



TASTE Reflection Questions
February 6, 2025

**Beauty and the Hidden Life: Lies the Word has
Told Women & the Truth the Church Offers**

Paige Rien

*And remember, I am with you always,
to the end of the age. ~ Matthew 28:20*



1. What did you find most interesting about this talk?
2. Paige gave us a list of lies (see on the second page) the world tells women regarding their homes.
 - Which of the lies she listed have you accepted as truth or previously accepted as truth?
 - How did this talk dispel the lie/lies lie(s) for you?
 - After learning the truth, how did that empower you to approach your home improvement in a spiritual way?
3. Paige read a book by Dr Louann Brizendine called The Male Brain which explains the difference between how the male brain functions vs the female brain. Generally speaking, because the female focus is within a smaller footprint, we care how the home looks. We are focused on the details. The male, generally speaking, has a wider footprint that is focused beyond the domestic sphere, and that is why they don't notice the messes in the home.
 - How does knowing this information encourage you to be more patient with the male members in your family?
 - Understanding that men don't necessarily notice things out of place, how does that make it easier to either accept or offer up?
4. Paige reminded us that the Catholic Church consists of three parts 1) The hierarchy which are Popes, Bishops, and Priests, 2) The Parish which is parish life and community, and 3) The domestic church which is the family at home. Because the domestic church is huge (1/3 of the church), the success of the Church in the world depends on it.
 - How does that reality help change your focus to the importance of the home being a warm and welcoming environment for love and faith to be expressed rather than the house appeal or the house being perfect?
 - What are some things you already do to provide an atmosphere of faith and love in your home?
 - What would you like to do differently? What would you like to incorporate?
5. Paige said that a thought came to her regarding the home. It is a powerful engine that allows for flourishing and a place where we live out our vocation to love, serve, grow, and help others do the same. It is the context in which God has chosen for us to become a saint.
 - What are some ways in which you love and serve in your home?
 - How do you help others to do the same in your home? By example? Teaching? Instruction?

LIES	TRUTHS
1. "They" (interior designers) know what to do and we do not. "They" have the answers for the home, but we do not.	Even if we do not know design or claim we are not good at it, we know ourselves, our story, our spouses, our children, and our home. In fact, we know our house intimately. This understanding is vital to a conversation with an outside design consultant and needs to inform the decisions we make. Before getting outside help with a house project, we need to review all that we do know.
2. A pretty house will make you happy, and give you a great family life.	Beauty and order are only of value if they are in support of what we are doing in the family – that is, in the domestic Church. What good are beautiful things that are fragile, that no one is allowed to touch, and that create obstacles for the family to avoid? We must remember that we are built for communion and it is our relationships that drive our happiness. The house is only working when there are people in it & messing it up!
3. Women call the shots when it comes to what the house looks like.	The Church tells us that the husband is the leader of the household and that his input is rightly in the conversation about the direction of the house. Without his input, the house could be set up with a feminized design scheme. When everyone under the roof is represented in the fabric of how the house looks and feels, it works better.
4. There is a right way and there is a wrong way.	There are millions of ways and there is no wrong way. The Church tells us that <u>things</u> are not the main point. We need to weaken the intensity of some of the choices we are struggling with in the house. We can do this by taking them to the Lord in daily Mass or to Adoration for a week as opposed to acting immediately on non-emergency projects.
5. Our home is all about us and our self-expression and says a lot about us.	While many people talk about "statement pieces" in a house, there is no statement! The house has nothing to say. The house has much greater work than to make statements. Rather than focusing on decorating for <u>others</u> , it is more important to make sure our house is conveying the right message to the people <u>within</u> our home – that is <u>they</u> matter most. We do this by cultivating belonging and expressing love to our family.
6. If you really want, you can have a prayer corner – one that does not "interfere" with the rest of the house.	If we follow scripture and pray unceasingly, the " <u>whole house</u> " can be a welcome place for prayer, not just a small corner. We can leave a Bible on the kitchen counter, place prayerful things in other places, and make the entire house hospitable to prayer.
7. Real estate appreciation is the ultimate goal. The greatest achievement in life is to sell high!	While our house is an asset that we are supposed to protect, the idea of resale being the ultimate goal is dangerous because it makes the focus for home improvements simply to increase the resale value rather than on improving the lives of those who live there. If we plan to live in a house for 5 years or more, don't worry about the next owner. Focus on what matters most to our family and our domestic Church.
8. Real life is ugly and needs to be put away, organized, or hidden.	When homes are shown on TV, magazines and social media, it gives us a false sense of the home because what we see is sterilized and staged to look a certain way. We should not hold this up as some kind of ideal. The hidden life is meant to be private. Images in the media lie about what the house should look like and how family life operates. Family life is much more complicated and messy than they show.
9. The mundane work within the home is drudgery.	Greatness and sainthood are built in the mundane, in the normal, in the routine. "Let us not grow tired of doing what is good, for in due time we shall reap our harvest if we do not give up" (Gal 6:9). Sanctifying grace is in the day-to-day tasks such as doing the dishes, making the meals, vacuuming, and/or doing the laundry.
10. Gather inspiration from others. Don't trust yourself, copy other women, pick a style, apply it and move on.	"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect" (Romans 12:2). We are supposed to do some testing. We have to explore and make mistakes. We can come up with our own ideas, separate from the noise of what everyone is telling us to do.