



Session 2

Lord God, I want to
be aware of your
love for me.

FAITH SHARING GROUPS

In our small groups, we will be doing a form of faith sharing. This is basically a *sharing of your heart* (and not so much of your head), of your *experiences in prayer and of the Scriptures*. It is not so much about ideas but more about your feelings or emotional reactions within or after the prayer. We will be focusing on a person's personal experience of the scripture; *thus, there are no right or wrong contributions*.

In faith sharing groups, we recognize God's presence by listening to one another with attention, reverence, and devotion.

- We pay attention to the person speaking by really listening to what he or she is saying.
We reverence the person who is before us by accepting and cherishing his or her differences.
- When we do these two things, we discover devotion, that is, recognizing God's presence in the person before us.

In order to foster this awareness of God's presence in our faith sharing groups, we keep in mind the following:

- Think about what you are going to share by reviewing your prayer experience for the week before coming to the meeting.
This will enable you to listen more attentively to the others in your group when they are sharing.
Do not cross-talk. In other words, listen reverently to each person's reflection without making any comments or judgments.
- Include several moments of silence between each person's reflections to help remember the presence of God in your midst.
- Always remember that strict confidentiality must be maintained throughout the retreat.

A few questions which might aid in your sharing:

1. In general, how was your prayer experience this past week? Was the prayer easy, difficult, or a combination of these?
2. How did you pray or what did you find helpful as you settled down to pray?
3. Specifically, what struck you in prayer this week especially regarding any of the scripture passages? Describe any positive or negative feelings you had.
4. Did the prayer leave you enlightened or challenged in any particular way?
5. Were there any events in your life this week that helped you grow in a heartfelt knowledge of God?

SOME NOTES ON PRAYER

- The "Art" of prayer is what you do.
 - Fidelity, time of day, posture, place, consistency, note taking, etc.
- The "Experience of prayer is what God gives you."
 - Sense of His presence, distracted, dryness, peace, restlessness, etc.
 - Try to accept whatever is given. The Giver knows what we need.
 - If you are frustrated remain faithful to the "Art" then accept what God gives you in prayer.
- Be aware that your prayer experience is affected when you are hungry, angry, lonely, tired, ill, or otherwise out-of-sorts.
- Suggestions on the "Art"
 - Find a place of reliable quiet and solitude
 - Settle in, relax, be attentive to your breathing, slow down; think of yourself as welcoming God into your space.
 - Consciously place yourself in the presence of the Lord. Be attentive to His Holy Spirit with you; He is there.
 - Pray for the grace specified; what you pray for is what you get.
 - Read and savor the scripture passage. Read aloud, repeat, read slowly, savor a phrase, etc. Immerse yourself in the words without analyzing; pay attention to your - emotions as you read.
 - Let go of expectations; let what happens happen.
 - Don't fight distractions; passively let them pass by like clouds in the sky.
 - Fulfill your commitment; don't cut your prayer time short because, "it's not going well," accept the experience God gives you.
 - Don't be a slave to the format. If you sense God's presence stay in that place rather than move on to whatever the next "step" is.
 - Write down a few notes on your prayer experience.
 - Finish the way you started; think of yourself as saying a gracious, thankful farewell to God.

PRAYING WITH IGNATIUS-SAINT IGNATIUS HIGH SCHOOL
HOME PRAYER SELECTIONS

Week 2

PREPARE: Choose Place, Posture, Prayer Time, Prayer Passage, and become mindful of the Presence of God.

GRACE SOUGHT: Lord God, I want to be aware of your love for me.

Pray:

Psalm 23	The Good Shepherd
Luke 12:22-32	Lilies of the Field
Isaiah 43:1-7, 18-19	Do not be afraid
Matthew 11:28-30	Come to me, all that are weary
What is Life All About?	(Handout)
Principle and Foundation	(Handout)

Review of Prayer:

1. What did you like? What resonated with you?
2. What didn't you like? Where did you feel resistance?

3. Did you experience any spiritual insight? Delight?
 1. What are you learning about God?
 2. What was revealed of yourself?
 3. What is being revealed of your relationship with God?

WHAT IS LIFE ALL ABOUT?

For me, what is life all about?

- What are my goals?
- What are my dreams?
- What are my desires?

In the world in which I live, what actually motivates me the most?

- What do I hope to achieve in my life?
- What are the most important operative values in my life?

If I look to my feelings for clues –

- What upsets me? Angers me?
- When do I feel happy, encouraged, or fulfilled?
- What are the causes?

When do I get down or depressed or discouraged? The causes?

What energizes me? What do I look forward to? Or what do I dread? Why?

When am I at peace or satisfied with who I am? Or what I have

done? Dissatisfied?

When do I feel successful? Or when a failure?

Are my operative values the same as my idealistic ones? And if they differ, how do they differ?

In short, when I look at how I lead my life, what is life all about....really?

PRINCIPLE AND FOUNDATION

We are created to praise, reverence and serve God, our Lord,
And by this means to save our soul.

The other things on the face of the earth are created for us
to help us in attaining the end for which we are created.

Hence, we are able to make use of them
in so far as they help us in the attainment of our end,
And we must rid ourselves of them
in so far as they prove a hindrance to us.

Therefore, we must make ourselves indifferent regarding our choices to all
created things, as far as we are allowed free choice,
and are not under any prohibition

Consequently, as far as we are concerned,
We should not prefer

Health to sickness,
Riches to poverty,
Honor to dishonor,
A long life to a short life.

The same holds for all other things.

Our one desire and choice should be what is more conducive to the end for which we are created.