



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 3: ACCOMPANYING

OBJECTIVE: Participants will name the injustices that are a part of their lives, including the exploitation and oppression of those in poverty around the world, in order to build a more just world as protagonists in that vision.



OPENING PRAYER

*Jesus, our companion in truth and love,
May we create your vision on Earth, your
mission of justice and peace. Let us own
our call to conversion in order to transform
our relationship with all of creation as
disciples and builders of a world of
inclusion and liberation.*

Amen



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Give time for participants to reflect and journal about their responses. Play music that encourages a reflective environment or CRS' Stations of the Cross video series, available at crsricebowl.org/holy-week.

- What are some aspects of the reality in which you live?
- Who is part of your community, and in what realities do they live?
- How do you take into account the injustices present in our world and act to construct a world where everyone can flourish?



ACTIVITY: MARY, UNTIER OF KNOTS (15 minutes)

Materials: Space for a big circle, thick rope, permanent markers, two pieces of white fabric for each person to write on

Examining the realities in which we live means that we need to go out to encounter and investigate the injustice present in the way we live. In doing so, we can recognize our responsibility to accompany our neighbor in their journey. It also means that we share our hopes and struggles in community.

Ask participants to stand in a circle. Arrange the rope in a circle in the middle. Explain that each person will have time to write two intercessions (one on each of their fabric pieces) to offer to the community and to Mary, untier of knots, on their fabric. After they finish writing, ask that one person at a time tie their pieces of fabric to the rope. After everyone is finished, ask them to reenter the circle, one at a time, to untie another person's intercession, read it in silence and offer it to Mary, untier of knots.



ACTIVITY: LISTENING TO SACRED SCRIPTURE

Matthew 15:22-32 (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?
- In what ways are you a part of the injustice that affects your neighbor living in poverty?
- Who are your neighbors carrying crosses of injustice?

SESSION 3: ACCOMPANYING



ACTIVITY: EXAMINING AND BEING IN THE STRUGGLE FOR JUSTICE (15 minutes)

Materials: Three poster boards, various magazines, colored paper, markers, glue

In ministry in communion and in the pastoral circle, we reflect not only on the realities in which we live, but also in the mission of our call, and the action that we want to take to build God's vision on Earth.

Put two poster boards on different tables. On other tables, put magazines and other creative materials for the group. Explain that the group will create one poster to represent "the reality," or the world they live in, and another poster that represents "the vision," or the world they want to see. Each person can add what they want to help fill each poster—symbols, words, magazine images, etc. At the end of the activity, there will be two posters that represent the group. To finish the activity, use the third poster to have the group reflect on how they can create the vision in their second poster, by writing a list of their ideas.



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:

"God's world is a world where everyone feels responsible for the other, for the good of the other. This evening, in reflection, fasting and prayer, each of us deep down should ask ourselves: 'Is this really the world that I desire? Is this really the world that we all carry in our hearts? Is the world that we want really a world of harmony and peace, in ourselves, in our relations with others, in families, in cities, in and between nations?'"

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.

