



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 4: BEARING FRUIT

OBJECTIVE: Participants will open themselves up to see how Jesus is moving and present in their lives.



OPENING PRAYER

God of humility,

*Help us to see your presence in our lives,
in our neighbor, all people who live near us
and all over the world.*

*Give us the strength to continue working to
be the person that you call us to be.*

Amen



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

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

- How does Jesus accompany you?
- How do you accompany your neighbor in his or her journey?
- What does accompaniment mean to you, and how does that definition include mutuality?



ACTIVITY: THE EXAMEN (15 minutes)

Materials: The Examen

The Examen, an Ignatian meditation, gives us an opportunity to reflect on the presence of Jesus in our lives through our everyday encounters and interactions. In these encounters, we find how God is present in our lives and where we have been open to receive God's messages for us.

If there is space, ask participants to sit or lie down in a comfortable position. After a long pause, begin the meditation, pausing after each question to provide participants with enough time to reflect on the question.

- We pause to take a moment to reflect on our day . . .
 - When you woke up, how did you feel?
 - In the morning, who did you encounter? Were you traveling to a specific place?
 - What was your motivation to do what you did?
 - What did you do this afternoon?
 - How did you finish your day?
 - In what part of the day did you feel closest to Jesus?
 - At what moment of your day did you feel distanced from Jesus?
 - What is Jesus trying to communicate to you?
 - Give thanks to God for this day, in your own way. And, ask for accompaniment in the joyful and difficult moments of each day.
- Amen

After the meditation, ask participants to reflect on the experience in small groups or with partners.

SESSION 4: BEARING FRUIT

JUDGE

ACTIVITY: LISTENING TO SACRED SCRIPTURE
Luke 10:25–37 (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?
- When you go out to encounter your neighbor, do you search for the light and teaching they have for you?
- In your life, what encounters have you had that taught you the truth of who you are and the person you want to be?

ACT

ACTIVITY: GIFTS ARE TO BE SHARED (15 minutes)

Materials: paper, markers, pens

Who we are is a gift from God and a gift to our communities. Similarly, the people we encounter are gifts from God and a gift to our communities. Today, we reflect on our gifts and how we can use them to build a more just world through mutual accompaniment, as Jesus accompanies us.

Ask participants to draw a tree with roots, a trunk, branches, leaves and fruit. Explain to the participants that they should write the following over each part of the tree:

- Roots—what inspires you to live connected to Jesus' mission
- Trunk—what you are passionate about and the values you live out
- Branches—your talents that you can offer to others
- Leaves—the moments when you are open to Jesus' movement in your life
- Fruit—the lessons you have received from your neighbor

EVALUATE

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?

CELEBRATE

FINAL PRAYER

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

"We could never have imagined that the same Lord would become one of us and walk with us, be present with us, present in his Church, present in the Eucharist, present in his Word, present in the poor. He is present, walking with us. And this is closeness: the shepherd close to his flock, close to his sheep, whom he knows, one by one."

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.

