

ENCOUNTERING JESUS

Living as Missionary Disciples

Diocese of Winona-Rochester



Parish/Cluster Sessions for Study & Reflection

(April – Early June)

OVERVIEW

Our diocesan Ministry Days 2020 gathering will be held on **Monday - Tuesday, June 15-16, at Saint Mary's University in Winona**. The title for the gathering is, "*New Wine into New Wineskins: Moving from 'What?' to 'How?' in Missionary Discipleship.*" Our lead presenter and facilitator will be Mr. Rich Curran, Founder and Executive Director of Parish Success Group.

Ministry Days will provide our clergy and lay leaders with a deeper understanding of, and the tools for, how to move our diocese and parishes from a "maintenance" to a "mission" focus in our ecclesial culture and ministry.

To prepare for Ministry Days, we are encouraging our parishes to consider two actions:

- To form a team of leaders – i.e., pastor, parish/school staff members, and key lay leaders – to participate in Ministry Days.
(This can be the same team of leaders participating in this deanery workshop.)
- To gather these leaders for study and reflection sessions, prior to Ministry Days, to provide a common understanding of the Church's call for a "new evangelization" and for forming "missionary disciples".

STUDY & REFLECTION SESSIONS

We are inviting our parishes/parish clusters to form a team of leaders to plan and act on the Church's call to a new evangelization and missionary discipleship. To prepare us for this effort, the first step is to have a shared understanding of what this call is, and what it means for our parishes and for our diocese.

The proposed sessions that follow are designed to provide leaders with this common understanding of what the Church is calling us to, in this present moment, in the life and ministry of our parishes. The sessions ask participants, first, to study selected sections of recent Church statements, and, then, to come together for an open and honest conversation of how the content of these texts relate to their parish/cluster and local community. Some initial planning and "next steps" are also included as part of these conversations. The sessions would last for about an hour in length.

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The texts for study below are all available online (at the Vatican and USCCB web sites), or for purchase in hard copy at the USCCB Bookstore [<http://store.usccb.org/>].

SESSION I

[Before the session]

Study...

- “The Joy of the Gospel” (*Evangelii Gaudium*), by Pope Francis – Chapter One: “The Church’s Missionary Transformation” (#19 - #49)
- “Disciples Called to Witness: The New Evangelization,” by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops – Parts III (pp. 2-9)
- “Living as Missionary Disciples: A Resource for Evangelization,” by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (pp. 5-8)

[At the session]

Reflect and Pray...

Matthew 5:1-16

- *What in this passage caught your attention? ...inspired you? ...challenged you?*
 - *What conversion of life is the Lord asking of you, and of us, through this passage?*
- “A Disciple’s Prayer”

Review Readings and Discuss...

1) *What are your initial reactions, insights, challenges, questions, etc.?*

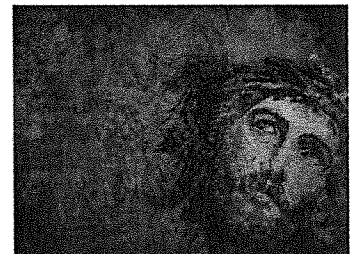
2) *Choose any of the following for discussion:*

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- When have you shared the gospel, even in a small way, and have felt the joy of the Lord in the process? (#19-#23)
 - What does taking on the “smell of the sheep” mean in the efforts of our parish to become an evangelizing community? (#24)
 - How can our parish become better equipped for the mission of evangelization? (#25-#33)
 - How well do our parish’s catechetical and sacramental ministries focus on “the essentials” – i.e., the saving love of God made manifest for us through the death and resurrection of his Son? (#34-#39)
 - How can we as a parish reach out in love and service to “the poor and the sick” and “those ... despised and overlooked”? (#46-#49)

3) *What are some concrete next steps for our parish, based on our reflection and discussion?*

Close in Prayer...

Matthew 5:1-16 / “A Prayer for Evangelization”



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SESSION II

[Before the session]

Study...

- “Disciples Called to Witness: The New Evangelization,” by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops – Part IV (pp. 10-14)
- “Living as Missionary Disciples: A Resource for Evangelization,” by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (pp. 9-19)

[At the session]

Reflect and Pray...

Luke 10:1-12, 16-20

- *What in this passage caught your attention? ...inspired you? ...challenged you?*
 - *What conversion of life is the Lord asking of you, and of us, through this passage?*
- “A Disciple’s Prayer”

Review Readings and Discuss...

1) What are your initial reactions, insights, challenges, questions, etc.?

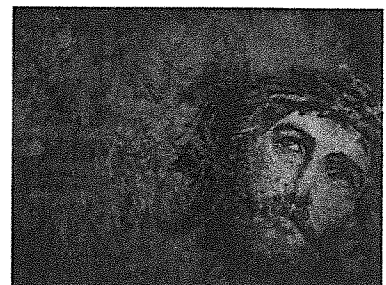
2) Choose any of the following for discussion:

- How does our parish community provide people with opportunities for a personal encounter with Jesus Christ?
- How do our faith formation programs serve to foster a personal relationship with Christ, and invite our parishioners into discipleship in Christ?
- What does our parish do to help our people deepen their prayer life?
- How does our parish reach out to, and support, people in their everyday lives – e.g., the newly married, new parents, those experiencing separation and divorce, those who are grieving, those facing financial stress, etc.?
- How do we engage people during key moments of the faith journey – baptisms and confirmations, weddings, funerals, etc.? And, how do we evangelize at key seasons and celebrations of the church year – i.e., Advent and Christmas (Christmas Eve/Day), and Lent and Easter (Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday)?

3) What are some concrete next steps for our parish, based on our reflection and discussion?

Close in Prayer...

Luke 10:1-12, 16-20 / “A Prayer for Evangelization”



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SESSION III

[Before the session]

Study...

- “Disciples Called to Witness: The New Evangelization,” by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops – Part V (pp. 15-20)
- “Living as Missionary Disciples: A Resource for Evangelization,” by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (pp. 20-29)

[At the session]

Reflect and Pray...

Matthew 28:16-20

- *What in this passage caught your attention? ...inspired you? ...challenged you?*
- *What conversion of life is the Lord asking of you, and of us, through this passage?*

“A Disciple’s Prayer”

Review Readings and Discuss...

1) What are your initial reactions, insights, challenges, questions, etc.?

2) Choose any of the following for discussion:

- How can we bring the power and inspiration of the Holy Spirit into our planning for parish renewal? (“DCW,” pp. 15-16) How can we make sure that prayer is always at the heart of, and guiding, our planning efforts? (“LMD,” pp. 21-22)
- Who are the key people in our parish who can assist our parish (and parish staff) in leading these efforts? How can we form and equip a leadership “team”? (“DCW,” pp. 16-17 / “LMD,” pp. 24-25)
- How do we root our planning in an “atmosphere of hospitality and trust,” and of “strong and trusting relationships”? (“DCW,” p. 17 / “LMD,” pp. 26-28)
- What human and financial resources will we need to support our planning efforts? How does our planning support a deeper culture of stewardship in our parish? (“DCW,” p. 19 / “LMD,” p. 28)

3) What are some concrete next steps for our parish, based on our reflection and discussion?

Close in Prayer...

Luke 10:1-12, 16-20 / “A Prayer for Evangelization”

[After the session (before Ministry Days)]

Study and Review...

- “Guiding Principles for Missionary Disciples” (with “Reflection & Discussion Questions”) ~ Diocese of Winona-Rochester
- “A Basic Parish Mission Planning Process” ~ Diocese of Winona-Rochester
- “Resources: Mission and Discipleship”

