



Small Group Leader Guide

“Without cost you have received; without cost you are to give.” (Matthew 10:8b) You may copy, reprint, and/or post this material free of charge. We encourage parishes and diocese to adapt this material as needed. Please include the appropriate copyright notices with the reprinted material.

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Disclaimers

This is not group counseling. If someone is experiencing strong emotion (especially if it is a negative emotion), some may be tempted to step in to comfort in a way that could distract the rest of the group. Do your best to redirect the conversation and allow Jesus to finish what he has started in their heart.

This is more than intellectual discussion. We are not primarily seeking intellectual understanding but prayer - a heart-to-heart conversation with God. Historical background, language, and other academic insights are best left to another time.



Live Lent Together Objectives



1. Facilitate an encounter with God through Scripture.

The 6 week prayer guides do not primarily provide *education* in faith but *life transformation* through an encounter with the living God.

2. Engage hearts through an experience of beauty.

The Psalm and art for each week help engage the emotions and arouse the imagination as aids to prayer.

3. Form authentic friendships.

The questions are written to help your group share deeply. You can assist the process by making time for casual conversation and sharing life outside weekly meetings.

4. Send out witnesses to share the Good News.

As Pope Francis said in *The Joy of the Gospel*, "anyone who has truly experienced God's saving love does not need much time or lengthy training to go out and proclaim that love." We expect that many who complete the series as a participant will go on to lead their own group with encouragement and minimal coaching.

Find the prayer guides at archomaha.org/lent

Who to Invite

Encounter

Encounter is designed to foster initial conversion by helping people experience God's love for them and evoking a response to follow Jesus as his disciple. Those most likely to enjoy this study:

- Have a passive curiosity about Jesus, his life, and his teachings
- Want something more out of life than what they are experiencing and are open to change
- Are actively seeking to know God and decide whether they can entrust their life to him



Mercy

Mercy centers around Jesus' mission to reveal the merciful heart of his Father.

Those who will benefit most:

- Already have a personal relationship with Jesus
- Desire to follow Jesus more faithfully
- Are seeking a more profound experience of God's mercy in their lives and relationships

Mission

Mission centers around Jesus' Mission to seek and save the lost and his invitation for his disciples to join him. You might invite others who:

- Already have a personal relationship with Jesus
- Desire to follow Jesus more faithfully
- Are becoming aware of their call to share Jesus with others

Nourish



Nourish is part of the three-year Eucharistic Revival in the United States, and every week centers around a Eucharistic Theme. You could invite those who:

- Already have a personal relationship with Jesus
- Desire a greater intimacy with Christ in the Eucharist
- Are becoming aware of their call to share Jesus with others

Sunday Gospels

The *Sunday Gospels* follows the weekly readings for Lent.

Suggested Meeting Outline

20 Minutes | Casual Conversation

Allowing your group to build relationships will allow for more honest discussions.

10 Minutes | Psalm & Conversation Starters

Pray the Psalm together. The Conversation Starters are designed to ease your group into prayer and deeper conversation.

45 Minutes | WRAP with Scripture

Ask a volunteer to read the scripture passage aloud, then follow the process for WRAP as outlined in this guide.

10 Minutes | Going Deeper

Ask the "going deeper questions" to guide your group's discussion.

5 Minutes | Group Action & Psalm

Introduce the group action and encourage your group to take the challenge. Then reread the Psalm as a closing prayer.

90 Minutes Total | End on Time

Please be respectful of people's time and bring the conversation to a close so people can leave. Be prepared to stick around for ongoing discussion.

The WRAP Method

Pray to the Holy Spirit for open hearts and the gift of prayer. Draw your group members' attention to any particular graces they are seeking in this time.

W Write

Read the passage aloud. It is best to have a consistent reader, as some people get distracted as reading styles change.

You can guide your group members to notice where the Lord draws their attention and write it down. This could be a word, phrase, or image. Permit them to re-read the passage silently.

Invite anyone in your group who feels comfortable to share what the Lord is bringing to their attention. Acknowledge their contributions with a simple smile while encouraging silence rather than conversation.



R Reflect

Read the passage aloud again.

Invite your group members to deeper reflection on the scripture passage, saying something like, "Let the Lord draw your mind back to what initially grabbed your attention and use your imagination and intellect to reflect on what is going on in the passage."

Allow your group members time to write, then invite them to share as they feel comfortable.

The WRAP Method

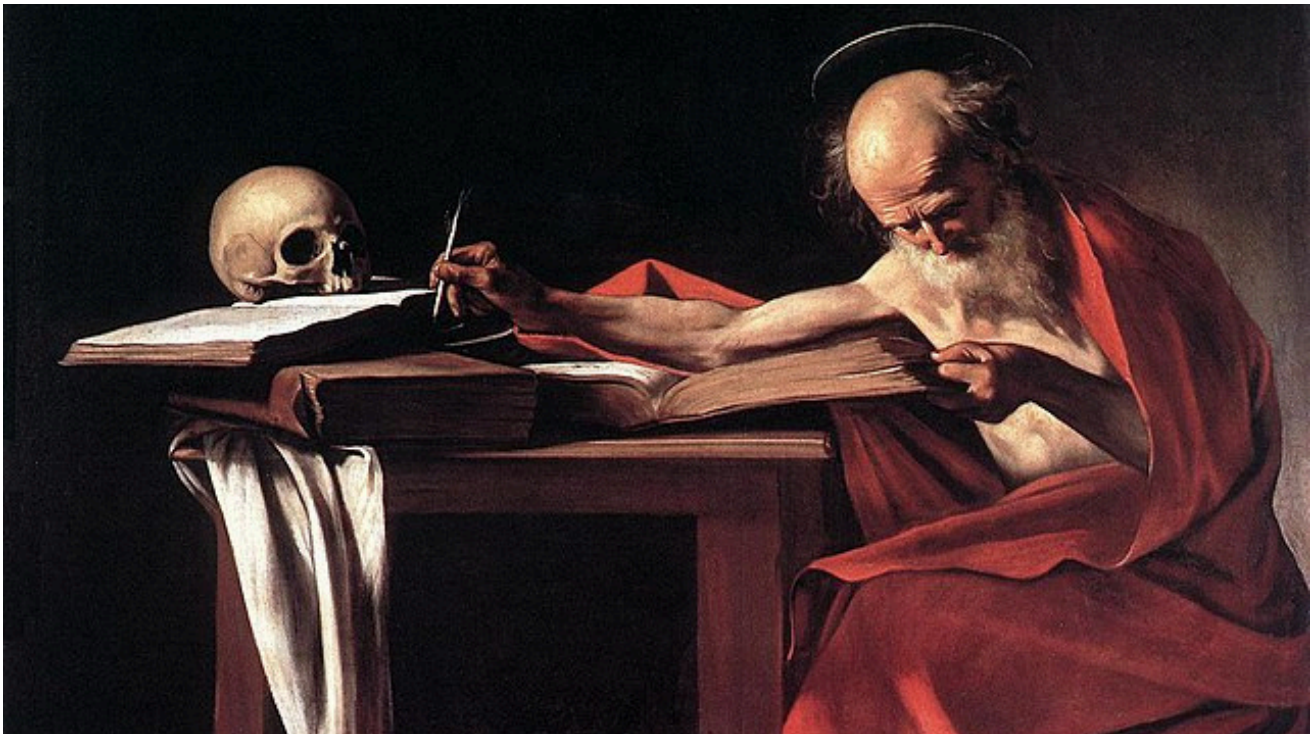
A

Read the passage aloud a final time.

Apply

Invite your group members to see the personal application of the Gospel passage, saying something like, "This time make it personal as you apply the passage to yourself. Where are you in the story?"

Allow time for writing, then invite people to share.



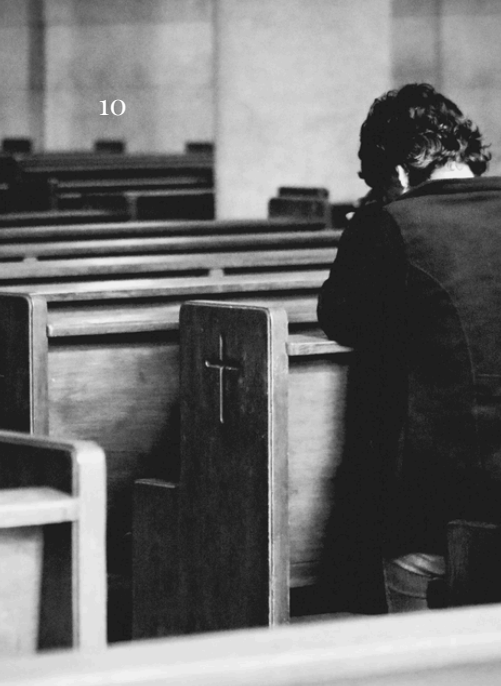
P

Allow time for each member of your group to write a personal prayer in response to God.

Pray

Close with an Our Father.

*WRAP is an acronym and method for Lectio Divina from the book WRAP Yourself In Scripture © by Karen & Lawrence Dwyer published by The Institute for Priestly Formation (2011, 2018). The WRAP Method involves four steps: Write, Reflect, Apply, and Pray with Scripture.



Keys for Success

Pray for your Group Members Daily

God is the one who changes hearts. Ask him daily to supply the grace needed for deep and lasting conversion.

Prepare by Reading the Participant Guide

Pray through the Gospel passage for the upcoming week ahead of time, and read the discussion questions.

Meet Weekly

We recommend that your group meet weekly through Lent for consistency and maximum impact.

Facilitate Discussion, Not Lessons

Setting yourself up as the "teacher" can discourage participation from group members who are unsure of their beliefs or feel they don't belong. Trust that Jesus reveals himself to them through their prayer with the scriptures.

Build Relationships

Disciples are made in the context of authentic friendships. An effective group leader and disciple-maker maximizes time spent with group members outside the group time.

Cast Vision for Multiplying Groups

As you near the end of the series, begin encouraging your group members to look beyond your group to other people in their lives who might be ready to hear the Good News of Jesus.





Archdiocese *of* Omaha