



***The Big Class***  
***for***  
***Congregations***

Here's How to Use  
The Big Class with Your Congregation

## ***Welcome Partners***

We're elated to partner with you in offering The Big Class for your congregation.

Our three-fold objective is: to draw people into deeper conversation about this pressing issue and its interaction with Christian witness; to help people draw connections between prophetic witness and current reality as they seek to discern the call within; and to motivate people to take practical and substantive action.

We have created a few easy steps to help you explain and communicate the power of The Big Class to your congregation.

Over the next few weeks, use this plan to ensure your church staff, volunteers, and members can learn how further study of this course can help them respond to gun violence in proactive ways.

You are welcome to print a copy of this document to refer to as you follow the steps. With just a little work on the front end, you can help ensure that your congregation is informed about, and gets the most use out of, this important resource.

Please don't hesitate to contact us at [hello@churchnext.tv](mailto:hello@churchnext.tv) or 888-963-9328. Our ChurchNext team is here to serve you.

The ChurchNext Team and Our Sponsors

# Step One: Register for The Big Class



You and your congregation can register for The Big Class before the class actually begins. Once you've registered you can take the class for free during the time period it's offered. It's a pre-recorded class, designed so that an average learner will be able to complete the course in about 45 minutes. No reading or other preparation is required. Students may pause the class at any time and return to take it later.

## Action Steps to Register for The Big Class

1. Go to [churchnext.tv](http://churchnext.tv)
2. Select 'The Big Class' from menu
3. Click on the registration link and follow the process. Note that just because registration is open does not mean the class has commenced. You will be able to take the class for free between during the designated time periods.
4. Contact us with any questions at [hello@churchnext.tv](mailto:hello@churchnext.tv) or 888-963-9328.

## Step Two | Plan How You Will Use The Big Class



There are several different ways The Big Class can be used, from individual to group learning. You may find it useful to have thought a bit about how your congregation may best take advantage of this learning event. We've listed four strategies below, but if you come up with another that works, please let us know!



### Decide Your Strategy

*Individual Study* – Encourage your congregation to take The Big Class at some point during the time period it is offered. No pressure, no commitment. Just learn on your own time.

*Individual Study at a Set Time* – Encourage your congregation to be online at the same time – taking the class alongside other members of the congregation, whose comments will show up in the Discussion areas.

*Individual Study with Follow Up* – Plan a Big Class event for your church. Encourage your congregation to take The Big Class at some point during the week, then plan a time for a group discussion, perhaps Sunday Morning. Included at the end of the class are downloadable discussion questions that you can print up and use with your group

*Group Online Study* – Project The Big Class onto a large screen, using a television or projector. Set a time for your congregation to take the course and work through the material as a group. This can be really helpful for participants without home Internet access or computer skills. Note that your computer will need the Internet to access the class. See page 6 for step-by-step instructions.

## Step Three | Inviting Others to Come



Informing those in your congregation about The Big Class is best done through your church's existing communication channels; newsletter articles, bulletin inserts, email blasts, your website, Facebook, Twitter, etc. Remember to invite shut-ins, former members, neighbors, friends, and those from outside your faith community as well. The Big Class can be a helpful evangelism tool.

To help, we have created a resource page with a poster and bulletin announcements. Go to [churchnext.tv](http://churchnext.tv) > The Big Class



Please Note that if your congregation already has a ChurchNext account and your members would like to take The Big Class, they will have to sign up via the [churchnext.tv](http://churchnext.tv) website. This course will not be available in your congregational account until after the Big Class is finished.



### Action Steps to Get the Word Out

1. Think about a workable and effective way to graciously invite those inside and outside your church community to take part in this class.
2. Choose an adult forum, special meeting, worship service, or all of the above to tell people about The Big Class. You may want to recommend people take our free class called [How to Take a ChurchNext Class](#).
3. Offer to sit down with people who may need help, or have a 'help' session at a given time to show people how to take a ChurchNext online class.

# Step Four | Taking the Class



Now for the fun part.

You've already organized your publicity and people and are now ready to take the class. You are encouraged to participate in the Discussion Forums, which appear regularly in the class as a part of each module.

Note that The Big Class will take an average user, or group of users taking it together about 45 minutes to work through, however this is dependent upon how long students spend on discussion questions.



## Moderators

The Big Class is often moderated. This means that the instructor, and their staff, may be available to field any questions students may have during the course of the class. After Lesson 3 students will be invited to 'Chat with the Presenter.' This is the area where we encourage students to make comments or pose questions for our moderators to address. This area will be regularly checked throughout the duration of the course, and the presenter or their representatives are encouraged to respond to these queries at their discretion.

# Step Five | Taking the Class – In Groups



Many parishes have found that going through the Big Class with other members of the congregation can lead to very productive conversations as well as building community within the parish. It's easy to do! Here, we suggest a format that you might find productive for leading a group through The Big Class. These are suggestions only; feel free to go through the class in any way that you think would be most productive.



## Before the Class

First let's take a look at some materials you may need:

- Projector and screen or television
- Copies of the Discussion Questions, Resources, and the Takeaway pages for each person and yourself. (Download these from the Continuing the Journey section under Lesson Four.)
- Set up the computer and projector/TV. Make sure they work ahead of time.
- Set up tables in ways that will make the screen and sound accessible to everyone.
- If you anticipate a large group, set up several tables that will accommodate 7-8 people in order to break the large group into smaller ones. Encourage people to sit at these tables instead of fragmenting into small tables or sitting alone.
- Distribute class literature at each seat: these are found in one of the last steps of the class and usually include Discussion Questions and the Takeaway.
- Set up any food or drink you plan to provide.

# Step Five | Taking the Class – In Groups



## Starting the Class

- Once your group is gathered, open the class with a prayer. Use the prayer included here or any other prayer you choose.

Prayer Attributed to Saint Francis:

*Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.*

- Briefly welcome people to the class, tell them about the instructors. This information is available on the class's Introduction page.
- Click on the 'Introduction' step and read it to the class.
- Watch the first video. When the video is over, have the class (or small groups) do the following:
  - Read the discussion questions for that video.  
Have the class discuss each question (as a large group for groups under 10; in smaller groups if the class has 10 or more people.) Tell them ahead of time how much time they will have to discuss the questions. (Time amounts will depend on how much time you have for the class. We recommend no more than 10-15 minutes per series of discussion questions.)
  - (optional for large classes, depending on time availability) Have different small groups share observations with the class as a whole.

# Step Five | Taking the Class – In Groups



## Starting the Class (Continued)

- Skip the self-assessment and online discussion questions. Go on to the next video.
- Repeat these steps for the following video presentations.
- After the last video presentation, draw the class's attention to the Takeaway page and explain that it summarizes the material from each video.
- Close with a prayer – again, use the one that we suggest here or any prayer of your choice.

*Almighty God, who created us in your image: Grant us grace fearlessly to resist evil and oppression; and, that we may reverently use our freedom, help us to employ it in the maintenance of justice in our communities and among the nations. Kindle, we pray, in every heart the true love of peace, and guide with your wisdom those who take counsel for the nations of the earth, that your dominion may increase until the earth is filled with the knowledge of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen. (Adapted from The Book of Common Prayer.)*

## Step Six | Continuing the Journey



Once you have completed The Big Class you will have found a final section called 'Continuing the Journey' which includes resources for moving the conversation forward, with actionable steps. You are encouraged to use these resources to keep the energy moving in your congregation.

Also, now that you have experienced online learning via ChurchNext, we invite you to 'try us out' with a special offer. Your congregation can purchase a discounted, one-year subscription, which gives every member of your congregation unlimited access to ChurchNext materials for one year, (that's nearly 300 courses) for \$300. If you're interested, please contact us at [hello@churchnext.tv](mailto:hello@churchnext.tv)

Thanks for learning with us.