



LENT IS A TIME OF **encounter**

Photo by Daniel Helfer for CRS

INTRODUCTION

During Lent, we walk with Jesus on his road to death and resurrection. Lent is a time of encounter. And, we can use this season of Lent as a special time to respond to the call to be a Church that goes out to encounter ourselves, our neighbor and our God.

This resource is offered for faith formation with spirituality rooted in:

- The liberation of each young person
- The preferential option for the poor
- Our relationship to the Trinity, centered on Jesus Christ
- Our call to communal and personal conversion through solidarity
- The focus and process of V Encuentro

STRUCTURE OF RESOURCE

Using the structure of the pastoral circle, we recognize that each youth, from their reality, is a protagonist in their community—exploring diverse ways to express themselves, encounter God and examine the reality of injustice in the world.

To this end, this resource has five sessions designed to reflect on Scripture, create unique opportunities for prayer and build global solidarity—personally and communally.

SESSION 1

TAKING THE FIRST STEP/PRIMEREANDO

An encounter with Jesus, who calls us to be missionary disciples for personal and communal conversion.

SESSION 2

GETTING INVOLVED/INVOLUCRÁNDOSE

An encounter with our realities as a community of missionary disciples.

SESSION 3

ACCOMPANING/ACOMPAÑANDO

An encounter with the presence of injustice that moves us to denounce it, and embrace mercy and global solidarity through accompaniment.

SESSION 4

BEARING FRUIT/FRUCTIFICANDO

An encounter with our human experience through the presence of Jesus in our life.

SESSION 5

CELEBRATING/FESTEJANDO

An encounter with the celebration that is the promise of Jesus' resurrection, and what that means for living a prophetic life of justice and global solidarity.

SESSION 5: CELEBRATING

OBJECTIVE: Participants will celebrate their commitment to living as their true selves, exploring their role as part of the Body of Christ on Earth.



OPENING PRAYER

Jesus, you have walked on Earth, suffered, died and risen.

We have reflected on our calling, on your presence and on the need of your vision and mission in the world. Make us an instrument of your mercy and action for liberation and justice.

Amen



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Give time for participants to reflect and journal about their responses. Play music that encourages a reflective environment.

- How do you celebrate, through your actions, the spirit of the resurrection that you receive from Jesus?
- How do you celebrate your faith by constructing the vision Jesus calls us to create as a community of missionary disciples?
- What does the Resurrection mean to you?



ACTIVITY: SOLIDARITY WILL TRANSFORM THE WORLD (15 minutes)

Materials: large poster, markers

Solidarity is transformative and will transform the world. In the moments that we are open to Jesus' call in our lives, we receive the Spirit, and our hearts are on fire to create a more just world for all. It is not only a feeling that makes us feel a closeness to God, but one that moves us to be a part of the struggle for justice in a renewed way, working for the common good.

Write the sentence "Solidarity will transform the world" on a large poster, and place it on the ground. Invite each participant to write his or her definition of the phrase; it can be a complete sentence or a few words. Then, give time for each participant to examine and review what others in the group wrote, as a walking, silent meditation.



ACTIVITY: LISTENING TO SACRED SCRIPTURE
Matthew 28:1-10 (20 minutes)

Use the *Lectio divina* resource in the appendix or at crsricebowl.org/youth to reflect on the Scripture.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What does this Gospel story mean to you?
- What phrase called out to you in the Scripture?
- Do you have the faith to receive the Resurrection of Jesus like the women at the tomb?
- How can you commit yourself to liberation and justice as a disciple of Jesus?

SESSION 5: CELEBRATING



ACTIVITY: A LETTER TO YOURSELF (15 minutes)

Materials: CRS Rice Bowls and a CRS Lenten Calendar, blank paper, pens, envelopes

After the journey of prayer, fasting and almsgiving that is Lent, we pause to review what we have learned about ourselves, our neighbors and our relationship with God.

Allow time for participants to reflect on their CRS Rice Bowl and Lenten Calendar, including the stories of the brothers and sisters they met this Lenten season. Explain that these are symbols of their faith journey, and ask that they write a letter to themselves about their reflections from this Lenten season, and about what they want to do to live the spirit of the resurrection, both personally and in their community.



Take time to have participants evaluate and write their reflections about the activity. After some personal reflection, ask participants to share in groups of three or in pairs.



REFLECTION QUESTION

- What is the message that you received from the activity today?



FINAL PRAYER

Allow a volunteer to offer a prayer in his or her own words. Then, ask another participant to read these words of Pope Francis:

"Dear brothers and sisters, Christ is risen! And we have the possibility of opening our hearts and receiving his gift of hope. Let us open our hearts to hope and go forth. May the memory of his works and his words be the bright star which directs our steps in the ways of faith towards that Easter that will have no end."

Amen

APPENDIX

LECTIO DIVINA

Lectio divina is a way to pray with sacred Scripture through meditation with repetition and imagination.

Recommendation for the activity:

Ask the participants to sit comfortably before you begin the exercise. Read the Scripture slowly and with clarity, or invite a volunteer to read to the group using the instructions below.

1. Read the Scripture for the first time. Give time for silence and reflection after you finish the reading.
2. Before reading the Scripture for the second time, ask that participants select a person in the story to focus on for the duration of the reading. Give time for silent reflection after you finish the reading.
3. Read the Scripture for the third time. Give time for silent reflection. Ask participants to share one word or a short phrase that stood out to them in the Scripture.
4. As a group, ask participants to share something about the experience and the messages that they have received from God.

