

YOU DECIDE.



A CASE FOR LOVE
STUDENT
CURRICULUM



GRACEBASEDFILMS



FROM DIRECTOR BRIAN IDE

As your month of reflection begins, I want to share a bit of my journey with you; and to offer a further challenge on which to consider.

Recently, I had grown more and more troubled by the increasing divisive state of our culture, and found myself contemplating, “what can I do to help?”

While that led to many considerations, at the end of the day, all I really knew how to do well is make movies. Combining this glaring need with my skills, I went about the task of making this documentary—to give voice to my own thoughts as well as many others around the country.

Bishop Michael Curry, the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, inspired the film’s focus as he offered a solution to what ails us: “Love.” Specifically, “Unselfish Love.”

As Bishop Curry wrote in his latest book,

“When love is the way, the earth will be a sanctuary. When love is the way, we will lay our swords and shields down by the riverside to study war no more. When love is the way, there’s plenty of room for all of God’s children. When love is the way, we actually treat each other, well, like we are actually family.”

Could the answer to society’s problems really be that simple and actually within the grasp of each of us?

This film presents what I observed and encountered while criss-crossing back and forth across the U.S., in search of the answer. Viewers must decide for themselves, and if their answer is “yes,” they will hopefully be inspired to live—intentionally—more selflessly and become part of the solution, making their own case for love.

G R A C E B A S E D F I L M S . O R G



VISIT THE WEBSITE



YOU DECIDE.

ATM CASE FOR LOVE

HOW TO USE THIS CURRICULUM

A Case for Love asks what unselfish love looks like in today's world, at a time when division, estrangement, and hatred seem to be as strong as ever.

The 13 stories in the movie invite us on a personal journey, reflecting on ways in which we may experience sacrificial love, and then embody it for others in our lives, communities, and the world.

This workbook is meant to be a guide, prompting each of us to consider various aspects of unselfish love shown in the movie. Then to combine this with the "Month of Unselfish Love" challenge, taking 30 days to journal your experiences of unselfish love, and how they can impact your life for the future.

This discussion guide can be used personally, or in a gathering setting. For groups it is intended to help shape conversations in faith communities and other groups who might want to explore these questions.

We encourage you to discuss in groups of approximately five people or smaller so everyone has plenty of time to share. If you have a large group, you can gather together after the small group discussion to harvest learnings, wonderings, or insights.

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A CASE FOR LOVE GRADES 7-12 CURRICULUM

1. BEING DEALT A BAD HAND

STORY | Former NFL Player Tim Shaw suffers from late-stage ALS but continues to help others.

REVIEW AND REFLECT:

1. Notice the sign in the living room: "House of Joy and Awe". How is joy and awe celebrated in Tim's family?
2. What does John Shaw (Tim's father) mean when he says "we don't celebrate the last time we do something"?
3. How did Tim demonstrate endurance despite his ALS?
4. What does he mean when he says, "my suffering is not without reason...I have advantages, even now"?
5. What is Tim doing that is even greater than healing himself?
6. How is it an example of "unselfish love"?

MAKE THE CASE (choose one):

1. Have you ever experienced a challenge where you knew it wouldn't end shortly but instead would take a long time before it's over? If so, how did you face it? What strategies did you use?
2. Is your home a "House of Joy and Awe"? What two descriptions would you use if you were to replicate the sign in their living room?

EXERCISE: WORD ART

In the Shaw's living room, there is a sign, "House of Joy and Awe."

1. What would the sign say in the living room of your home (choose two words: "House of X and Y")?
2. What does it mean to you?
3. What do you do to ensure that the living room sign is true for all who enter your home?



This guide was prepared by Reach Academics in collaboration with Grace-Based Films.

The Reach Academics Mission is to spotlight and codify the central importance of human relationships in K-12 schools. Using the book *Time to Teach: Time to Reach* as core material, we align with schools to help all members thrive.

reachacademics.com

2. LOVE AND LOSS

STORY | *Bishop Michael Curry and others define unselfish love; discussing its power to impact our world.*

REVIEW AND REFLECT:

1. What is Selfishness vs. Selflessness?
2. How does self-preservation feed into how we balance our selfishness in society?
3. What tensions arise due to an abundance of selfishness?
4. How can we learn to live together - what's your idea of a utopia?
5. What is the connection between social media and selfishness in society?
6. What does it mean to "get out of yourself"?
7. Do you agree that "we are all on the same boat"?

3. MAKING IT LOOK EASY

STORY 1 | *U.S. Naval Officer Lt. Commander Krystina Landry makes a difference in sailors lives, simply by listening.*

REVIEW AND REFLECT:

1. What is Lt. Commander Krystina Landry's definition of family?
2. Lt. Cmdr. Landry states, "I wouldn't change my son for the world...but I would change the world for my son" - what does that mean to you?
3. What does she say about maintaining high expectations?
4. How does Lt. Commander Krystina Landry demonstrate "unselfish love"?

MAKE THE CASE *(choose one):*

1. What do you do when someone treats you unkindly?
2. Do you live life "like a fairy tale"? If so, how? What is achieved by doing so?
3. How does our limited amount of time on earth impact the need to love self and others?

"And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,[a] neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love." *Romans 8:38*

EXERCISE: TELL US A STORY

The Lieutenant mentions the importance of “getting (her) sailors to talk”.

1. Why is it important to speak about what’s on your mind?
2. What prevents you from speaking sometimes?
3. What type of person do you feel comfortable talking to?
4. Who is your “Sailor Whisperer”? In other words, who has done a remarkable job earning your trust so that you feel comfortable talking with them?
5. If you don’t have anyone you can talk to, why do you think that’s the case?
6. How can you find someone to talk to?
7. Where can you find someone to talk to?
8. Have you ever been in the role of listener, knowing that you are making a difference to the person doing the talking?
9. Are you more of a talker or a listener?

STORY 2 | *Cooking enthusiasts Rosy Uy and Warren Poole create a community by cooking and sharing food.*

MAKE THE CASE:

1. What does it mean to “enjoy the good food (of life)!?”
2. What is the definition of stewardship? How does Rosy live out this definition?
3. Is there a time when you weren’t given a seat at the dinner table? What was the context? How did you feel? How did you respond?

EXERCISE: FEEDING OUR SOULS

Create a recipe for a meal that nourishes your soul, including:

1. Ingredients: List several ingredients that combine to give you a sense of completeness in your soul
2. Measurements: Give a measurement of each ingredient, so that it is clear to the reader which of the ingredients matter most to you
3. Baking time: State how long it takes for these ingredients to come together as an optimal “meal”
4. Eating instructions: Explain what type of environment works best for the enjoyment of your meal.

EXAMPLE: SOUL FOOD FOR JONATHAN PANTZAR

- Laughter (2 cups)
- Wisdom (1 cup)
- Edginess (1 tablespoon)
- Vulgarity (a pinch)
- Baseball - Red Sox (1 cup)
- Tiktok (1/3 cup)
- Military Stories (1/3 cup)

Take these ingredients and mix them together while listening to K-pop. Give about 7 minutes. Take the bowl outside to the old tree house you used to play in as a kid. Sit under the tree, gaze up at the cloud formations, and enjoy!

continued

4. EXCLUSION

STORY 1 | Affluent African American couple Sandra and Don Samuels move to difficult neighborhood to make a positive difference in the community.

REVIEW AND REFLECT:

1. How is Socio-economic status an obstacle toward inclusivity in their neighborhood?
2. What is the connection between safety and income, and how do Don and Sandra describe it?
3. Why does Don want to live there?
4. How are Don and Sandra both examples of standing tall amidst evil?

MAKE THE CASE (choose one):

1. What are elements of your community that work at achieving trust and connection?
2. What does it take for you to feel safe in your community?
3. When was a time where you took a stand against oppression, offensive behavior, or bullying?

EXERCISE: MATTER OF TRUST

Think of someone you unconditionally trust.

1. Who is this person?
2. How long did she or he take to earn your trust?
3. At what point did you realize that you genuinely trust this person?
4. How easy would it be for this trust to be broken?
5. What would it take for this to occur?
6. In your opinion, is trust fragile like glass or strong like titanium?

STORY 2 | Jason Sole who was formerly incarcerated becomes an educator and a restorative justice professional.

REVIEW AND REFLECT:

1. Jason says, "They viewed me as a black kid with a 9mm pistol, not a graduate". How is this an example of dehumanization? What other situations have you learned about where dehumanization is taking (or has taken) place in the world?
2. Why was Jason pulled over by cops again and again?
3. What did Jason do about his situation that was empowering?
4. What does Jason mean when he says "you're not taking my mind"?
5. How is Jason an example of "unselfish love"?

MAKE THE CASE (choose one):

1. When have you ever turned a "victim mentality" on its head and instead chose to be strong?
2. What part of yourself do you hold as the most sacred (worthy of protection)?
3. What do you look for in others when you assess whether to be friends?

EXERCISE: DE-HUMANIZE ME

1. What makes people “human”?
2. What are your most human characteristics?
3. How are humans different than other living creatures?
4. What part of being human to you cherish most?

5. ANSWERING THE CALL

STORY | *The Eardmann family welcomes a refugee family into their home during an intense time of need; both families are positively changed.*

REVIEW AND REFLECT:

1. How does the “chair story” demonstrate the immense power of their drive to arrive in the US?
2. “In love, there is no need for race or religion”...what does this statement mean, and why is it particularly powerful coming from this family?
3. “What might have happened if the Edmann’s had chosen to (over)think with their heads instead of follow their hearts?”

MAKE THE CASE *(choose one):*

1. When is a time when you chose to “go with your heart” - a time when you let your heart lead?
2. What is your relationship to the immigration experience? Do you know any immigrants? Are you an immigrant?
3. “What we give comes back two-fold”...what does this mean to you? When is a time you have experienced this?

EXERCISE: FAMILY HERITAGE

“Where are you from?” can be a touchy question, only to be asked when the situation is mutually comfortable between people.

1. Where does your lineage begin?
2. Who stands out from your past?
3. What is the role of religion in your family heritage?
4. Is there an immigration story in your family history?
5. Is there an emigration story?
6. How solidly is your family rooted in your location today?

continued

6. HOPE

STORY | Bishop Michael Curry recounts his childhood, remembering his first role-model of unselfish love, the caregiver, Josephine Robbins, that arrived after his mom's long-term illness and untimely death.

REVIEW AND REFLECT:

Tikkun Olam (lit. 'repairing of the world') is a concept in Judaism, which refers to various forms of action intended to repair and improve the world. In classical rabbinic literature, the phrase referred to legal enactments intended to preserve the social order.

1. How can you continue to make the world better?
2. Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. states that we must "learn to live together as brothers or perish as fools". Are we abiding by his statement?
3. How will you do the work of building a healing community, instead of merely looking out for yourself?
4. What does it require for you to heal a community?
5. What does the word "Duty" mean to you? What does it require to give your life in the service of others?

7. LOVE IS...

STORY 1 | Bishop Michael Curry and others define unselfish love; discussing its power to impact our world.

STORY 2 | Josephine Robbins didn't think twice about helping the Curry family: "I just did what needed to be done."

REVIEW AND REFLECT:

1. Does this remind you of a previous story or stories?
2. What does Michael Curry say about what he learned about love and loss?
3. "Death does not have the final word"...what does he mean by this? Would you agree?
4. What losses have you experienced in your life?

8. FINAL EXERCISE:

REVIEW AND REFLECT:

1. What most inspired you from these interviews?
2. What do you believe you can do in order to generate more love in your world today?

What is UNSELFISH **LOVE** to YOU?

A CASE FOR LOVE GRADES 9-12 ADDITIONAL *Questions*

1. BEING DEALT A BAD HAND

STORY | *Kindness transforms a sex trafficking victim's life; she pays it forward.*

REVIEW AND REFLECT:

1. What does Sheila mean when she says that her physical scars are like a “road map”?
2. Why is her statement, “I love her anyways” so powerful?
3. Who is she referring to? How is it an example of “unselfish love”?
4. How is unselfish love demonstrated through Reverend Becca Stevens?

MAKE THE CASE *(choose one):*

1. What keeps you anchored in your family?
2. What would you do if a friend of yours said they wanted to “run away”?
3. Have you ever been a part of a community that helped you be your best self?

EXERCISE: THE ROAD MAP

Create a map of the scars you carry both visible and unseen.

1. Where are they located?
2. What is their significance to you?
3. How have you remedied them?
4. Who has helped you heal from them?
5. How do you prevent future scars from occurring?

continued

“Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.” 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

2. LOVE AND LOSS

STORY 1 | *U.S. Marine Kevin Samples overcomes PTSD with the help of his spouse Deb.*

REVIEW AND REFLECT:

1. What is PTSD? How did it present in Meghan?
2. How did Matthew's autism impact how he felt about his future? How did Meghan disprove Matthew's fears?
3. What does Meghan and Matthew's wedding ceremony teach us about unselfish love?
4. How has Meghan taught her parents about the true meaning of unselfish love?
5. How does Meghan demonstrate unselfish love to Matthew?

MAKE THE CASE *(choose one)*:

1. What is the importance of family to you?
2. Share a situation you experienced in childhood that influences the choices you make today.
3. Who is your "Meghan"? In other words, who is the one friend, family member, or other person who you can 100% count on for unwavering, unconditional support?

EXERCISE: CHARACTERISTICS OF A FRIEND

Think about your 2-3 closest friends.

1. What traits to they have in common?
2. How does having them as friends impact your daily life?
3. What will you do to ensure they remain your closest friends for life?

STORY 2 | *White parents Jolynn and Jeffrey Lee adopt an older Korean child and become more societally-aware before losing child to cancer.*

REVIEW AND REFLECT:

1. What does Jeffrey mean when he says there is no greater love than brotherly love?
2. What is the connection between sacrifice and the military?
3. What was the impact of PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) on Jeffrey?
4. How does Jeffrey demonstrate unselfish love to his compatriot? To Jolynn?
5. How is it an example of "unselfish love"?

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." *John 3:16*

MAKE THE CASE *(choose one):*

1. What is the difference between hearing and listening? Which requires more action and intent?
2. Jolynn talks about “changing what’s going on in our homes before moving out to help others”? Do you agree with this statement?

EXERCISE: LOVE TO LIKE YOU

Jolynn says, “I love you, but I don’t like you”

1. What is the type of love being referred to in Jolynn’s statement?
2. Share an example of someone you felt this way about.
3. Do you feel like this is a fair way to view another person?

4. EXCLUSION

STORY | LGBTQIA+ man, Brad Ayers, is spurned his entire lifetime by various religious institutions. He finally finds acceptance and now welcomes others.

REVIEW AND REFLECT:

1. How did growing up in his family cause Brad anguish as a teenager?
2. What messages did Brad hear about being gay at that time? How did they exacerbate his anguish?
3. Who is “The One” who managed to encourage Brad to break out of his feelings of sadness?
4. What was “The Question” he asked her, and the answer she gave, that sticks with Brad until this day?
5. Why was her answer “something that (he) needed to hear”? How did Brad experience “unselfish love”?

MAKE THE CASE *(choose one):*

1. What three words define your family?
2. Have you ever felt like nobody’s listening to you - the “real” you? How did it make you feel? What did you do to feel more listened to...or did you decide not to take action?
3. Do you have someone in your life with whom you can be completely transparent?

EXERCISE: LISTEN CLOSELY

Find a time over the next week and listen to a conversation between two people. Take notes on the following:

1. What was the dynamic between these people? Friends, parent/child, co-workers, student/teacher, etc.?
2. What was the tone of their verbal communication? Was it tense, loose, relaxed, stunted, etc.?
3. What did their non-verbal communication convey to you? Avoidance? Connection? Open? Defensive?
4. How comfortable and relaxed were these two people?
5. What did you learn about these two people from listening to how they communicated (not the content, but the communication style)?

continued

5. ANSWERING THE CALL

STORY | *Mel And Sam Pioske fosters three hard-to-place siblings and find both struggle and hope.*

REVIEW AND REFLECT:

1. What are the challenges their children are facing and how do Sam and Mel work through them?
2. How does the teddy bear paw connect with expressing love in the Pioske family?
3. What is the connection between trust and love in Mel's descriptions of her children?
4. How has your perspective on tantrums changed after hearing Mel and Sam speak about them?

MAKE THE CASE *(choose one)*:

1. Share a time when you were challenged and tested by someone. How did you address it? What did you do, and what do you wish you had done instead?
2. How do you achieve trust with others?
3. How do others achieve trust with you?

EXERCISE: WHAT IS LOVE?

Love can be defined in many ways. Romantic love. Paternal love. Brotherly love. Required love. And on and on.

1. What type of love is the focus in your family?
2. How is it expressed?
3. Would you say that you come from a family where love is freely expressed?
4. Is love somehow absent?
5. Do you wish there was more love (or less love) expressed in your family?
6. What is the importance of love in your family?

For each day of the next month, commit an intentional act of unselfish love.

Record each act in this journal.

Describe the act.

Describe how it impacted the recipient.

Describe how it impacted you.

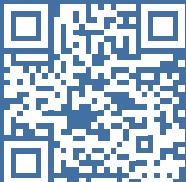
At the end of the month, if this practice speaks to you, consider continuing it.

Describe the practice to someone else and gift them a journal so that they can begin this practice as well.

BE A VOICE FOR LOVE

“Dr. King was right: we must discover love—the redemptive power of love. And when we do that, we will make of this old world, a new world.”

The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry, Presiding Bishop and Primate of the Episcopal Church, from his sermon at the Royal Wedding



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THE JOURNAL

Each day, describe your act of unselfish love in detail. Think about how it impacted the recipient, and how it impacted you.

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE DAY 1

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *Where did you see sacrifice today?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE DAY 2

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *What is an unexpected blessing that came your way?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE

DAY 3

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *Did fear get in the way today?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE DAY 4

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *Who inspired you today?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE

DAY 5

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *How can you give back today?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE DAY 6

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *How does fear keep us from blessing others?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE

DAY 7

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *How can we use love to overcome loss?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE DAY 8

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *When have you felt excluded?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE DAY 9

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *How can you reach out to someone else who is feeling excluded?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE DAY 10

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *Can you recognize your own prejudices?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE

DAY 11

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *How can you overcome your own prejudices?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE DAY 12

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *What bridge did you build today?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE

DAY 13

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *What surprised you today?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE DAY 14

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *What does sacrificial love mean to you?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE

DAY 15

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *Where do you find hope?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE DAY 16

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *What is something that unites us all?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE

DAY 17

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *How can you overcome inherited challenges?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE DAY 18

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *What habits do you need to break?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE

DAY 19

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *What is one habit you would like to create?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE DAY 20

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *Who is the “other” in your life?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE

DAY 21

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *What does faith mean to you?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE DAY 22

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *Where do you find community?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE

DAY 23

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *What is something people assume about you and are wrong?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE DAY 24

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *What do you hope for the next generation?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE

DAY 25

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *What is a small act that you've done that has led to an even bigger act?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE DAY 26

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *How can I be a better listener?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE DAY 27

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *Is there a call that you didn't answer and you wish you had?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE DAY 28

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *How do you respond to hate?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE

DAY 29

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *Who is best at making you feel less alone?*

A MONTH OF UNSELFISH LOVE DAY 30

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *What moment in life do you wish you could do again differently?*

BISHOP
MICHAEL CURRY



PETE BUTTIGIEG



SENATOR
JOHN DANFORTH



YOU DECIDE.

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IN THEATERS
JANUARY 23 ONLY



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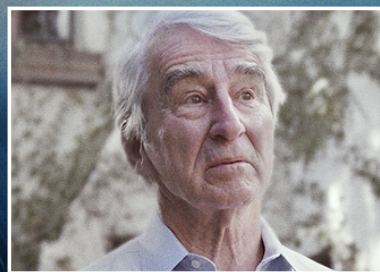
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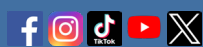


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