

CHRISTIAN LIFE REFLECTION

SPEAKER PREPARATION MATERIAL

Speaker: Adult Team Member, possibly a married couple

Length: 20-30 minutes

Time: Third reflection of Rise Day, after lunch

Scripture: Gal 5:22-23

Previous Reflection: Church - People of God (ending with Covenant Rite)

Following Reflection: Signs

Setting:

Participants are now witnessing the paschal mystery unfolding in the lives of persons making a sincere effort to respond to Jesus' unconditional love and his gift of the family of God, the Church. They may seek to love as he loves and to pray as he prays. They may expect that holiness may lead to the happiness promised to those who are watching the kingdom coming into view in their midst. The kingdom comes wherever they themselves bring their love and prayer to all those in their lives.

Progression:

Your sharing brings hope to participants who are growing in understanding the pattern of the paschal mystery that is characteristic of our Christian vocation. They may behold a variety of ways people follow Christ, all presenting challenges and sacrifices, but promising opportunities for growth, loving relationships, and unlimited opportunities for peace, happiness, and holiness.

Purpose:

The second day of TEC presents the lives of everyday Christians who have entered into the paschal mystery as part of the community of love in the family of God. The Christian life is presented as a growing, transforming process taking place in our minds, hearts, and actions.

By considering Christ's attitudes and actions in everyday encounters with people in our lives, you, the speaker(s), will become a witness to the universal call to holiness. Your personal sharing will develop a vision of the kingdom of God being established in our very midst by Christians living their everyday lives well. The acts of love, compassion, mercy, and generosity offered by Christians are changing the landscape of the world. News of Christ-like actions will remind participants that all are called to holiness. Security and true happiness awaits them when they act on behalf of the gospel and step into the paschal mystery. Prayer serves as the inspiration and sustenance for Christ-like attitudes and actions. This life of prayer and action will bring the kingdom into our midst and offer us the foretaste of what is promised to those who respond to the universal call to holiness and live their lives in Christ.

Faith Awareness:

This reflection reinforces the idea that the Christian life is not something to which individuals are expected to conform to an external set of rules outside of who they are. Rather, it is responding to Christ living in them, breaking into their everyday situations and relationships with love, forgiveness, and guidance. Their upbringing and formation, even the recent experiences of this weekend, may seem more relevant. The life of Jesus, the paschal mystery, the gospel stories and teachings, and the spiritual and corporal works of mercy all come together to affirm them as kingdom builders already at work in response to the universal call to holiness.

Response:

Participants may begin to personalize both the call and the commitment that is being explored in this reflection.

Scripture for further reflection:

Mt 5:43-48

Col 3:12-17

1 Cor 13:4-7

2 Cor 4:13-16

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OUTLINE

After reading and praying with the scripture for this reflection, please study the outline carefully. Time constraints may require you to be selective. As you develop your stories and examples, consider the points in bold as most essential to the purpose of your sharing and the continuity of the weekend.

Scripture: Make sure to read Galatians 5:22-23 from the enthroned Bible at the point in your reflection where you feel it is most apropos:

In contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. (Gal 5:22-23)

Introduction: Please share a story about a mentor who exemplifies the Christian life for you.

I. Our Christian life is a call from God to each individual, a universal call to holiness.

- A. Share how you experienced a call to your Christian life.
 - 1. Describe your faith growing up; did it imitate that of parents/adults?
 - 2. Share a time in adolescence when you were questioning your faith.
 - 3. Over time, I have developed a more mature attitude along the path of faith, perhaps still questioning, but owning, believing, and adopting a healthy practice of faith.
- B. The Christian life calls us to develop our relationship with Christ and to experience his love and holiness. Share an example of experiencing God's love.
- C. Our call is to imitate Christ's holiness.
 - 1. We are called to live according through the eyes of Christ.
 - 2. We are called to act like Christ: welcoming, respecting, loving, and forgiving.
- D. What does Christian life look like to you now? How do you pray? Make peace? Show love? Serve others?
- E. The Holy Spirit helps us to live out our chosen vocations.
 - 1. The Holy Spirit, communicating heavenly joy, inspires Christians to be loving and merciful.
 - 2. Holiness involves being open to the Holy Spirit, who will lead us to Christ-like attitudes and actions, changing us and our world.
 - 3. The Holy Spirit helps us to become more and more the person we are called to be by living out the paschal mystery in our lives.

II. The Christian life is oriented toward holiness and sustained by prayer.

- A. Jesus taught his followers how to pray to “our father.”
 - 1. The Lord’s Prayer summarizes the entire gospel and asks for the kingdom to come now and for God’s will to be done on earth as it is in heaven.
 - 2. The Lord’s Prayer is at the center of the liturgy and all Christian prayer because it models Jesus’ way of praying: raising our minds and hearts to God in Adoration, Contrition, Intercession, Thanks, and Praise.
- B. Our personal prayer may take many forms, all deepening our love of God.
 - 1. Meditation on scripture, art, stories, or songs engage our minds and hearts.
 - 2. Contemplation is spending time with our Lord, encountering him, unmasking ourselves for him, “gazing at him who is gazing at me.”
 - 3. Prayer is a conversation with God.
 - 4. Silence is important in any conversation.
 - 5. Prayer can be inward and expressed in action as well.
- C. Relate a prayer experience which brought you special closeness to Jesus.
- D. Describe how your relationship with Christ is sustained by daily prayer.
 - 1. What blessings do you experience through daily prayer?
 - 2. What are the challenges of daily prayer?
 - 3. How do you balance prayer in daily life?

conclusion:

Lead this reflection by summarizing how the attitudes and actions of mature Christians hold beauty, promise, and hope amid difficulties when sustained in prayer. Tell participants that we will now be moving to the chapel; ask them to be thinking about these three questions:

- 1. How is my Christian life becoming more holy?
- 2. What do I need from the Lord?
- 3. How am I being called to holiness at this moment?

Immediately following this reflection, lead participants to the chapel, kneel before the Blessed Sacrament (invite all to do the same) and offer a spontaneous prayer from the heart.