



## PARISH CONSULTATION WITH SMALL GROUPS

### SESSION 1 HANDOUT

**Focus area #1 (Sessions 1 & 2):** Forming missionary disciples who know Jesus' love and respond to his call.

**Focus area #2 (Sessions 3 & 4):** Forming parishes that are in the service of evangelization.

**Focus area #3 (Sessions 5 & 6):** Forming youth and young adults in and for a Church that is always young.

**Session 1: Forming missionary disciples who know Jesus' love and respond to his call.**

Topic 1A: The Good News of Jesus Christ – "Kerygma"

Topic 1B: Personally Encountering Jesus

## PRAYER

### 1. Luke 19:1-10, Zacchaeus the Tax Collector

He came to Jericho and intended to pass through the town. Now a man there named Zacchaeus, who was a chief tax collector and also a wealthy man, was seeking to see who Jesus was; but he could not see him because of the crowd, for he was short in stature. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree in order to see Jesus, who was about to pass that way.

When he reached the place, Jesus looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down quickly, for today I must stay at your house." And he came down quickly and received him with joy. When they all saw this, they began to grumble, saying, "He has gone to stay at the house of a sinner."

But Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, "Behold, half of my possessions, Lord, I shall give to the poor, and if I have extorted anything from anyone I shall repay it four times over." And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house because this man too is a descendant of Abraham. For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save what was lost."

### 2. Litany of Trust, abridged. Responses listed in **bold**.

- That you are continually holding me, sustaining me, loving me, **Jesus, I trust in you.**
- That your love goes deeper than my sins and failings, and transforms me, **Jesus, I trust in you.**
- That not knowing what tomorrow brings is an invitation to lean on you, **Jesus, I trust in you.**
- That you are with me in my suffering, **Jesus, I trust in you.**
- That my suffering, united to your own, will bear fruit in this life and the next, **Jesus, I trust in you.**
- That you will not leave me orphan, and you are present in your Church, **Jesus, I trust in you.**
- That your plan is better than anything else, **Jesus, I trust in you.**
- That you always hear me, and in your goodness always respond to me, **Jesus, I trust in you.**
- That you give me the grace to accept forgiveness and to forgive others, **Jesus, I trust in you.**
- That you give me all the strength I need for what is asked, **Jesus, I trust in you.**
- That my life is a gift, **Jesus, I trust in you.**
- That you will teach me to trust you, **Jesus, I trust in you.**
- That you are my Lord and my God, **Jesus, I trust in you.**
- That I am your beloved one, **Jesus, I trust in you.**

*Written by the Sisters of Life (www.sistersoflife.org).*

## TOPIC 1A TEACHING OUTLINE

### 1. Heart of the Gospel – "Kerygma"

Before ascending into heaven, Jesus gave his followers a mission.

"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations." (Mt. 28:19)

"Kerygma" means proclamation. It is a simple yet profound story of how we have been saved by God for happiness in this life and eternal life with him.

### 2. God, in his love, created us good.

"In the beginning ... God created the heavens and the earth."

(Gen. 1:1) "God created mankind in his image; in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them." (Gen. 1:27)

Man and woman, uniting with each other physically in a loving union of souls, would fill the earth with the children of their union, who are also eternal beings made in God's image, like them.

### 3. We fell into sin.

Tempted by the Devil to distrust and disobey God, Adam and Eve believed the Devil's lie and ate of the forbidden fruit. Sin destroyed their communion with God in multiple ways.

- They lost the gift of eternal life, and experienced separation from God.
- Sin corrupted their relationship with one another.
- Sin introduced a rupture in our own humanity, leaving us internally disordered.

### 4. Jesus rescued us by giving his life to save us.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life." (John 3:16) God lovingly prepared for the fulfillment of his plan in the coming of his Son. He called Abraham, sent Moses, established the kingdom of David, and sent the prophets.

"When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to ransom those under the law, so that we might receive adoption." (Gal. 4:4-5) Upon his baptism, Jesus began his mission to announce the kingdom of God. Jesus pours out his life in the Eucharist and on the cross to free us from the punishment of sin, which is death, and share his eternal life with us.

### 5. God sends us on mission.

After the Holy Spirit came upon them at Pentecost, Peter and the apostles proclaimed the Kerygma, the same message that has echoed down the centuries: "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is made to you and to your children and to all those far off, whomever the Lord our God will call." (Acts 2:38-39)

## TABLE DISCUSSION GUIDELINES

### 1. GENERAL GUIDELINES (read out loud by the table facilitator)

- My job as facilitator is simply to make sure everyone at the table has an opportunity to contribute, the time is shared amongst all table members, and the discussion stays on track. Table facilitators, as members of the small group, will be involved in the discussion and provide individual feedback. Table facilitators are not theologians or experts.
- For fruitful table discussions, please take into consideration that the Synod process is intended to recommend pastoral priorities for our Archdiocese that are both realistic (e.g., within the competence of the Archdiocese to implement) and consistent with the teachings of the Church.
- Please turn to the Discussion Questions & Feedback Forms for our two topics today. For this first session, there will only be feedback on topic 1B.
  - If you feel comfortable doing so, please fill out the demographic information.
  - The form lists the table discussion questions at the top. We are each invited to choose one or two of the questions on which to share.
  - On the form for topic 1B, you will see some ideas for consideration. The ideas for consideration are provided to help us get started in our discussion and provide a framework to give feedback.
  - On the feedback form, we are asked which of the ideas for consideration have worked for us individually, and which ideas the parish or Archdiocese should prioritize in the future. We can choose up to three ideas under each of these two sections. In the third section, we can each provide an idea of our own, up to 20 words.

### 2. RESPECTFUL DISCUSSION GUIDELINES (read out loud by the table scribe)

- Everyone's input is valued. We are here to listen to each other and to the promptings of the Holy Spirit with a disposition of the heart that we all have something to learn. As it says in 1 Thessalonians 5:11: "Therefore, encourage one another and build one another up, as indeed you do." We are not here to debate. Expect differing viewpoints and presume the good will of the other.
- People may share personal experiences. Please be sensitive to this vulnerability and do not share others' private information outside this group.
- Feedback forms do not have names. In addition, scribes have been asked to keep your responses confidential.

### 3. PROCESS FOR SHARING (read out loud by a table volunteer)

- To allow everyone an opportunity to share, we will proceed as follows:
  - The table facilitator will share first. After the facilitator is done, he or she invites another to share. You can invite anyone at the table, whether they are next to you or across from you. After that person has shared, they invite another. We will do this until everyone at the table has been asked to share.
  - All are encouraged to share but no one should feel pressured to speak. If you don't want to share, simply say "pass," and ask another to share.
  - We ask you to listen and not immediately respond to someone's sharing. After everyone has had an opportunity to share, the facilitator will initiate an open discussion of the question (time permitting).
- The facilitator will now read the discussion questions out loud and allow some quiet time to consider the questions and ideas for consideration. Then the facilitator will share first.

## TOPIC 1B TEACHING OUTLINE

### 1. Meaning of discipleship.

- The word "disciple" means someone who is a learner, a student, or an apprentice. The disciple seeks to live in daily relationship with the teacher because he wants to become like the teacher. To be a disciple of Jesus meant to believe he was the Messiah. When Jesus asks: "Who do you say I am?," disciples respond like St. Peter, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." (Mt. 16:15-16)

### 2. A life-changing encounter with Jesus.

- Catholicism is first and foremost a relationship. "Being a Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction." (The Joy of the Gospel, 7) Jesus is God and he is alive! He has risen from the dead! Through the Holy Spirit, each of us can encounter him today as a real living person.

### 3. Repentance and conversion.

- When people encounter Jesus, they encounter simultaneously two truths about themselves. First, they are sinners. Second, they are infinitely loved. It is this experience of being loved sinners that allows them to repent, to turn away from their sins and turn towards Jesus. Scripture gives many beautiful examples of this, including the powerful story of the woman at the well. As Pope Francis said, "This itinerary of faith is an itinerary of conversion." (Pope Francis, Angelus Address, Dec. 6, 2020)

### 4. The decision to follow Jesus in every area of one's life.

- The heart of discipleship is expressed in the Bible with the phrase "Jesus is Lord." Disciples decide to submit their whole lives to his lordship. This means I spend time with him in daily prayer; worship him in Mass and Adoration, and encounter his unconditional love in Reconciliation; take time on retreat and with others in Christian community and fellowship; serve him with my time, talents, and treasure; and seek to make him present in all the situations of my life. It means I try to live the two great commandments, "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind" and "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Mt. 22:37,39)