

LEISURE ATTITUDES

FOR YOUTH

by Joseph A. Sommer, S.J.

Summer, Joseph A.
- Leisure attitudes
ADW 1152

850693



SCHOOL

HOME

LEISURE

PARISH

SOCIAL

order

ONE OF FIVE

SOCIAL APOSTOLATE

PROGRAMS

DESIGNED TO CREATE

CORRECT ATTITUDES

FOR YOUTH

LEISURE ATTITUDES FOR YOUTH

by

Joseph A. Sommer, S. J.

THE QUEEN'S WORK

3115 South Grand Boulevard

St. Louis 18, Missouri

Imprimi potest:

Joseph P. Fisher, S. J.

Provincial, Missouri Province

Imprimatur:

✠ Joseph E. Ritter

Archbishop of St. Louis

April 20, 1956

ANY FINANCIAL PROFIT made by the Central Office of the Sodality of Our Lady will be used for the promotion of the Sodality and the cause of Catholic Action.

Copyright 1956

THE QUEEN'S WORK

Deacidified

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD	4
HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET	5
I. CATHOLIC CONCEPT OF LEISURE	9
II. CATHOLIC USE OF LEISURE	12
III. LEISURE FOR FUN	14
1. PLACES FOR RECREATION	14
2. PICKING FRIENDS	15
3. CHRISTIAN COURTESY	16
4. DATING	17
5. GROUP FUN	19
6. DANCING	19
7. DRESS (for Girls)	20
8. MOVIES	22
9. TV - RADIO	23
10. HANG-OUTS	24
11. DRIVING (HOT RODS)	25
12. DRINKING	26
13. GOING STEADY	27
14. CONVERSATION	28
FURTHER TOPICS	29
IV. LEISURE FOR OTHERS	30
V. LEISURE FOR GOD	32
VI. LEISURE FOR SPORTS	34
VII. LEISURE FOR CULTURE	37
1. READING	38
2. MUSIC	39
VIII. LEISURE FOR HOBBIES IN HOME	41
IX. MONEY FOR LEISURE ACTIVITIES	44
1. JOBS	44
2. USE OF MONEY	45
X. LEISURE IN SUMMER	47

FOREWORD

This is the third in the series of five apostolate booklets for teen-agers in parishes and high schools. The first two deal with attitudes towards school and home life. The last two deal with Church and civic life.

This booklet gives practical aids and suggestions to help young people form in their friends and acquaintances a truly Catholic and Christlike attitude in their use of leisure time.

Your use of leisure tells whether you have a cultured personality or a decayed one. God did not give you the time between periods of work (whether in school or on a job) to waste on empty diversions. God gave you that time to develop all of your talents for the service of your fellowmen.

The late Father Daniel Lord in one of his writings gave the following valuable advice: "How wise you are if you learn to use your leisure and use it well! Plan your leisure time with interest. Learn to seize as a special gift any moment that falls into your hands. It is during your leisure that you become great or lapse into mental, spiritual, and emotional decay."

How to Use This Booklet

As an apostle, you must know: (1) what leisure exactly is; (2) how to make good use of this gift from God. The first two divisions of this booklet treat these two basic ideas. The next divisions of the booklet group suggestions for the correct use of leisure under the following headings: leisure for fun, for others, for God, for sports and culture and hobbies, in the home; money for leisure activities; leisure in summer.

This booklet contains much more material than you can cover in a year's apostolate. Hence your group will have to decide what items it will work on during the coming year.

Plan and execute each apostolic action according to a procedure used successfully by Communists and other action groups: indoctrinate, observe, plan and carry out action, report every week.

The following six-week schedule for each apostolic action covers six weeks' work. The schedule, however, can be adapted to a period less than six weeks.

First Meeting. Before this meeting have your group select a division of leisure on which it will work during the coming weeks. Each member then comes prepared for discussion. At this first meeting the director or a member may give an instruction on the matter selected or the matter can be learned through discussion of the questions given under Step One, Mind of the Church.

Toward the end of the meeting, the group looks over the booklet questions given under Step Two, Make a Survey. The meeting ends with a group resolution somewhat like the following: "During the coming week each of us shall casually find out what two or three of our teen-age friends think about this topic."

MAKING A SURVEY

Second Meeting. First, each member reports whether or not he asked two or three of his friends about the topic selected. The group then discusses its findings. The meeting ends with a resolution to continue the fact finding during the coming week.

Third Meeting. Members first report individually whether or not they carried out the previous week's resolution. Then they discuss their findings further. The meeting ends with a resolution like the following: "During the coming week each of us shall further study what Christ wants in this matter and make a comparison between His ideas and how our young friends act."

Fourth Meeting. Each member makes a report on whether or not he has carried out the previous week's resolution. The mind of Christ, especially as expressed through His Church, is discussed more and a comparison made between Christ's attitude and the attitude of the young people in the Church's environment.

The members of the group end with the resolution to get an answer to each of the following four questions during the coming week:

1. What modern man or woman is an outstanding example in this phase of leisure?
2. What modern man or woman is notorious for failure in this aspect of leisure?
3. What words of Christ in the Gospel have some bearing on this facet of leisure?
4. What action of Christ in the Gospel displays some virtue needed for this phase of leisure?

PLANNING ACTION

Fifth Meeting. Each member first reports his answers to the four questions. The group then discusses possible action that can be taken to bring the attitude of their young

friends into closer conformity to that of Christ's. This apostolate can be carried out by action or by word or by a combination of both.

The following questions will help you plan ways of carrying on a campaign among young friends and acquaintances to make them more conscious of Christ's attitude about the particular phase of leisure that you are working on and to influence them to make Christ's attitude their own.

A. What shall the prayer elements of your campaign consist of: daily Mass? daily Communion? daily Rosary? daily mental prayer? What sacrifices will you make?

B. What group action will you take? Can two or more members band together and influence other teen-age groups in the parish or school to discuss and take action on this particular phase of leisure? Can Christ's viewpoint on the matter be brought up again and again casually in conversations? What can be done in your classes, school assemblies, and extracurricular activities to promote Christ's attitude in this matter? Can you put articles or notices in church or school paper, on the bulletin board?

C. What can be done by you as an individual to influence your young friends and acquaintances in this matter? The following are some helps on how to proceed on your own.

1. Be friendly with the person. Do him a favor, if possible. Be interested in what he is interested in. Pay him a sincere compliment about something good in him. Make some casual remarks about the subject you wish to discuss.

N.B. Keep in mind that the above are not sham actions but sincere efforts to help your friend come to know and love more the greatest Friend that both of you can have, Jesus Christ. You are not really better than your young friend, but for some reason Our Lord and Our Lady have asked you to help him come to know Them better.

2. Discuss the subject with him alone, and not with others present. Do so during leisure time, not before an exam or some other important event.

a) Be friendly and patient. Do not try to force his free will. Discuss the subject and let him think it over.

b) Be on equal terms. Mention you have trouble with the same point. Tell him how some idea in a sermon or in reading struck you.

c) Ask him for a little favor. That procedure puts you under obligation to him and puts him at ease.

3. Continue your prayer and sacrifices. Be patient. Give the person a chance to think things over.

D. What are various ways of explaining Christ's attitude on this particular phase of leisure? How would you express your ideas in an article for the parish or school paper? How would you do so in parish meetings, class discussions, in school assemblies? How could you introduce the matter in a casual conversation with your friends and acquaintances?

E. What objections will your young friends bring up? How will you answer them? What are good ways of presenting these answers? Will your friends try to change the topic of conversation or shrug the matter off as of little importance?

Resolution: After your group covers the foregoing questions, decide on a definite action that you will carry out as a group or as individuals during the coming week. Put your decision in the form of a resolution.

Sixth Meeting. Each member reports on his success or failure in performing the apostolic action decided on at the previous meeting. All describe the various ways in which they have introduced the topic in discussions and conversations, have explained it to others, have answered their objections, have persuaded them to action. All these contributions made at the meeting will give all of you a better grasp of the matter and help you acquire valuable apostolic techniques.

The meeting will end with a repetition of the same resolution on this same aspect of leisure.

During the coming week the group will decide on what new phase of leisure they will begin at the next meeting.

I. Catholic Concept of Leisure

Father Daniel A. Lord, S.J., once stated that "The greatest invention of the 20th Century is universal leisure. Don't talk to me about the automobile, the radio, the jet plane, or even atomic power. The most wonderful discovery of our times is all the leisure that now belongs to all of us." And Father Lord went on further to say, "Leisure is really one of the most remarkable tests of what you really are."

What is leisure? Some high school students after much discussion decided that "leisure included the minutes and hours above the time needed for the day's routine and required activity." Thus for students it means the time left after school, homework, meals, and chores.

Father Lord's master of novices once told him and his fellow novices that into the Jesuit Order each year comes a group of young men who are carefully selected, men of somewhat better than just average educational capacities, men zealous and generous, and bent on serving God well. Yet after 20 years there will be the widest range of differences among them, differences that can be put down very largely to what each one did and does with his leisure. "There will be those differences among you too," he assured them. "How wise you are if you learn to use your leisure and use it well! Cram your leisure time with interests. Learn to seize as a special gift any moment that falls into your hands. It is during your leisure that you become great or lapse into mental, spiritual, and emotional decay."

The right use of leisure spells the difference between the successful business man and the failure. As Father Lord pointed out, "During leisure we may meet with the greatest, listen to the best, read the wisest, follow the most adventuresome, and compass the world. In leisure we may become saintly scholars and scholarly saints."

The Bishops of Quebec in their joint pastoral letter of 1950 pointed out that "Leisure time is not the purpose of life, but is certainly the means to a better life. . . . An expression of human freedom, it allows the expansion of personality, smothered by certain conditions of modern work; it offers the opportunity of developing self-control, and mastery over one's life. Therefore it has a part to play in the restoration of the working man."

The teen years is the time in which to learn how to use leisure to advantage.

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

Suppose Christ were to join your group and to describe vividly the following five high-school students. He asks you to explain why or why not each of them has His view of leisure. How would you answer Him?

The first sees three movies a week.

The second reads a good novel or biography every two weeks.

The third works five afternoons and evenings and all day Saturday each week.

The fourth reads a comic book every day.

The fifth spends an hour every day fixing items in the home.

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

During the coming week see how many of your friends you can find who have one or more of the following opinions of leisure.

1. Leisure consists of the hours we are free from the drudgery of the classroom.

2. The only sensible way to spend leisure is to go to a show or dance or have some other type of fun with the crowd.

3. Only bookworms do any reading or studying beyond the demands of homework.

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(First read the explanation of this step on pages 6-7).

What activities can you promote in order that your young friends acquire a better understanding of Christ's view of leisure and want to make it their own?

What kind of propaganda campaign can you sponsor to help Mary get across Christ's ideas on leisure to your young friends?

II. Catholic Use of Leisure

Subtract from your 24 hours a day the time you spend at school, homework, meals, sleeping, and chores. The remainder of your time is called leisure. It is a time in which you can do what you want and in the way you want to do it. Christ gives you that time as a means to developing your interests, ideals, your ability to use your free time, your understanding of your needs. Christ knows that today you are forming the patterns of work and play that will last through your whole adult life.

Commercialized recreation is destroying in people the correct idea of leisure time activity. Recreation does not consist of mere time-killing devices. Leisure is not a time merely for gossiping on the telephone or loafing about the home or corner drugstore. Christ does not judge your use of leisure by how much fun you have, but by how much your leisure activity develops your God-given talents and renews the energy spent in routine activities.

In a talk to delegates from a folklore festival, July 19, 1953, Pope Pius XII stated, "...the civilization which imposes the law of the machine on human beings also threatens to debase their normal use of leisure time. It too easily creates artificial pleasures, egotistical and banal, ready-made pleasures that demand no effort or initiative and that turn the individual inward toward himself, rather than outward toward society."

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

What is the connection between your making good use of leisure now and your future recreation as an adult?

Name some recreational activities and the ways in which they demand sacrifice and moral power.

What are some ways that you can make good use of an evening that you have at home all alone?

How would you go about planning such an evening?

What are some ways in which you can use your leisure to help others?

What are some of the biggest obstacles today to wholesome Catholic recreation?

How do your present social activities help prepare you for married life, business career, religious life?

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

Do any of your young friends or acquaintances roam the streets frequently going from one place to another and doing nothing all evening?

Do any of your young friends or acquaintances prefer to go to a movie or some dance which promises entertainment without effort on their part?

How many of your young friends take the trouble to go to a library and look up books on entertainment?

How many of your friends plan their use of leisure at least a day ahead of time?

How many dawdle about doing little but day-dreaming?

How many frequently race around so hard that they feel exhausted for hours afterward?

How many of your young friends are not able to entertain themselves?

How many of your companions almost always look for the same type of amusement?

How many always follow the crowd?

How many take the initiative to suggest new activities?

How many use recreation as a means to bring their companions closer to Christ?

III. Leisure for Fun

Pleasure in leisure activity can enrich your personality or poison it. Father Lord gave a good norm for pleasure: "But when fun releases wholesome laughter, exercises cramped lungs, makes one rediscover unused muscles, causes one to be completely absorbed in a tense drama played on an amateur stage or in an amateur contest played out on a field, it is likely to be good and to do good."

The archbishops and bishops of Quebec in 1950 stated that "Amusements and games, if they respect the dignity of the workingman, will be a real relaxation, a means of preserving health, of forming a team spirit of co-operation, and of developing alert and responsive bodies and souls."

The bishops warned against those entertainers who plan to stir up your passions in order to take your money. "Amusements," they said, "should not cater to the superficial, and some times to the lowest of tastes. They should, on the contrary, assure the full growth of the person by preserving his physical strength, and by developing his intellectual faculties and moral virtues."

1. PLACES FOR RECREATION

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

Name some of the places to which teen-agers can ordinarily go for fun.

Is it necessary to go to an expensive place to have a good time?

What are some places that fellows and girls can go for sports in mixed company, e.g., roller skating, tennis, horseback riding, bowling, golf?

Name some places to which fellows and girls can go occasionally, e.g., circus, museum, etc.

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

Where do your young friends and acquaintances recreate? Homes, drugstores, streets, movies, dance halls, parish teen-age centers, other recreation centers, parks?

Would Christ consider all of these places suitable?

Do some of the young people go to unsuitable places because they think they can have more fun away from restraint?

Do you and your young friends have enough facilities for recreation? Do you need more or better places?

Are there suitable places of recreation which are not frequented by the young people?

How many would rather go out with a crowd than on single dates?

Do your young friends find double-dating safer than just single dates?

How many of the boys take out a girl who is a "wall-flower"?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(Read the suggestions for this step given on pages 6-7).

2. PICKING FRIENDS

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

What good qualities does Christ expect you to find in a friend?

What bad qualities mark a person as undesirable for close association?

Can you be friendly with people and still not be close friends?

Can you love others and treat them as Christ, and still not be close friends with them because they have undesirable qualities?

In selecting dates, why should you select Catholics?

Can you be friends and recreate with non-Catholics and be zealous for their conversion, and still not date them?

Do your friends gradually become a part of you?

Why should you choose those persons to be friends who will help you to be a better person because you associate with them closely?

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

What scale of values do your young friends have for choosing close friends?

How many bring their friends home to meet their parents?

How many prefer to keep mostly to themselves rather than to make the effort to make friends?

Where do they usually meet fellows and girls and develop close friendships?

What are ways in which these close friendships are usually begun?

How many of the fellows and girls approve of pick-ups? Why?

How many go on blind dates? Why?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(Read the suggestions for this step given on pages 6-7).

3. CHRISTIAN COURTESY

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

What motives does a Catholic have for courtesy that a pagan does not?

Recall an instance from the Gospel in which Christ took criticism gracefully; in which He controlled His emotions; made new friends; enjoyed the good fortune of others; admired good characteristics of others; showed special consideration for strangers; manifested enthusiasm for the

plans of others; spoke with a smile; was considerate at table; remembered faces and names; helped others to get acquainted; was a good loser.

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

What is the courtesy quotient of your young friends and acquaintances?

Are they on time for meetings with friends?

Do they avoid telling the story ahead of a picture at a movie?

Do they keep silence in the library?

Do they avoid unkind remarks even when they are true?

Do they keep silence when someone else is talking?

Do they have enthusiasm for activities planned by companions?

Is their appearance neat?

Are they cheerful and kind even when others are rude?

Do they see the connection between having these social graces and treating others as Christ Himself?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(Read the suggestions for this step given on pages 6-7).

4. DATING

How in God's plan is dating a preparation for marriage?

Which of the following are most important for a successful marriage: spiritual maturity, intellectual maturity, practical knowledge in homemaking, physical attraction?

Why is the youth dating system in this country not a good preparation for successful marriages?

What are the qualities that make a boy or girl popular? Are these the same qualities that are most important for successful marriages?

Since you most likely are caught inextricably in this country's crazy dating system, what safeguards must you take in order to preserve purity on dates?

How often can teen-agers go out on dates without hurting themselves seriously?

Should the boy or the girl suggest the place and time of a date?

May girls ask boys for dates?

Is an automobile necessary?

What is a reasonable maximum and minimum of money to be spent on a date?

Why should both the fellow and the girl introduce each other to their parents?

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

How many of your young friends and acquaintances date?

What are their reasons for dating?

How often do they date?

Do they date on weekends or week days?

Where do they meet their dates?

Where do they go on dates?

Do they go with a person just to go out?

Do they discuss with their parents the hour to be in?
How many date alone? Double date?

How much does the average date cost?

Are certain boys and girls popular, while others are ignored?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(Read the suggestions for this step given on pages 6-7).

5. GROUP FUN

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

Group fun is that had by a number of boys and girls together, without individual boys dating individual girls.

Why is such fun much more in line with the nature God has given teen-agers than dating is?

What makes such fun in a crowd more wholesome for teen-agers than dating?

What are other advantages? Why?

Do you have an obligation to promote non-dating parties?

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

How many of your friends prefer group fun to dating?

How many of your friends participate in non-dating parties?

Find out why some do not participate.

In what places is it possible to have group fun?

How can you plan fun in a crowd for those who do not have the opportunity?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(Read the suggestions for this step given on pages 6-7).

6. DANCING

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

How is Christ's view of dancing midway between the pagan world's sophisticated pleasure in night clubs and the puritan's banning of legitimate fun?

In what way is dancing an opportunity to practice good manners, pleasant association with one's companions in the

right kind of atmosphere, good exercise, and a way to develop coordination and self-control?

Can learning to dance correctly, to treat a dancing partner with respect, and to move to the rhythm of good music instead of at the whim of untrained feet be positive protection against temptation?

How is tap dancing a great exercise in rhythm and a marvelous development of coordinated muscles?

How is ballet, even the amateur kind, a training in precision and balance?

Would the teaching of dancing in your parish or school imitate the sponsoring of dancing by the Church in the Middle Ages?

If dancing were taught, should it be on a compulsory or voluntary basis?

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

What types of dances are popular among teen-agers?

Are any of these a source of temptation to those dancing? To those watching?

How many of the boys you know are good dancers? Poor dancers?

How many of the girls you know are good dancers? Poor dancers?

If your parish or school offered to teach dancing, how many boys would want it? How many girls?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(Read the suggestions for this step given on pages 6-7).

7. DRESS (for Girls)

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

In what ways does God want you to use clothing for bodily protection?

What are ways in which girls can use clothing as means of decoration?

What makes a dress, bathing suit, and other clothing modest? The amount of clothing or also the way it is worn and also the circumstances of time and place?

Why should girls be careful not to accentuate certain parts of their body by the way they dress?

What responsibility do girls and fellows have toward each other's moral welfare in regard to dress?

Would the following norms proposed by Father Lord be practical for judging modesty in dress?

1. If your costume is meant for the occasion, it's probably right.

2. If in it you can do the things that the occasion calls for, from walking to playing hockey, it is probably correct.

3. If it leaves you without embarrassment and the audience without nervous tension, over-interest, or embarrassment, it is likely to be modest.

4. If a boy turns his eyes quickly away from a girl when first meeting her and then casually looks back for a second glance, she probably is dressed immodestly.

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

How many of the Catholic girls you know live up to the ideas of modesty?

Do girls wear immodest dresses because the crowd does it?

Are girls guided more by the latest fashions than what looks best on them in their choice of clothes?

Do they spend too much money on clothes? Why?

What types of dress do the boys and girls consider immodest?

Why do some girls dress immodestly?

How many of the girls you know want to dress modestly in order not to shove boys along the road to hell?

How many of the boys you know prefer to go with girls who dress modestly?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(Read the suggestions for this step given on pages 6-7).

8. MOVIES

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

In his encyclical on motion pictures, Pius XI mentioned that good movies can have the following effects:

1. Provide wholesome recreation.
2. Arouse noble ideas of life.
3. Impart better knowledge of the history and beauties of one's own land and other countries.
4. Present truth and virtue under attractive form.
5. Create at least a flavor of understanding among nations, social classes, and races.
6. Champion the cause of justice.

For each of the above six points, mention a recent motion picture that had that good effect on you.

What are the best ways of finding out about a movie before you see it?

How binding are the Legion of Decency ratings in regard to "B" pictures? "A-2"?

Should pictures featuring stars with bad moral reputations be patronized?

How can you evaluate a movie after seeing it, both artistically and morally?

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

How often do your teen-age friends go to movies? Why? How do they choose the movies they go to?

Do they have a good norm? Or are they just looking for relaxation and escape from daily life?

Are they concerned about staying away from "B" movies?

Do they consult their confessor before going to "A-2" movies?

How do they discuss movies after seeing them?

Do they know the influence movies have on them?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(Read the suggestions for this step given on pages 6-7).

9. TV - RADIO

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

The six points Pope Pius XI made about movies apply to TV and radio also.

For each of the six good effects, mention a TV or radio program that has that good effect. For each, if possible, mention a TV or radio program that has the opposite effect.

What is the maximum amount of time a high-school student can watch TV or listen to the radio without hurting his studies or the other important elements of his daily life?

What are the best ways of finding out about TV or radio programs ahead of time?

After seeing a TV or radio program, how can you evaluate it?

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

How many hours each week do your fellow high-school students watch TV or listen to the radio.

Do they have any norms for choosing the TV or radio program?

Do they object to the following faults which have occurred in TV and radio programs:

1. Excessive bad taste in words, actions, and dress?
2. Marriage ridiculed?
3. False values glorified?
4. Glorification of criminals?
5. Derision of racial or national groups?
6. Excessive noise, confusion, and tumult?
7. Irreverence toward religion?
8. Vulgar and sordid incidents?
9. Continual glamorizing of strictly material values?
10. Making fun of family authority and customs?
11. Excessive brutality and bloodshed?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(Read the suggestions for this step given on pages 6-7).

10. HANG-OUTS

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

A "hang-out" is a place where a group regularly meets during leisure.

What are examples of such places that Christ would approve of?

What are examples of spots with evil influence?

Is there a need to have hang-outs?

Is there a danger of young people forming cliques as a result of going to such spots?

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

Do the teen-agers of your parish or school frequent hang-outs? What kind?

Do they always go in the same groups?

Does your parish or school provide entertainment to counteract attendance at bad places?

Why do the young people go to hang-outs? What type goes there?

What really goes on at these spots?

Do these places interfere with attendance at Mass?

Which hang-outs does the parish or school approve, if any?

Do these places give the parish or school a bad name? Are they harmful in other ways?

Do they interfere with homework?

Do they harm home life?

Do some people form cliques as a result of going to hang-outs?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(Read the suggestions for this step given on pages 6-7).

11. DRIVING (HOT-RODS)

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

In what way can each of the following uses of an automobile be considered good? Bad? Why?

An automobile takes a family to a picnic in the country.

A fisherman uses his auto to reach his favorite trout stream.

An art lover drives to a museum.

A book lover brings home a box full of books.

A basketball team drives to a game in a nearby town.

A young couple park at the end of a date.

A factory worker drives home from his job.

Hot Rods. What is a hot-rod? What harm do hot-rods do? Are they any good at all for young people?

How would you go about finding out what Christ thinks of the use of automobiles and especially of hot-rods?

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

Do any of your young friends own cars? How many?
For what purposes do the young people use automobiles?
How many of your young friends and acquaintances are safe drivers?

How many endanger the lives of people when they drive?
How many drive hot-rods?

Do they influence a good number of your young friends and acquaintances?

Do "pick-ups" and hot-rods go hand in hand?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(Read the suggestions for this step given on pages 6-7).

12. DRINKING

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

What liquids come under the term "drinking"?

How would you go about finding out Christ's attitude toward teen-age drinking?

Does the Church consider drinking for teen-agers morally good or bad?

Does drinking make other kinds of sinning easier?

Is drinking at home under parental supervision right or wrong? Why?

Is it necessary for teen-agers to drink in order to have a good time? Why not?

Besides making near occasions for sinning, what other ill effects does teen-age drinking bring about?

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

Do any of your young friends and acquaintances drink alcoholic beverages?

If so, at what age did they begin drinking?
Are juniors and seniors the chief offenders?
How much do they drink?
When and where do they do most of their drinking? Why?
Are those who drink a small minority of the young people
in your parish or school?
Does drinking cause absence from school?
Do those who drink influence others by their actions?
What do parents think about teen-age drinking?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(Read the suggestions for this step given on pages 6-7).

13. GOING STEADY

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

"Going Steady" is the name given to a boy and a girl dating each other frequently and exclusively, with the air of possessiveness as if they were engaged, but without the intention of getting married within the next year or so.

How can you find out what Christ thinks about this pagan way of living?

Does the Church condemn going steady in the above sense?

Why is teen-age steady dating a bad preparation for future marriage?

What ill effects does steady dating have on recreation?

How does going steady harm a teen-ager's Catholic student vocation?

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

How many of your young friends and acquaintances have a definition of going steady that is different than the one given above?

How many of them actually date steady in the sense given above?

Do only a minority of them go steady or is it a widespread problem?

What percentage go steady?

Why do some teen-agers go steady? Is it because of a particular social pressure?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(Read the suggestions for this step given on pages 6-7).

14. CONVERSATION

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

Indicate some Gospel scenes in which Christ showed that He Himself was a good conversationalist?

Does the Church consider intelligent conversation as a necessary tool for her lay apostles? Why?

What elements of good conversation does Christ want young people to have?

What are some of the bad features that Christ wants to be avoided in conversation?

What connection is there between good reading and good conversation?

How can good conversation help Christianize an environment, and bad conversation de-Christianize it?

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

How many of your young friends and acquaintances know how to converse intelligently and interestingly?

How many of them find good conversation difficult because of the following:

1. Limited interests and activity?
2. Shallow topics?

3. Superficial pastime and lack of solid thinking in any topic?

4. Continually looking for fun with no time given to mental advancement?

5. A great number of external activities without a thorough knowledge of any of them?

6. Lack of ambition to widen their sphere of knowledge?

How many, if any, of your young friends and acquaintances indulge in off-color stories? Why?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(Read the suggestions for this step given on pages 6-7).

FURTHER TOPICS

In the fun phase of teen-age leisure, there may be other problems such as parking, gambling, drive-ins, dope, that may need the apostolic help of your Sodality. If so, you can without much trouble draw up a set of questions for each of the first two steps, along the lines of those given in the above topics, and after discussion and observation plan suitable action.

IV. Leisure for Others

Leisure is not a luxury to be squandered on oneself. Even if you were looking only for your own personal happiness, you would not concentrate on yourself but on others. God put into your nature the need to work for others. As soon as you concentrate solely on yourself, your human machinery goes awry.

Moreover, one of the most important items in modern happiness and success is the art of getting along with other people. Books on how to be popular are numerous among the best sellers.

Men must join together and contribute their share of work in such organizations as unions or professional associations or the parish CYO, because in company with others they can accomplish what they cannot conceivably do alone.

Moreover by being active in parish and school and civic organizations, young people learn to talk, to meet strangers, to cooperate on activities, to plan programs, to acquire the necessary give and take of democratic life.

By being active in organizations now, teen-agers will prepare themselves for the future. Each one will then, as the Quebec hierarchy pointed out in 1950, "devote himself, without injury to his family life, to those different organizations which aim at the restoration of his conditions: religious associations, recreational groups, Catholic Action, unions, credit unions, consumer and housing co-operatives."

The Quebec hierarchy pointed out that "These associations will help him study the concrete problems which interest him, point out to him the elements of their solutions, and offer him an occasion of assuming responsibilities. And it is precisely by assuming responsibility that he will

develop himself and be urged to practice in a better way social solidarity."

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

Why should young people use a good part of their leisure to help others?

What are various ways in which young people as individuals can help others?

Why should young people join organizations provided for them in their parishes, schools, and other places?

What good effects come to young people from their being active in such organizations?

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

How many of your young friends and acquaintances belong to organizations in their parishes? In their schools? In other places?

Name the various organizations to which they belong.

Why do they belong to these organizations? Is it to help themselves or are they conscious of being of service to others?

How many of them are as active as reasonably possible in the organizations to which they belong?

How many are in these organizations merely to belong, and not to contribute their share to the good of the organization? Why?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(Read the suggestions for this step given on pages 6-7).

V. Leisure for God

Certainly one reason God provides you with leisure is that it gives you an opportunity to rest awhile with Him, to sit at Christ's feet with Mary Magdalen, to learn from His actions and His words how to live a full life here in this life and hereafter.

You have time for mental prayer, that special companionship by which you become close friends with Christ and Mary, in which you develop a thrilling companionship that will last for all eternity.

You have time to work with the crucified Christ in the Mass. Frequently and perhaps daily you have an opportunity to help Christ perform anew the greatest action that takes place on earth.

There is time for an annual retreat, a time spent with Christ, in getting to know Him and yourself better and developing a closer friendship with Him.

Leisure provides you with time to be with Christ and Mary and the saints in a choice of warm and stimulating devotions.

Parishes offer you the opportunity to help Christ in His work with other young people.

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

How much of their leisure does God expect young people to spend with Him?

What are various ways in which young people can spend time with God in their parish? At home? At school? Other places?

Name religious organizations to which Catholic young people can belong.

What is the purpose of the young people's club in the parish?

What kind of program should it provide?

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

How much of their leisure each day do your young friends and acquaintances spend with God?

How many go to Mass during the week? How often?

How many know what mental prayer is and the need for it?

How many of them belong to their parish CYO? Other parish organizations?

How many of the parishes near you have organizations for young people?

How many do not?

In those that do, what kind of program do they provide?

If there are any parishes without a youth organization, what is the possibility of getting one started?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(Read the suggestions for this step given on pages 6-7).

VI. Leisure for Sports

On November 8, 1952, Pope Pius XII in his talk to delegates of the National Congress on the Pedagogic and Hygienic problems of Sport in Rome, gave an excellent explanation of the purpose of athletics.

Pope Pius XII pointed out that the immediate purpose was the "education, development, and strengthening of the body in its constitution and power of movement."

But as our Holy Father points out, "What purpose would be served by the use of development of the body, of its energies, of its beauty, if it were not at the service of something more noble and lasting, namely, the soul?"

Since the soul rates much more highly than the body, "The highest merit should not be attributed to him who has the strongest and most agile muscles, but rather to him who shows the most ready ability in keeping them subject to the power of the spirit."

Pius XII then points out that in sports you should pay much more attention to the development of your soul than of your body. "Truth and righteousness, love, justice and equity, moral integrity and natural modesty, due care of one's life and health, of one's family, of one's profession, of one's good name and true honor, must not be made secondary to sporting activities, to their victories and glory."

Moreover, "to make gymnastics, sport, rhythm, with all their associations, the highest aim of life, would in truth be too trifling for man, whose primary greatness consists in far higher aspirations, tendencies and talents."

Moreover, those who have bulging and well-coordinated muscles should not look down on those who are not athletic.

As Pius XII points out, "Many are the examples given us in present-day life, in addition to those in the pages of history, which show that there is nothing to prevent a soul, not only a sound one, but sometimes a great one, even a genial and heroic soul, from being housed in a weak or impaired body."

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

Why are the following statements by Pope Pius XII correct?

"Give to God in the first place the honor that is due to Him, and above all keep the Lord's Day holy, since sport does not excuse us from the discharge of our religious duties.

"In like manner the Fourth Commandment which bids us preserve the harmony that the Creator intended to reign in the bosom of the family, recalls fidelity to family obligations, which should take precedence over the so-called demands of sport and the things that pertain to it.

"The divine Commandments also demand a safeguarding of one's own life and the lives of others, as well as the health of one's own body and that of others, neither of which is permissible, without good reason, to expose to serious danger in gymnastics and sport.

"From the...Commandments comes also the force of those laws...that the genuine sportsman rightly considers, in games and competitions, as inviolable... He respects the good name and honor of his adversary as of equal value with his own."

Why is participating in sports ordinarily preferable to watching them?

In the parish and school should athletics be considered more, equally, or less important than intellectual and cultural and spiritual development? Why?

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

What type of athletic programs are offered in parish or school?

How many of your young friends and acquaintances participate in some athletics in their parish or school?

Are sports over-emphasized in your parish or school?

What physical facilities are available in your parish or school? Are they adequate?

Do players on the teams try to injure some of their opponents?

Do any of the teams tend to be a clique all by themselves?

Is there any lack of charity among the players themselves?

Are athletes given non-athletic privileges not given to others?

Are the majority of athletes good or poor students? Are athletes given more consideration in other activities in the parish or school? If so, how? Why?

VII. Leisure for Culture

God gave you five senses, an imagination, emotions, an intellect and a will. The more you cultivate the noble features of these faculties and eliminate the baser ones, the more culture you have. No one but yourself can cultivate those talents. The more you develop them, the better personality you have. Your ability to do depends on what you are.

One of the surest ways to develop your personality is to live with distinguished people. And on the shelves of libraries you can choose your company carefully. You can live with St. Augustine in his Confessions. You can come in contact with the great soul of St. Teresa in her autobiography. You can live with the saints and other great peoples of all ages. And best of all, you can walk side by side with Christ in the Gospel.

Great masterpieces of art will let you look at life with the mind and eyes of great artists. You will see the things they saw. You will emphasize what they emphasized. They will teach you how to look at your world.

Records and radio and music halls and your parish church will bring you in contact with great composers like Palestrina and Beethoven and Mozart and Gershwin. They will teach you how to discover your finer emotions, to develop and control them.

The years of youth are the time to begin meeting great people in literature and music and art. Then as the years pass, you can develop your acquaintanceship with them.

The Quebec hierarchy pointed out that "...leisure time should encourage a spiritual development.... Cultural development is not reserved for one class; all have a right to

it, workingmen as well as others. Many are the means afforded: the stage and screen, excursions, travel, reading, libraries, study groups, night schools, and adult education in the arts and sciences. . . . The knowledge so acquired will blossom into true culture during periods of reflection and meditation, periods which are afforded by the Christian observance of Sunday, and other times of rest."

1. READING

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

Name some great authors that would appeal to teenagers. What particular work would you recommend? Why?

Name some magazines that will help develop young people's minds and emotions correctly. Give reasons for your selections.

To what parts of diocesan Catholic papers should teenagers give particular attention? Why?

Should teenagers become well acquainted with their school and parish and public libraries? Why? What are ways of getting them so interested?

What parts of the Sunday paper should a teenager look at carefully? What parts should he skim over or skip? Why?

What comic books would Christ approve for teenagers? Which would he disapprove of? Why?

Which pocket books would Christ approve of? Disapprove of? Why?

STEP TWO: Make a Survey:

What great authors are popular among the young people you know?

How many of your young friends and acquaintances read works by great authors?

How many read books by Catholic authors? If some do not, why not?

How many of your young friends and acquaintances read the diocesan newspaper? What sections do they read?

What magazines do your young friends read? Are they good or bad for them? Why or why not? How many of your young friends and acquaintances read Catholic books and magazines? Do they read them out of loyalty, penance, or interest?

Name some that they like. Name some Catholic writers whose works they enjoy.

How many of your young friends and acquaintances have library cards? How many use them? How often?

Are there any of your friends and acquaintances that read only comic books and other cheap literature? Why?

2. MUSIC

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

What types of modern music does Christ approve of? How would you find out Christ's opinion?

Give examples of the kind Christ would approve of.

What are examples of those He would disapprove of? Why?

Should young people acquire a taste for hi-fi? How much? Why?

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

What kind of music do three or four of your friends like?

If they buy records, what kind do they buy? Why?

Do they ever go to concerts?

How many appreciate Gregorian chant?

What facilities do you have in your parish for developing musical abilities? In your school? In your city or town?

What is the attitude of some of your friends toward these organizations? Do they appreciate or look down upon them? Why?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(Read the suggestions for this step given on pages 6-7).

VIII. Leisure for Hobbies in Home

Merriam-Webster gives as one definition of the word hobby, "An occupation or interest to which one gives his spare time."

We are not here concerned with giving a list of the exciting hobbies that challenge modern young people. There are many books and booklets that describe the wide range of hobbies and how to select them. You can find these easily in your school and public libraries.

What does concern us here is Christ's attitude toward the part hobbies play in your home life now, and how they prepare for the job that many of you will have as adults, namely, that of running a household. (Recreation in the home is treated in the apostolate booklet on the HOME ATTITUDE.)

The Quebec bishops stated very well that "The best use of leisure is repose in the midst of the family which, at least on certain days, knits the members together. It is then that the husband and father fulfills his family obligations. Too long an absence makes the workingman a stranger in his own home, and places on the mother the full responsibility of raising the children; a more regular presence will give him an occasion of assuming his paternal duties. The cultivation of a kitchen or flower garden, or the performance of odd jobs which allow free rein to his talents and his initiative, will divert the worker's attention from his factory work, often automatic and joyless, and make him love all the more the land which he has worked with his own hands, or the house he has furnished and decorated."

Hobbies develop talent that will be found extremely useful in future home making. Future fathers and mothers now

develop their ability to make home life so interesting and enjoyable and useful that children will want to spend much time in their homes.

Hobbies also give young people the opportunity to enable themselves as adults to enjoy their leisure. In the not too distant future, the 40-hour week will undoubtedly become the 30-hour week. There will be a long weekend of at least three days. The problem facing leaders in our country today is that of educating adults in the art of using their leisure profitably, especially at home.

One job of your discussion group is that of getting as many of the young people in your environment as possible to prepare themselves for the family use of their spare time when they are adults. Ten years from now, will you be able to stand with Christ and Mary and point to many young adults who because of your present apostolate will be using their leisure in a family way?

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church

Name some items that people collect as a hobby.

Name some artistic hobbies.

What are some hobbies that develop constructive skills?

What are ways in which each of the above three types of hobbies will prepare young people for (1) future family life? (2) future family use of adult leisure?

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

Name some of the useful hobbies that some of your friends have.

Name some hobbies they have which are not useful. Why are they not useful?

Of those who have good hobbies, how many have the idea of preparing themselves for the family use of spare time as adults? If they don't, why not?

Do any of them have their hobby merely for fun and enjoyment? Are there any who are trying to do activities that are beyond their capabilities?

Do any of them spend too much time on their hobbies?

Do any of them spend too much money on their hobbies?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(Read the suggestions for this step given on pages 6-7).

IX. Money for Leisure Activities

A miser has a problem that an alcoholic does not have. Man can live without alcohol. But in our present economy man cannot live without money. A miser has to learn to use money properly.

Teen-age life today has serious money problems. For example, in addition to a great variety of dues and money collections in high schools, there are the innumerable demands that parties, dances, corsages, photographs, class rings, year books make on the teen-age pocketbook.

Such an over-emphasis on money must puzzle Christ whose words, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," still re-echo down through the ages into our present teen-age life. What must He think of the mad teen-age rush in Catholic high schools for the material trinkets of this earth?

For an excellent treatment of this subject, read Sister Dulcidia's article, "Money in Catholic Schools," published in the March 1954 issue of INTEGRITY.

JOB

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

How would you go about finding out Christ's viewpoint on students working after school and on Saturdays?

Would Christ consider your school life and family life more important than having a job? Why?

How many hours can a high-school student work without interfering with his student and family and church life?

Name some jobs that have the necessary healthful atmosphere, appropriate working hours, and suitable companions for high-school students who have to work.

Name some jobs that fail in one of the above respects. Why?

Name some good motives for having a job after school.

Can you think of any situation in which Christ would approve of a teen-ager working after school in order to maintain a car for his own use? If so, why?

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

How many of your young friends have an allowance? How many earn their own money?

How many of your young friends work?

How many of them work in order to have sufficient money for class rings, year books, proms and other dances, and the many other teen-age social activities?

How many work such long hours that they do not have time for good reading outside of the time they put in on their required homework? Why?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(Read the suggestions for this step given on pages 6-7).

2. USE OF MONEY

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

Name some student uses of money that Christ would approve of. Why?

Name some that Christ would not approve of. Why?

How much money should a teen-ager give to the support of his parish church?

Should teen-agers give alms to the poor? How much? Why?

Why is it important that a young person learn how to budget his money?

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

How much money are your young friends obliged to spend at school for proms, dances, class rings, year books, etc.?

Are there students who cannot reasonably afford to spend this amount of money?

Could some of these be eliminated or their expense be reduced reasonably?

How much money does the average young person spend on a prom?

How much is spent on clothes, car or taxi, corsage, and other items before the prom? How much is spent for items at the prom itself? How much is spent at other places for other items after the prom is over? Do you think Christ approves of the amount spent? Why or why not?

If a student could not afford a senior class ring, would he have to suffer embarrassment in any way? If so, why?

How many students follow a budget?

How many young people contribute to the support of their parish? How much?

How many young people save money for future education?

How many contribute to the support of their family?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(Read the suggestions for this step given on pages 6-7).

X. Leisure in Summer

The devil frequently has a gay time during the vacation months, since many young people make freedom from school mean freedom from all restrictions. Mary needs your help very much. She knows only too well that all of the previous items in this booklet, but especially the ones given below, need emphasis during the off-school weeks.

For at least three meetings before the end of school, take up the following, one by one, and apply the three steps:

1. What does Christ through His Church teach you about this?
2. What is the attitude of your young friends?
3. What will you do to make their attitudes thoroughly Christlike?

MASS

How many, if any, of your young friends fail to go to Mass every Sunday during vacation time? How can you encourage them to go to Mass every Sunday, and even during the week?

HOLY COMMUNION

Do any of your friends fail to go to Communion even once during the summer months? What will you do to encourage them to go to Communion frequently? How will you remind them about the First Fridays and First Saturdays?

CONFESSION

How many, if any, of your young friends fail to go to confession even once during the summer months? What will you do to get them to go to confession at least once a month?

HOME LIFE

How much time do your friends spend at home during the summer months? What can you do to get them to want to contribute their share to creating a happy home life during vacation time?

WORK

How many of your friends have the Catholic concept of work, namely, that it is a means of serving Christ in their neighbor? What will you do to promote Christ's concept of work among your young friends during the off-school months?

READING

How many of your friends have a program for good reading during vacation time? What will you do to help them in this respect?

DRESS

In what ways, if any, do some of your friends wear immodest clothes? What will you do to get them to want to wear modest clothes in order to avoid helping others commit mortal sins?

