



Mentoring in the Faith

Objective: To help women see the many ways they can mentor or be mentored and to provide basic tools for mentoring or mentorship

Key Themes: the duty we have to mentor and be mentored by others, the concept of living Three Deep

Key Scripture Passages or Role Models: the Book of Titus, St. Paul

Ladies will be able to: share what the church teaches us about being good mentors, what role models we have for a mentor/mentoree relationship, and what to do when we find ourselves in need of a mentor or looking for an opportunity to mentor.

Activities (include group discussion and personal reflection):

Send Off:

Set up notes/Supplies:

Take-Home Resources:

Greeting/Icebreaker:

Option #1: Mrs. Left and Mrs. Right Story (a pass the gift game)
(to be used in traditional CWOCs where there is a good mix of active duty and retiree spouses)

1. Prepare an appropriate number of small gift boxes with a mirror in the bottom of each for your audience. For an audience under 30, perhaps prepare two boxes. For a larger audience, prepare a few more.
2. Hand the boxes out at random to women in the audience and instruct them not to open the boxes.



3. Ask them to listen closely to the story you will read them and to pass the box left when they hear the word left, and right when they hear the word right.
4. The Story:

This is a story about three women in your chapel community, Mrs. Right, Mrs. Center and Mrs. Left.

(BEVIN)

Mrs. Right has been married to Sergeant Major (retired) Right for 33 years, ever since they left home so he could join the Army. She has been right by his side every step of the way and each time they moved, Mrs. Right went right to the chapel to find her place in the CWOC. She has been in a CWOC or MCCW leadership role, right in the thick of things, for nearly twenty years. Now that they have left active duty life behind, Mrs. Right is thinking about making some changes. She has grandkids right down the road and she wants to have more time left to spend with them. So, Mrs. Right doesn't discern a position and a new young team is discerned right in. But in a conversation one day, Mrs. Right shares a little wistfully with you, "Now that I'm not a CWOC leader, I'm not sure what is left for me to do in the chapel."

(AMBER)

Mrs. Left is one of the new leaders. She and her husband, Lt. Left, just got to Fort AnyPlace last year and this is their first duty station after they left home. Mrs. Left jumped right in at the chapel because she missed the amazing parish she left behind. She has enjoyed her chapel community and knows God has put her in the right place, but Mrs. Right and her team left big shoes to fill and Mrs. Left's worries about not measuring up haven't left her mind. She confides in you, "How am I going to get this right?"



(KIM)

Mrs. Center and her husband, Staff Sgt. Center live at the base right in the center of the country. After years of moving from the left coast to the right coast, they are right in the middle of the busy season of life. Over the years, every time Mrs. Center left one post, she settled right in at her home making quick connections in their new chapel. She runs right from the chapel to after school lessons and no task is left undone. When she looks left and right she is blessed to have the opportunity to connect with so many young women hungry for mentorship and grateful for the inspiration of those who are a little further along in their life journey. But at the end of the day, she feels called to unite women in their faith. She struggles to stay focused in the hustle and bustle of all that is going on around her. She wonders if she is appreciated and how she'll ever find time to keep her life centered on God.

5. At the conclusion of the story, ask the women holding the boxes to open to them and look inside. They will see themselves in the mirror as the answer to the two questions posed at the end of each section of the story. Ask them to show the inside of the box to others around them.

6. Guide a brief conclusion reflection saying,

“Perhaps you have felt like Mrs. Right before? Not sure what is next for you. Or maybe you’ve been Mrs. Left, looking at big shoes to fill and wondering how you would do it. Or perhaps you are Mrs. Center, with all the busyness of life whirling around you and needing authentic connection to others. The answer to each of their worries may be what you see in that little box -- you! Each of us has gifts we can share as a mentor and each of us have faced or will face times when we are in need of mentorship. God’s challenge to us to live a three deep life provides continuous opportunities to connect, unite and inspire other women in our lives--Catholic women, military



sisters, younger women, older women and to walk alongside those sharing our journey. Today we are going to look at what the church teaches us about being good mentors, what role models we have for a mentor/mentoree relationship, and what to do when we find ourselves in the same spots as Mrs. Left, Mrs. Center and Mrs. Right - in need of a mentor or looking for an opportunity to mentor.

BEVIN

Option #2: Three Deep

(Use this option with groups that are primarily active duty spouses or active duty)

1. Explain that you are going to play a short game and ask for someone to volunteer first.
2. Ask the first volunteer to stand and share something she'd like to learn.
3. Ask others in the group if someone has the skills, knowledge or ability to teach her that thing or to help her find out where to learn. Have that person come stand next to the first.
4. Ask the second woman to share something she'd like to learn and then repeat steps 3 and 4.
5. Continue until 8-10 women in the room are standing in a circle or line
6. Guide a brief conclusion by jumping into the discussion of the concept of Three Deep

Kim

Proclamation/Discussion:

An old piece of wisdom shared by our PWOC sisters says that we should strive to live our lives "three deep" - "at any given point," it says, "I should be pouring my life into another (mentoring) but I should also be in a relationship in which I can be mentored. So "three deep" is the person I mentor, myself, and the person mentoring me." Sounds like a good thing, right?



But the word mentor doesn't actually appear in the Bible or in the catechism of the Catholic Church, so why is this good? Why should we spend time thinking about becoming or learning from a mentor?

It matters because as Catholics, as Christians, we aren't called to take this journey alone. We are called to walk alongside one another, to live and learn and practice our faith communally.

We also know from the teachings of our Catholic Church that through our baptism we share in the common priesthood of the church.

In CCC **1269** we read, "Having become a member of the Church, the person baptized belongs no longer to himself, but to him who died and rose for us. From now on, he is called to be subject to others, to serve them in the communion of the Church, and to "obey and submit" to the Church's leaders, holding them in respect and affection."

So, we see our role as both mentors to others - we are to serve others in the communion of the church - and our role as the mentored - subject to the leaders of our Church who teach us how to live the faith.

We also see great examples of mentoring in so many places in scripture (ask for examples and then share the following):

- In Jesus' public ministry as he teaches and others follow and learn from Him
- In Acts of the Apostles, when we read about the early church devoting themselves to the teachings (the mentoring, maybe?) of the apostles and living in communion with one another.
- In the example of St. Paul, who is maybe the consummate mentor -- how many churches did he set up and then send letters of wisdom and advice to in order to mentor them in the faith?

So both scripture and church teaching supports the idea that mentoring others is a good thing.



But where do we begin? Most of us are not going to be called to live a life like the early Apostles or like St. Paul, so instead we have to look to where we are called - to our chapel communities and the women in them. We can respond to the needs of the women in our communities who have the gifts to become a mentor to us or who are in need of our mentorship.

Think for a moment of a time when you found yourselves looking for help, guidance, support, or reassurance. Was there someone there who filled that role for you? And what impact did it have on you? If there wasn't someone there to fill that role, what impact did it have on you? (Ask the group to share some examples)

Now think about a time when you maybe found yourself not sure where you fit after stepping out of a role or responsibility? Or maybe in a situation where you were actually mentoring someone - what impact did that have on you? (Ask the group to share some examples)

Did anyone have a hard time coming up with an example? If so, have any of you ever welcomed a new family to your community and answered their questions? Have any of you ever sat down next to the new gal at CWOC and struck up a conversation with her, maybe followed up with a friend request on FB or a quick text? Have any of you ever encouraged someone in your women's ministry to volunteer for a small task that you knew they would be great at? Have any of you ever found yourself on the receiving end of those actions?

Mentoring happens on a long spectrum and sometimes mentoring is very informal - walking alongside someone at the moment they need help or reassurance. And sometimes it is far more formal, with regularly scheduled visits or meetings and a formal process of give and take.

As military women we are likely to find ourselves in situations along this spectrum often - with transient lifestyles - we need or are in the position of being able to offer support regularly.



These informal moments of mentoring can be hugely important to the success of our CWOCs -- we grow our groups by warm, encouraging welcomes to new women and by following up with them to see how our group can meet them where they are. We grow new leaders by asking women to step up gradually into small roles that can eventually blossom into a bigger commitment. We support current leaders by sending them a note of encouragement or providing helping hands or gentle advice when needed. And we provide opportunities for others to mentor us when we remember to ask for help and advice and support.

Each of us needs to keep that “three deep” model in mind and be looking for opportunities to mentor and be mentored all the time.

Sometimes, we may find ourselves in a situation that requires more formal mentoring - either as the mentor or the mentoree. This more formal mentoring has really important implications for our CWOCs as well. From an organizational perspective we see that formal mentoring is good because it provides:

- organizational learning
- personal growth
- role modeling
- coaching and counseling
- exposure to established traditions and new ideas

KIM

In these situations, scripture provides many examples for us of what a good mentoring relationship can and should look like. We find a great deal of advice in the very short book of Titus. (Hand out copies of these verses to different groups in the room and ask the groups to pull from the text advice they see for how to be a good mentor and advice they see for how to be a good mentoree. Ask the group to share the characteristics they found and write them on a big whiteboard or a big poster paper)



Titus 2:3-5

Similarly, older women should be reverent in their behavior, not slanderers, not addicted to drink, teaching what is good, so that they may train younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, chaste, good homemakers, under the control of their husbands, so that the word of God may not be discredited.

Titus 2:6-8

Urge the younger men, similarly, to control themselves, showing yourself as a model of good deeds in every respect, with integrity in your teaching, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be criticized, so that the opponent will be put to shame without anything bad to say about us.

Titus 3:1-2

Remind them to be under the control of magistrates and authorities, to be obedient, to be open to every good enterprise. They are to slander no one, to be peaceable, considerate, exercising all graciousness toward everyone.

Titus 3:8-9

This saying is trustworthy. I want you to insist on these points, that those who have believed in God be careful to devote themselves to good works; these are excellent and beneficial to others. Avoid foolish arguments, genealogies, rivalries, and quarrels about the law, for they are useless and futile.

These are all great characteristics of being a good mentor or mentoree. A few other things to remember:

- Frequent communication, especially at the beginning, is important to establish the relationship
- Both mentor and mentoree should practice good listening and should hold what is shared in confidence



- The mentor and mentoree must recognize the limits of the relationship - the mentor is not meant to meet all of the mentoree's needs
- A mentor who has been very involved in the leadership of her CWOC may need to practice redirection - empower the new leaders by directing those with questions, comments, or concerns to go to the new leaders
- Both mentor and mentoree should be open to new ways of doing things -- change isn't necessarily bad but sometimes it is hard

BEVIN

Let's consider/return to Mrs. Right, Mrs. Center and Mrs. Left

(AMBER, KIM, BEVIN) Read their blurb

What advice would you give them?

Ask a few women to share what advice they would give and what that mentoring relationship might look like. If you are doing a longer presentation, maybe ask the group to do some role playing, identifying possible road bumps Mrs. Left and Mrs. Right and Mrs. Center might encounter in their relationship and how to overcome them.

KIM

Application/Sending Forth:

Ladies, we talked a few times today about the idea of living Three Deep - of being mentored and mentoring to those around you at all times. I want to encourage you to take a moment to think about where God is calling you to focus today. Are you Mrs. Right - looking for a way to share your wisdom and experience with those around you? Or are you Mrs. Left - ready to step up but praying for a guide to walk alongside you as you embark on a new path? Are you Mrs. Center and living in the middle of life? I hope that each of you will see a little of each in



yourselves and see that you have gifts to share in both giving and receiving mentorship.

After you take a brief moment of thinking and praying, please stand up and move to the side of the room that you feel most called to today - our Mrs. Rights who are ready to mentor, please move to the right side of the room. And our Mrs. Left's who are looking for that mentoring presence, please move to the left side. And our Mrs. Centers who are seeking to connect with everyone gather in the middle.

(Hand out the prayers or Project on the Screen Mentor's Prayer to the left side of the room and the Mentoree's Prayer to the right side of the room and a mix to the center group . Ask the group to pray, one group at a time, for one another.)

On Screen

Mentor's Prayer

God, thank you for those who came before us, for all the many gifts you have given our mentors and for the desire you have laid on their hearts to share those gifts with others. We pray that you will make their hearts and hands open to the needs of those around them and that you will send your Spirit to guide them in teaching and mentoring others. We pray that they will be instruments of your plan in whatever time and place they find themselves. In Jesus name, Amen.

Mentoree's Prayer

God, we thank you for those who come after us, who are willing to step into our shoes and who trust in you enough to embark on new journeys. We pray that you open their eyes to those around them who can guide, support, and teach them and we pray that your Spirit opens their hearts to make them willing mentorees to the wisdom shared with them. We pray that they will be instruments of your plan in whatever time and place they find themselves. In Jesus name, Amen.