



Parish Discernment Session #4

Food for the Journey

Focusing Question: How can we help the young adults in our community find the food they need for their journey in Christ and the Church?

I. Opening Prayer (20 minutes)

Lectio divina with Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I lack.
In green pastures he makes me lie down;
to still waters he leads me;
he restores my soul.
He guides me along right paths
for the sake of his name.
Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil, for you are with me;
your rod and your staff comfort me.

You set a table before me
in front of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Indeed, goodness and mercy will pursue me
all the days of my life;
I will dwell in the house of the Lord
for endless days.

Was there a word or phrase or image that stood out to you?

What insights did you have during your meditation?

What graces did you receive during your meditation (for example: joy, hope, longing, contrition, etc.)?

II. Introductory Comments (10 minutes)

A Message from Bishop Berg

We search for meaning. We search for security. We search for love. In a cold and lonely world, in the midst of endless activity and distraction, we long for home and for adventure. We long for the food we need to sustain us, to nourish us in the midst of life's struggles. This is what we find in Jesus. This is what we receive in the Eucharist. We have a home in Him. We have meaning, security, and love in relationship with Him. We are strengthened by Him, our daily bread, and can face the challenges of life in Him.

Our young adults want to build a life. They want a life full of joy and purpose. They want a life of deep relationship. They want a life of fulfillment and belonging. These longings in the hearts of our young adults are good and natural.

We know, however, that these longings cannot be fulfilled by the world or the things of the world. These longings point to eternity and only find their fulfillment in Christ.

Our young adults are a treasure. They bring life, joy, and enthusiasm. They bring optimism. They bring hope. They bring stability and balance to our community. They also bring a risk which requires a response of our willingness to step out. They bring family and noise and children.

Let us work to bring them in. Let us work to seek them out. Let us work to be open to the gifts that they bring, respecting the legitimate calls on their time and attention. Let our parishes become places of hospitality where they find relationship and permanence and fulfillment. Are we open to their needs? Or does our Liturgy seem to be a perception of exile to a room in the back of the Church?

As we pray to recognize the reality of who our young adults are, we remember the dreams of our lives when we were young and discern how we can move toward deeper relationship with them in the Eucharist. We become grounded in sincere longings for their well-being. We truly want a full life for them. We want them to receive the food that they need for their journey, and we know that they can find this in the Eucharist.

How, then, can we build relationships with the young adults in our parishes and communities and help them to be fed by Jesus in the Eucharist? I ask you to take this question to prayer today, and may the Holy Spirit guide your discussion, your implementation of your next steps, your efforts to build relationships with our young adults, and may our heavenly Father bless each one of you.

Come Holy Spirit!

Points to Remember

- No one of us has all the answers.
- God has the answers.
- God speaks through His people.
- Discussion based in prayer is a means of hearing God's will.
- Do not be attached to your own opinion.
- Look with charity on the thoughts and opinions of others and assume that we are all wanting something good.

Prayer for Openness to the Lord's Will

Lord Jesus, we come together as Your Body to submit to You as the Head of the Body. Send Your Holy Spirit to soften our hearts, to detach us from our own opinions, to help us to encounter You in prayer, to inspire our conversations, to help us to hear Your will for Your Body, and to guide us into deeper communion in You through our time together. Remove any obstacles or barriers that stand in the way of these things, and send Your holy angels to protect us during our time together.

Blessed Carlo Acutis, pray for us!

St. Thérèse, pray for us!

(patron of our parish), pray for us! (or "have mercy on us!" if it is Sacred Heart)

Our Lady of Guadalupe, pray for us!

Come, Holy Spirit!

III. Ask the Lord (30 minutes)

A. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and silent prayer (5 minutes)

B. Guided Meditation (10 minutes)

- Receiving Him in the Eucharist, my Savior, Jesus Christ, feeds me, nourishes me, and sustains me during the difficulties and struggles of this life.
- Without Him, I can do nothing.
- Jesus gives me strength to face death and to bring me into the presence of my Father in heaven.
- **Pray in these or your own words:** "Jesus, without You, I can do nothing."

C. Ask the Lord these questions: (15 minutes)

1. How are You longing to feed the young adults in our parish and community?

2. In what ways do our young adults need to be fed for their journey?

3. In keeping with the Little Way (doing little things with great love), what one action are You prompting *me* to do that will build relationships with our young adults and help them be fed by You in the Eucharist?

D. Reposition of the Blessed Sacrament

IV. Discussion and Conclusions (60 minutes)

A. Small Group Discussion (20 minutes)

1. How is Jesus longing to feed the young adults in our parish and community?

2. In what ways do our young adults need to be fed for their journey?

3. In keeping with the Little Way (doing little things with great love), what one action is the Holy Spirit prompting *me* to do that will build relationships with our young adults and help them be fed by Jesus in the Eucharist?

B. Large Group Synthesis (40 minutes)

1. What holy desires can we see in these responses?

2.. What one step will we take to build relationships with our young adults and help them be fed by Jesus?

V. Follow-up plan (20 minutes)

A. This is how we will be sorting through this information:

B. This is how and when you can expect to hear more from us in response to what is in your input:

C. Who is in charge of inviting others into this discussion?

D. How will others be invited into this discussion?

VI. Praise and Thanksgiving

A. Divine Mercy Chaplet

Pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet as normal but with the following prayers preceding the appropriate decade.

1. First Decade: Heavenly Father, through Your Son, Our Lord, Jesus Christ, we ask for Your mercy upon our clergy, *(name your pastor, other priests, and deacons)*.

For each decade:

V. Eternal Father, we offer you the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your dearly beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ

R. in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world.

(x10) V. For the sake of His sorrowful Passion

R. have mercy on us and on the whole world.

2. Second Decade: Heavenly Father, through Your Son, Our Lord, Jesus Christ, we ask for Your mercy upon all the parishioners of our parish, *(name your parish)*.

3. Third Decade: Heavenly Father, through Your Son, Our Lord, Jesus Christ, we ask for Your mercy upon those in our parish who have fallen away from the practice of their Faith.

4. Fourth Decade: Heavenly Father, through Your Son, Our Lord, Jesus Christ, we ask for Your mercy upon all who live within our parish boundaries.

5. Fifth Decade: Heavenly Father, through Your Son, Our Lord, Jesus Christ, we ask for the mercy of young adults turning to Jesus for the food they need for their journey.

B. “Conversational” style prayer of thanksgiving for one another

Those who are prompted may offer aloud a prayer of thanksgiving for others.

C. A Prayer for Eucharistic Revival

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the gift of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who promised to stay with us always, until the end of the age. Reawaken our wonder at His presence in the Most Holy Eucharist. May our hearts burn within us as He opens the Scriptures and breaks the bread. Give us the eyes of faith to recognize His presence in our brothers and sisters, especially in the face of the poor and the suffering. Nourished by the Eucharist, send us forth to walk faithfully as missionary disciples, proclaiming the Gospel to every heart and extending Your kingdom to every land. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Eucharistic Revival Parish Discernment Sessions Overview

Session #1

- **Eucharistic Revival Theme:** Communion
- **Main Topic for Discussion:** How can we enhance communion between pastor and parishioners in our parish?
- This session to be facilitated by representatives from the diocesan team. Subsequent sessions to be facilitated at the local level.

Session #2

- **Eucharistic Revival Theme:** Thanksgiving
- **Main Topic for Discussion:** How can we thankfully move forward as a parish in the gifts we have instead of focusing most of our attention on what we lack?

Session #3

- **Eucharistic Revival Theme:** The Real Presence of Christ
- **Main Topic for Discussion:** How can we create a culture of encounter with Jesus in our parish?

Session #4

- **Eucharistic Revival Theme:** Food for the Journey
- **Main Topic for Discussion:** How can we help the young adults in our community find the food they need for their journey in Christ and the Church?

Session #5

- **Eucharistic Revival Theme:** The Sacrifice of Christ
- **Main Topic for Discussion:** How can we more fruitfully help our elderly, sick, and homebound be supported and contribute to the mission of the parish?

Session #6

- **Eucharistic Revival Theme:** Transformation in Christ
- **Main Topic for Discussion:** What can we do to help our children be transformed by their preparation for and reception of the sacraments of First Reconciliation, First Holy Communion, and Confirmation so that they want to continue to grow in their Faith?

Session #7

- **Eucharistic Revival Theme:** Conversion
- **Main Topic for Discussion:** How can we support each other in growing in holiness through authentic spiritual friendships?

Session #8

- **Eucharistic Revival Theme:** Sent Forth
- **Main Topic for Discussion:** How can we help those we love come back to the Church, and how can we reach out in love to the marginalized?

The session handouts for these sessions will be made available approximately every two months, beginning in January, 2023.