



Short Guide to Leading a Movie Discussion

The recent release of films about St Josemaria Escrivá is a perfect opportunity to explore his life and teachings by organizing and leading a faith-filled discussion with friends.

–Not sure how to get started?

Download one of the St. Josemaria Institute’s Movie Discussion Guides, order the movie DVD, get your friends together, and start the conversation. You can also follow these additional tips:

Step 1: Prepare

Begin by asking yourself why you want to organize a discussion group and praying about what you hope to gain for yourself and your friends.

St Josemaria Escrivá would pray before and during retreats and other activities he would lead, *“God grant we may draw profit from it — and, first of all, myself!”* (*The Forge*, 662)

Also:

- Watch the movie in advance.
- Take notes of scenes, lines, characters, etc., that may be interesting or thought provoking for discussion.
- Choose a theme to focus on.
- Read through the discussion guide.
- Choose a place for hosting the discussion— church, home, dorm room, library—anywhere with TV/DVD capabilities and suitable for talking.
- Set the date and time.

Step 2: Invite

It’s time to spread the word and get your group together. Six to eight people is usually a good size for discussion.

Send the discussion guide to your group in advance so they know what to expect. Send them a link, attach a PDF, or print a copy. Each person should have their own guide.

Encourage them to watch the entire movie in advance, if possible, since you may or may not want to watch the entire movie when you get together.

Step 3: Organize

As your event approaches make sure you have everything you need:

- DVD
- Extra copies of the discussion guides
- Pens/pencils
- TV and DVD player (speakers if necessary)

Check that the DVD player and sound are working properly.

Make the room feel as welcoming as possible.

Step 4: Lead

Although you may be meeting with a group of close friends, try to start and end the discussion on time.

Try to stay focused on the theme of the discussion so that the conversation is not sidetracked and everyone has a chance to express their thoughts and questions.

Try to redirect those who tend to dominate the discussion and encourage those who do not open up with the group.

Everyone should feel that they gained something positive from the discussion so encourage them to make a personal resolution—specifically one thing that they are going to work on in their daily lives to come closer to God.

If anyone has doubts or questions that you feel you cannot answer, offer to follow up with them and put them in touch with someone who can help.

Step 5: Evaluate & Follow Up

Ask for feedback at the end of the discussion.

- Was the session too long or lacking direction?
- Would the group like to meet again?
- Is it better to watch the entire movie together or just segments?

These and other questions are important if you’d like to continue organizing discussions and want to improve your meetings each time.

Remember to follow up with anyone who had specific questions and/or needed additional help.