



Sipping and Sharing

Program Title: Wine Night

Program Description (one or two sentences):

This wine night is a fun way to introduce the idea of personal evangelization – the sharing of one’s own faith experience or story – using wine tasting as a framework.

Liturgical Season or Theme: any season, ice breaker, women’s night out

Facilitator Prep:

The facilitator should spend time before the program to become comfortable with the overall script and make it her own.

The facilitator will also need to purchase the wines. When shopping for wines, the facilitator should look for labels, names, or wineries that speak to some aspect of faith. Once she has purchased the wines, she should spend time learning about the wine and the winery and look up the characteristics of the wines and add that information to her the script. For general descriptions of wine varietals, try this website:

http://www.winespectator.com/webfeature/show/id/Varietal-Characteristics_1001; or this one: <http://www.winemag.com/2015/01/20/wine-for-beginners/> (which also has great general information about wine and wine tasting.)

Once the wines are chosen, the facilitator should also assign each wine to a woman, who will share her story during the program. Women should be given advance notice so they can prepare a one- to two-minute story reflecting on how the characteristics of her wine have played a role in her faith life.

The facilitator will also want to identify one or two women to help pour the wines and hand out the food pairings.

On the day of the program, plan adequate time for preparing the food pairing items.

Consider inviting your priest or chaplain to join you for the program and to offer a final blessing at the conclusion of the program.

Supplies:

- Four different varietals of wine (the number of bottles will depend on how many women will attend the program. Each woman will get one “tasting-sized pour” of each wine and a bottle of wine typically holds about 10 “tastes.”)





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- Wine glasses
- Simple foods to pair with each wine (for ideas on good pairings check out this simple chart: <http://www.enjoyhopewellvalleywines.com/wine-pairing-chart.html>)
- Napkins
- Dishes or platters for serving the food items

Set up:

Plan to hold your program in a room that has plenty of casual seating for your group. This is definitely a program better done in a casual setting as opposed to seated at a table.

Have a space where you can have all the wines opened and ready to pour and the food pairings prepared and ready to pass around. Place the wine glasses in a location where participants can grab one on her way in.

Script or Notes:

Welcome ladies!

We come together tonight to enjoy a bit of savoring and sipping wine. Wine is meant to be enjoyed and savored, not gulped and underappreciated.

The US Conference of Catholic Bishops tells us that “the New Evangelization calls each of us to deepen our faith, believe in the Gospel message, and go forth to proclaim the Gospel. The focus of the New Evangelization calls all Catholics to be evangelized and then go forth to evangelize.”

As Catholic women in this era of new evangelization we should approach our encounters with other women the same as we approach savoring wine. An evangelizer is a WITNESS, not a journalist or a JUDGE; but someone who shares her testimony based on the great truths that have been identified in her encounter with Christ himself by way of the Holy Spirit.

Tonight we are going to share a bit of wine, appreciate the blends, where they came from, and the characteristics of that wine. Having said that we want to appreciate you and where you come from and what characteristics may have enhanced your blend of virtues and good practices. To help you see how these blends work in our lives, we have asked four WINE women to share how their personal blend has assisted in her walk with the Lord and in her friendships, vocation, service, and leadership.

As women, we can approach evangelizing to other women much the same way we approach savoring and sipping wine. Wine should be savored from a glass or clear vessel so that when we taste wine, we use all of our senses and our powers of



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observation. We hold the wine up to the light to observe the color and we pair with the foods that enhance its flavor and bring out the very best in the wine.

When we evangelize, we do the same: we hold up our faith in Christ's light, we use our powers of observation to determine what will help us share the Gospel in a way that brings out the very best and "pairs" well with the woman with whom we are sharing.

This evening we will enjoy four pours: (list your wines)

We will only be pouring small tastes of wine in your glass with each pour and as we taste, I will describe the characteristics and flavors of each wine.

(Invite your pourers to pour the first taste, but ask the women not to drink their wine until directed to do so. While they pour, describe how you selected this wine – perhaps something about the label or the name of the wine or vineyard spoke to you. Share anything you learned ahead of time about the wine or winery. Try to keep this to one to two minutes.

Once everyone has their taste poured, instruct the ladies to hold the wine up to the light to observe the color. Then ask the ladies to cover the glass with their hand, swirl the glass and then smell deeply from the glass. Ask the ladies share what they observe. Highlight that, like our experiences of the Gospel and our faith, it will be person different for each person. However, by sharing with each other, one may have a different experience when they revisit the same wine, or aspect of faith!

Share with the women some of the basic characteristics or flavors of the wine. Now instruct the ladies to taste their wine, taking a small savoring sip. As they sip, have your helpers pass out the food pairing. Encourage the women to taste the wine with the food and see if the flavor of the wine is changed. Remind them that this is similar to how we experience our faith when it is paired with different things and life experiences – as young women, as older women, as active duty service members, as wives, as mothers, with friends, in our church we grew up in, in a new church after a PCS, etc.

As they taste the food and wine, ask your first WINE woman to share her brief story of how the characteristics of this wine have played a role in her life.

Repeat this process for each of your four wines.)

Tonight we have explored how the experience of wine tasting can help us to understand our role as Catholic women today.

We allowed our senses to take in all the wines had to offer just like we allow ourselves to be open to the women we encounter.

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We observed how the wines changed when paired with foods that brought out new characteristics just like we allow ourselves to be changed and molded by the encounters we have with the Spirit.

We listened to other's experiences of the wine and what they tasted or smelled and allowed that to invite us to take another sip and experience something different just as we do when evangelizing: creating opportunities for others to take a second look because of our experiences.

Jesus was and is the greatest winemaker ever. He made in abundance—to fill those six jugs, he would have made 760 bottles of wine! And He didn't make just good wine but the best wine. We women are the best that the Lord has made and has to offer. Just like in the miracle of Cana where Jesus turned to the ordinary to extraordinary, we go from ordinary to extraordinary when we allow the Lord to work in us and surrender to the Holy Spirit.

(If your priest or chaplain has been able to join you for this event, you might invite him to do this "blessing of the branches" to close your program. If not, close with this simple prayer.)

Before we end if you would please bow your heads and let us pray for our LORD to BLESS his BRANCHES of the VINE gathered here this evening:

Heavenly Father, you are a God that makes life and life in abundance, we thank you for the opportunity to have been created as WOMEN who can go out and proclaim to the world your wonderful goodness. WE ask for your blessing at this time to make our lives be the branches that will blossom in our families, chapels and communities to bear fruit wherever we go and to do so cheerfully and joyfully, YOU have said that WINE cheers the HEART let us do just that, especially in consoling your heart, Glory Be to the Father, and To the Son and To the HOLY Spirit. AMEN.

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