

Leader's Guide for
FOUNDATIONS OF CHRISTIANITY
With Father Michael Himes

Mystery

We suggest you show this program before any of the others in this series.

Discussion Questions

- Himes retells the Job story. How does the Job story make you feel? What do you think about God's answer to Job?
- Himes says the most important things in life cannot be explained. In his life he gives the example of being a priest. What in your life is so important you cannot adequately explain it?
- What is your favorite metaphor for God?
- Have you ever felt compelled to say something about God but tongue-tied by the awareness that you were not able to speak of God adequately? What was that experience like?
- Have you ever said too much about God?
- Have you ever been silent when you should have spoken?
- What new insights did you gain from this program? Did anything confuse or disturb you?

Note to leader: *You may want to show this video twice and see what new insights people pick up the second time.*

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NOTE: This guide can be printed and cut down in size to be stored with the DVD version of this video program. Simply cut ¾ inch from each side of the page for a guide that, when folded, can be placed inside of the DVD case or attached to the DVD or VHS case.

For use with:

Foundations of Christianity on VHS (V5060) and DVD (D5060)

St. Anthony Messenger Press
28 W. Liberty St.
Cincinnati, OH 45202-6498
800-488-0488
www.AmericanCatholic.org

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Conversion

We suggest you show the program "Mystery" before any of the others in this series.

Discussion Questions

- Do you know anyone, like Paul, who had an instant conversion?
- What do you think of Himes' notion that all major religious traditions are "formation programs"?
- What saint do you most identify with? Who are your "conversation partners" in faith? Who has nurtured you in the Christian life?
- What is your experience of renewing your baptismal vows? Do you see progress in your conversion journey from other times when you renewed them?
- Has there been a time in your life when the external word of God and the internal word of God came together after a long time of listening to the external word?

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Faith

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Discussion Questions

- Father Himes describes two times of identity crisis in the church's history. Do you have a memory of that second crisis—in the 1960's at the time of Vatican II? How have we grown in faith since then?
- When someone says "God" to you, what do you think of?
- Have you ever experienced religion as "idolatry"?
- Have you ever fallen into "relativism"?
- What do you think of Father Himes' definition of "faith"?
- Why is "radical monotheism" so challenging?
- What did you find to be disturbing among these insights? What did you find to be enlightening? Inspiring?

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Hope

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Discussion Questions

- Have you ever confused hope with utopianism? What was that experience like? Have we ever done that as a church?
- Have you ever given in to despair? What was that like? What pulled you through?
- Give an example on a personal level of Christian Realism. Give an example on the church level.
- Who is a person of hope in your life?
- How did Jesus express his hope?
- How do you feel about the sermon given at the death of the child Nathaniel?
- What does it mean to embrace God as Mystery?

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Love

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Discussion Questions

- Was there a time in your life when it was difficult to love the other as "other"?
- When have you experienced "I-thou" relationships? When have you experienced "I-it" relationships?
- When have you seen "love as a choice" in action?
- Himes sees Paul's definition of love and Thomas Aquinas' definition of love as similar. Do you agree? If so, how would you describe that similarity?
- Himes says: "Giving life away is not a command but a description." That discovery surprised Himes. Does that statement surprise you?
- Himes gave us several definitions of love. Do you know others?
- When has love required courage in your life?
- Himes says that when you give yourself away, you will be constantly renewed. Has this been true in your life?

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