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Personal Growth Group Design: Leadership Training Group for Parish R.C.I.A. Processes

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LEADERSHIP TRAINING GROUP FOR

PARISH R.C.I.A. PROCESSES

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The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is a long-term process - usually nine months, but sometimes up to two years - in which men and women become members of the Roman Catholic Church. Often they are converting from other faiths or denominational backgrounds, but this is not always the case.

R.C.I.A. culminates in the Sacrament of Baptism or Reception into Full Communion at the Easter Vigil Mass, but this is not the end. It is only the beginning of new life within the Catholic Christian community (see Appendix C for a more detailed discussion of the R.C.I.A.).

The purpose of this group is to train non-professional individuals to become effective group leaders of R.C.I.A. programs in their own parishes.

It is assumed that this text will be used in the Belleville Diocese, which includes the 28 counties of Southern Illinois. For the purposes of this group, the counties will be divided into seven-county quarters, with no more than two persons per parish, per group, in any given quarter. This division is twofold: first to prevent a group being comprised of only one or two parishes, and as a practical measure, to prevent individuals from having to travel all over the diocese to be involved in this process.

Each group will be closed and will consist of twelve individuals; preferably an even distribution of men, women, religious, clergy and lay ministers. The group will have two facilitators, one male and one female, with at least one of the two being a professional psychologist. Both facilitators, it is assumed, possess strong faith backgrounds.

The twelve members must be at least twenty-five years of age and be baptized, confirmed, practicing Catholics. They must have a working knowledge of the R.C.I.A. process. Although a previous one-year involvement (in an R.C.I.A. program) is preferred it is not mandatory.

The groups will meet for two hours per week for twelve weeks. A thirteenth week session will be a celebration of the Eucharist, which is the foundation of the Catholic faith. Subsequent follow-up sessions after the termination of the group will be up to the discretion of the group itself.

Participants will be screened in a pre-group interview which will last no more than one hour. While the interview will focus on the individual's past experience with the R.C.I.A., the interviewer will stress four points of involvement: expectations of the individual in the group, i.e. attendance, journal

writing, etc.; confidentiality; type of group this is - training; and involvement within the group, i.e. sharing of self, experiences, faith. After the interview the interviewee will complete the T-P Leadership Questionnaire (Exercise Thirteen, Appendix B). This pre-treatment measure will be used in the final evaluation of the group.

To promote comfortability physically, mentally and spiritually, it is recommended that the groups meet anywhere but in a classroom type setting.

Because this will be a diocese-sponsored training program no fees will be charged for participants or their parishes.

Conversation with God - prayer - is the center of who we are as a (Catholic) christian people. Because of its importance, prayer will be an active part of the training group process and is a vital part of the R.C.I.A. itself. Thus, each session will open and close with prayer, carefully selected to mirror each meeting or stage of group development.

For the training group participants to become effective group leaders of their parish R.C.I.A. program, they must be "in touch" with their own spiritual growth, before leading others in understanding the new journey they are embarking on. Participants will be required to keep a journal detailing their spiritual growth.

Exercises will be provided to facilitate this growth. All parts of this journal will be kept private to the individual.

Within the structure of the group itself, to promote self-disclosure, the large group will often be divided into two sub-groups. Within these sub-groups will be no spouses, bosses, co-workers, etc. The groups will be divided evenly between men, women, religious, clergy and laity. Once the sub-groups are formed they are set until the termination of the group.

It is hoped that the facilitator team will be seen by the members as caring and trustworthy. Throughout the thirteen weeks they will make themselves available to individual members in the event a personal crisis should occur.

SESSION I

OBJECTIVES

1. Have members become acquainted.
2. Orient and prepare members for group.
3. Promote cohesion through universality of conversion and a common desire for altruism.
4. Begin to express fears and expectations.

7:30 - 7:35

Opening Prayer - Appendix A

7:35 - 7:45

Activity A

OBJECTIVES

1. Introduction of facilitators.
2. Initiate cohesiveness with facilitators.

Introduction of facilitators with a brief (five minute) personal statement of their reasons for being involved in the group.

7:45 - 8:45

Activity B

OBJECTIVES

1. To get acquainted with other members of a small group.
2. To discover one's initial impact on others.
3. To study phenomena related to first impressions, their accuracy and effects.

Structured Activity - First Names, First Impressions:

A Feedback Experience - Exercise One, Appendix B.

8:45 - 9:10

Activity C

OBJECTIVES

1. Orientation
2. Promote cohesion through universality of conversion and common desire for altruism.

Clarify for members the goals and objectives of the group, discuss procedural details and answer members' questions. Acknowledge their individual faith journey and where they are at in their personal conversion process. No longer is Church "They"/an institution but "We"/a community; thus they are at a point to reach out more affectively to others.

9:10 - 9:25

Activity D

OBJECTIVES

1. Begin to express fears and expectations.
2. Facilitators promote basis for modeling.

Facilitators begin to share briefly, their expectations and fears for the group. The floor is opened for group sharing of fears and expectations.

9:25 - 9:30

Closing Prayer - Appendix A

Outcome Assessment

The facilitators will process group development and individual role development after the session. Questions

they ask: Was a trusting climate created? Were members able to express fears and expectations? Are members involved? Did some wait passively for "something to happen?" Were the facilitators open with the members and psychologically present to them? Was a degree of structuring provided that will neither increase member dependence nor promote excessive floundering?

Comments offered to the facilitators as the group departs will aid in the above questions.

Rationale

In a church based group as such it is common that members are already acquainted with one another. Thus, Activity B introduces members on a slightly deeper level; discovering one's impact on others. The facilitators are seen as role models who are personable and non-threatening. Acknowledges a common faith journey that will be the basis for cohesion.

SESSION II

OBJECTIVES

1. Introduce members on a deeper level.
2. Emphasize confidentiality.
3. Encourage members to continue to express fears and expectations.
4. Promote self-disclosure and risk taking.
5. Continue to build group cohesion and trust.

7:30 - 7:40

Opening Prayer - Appendix A

7:40 - 7:50

Activity A

OBJECTIVE

1. Emphasize confidentiality.

Facilitator will give a brief lecture "stressing the importance of confidentiality, referring to the opening prayer: Ex. 3:2-5, we are walking on one another's "holy ground."

7:50 - 9:20

Activity B

OBJECTIVES

1. Introduce members on a deeper level.
2. Continue to express fears and expectations.
3. Generate self-disclosure and promote altruism by sharing personal faith stories.
4. Begin process of giving and receiving feedback.
5. Continue to build cohesion and trust.

Structured Activity - Journey to Now - Exercise Two,
Appendix B.

9:20 - 9:30
Closing Prayer - Appendix A

Outcome Assessment

The facilitators will process group and role development after the session. Questions discussed: Are members beginning to define their place in the group? Are they willing to express what they are thinking and feeling? Are members learning the basic attitudes of respect, empathy, acceptance, caring and responding (these facilitate trust building)? Are members keeping themselves vague and unknown? Did the facilitators assist the members when needed? Are the facilitators modeling basic interpersonal skills, such as active listening and responding? Do members understand the importance of confidentiality?

Rationale

The whole issue of confidentiality is of extreme importance in this group because of the outside occupations of members, i.e. priest or lay minister. Group members continue to get to know one another on a deeper level by sharing their personal faith journeys. Universality is highlighted and trust is being established.

SESSION III

OBJECTIVES

1. Present a model to help process change.
2. Promote deeper personal interaction and more self-disclosure by discussion of feelings and thoughts surrounding a growth experience.
3. Begin to discover that although ministerial roles are different, faith experiences are similar.

7:30 - 7:45

Opening Prayer - Appendix A

7:45 - 8:05

Activity A

OBJECTIVE

1. Present a scriptural model for change, growth.

Introduce the Exodus Model of Salvation History

(Lecture One - Appendix D), in terms of the

four-point change model to be used in Activity B.

8:05 - 8:50

Activity B

OBJECTIVES

1. Members personally examine a growth experience.
2. Promote deeper personal interaction and further self-disclosure by discussion of feelings and thoughts surrounding a growth experience.
3. Promote cohesion through exploration of universality of experiences and feelings.
4. Allows members to begin emerging in different roles.

8:05 - 8:20 Fill out "Change" activity sheet

(Structured Activity - Change - Exercise Three, Appendix B).

Use the time to explore a specific growth period or experience.

8:20 - 8:50 Break into sub-groups of six members; an even distribution of men and women, clergy/religious and lay, if possible members from the same parish will not be in the same sub-group. A facilitator in each sub-group will be a non-participant observer.

8:50 - 9:10

Activity C

OBJECTIVES

1. Promote processing skills.
2. Make members more aware of different ministerial roles but similar faith experiences - interpersonal learning.
3. Allows members to emerge in different roles.

Large group reassembles and facilitators encourage members to discuss thoughts and feelings during previous activity - what happened? Facilitators also offers comments that validate the differences and similarities of growth experiences and ministerial roles.

9:10 - 9:20

Activity D

OBJECTIVES

1. Facilitate and encourage journaling.
2. Discovery and awareness of self.

Brief lecture discussing the benefits of journaling. Hand out journal exercise (Handout One - Appendix E), to be used at home. Stress that journaling will be used throughout the rest of the group sessions, no part of the "spiritual" journal will be shared.

9:20 - 9:30

Closing Prayer - Appendix A

Outcome Assessment

After the session the facilitators will process the group's development. They will share information from the sub-groups they observed. They continue to watch for members developing into different roles. Questions the facilitators address: Are members recognizing and expressing any negative feelings? Are they willing to face and deal with reactions toward what is occurring in the group? Are they moving from dependence to independence? When necessary, are the facilitators providing a model for members to deal directly and tactfully with and challenges, either personal or professional? Are the facilitators encouraging members to express reactions that pertain to the here-and-now happenings in the sessions?

Rationale

Activity B, breaking into sub-groups, will help move the development of the group into a deeper level of interaction by promoting greater self-disclosure and risk-taking. This should also help the transition from the orientation stage of group development into a stage of conflict and/or cohesion. In the sharing of personal experiences it promotes a better understanding

of differences and similarities of faith. It is not the vow or ordination that makes the person a suitable minister, it is the faith that one has. More time is allowed for prayer, encouraging group members to become involved in sharing spontaneous prayers, thus building cohesion.

SESSION IV

OBJECTIVES

1. Present information on group roles and communication.
2. Demonstrate the effects of shared leadership.
3. Promote group development into conflict stage.

7:30 - 7:40

Opening Prayer - Appendix A

7:40 - 8:15

Activity A

OBJECTIVE

1. Instruct members on roles and communication skills.

Lecture on group roles and communication skills; the purpose of R.C.I.A. discussion groups: What they are and are not. After lecture, members receive copy of "Communication Effectiveness" (Handout Two - Appendix E). Allow time for members to review material and ask questions. Note: special attention will be given to roles used in activity B.

8:15 - 9:15

Activity B

OBJECTIVES

1. Gain practical experience in dealing with various roles.
2. Demonstrate effects of shared leadership.
3. Explore behavioral responses to an ambiguous task.
4. Promote processing skills.

Structured Activity - Choosing a Color: A Multiple

Role Play - Exercise Four, Appendix B. Facilitators

will be non-participant observers. After completion of structured activity the facilitators lead a discussion of the entire process, with special focus on the dimensions of shared leadership.

9:15 - 9:20

Activity C

Hand out week's journal exercise to be used at home, (Handout Three - Appendix E). Brief time allowed to answer questions.

9:20 - 9:30

Closing Prayer - Appendix A

Outcome Assessment

Determined by processing of the group upon completion of the structured activity. The facilitators will discuss what they observed during structured exercise. What members are emerging as the leaders? Is there a difference in the members involvement as compared to the previous sessions? Are changing roles evident? Are members learning how to express themselves so that others will listen? Do members exhibit good listening skills and attending behavior? Are the facilitators assisting members in dealing with any matters that will influence their ability to become autonomous and independent group members?

Rationale

This session is designed to give information and skills in communication and leadership, as well as recognizing and dealing with different roles in groups. Because of the nature of the ambiguous task, this can help promote the group development into the conflict stage. The interactions that emerge during the role play may be therapeutic in their effect: Corrective Recapitulation of the Family Group and Development of Socializing Techniques.

SESSION V

OBJECTIVES

1. Promote group development into the conflict stage.
2. Explore behavioral responses associated with exclusion.
3. Promote processing skills.
4. Impart information on the dynamics of exclusion.

7:30 - 7:40

Opening Prayer - Appendix A

7:40 - 9:10

Activity A

OBJECTIVES

1. To allow participants to experience consciously excluding and being excluded.
2. To confront feelings with exclusion generates.
3. To examine processes by which social identity is conferred by the excluding group and accepted by excluded member.

Structured Activity - The In-Group: Dynamics of Exclusion - Exercise Five, Appendix B. Facilitators will be non-participant observers. After completion of structured activity the facilitators will lead a discussion on the entire process, with special focus on the behavioral responses associated with exclusion. A presentation will be given, following the discussion, on the dynamics of exclusion.

9:10 - 9:20

Activity B

Hand out week's Journal exercise to be used at home, (Handout Four - Appendix E). A brief time allowed to

answer questions.

Outcome Assessment

The facilitators will discuss what they observed during the structured exercise. Upon completion of the structured activity, the processing among the group members will be monitored closely. Questions the facilitators ask themselves: Is the group as a whole, or are individual members resisting conflict? Are the members and facilitators willing to accept this possible resistance to work through the conflict? Is the group working toward being autonomous?

Rationale

This session is designed to give information on the dynamics of exclusion. Conflict is inevitable in all relationships, including groups. It is the avoidance (rather than the facing) of conflict that makes it destructive. Thus, the purpose of this session - to observe and process how this group will embrace and work through conflict.

SESSION VI

OBJECTIVES

1. Promote group development into the working stage.
2. Impart information on group development.
3. To introduce the concept of group process.
4. To help the group evaluate its own functioning.

7:30 - 7:40

Opening Prayer - Appendix A

7:40 - 8:25

Activity A

OBJECTIVES

1. To compare the development of a small group along the dimensions of task functions and personal relations.
2. To compare members' perceptions of the developmental status of a group at a given time.

Structured Activity - Group Development: A Graphic Analysis - Exercise Six, Appendix B.

7:40 - 7:55 A brief lecturette on group development is presented. The facilitator will stress the movement from orientation to problem-solving and from dependency to interdependence.

7:55 - 8:25 Participants are given a copy of the graph and time is allowed to rate the group. A discussion on the members' perceptions of the group will follow.

8:25 - 9:05
Activity B

OBJECTIVES

1. To help a group evaluate its own functioning.
2. To provide a way to examine objectively the participation of group members.
3. To explore the norms that have developed in a group which has been meeting for some time.

Structured Activity - Group Self-Evaluations: A

Collection of Instruments - Exercise Seven, Appendix B.

After the members have completed the Growth-Group Evaluation form the facilitator will lead a discussion of the data collected.

9:05 - 9:15
Activity C

Hand out week's Journal Exercise to be used at home, (Handout Five - Appendix E). A brief time allowed to answer questions.

9:15 - 9:30
Closing Prayer - Appendix A

Outcome Assessment

Much of the outcome will be determined by the members' perceptions of the group - the rating on the graph in Activity A. Also, the data collected from Activity B will be used. Facilitators will pay particular attention to the discussion by the group concerning the process of group development. Questions the facilitators will ask themselves when processing

after the group departs: Is there a sharing of the group leadership functions? Are the members able to assume greater responsibility for the work that occurs in the group? Definite roles within the group should continue to emerge.

Rationale

The group at this point should be moving out of the conflict stage and into the working stage. Cohesion by now should be relatively high. By the sharing of universal human experiences members are forming a close bond. This meeting and several subsequent sessions are designed to impart information on various aspects of group work. This session is designed to help members gain knowledge of group development and process.

SESSION VII

OBJECTIVES

1. Impart information on feedback in groups.
2. Develop skills in giving appropriate feedback.
3. Help the group evaluate its own feedback skills.
4. Promote the working stage of group development.

7:30 - 7:40

Activity A

OBJECTIVES

1. To develop skills in process observation.
2. To develop skills in giving appropriate feedback to individual group members.

Structured Activity - Group-on-Group: A Feedback

Experience - Exercise Eight, Appendix B.

7:40 - 7:55 A brief presentation on giving feedback will be given by one of the facilitators.

7:55 - 8:40 The Group-on-Group exercise commences. The large group will be broken down into its two sub-groups to participate in this activity; this will promote cohesion.

8:40 - 8:50

Activity B

OBJECTIVE

1. Help the group evaluate its own feedback style.

Structured Activity - Group Self-Evaluations: A

Collection of Instruments - Exercise Seven, Appendix B.

Copies of the Feedback Rating Scale are distributed to the group members. They are instructed to fill out the rating scale and return it to one of the facilitators. At this time there will be no discussion of the results, however, at the beginning of the next session it will be looked at.

8:50 - 9:00

Activity C

Hand out week's Journal exercise to be used at home, (Handout Six - Appendix E). A brief time allowed to answer questions.

9:00 - 9:30

Activity D - CLOSING PRAYER

OBJECTIVES

1. To experience feelings associated with meditation.
2. To begin the process of forgiveness.

Forgiveness Meditation - Appendix A. A facilitator will read the meditation slowly to the group, making appropriate pauses where needed. Before the meditation begins members are instructed that after the meditation is completed, they may stay to continue to meditate on their own or they are free to go. However, upon leaving they will keep silence as to not disturb those choosing to stay.

Outcome Assessment

Much of the assessment will come from the data off the Feedback Rating Scales that the group members completed in Activity B. (The results from this data will be presented to each small group in the following session.) The facilitators will process after the group departs. Questions the facilitators will address are: Is there honesty in the group or is it game-playing? Is there disclosure? How are the roles changing? Was the feedback in the group given freely and accepted without defensiveness? Was there a willingness to seriously reflect on the accuracy of the feedback.

Rationale

As group facilitators, the members will need the skills of giving and receiving appropriate feedback. The purpose of the small groups is to promote cohesion - the small groups will be the same throughout the entire twelve weeks. It is hoped that the skills learned in the session will not only be used in their R.C.I.A. Program but also in the work place and the R.C.I.A. team in the parish.

SESSION VIII

OBJECTIVES

1. Impart information on communication skills and techniques.
2. To practice empathizing.
3. Continue giving appropriate feedback.
4. Continue to promote the working stage of group development.
5. To make distinctions between thoughts and feelings.

7:30 - 7:40

Opening Prayer - Appendix A

7:40 - 7:50

Activity A

Each small group will process the data from the Feedback Rating Scale that was completed at the previous session. During the week the facilitators have taken the results from the scale and organized a working graph to assist in the processing.

7:50 - 9:10

Activity B

OBJECTIVES

1. To emphasize the need for careful, active listening during conversation.
2. To study dynamics involved in group conversation.
3. To explore both helpful and hindering communication behaviors in small groups.
4. To make distinctions between thoughts and feelings.

Structured Activity - Conversation Starters: A

Communications Experience - Exercise Nine, Appendix B.

7:50 - 8:10 A brief lecture on communication skills is given by one of the facilitators; the goals for

this activity is then discussed.

8:10 - 9:10 The large group is divided into its two sub-groups and the activity continues per instructions. The facilitators will be active participants as well as observers in this exercise.

9:10 - 9:20

Activity C

Hand out week's Journal exercise to be used at home, (Handout Seven - Appendix E). A brief time is allowed to answer questions.

9:20 - 9:30

Closing Prayer - Appendix A

Outcome Assessment

Outcome will be determined by the observation of the working groups. The facilitators will continue to process the meeting after the group departs. Questions they ask: Are the members continuing to take risks by sharing meaningful here-and-now reactions? Is the communication among all or most members; is it open and does it involve accurate expression of what is being experienced. Is catharsis and expression of feeling occurring? Does the group think about the meaning of various emotional experiences? Are the leadership functions continuing to be shared?

Rationale

The skills learned in this sessions will hopefully help the members not only with their upcoming R.C.I.A. group but also with their co-workers. As leaders of an R.C.I.A. group it is imperative that they can communicate effectively with their groups. Not only will they receive a short lecture on communication skills but they have already received a handout concerning this (Handout Two - Appendix E, Session IV). The questions selected in the exercise will promote self-disclosure and cohesion.

SESSION IX

OBJECTIVES

1. To look at nonverbal communication.
2. Continue processing skills.
3. To encourage members to be honest and spontaneous.
4. To analyze some aspects of cooperation in problem solving.
5. To explore feelings associated with "wearing masks."

7:30 - 7:45

Opening Prayer - Appendix A

7:45 - 8:05

Activity A

OBJECTIVE

1. To explore feelings associated with "wearing masks."

A short time is allowed for the small groups to process what they heard in the opening prayer. Any feelings associated with wearing masks will be discussed.

8:05 - 8:50

Activity B

OBJECTIVES

1. To analyze some aspects of cooperation in solving a group problem.
2. To sensitize participants to behaviors which may contribute toward or obstruct the solving of a group problem.

Structured Activity - Broken Squares: Nonverbal

Problem-Solving - Exercise Ten, Appendix B.

8:05 - 8:15 The facilitator begins with a discussion

of the meaning of cooperation.

8:15 - 8:50 The instructions are distributed to each of the small groups and the exercise commences.

8:50 - 9:05

Activity C

OBJECTIVE

1. Continue processing skills.

The large group reassembles and a discussion around the exercise is promoted. What happened in each of the small groups?

9:05 - 9:15

Activity D

Hand out week's Journal exercise to be used at home, (Handout Eight - Appendix E). A brief time allowed to answer questions.

9:15 - 9:30

Closing Prayer - Appendix A

Outcome Assessment

The process observation by the facilitators during the exercise in Activity B will help to evaluate the outcome of this session. Patterns of communication will be watched closely by the facilitators. Questions asked after the group departs: Are the roles changing in any way? What members became the leaders during the exercise and what members resisted the exercise? Could the group solve the problem at hand? Are the

members able to recognize nonverbal behavior? Are the members able to distinguish when verbal and nonverbal behaviors are contradictory? What were the patterns of communication in the group?

Rationale

The leaders of R.C.I.A. groups need to be aware of nonverbal communication patterns, thus the purpose this group exercise. The leaders will also need to be able to recognize discrepancies between verbal and nonverbal communication. Many of the R.C.I.A. programs are lead by a team; another group to deal with. This team of people will need to be able to solve problems and to analyze anything that could block this process.

SESSION X

OBJECTIVES

1. To begin to move into the final stage of group development.
2. To impart information on styles of leadership.
3. To generate feedback on intervention styles.
4. To explore dynamics of assuming leadership in a group.

7:30 - 7:45

Opening Prayer - Appendix A

7:45 - 8:45

Activity A

OBJECTIVES

1. To provide practice in intervening in small groups.
2. To generate feedback on intervention styles.

Structured Activity - Process Intervention: A

Facilitator Practice Session - Exercise Eleven,

Appendix B.

8:45 - 8:55

Activity B

OBJECTIVE

1. To evaluate personal leadership style.

Structured Activity - Therapist Style Measure -

Exercise Twelve, Appendix B.

8:55 - 9:05

Activity C

A brief discussion around the Measure used in Activity

B. The facilitator will discuss the different styles

of leadership and the skills that should be minimized and the skills that should be accented. This measure will be used to evaluate the outcome of the twelve week group process.

9:05 - 9:15

Activity D

Hand out week's Journal exercise to be used at home, (Handout Nine - Appendix E). A short time will be allowed to answer questions.

9:15 - 9:20

Activity E

The facilitator will explain what the next group session will involve: Each small group will be responsible for organizing and conducting a half an hour of a prayer experience. Time will be allowed in group to plan and organize this, however possible resources may be considered during the following week. Members are not allowed to discuss the exercise outside the session during the week with other members. Resources may be brought to group for consideration of use; tape recorder and stereo will be provided for music. It will also be announced that the group has two sessions left, not including the final Eucharist.

9:20 - 9:30

Closing Prayer - Appendix A

Outcome Assessment

Outcome will be assessed by the observation of the facilitators during the structured exercise. Feedback skills will be watched as well as how members assume leadership positions. Possible behavior associated with closing down will be monitored closely. The facilitators will ask the following questions after the group departs: Is there a sense of hopefulness among the members concerning their upcoming leadership of an R.C.I.A. group? Are members able to express fears, disappointments, suspicions, doubts and so forth? Or do they bury and avoid these reactions? Are the members taking responsibility for what is occurring in group? Are members accepting the idea that the group is coming to a close? Is there any behavior change that could be associated with the termination of the group?

Rationale

It is necessary to discover one's personal leadership style and receive feedback concerning this style if one is to become a facilitator of a group. This session provides practice for the novice facilitator. The measure used in Activity B gives the members a scale at which to observe their own personal style.

SESSION XI

OBJECTIVES

1. To continue to promote the development of the group to the final stage.
2. To have on hands practice in working with a group when planning prayer.
3. Allow members to express themselves through prayer.

7:30 - 7:40

Activity A

The facilitators will give a brief overview of the evenings session. There will be no opening prayer because of the nature of the meeting, the last hour will be prayer, presented by each small group. It is stressed that each group member should have a part in what goes on during the prayer along with the planning of it, thus everyone should be active in the planning and participation. The only rule put on the half hour prayer is that the group come to a consensus on what they plan to do. They will have forty minutes to discuss, plan and organize what will go on.

7:40 - 8:20

Activity B

The large group is divided into its two sub-groups and the planning of the prayer commences. The facilitators will observe the planning process of each of the

small groups. Resources such as bibles, music, and various prayer books will be available to look at. Members can also use resources they brought with them.

8:20 - 8:30

Activity C

Hand out week's Journal exercise to be used at home, (Handout Ten - Appendix E). A brief time will be allowed for answering questions. It will also be announced that this is the last journal exercise that will be provided.

8:30 - 9:00

Activity D

The first group conducts their prayer experience. It is confirmed by one of the facilitators that this has a time restraint of one half hour.

9:00 - 9:30

Activity E

The second group leads their prayer. After the second group is completed the two groups together will conclude the session with the Lord's Prayer.

Outcome Assessment

The facilitators will assess the session after the members have left. They will discuss what they observed during the planning of the prayer; how did the group solve the problem at hand? Who were the

leaders in the planning process? Did any member not want to participate in the exercise? Did the lay people get involved; were they allowed to get involved? Did any of the priests or religious become dominant members? Did the members appear comfortable with the planning and execution of the prayer activity? What are the feelings of the group over the upcoming separation of the group?

Rationale

Often, when dealing with a mixed population of people (i.e. priests, lay, religious) and the subject concerns prayer the laity pull back. It is thought that because of training the priests should do all the planning of prayer. The purpose of the exercise is to give the members experience in working with a group on a task that is sometimes sensitive. The structure of the prayer itself is open to the group thus, if they feel it necessary to say "Good-Bye" through their group prayer that can be their decision.

SESSION XII

OBJECTIVES

1. To bring closure to the group.
2. To explore their personal faith journey.
3. To give and receive final feedback in a safe way.
4. Evaluation of the training process.
5. Re-emphasize confidentiality.

7:30 - 7:40

Opening Prayer - Appendix A

7:40 - 7:45

Activity A

OBJECTIVE

1. Re-emphasize confidentiality.

One of the facilitators will re-emphasize the importance of maintaining confidentiality after the group is over.

7:45 - 7:55

Activity B

OBJECTIVE

1. Evaluation of the training process.

The members individually complete the T-P Leadership Questionnaire. Scoring will be done by the facilitators and results given at the following session.

(Structured Activity - T-P Leadership Questionnaire:

An Assessment of Style - Exercise Thirteen, Appendix B).

7:55 - 9:15

Activity C

OBJECTIVES

1. To explore member's personal faith journey.
2. To give and receive final feedback in a safe way.
3. Express fears and expectations at the closing of the group.

Structured Activity - Journey to Now - Exercise Two, Appendix B. This activity is the same activity used in the second session of the group. In that session the activity was to look at the personal faith journey of each member. The goal is the same again, however, in this group we are looking at the change that has occurred from the experience of the journal.

9:15 - 9:30

Closing Prayer - Appendix A

Outcome Assessment

The outcome will be assessed from observing the posters of each member. Have they grown spiritually? What was the final feedback given to the members on the posters? Was confidentiality stressed so the members understand the importance of it? What is the general feeling of the group at this point? Are the facilitators helping members deal with any feelings they possibly have concerning termination? Do the members have any unfinished business to take care of within the group?

Rationale

For an R.C.I.A. facilitator to be able to assist another person in discovering their faith, the facilitator must have a good strong basis from which to teach from. The purpose of the journal exercises was just that: to discover where an individual was at in their own journey of faith; to explore possible areas that were unexplored. The exercise selected not only had a mode of helping the member express something very personal in a fairly safe way, but also allowed for feedback in a non-threatening way. It is also important that confidentiality be stressed again at the end of the group to assure that the members still hold the interactions in the group as something private.

SESSION XIII

OBJECTIVES

1. To bring closure to the group.
2. To process the evaluation of the group.
3. To set up individual interview times to process and deal with any unanswered questions.
4. To evaluate the facilitators.

7:30 - 8:30

Activity A

OBJECTIVE

1. Process the evaluation of the group.
2. Evaluate the facilitators.

The facilitators will lead a discussion on the T-P Leadership Questionnaire that was completed at the previous session. Evaluation of the facilitators will be encouraged.

8:30 - 9:30

Activity B

OBJECTIVE

1. To bring closure to the group.

This final activity of the group will be a Eucharistic Celebration attended by the complete group. Prior to the beginning of the Mass a few minutes will be spent on a meditation (Meditation Before the Eucharistic Celebration - Appendix A). Following the Mass will be a social.

Outcome Assessment

Outcome will be assessed from the processing of the facilitators after the members have departed. Much of the assessment will come from the discussion in Activity A, on the Leadership Questionnaire.

Rationale

An appropriate closure activity for a church group as such is the celebration of the Eucharist which is believed to be the foundation of the Catholic faith. It allows the group members to come together as a community and become one in their common faith tradition. It is hoped that the group will not stop being community, but will continue the friendships made outside the group context. Time is allowed for the members to schedule appointments with one of the facilitators to follow up on any unanswered questions or issues.

The outcome assessment of the entire thirteen week process will be based on two pre-post exercises. The T-P Questionnaire: An Assessment of Style (Exercise thirteen, Appendix B), will be given to group members during the initial interview and introduced again at the twelfth session. A comparison will be made between the two profile sheets and the outcome will be discussed with the group members during the last session. This questionnaire will help to determine the effectiveness of the training program.

The structured exercise - Journey To Now (Exercise two, Appendix B), will facilitate in determining the spiritual growth of the group members. This exercise will be used in session two and twelve. Although this exercise is much more subjective than the Questionnaire above, it is believed to be a very helpful tool in determining spiritual growth.

The assessment notes on each session kept and discussed by each facilitator will be the final aid in determining the outcome of the entire process. These notes are important assessment tools that the facilitators have readily at their disposal.

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APPENDIX A

The Interior Journey

You are fascinated by your travels. And it is right to love my world, to treasure its beauty and the beauty that people have created in it. But the only journey that really matters is the interior journey you make towards me. You have seen many way-stations on this journey; you have known many adventures in your progress. But your journey of the heart had undreamed-of vistas yet to be seen, dramas of steepness, gardens of flowers, majestic places, fresh winds and long horizons.

This interior journey is filled with excitement, hardship, and glory. You have launched upon the greatest trip of all. Do not fear. The unknown before you will be revealed as you press onward with my Son beside you.

If you falter or stumble, His hand will be there. You need only glance at His face and He will steady your steps. With such a guide, how can you ever lose heart?

Press onward, little pilgrim. Persevere. Your goal is everlasting love.

Kelly B. Kelly

- Bread for the Eating

SESSION 1 - CLOSING PRAYER

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think that I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope that I have that desire in all things that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road though I may know nothing about it. Therefore will I trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.

Thomas Merton

- Thoughts in Solitude

EXODUS 3:2-5

There an angel of the Lord appeared to him in fire flaming out of a bush. As he looked on, he was surprised to see that the bush, though on fire was not consumed. So Moses decided, "I must go over to look at this remarkable sight, and see why the bush is not burned. When the Lord saw him coming over to look at it more closely, God called out to him from the bush, "Moses! Moses!" He answered, "Here I am." God said, "Come no nearer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground."

- Translation from
New American Bible

After the passage from scripture is read there will be a short silent pause followed by spontaneous prayer by one of the facilitators.

NOTE: The facilitator will model spontaneous prayer to be used by the group members in future sessions.

SESSION 2 - CLOSING PRAYER

SESSION 3 - OPENING PRAYER WITH SONG

JEREMIAH 29:11-15

For I know well the plans I have in mind for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare, not for woe! plans to give you a future full of hope. When you call me, when you go to pray to me, I will listen to you. When you look for me, you will find me. Yes, when you seek me with all your heart, you will find me with you, says the Lord, and I will change your lot; I will gather you together from all the nations and all the places to which I have banished you, says the Lord, and bring you back to the place from which I have exiled you.

- Translation from
New American Bible

After the passage from scripture is read there will be a short silent pause followed by spontaneous prayer by one of the facilitators.

SESSION 3 - CLOSING PRAYER

1 CORINTHIANS 12:4-8, 12-20, 27

There are different gifts but the same Spirit; there are different ministries but the same Lord; there are different works but the same God who accomplishes all of them in everyone. To each person the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one the Spirit gives wisdom in discourse, in another the power to express knowledge. The body is one and has many members, but all the members, many though they are, are one body; and so it is with Christ. It was in one Spirit that all of us, whether Jew or Greek, slave or free, were baptized into one body. All of us have been given to drink of the one Spirit. Now the body is not one member, it is many. If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand I do not belong to the body," would it then no longer belong to the body? If the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye I do not belong to the body," would it then no longer belong to the body? If the body were all eye, what would happen to our hearing? If it were all ear, what would happen to our smelling? As it is, God has set each member of the body in the place he wanted it to be. If all the members were alike where would the body be? There are, indeed, many different

members, but one body. You, then, are the body of Christ.
Every one of you is a member of it.

- Translation from
New American Bible

SESSION 4 - OPENING PRAYER

JOHN 14:1-3

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Have faith in God and faith in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places; otherwise, how could I have told you that I was going to prepare a place for you? I am indeed going to prepare a place for you, and then I shall come back to take you with me, that where I am you also may be. You know the way that leads where I go.

- Translation from
New American Bible

After scripture has been read there will be a short silent pause, the facilitators will invite the group members to share spontaneous prayers.

SESSION 4 - CLOSING PRAYER

Jesus, you are the example we need. You have taught us that in order to communicate well we have to learn to listen. In the Gospels every word you spoke was just what was needed. It is impossible to imagine you wasting words. You knew what to say to those around you because you listened with all your attention, just as you listened to the Father. Were you able to be attentive to others because you were so open to God? Please help me learn to listen so that my words, like your, will be just what is needed.

Kelly B. Kelly

- Bread for the Eating

Philosophers talk of all of us being caught up and moving in a single stream of life. We all originated from the same source but are not ourselves the source. We arise as a special quality of the source and pass on into it again while the true source itself remains. We will run our unique way, over rapids, peaceful ponds, fiercely at times, calmly at others. We will join other streams and rivers along the way, gaining strength, being propelled or momentarily falling aside in muddy, stagnant pools. But no matter how quickly or slowly or quietly or passionately we move, we all come eventually to the same end in the same sea. We have returned to the source from which we rose. We are therefore at one time or another, the beginning, the end, as well as the way, but are permanently never any of them. We are an important part of the dynamic process, but we, like everything else, are only passing through. We are each a singular person but we are each a universal person as well. Both are equally important. We are born provincial, egocentric limited. The more we become, the more universal the person we are. We finally come to realize that most human conflicts arise through our provincialism, our concern for our personal problems, our selfish interests, our own conflicts.

Leo Buscaglia

- Personhood: The Art of Being Fully Human

SESSION 5 - CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, it takes a lot of living to understand we are constantly passing something on to others by who we are. It's an awesome challenge; but if we try to be authentic and real, the best we can be, example will take care of itself. Help us realize that much of what we do is taken with small steps - - little things that make a big difference: "I'm sorry"; "I care"; "I love you." Help us risk taking time to be persons of joy, of peace, and of love. Then what we have to pass on will be you.

Kelly B. Kelly

- Bread for the Eating

After the prayer the facilitators will invite the group members to join hands and close with the Lord's Prayer.

The Scroll Unrolling

See your spiritual life as a scroll unrolling. Ahead of you are the words you seek, slowly becoming visible. Behind you, is your life gone by, rolling out of sight. The hand on the scroll is mine.

Keep your eyes always on the scroll ahead, reading and pondering each word that I give you. Let go what has gone by. It has already shaped you for what is to come.

Open all of yourself to what I give you - - body, soul, spirit, mind, emotion. Do not be discouraged if you flag in the effort for a while; if the scroll seems to be stationary. My hand is still on it and I will adjust its speed to your need.

Just be confident that it is YOUR scroll, that I am in charge, and that I have great things in store for you. Delight in your scroll and know your closeness to me grows deeper with each unrolling. It is uniquely yours and has been written by an author whose love is so great that you could not even imagine it without being consumed by it.

Little by little, be content to see that scroll unrolled and read upon it what my heart has written to your heart. This is how you shall learn of my love.

Kelly B. Kelly

- Bread for the Eating

SESSION 6 - CLOSING PRAYER

The River

I look up at the sky and see the morning star
burn brightly in the heavens.

I imagine what it sees as it looks down
on me and my surroundings
and this portion of the earth.

I visualize what it must have seen
a thousand years ago today . . .
five thousand . . .
a hundred thousand . . .
five million years ago.

I attempt to see in fantasy
what the morning star will see
a thousand years . . .
five thousand . . .
a hundred thousand . . .
five million years from now
on the anniversary of this day.

I pass in review the various stages of my life --
infancy, childhood, adolescence,
adulthood, middle age --
in the following fashion:

I search for the things
that seemed immeasurably important
at each of these stages of my life,
things that caused me worry and anxiety,
things that I stubbornly clung to,

that I thought I could never live with
or without.

When I look back from the distance of today,
how many of those loves and dreams and fears
retain the hold they had on me in former years?

Then I review
some of the problems that I have today,
some of my present sufferings,
and of each of them I say,
"This too will pass away."

I think of the things I cling to
or that I am possessive of.
I realize that a day must surely come
when I shall see them differently.
So of each of these attachments too I say,
"This too will pass away."

I make a list of the many things I fear,
and of each of them I say,
"This too will pass away."

To end, I see myself embarking on my daily tasks
with the earnestness
and fervor
with which I plunge into a drama
or a game,
absorbed, immersed, but never drowning.

Anthony de Mello, S.J.

- Wellsprings

SESSION 7 - OPENING PRAYER

PSALM 32

The person who knows the meaning of forgiveness,
whose past failures no longer plague them,
who stands blameless and guilt-free before God -
that person is rich indeed.

Every time I attempt to handle my own guilt -
by ignoring it, rationalizing it,
or just running away from it -
some unseen power or pressure
from the depths of my being
squeezes my life dry, leaving me empty.

But when I face up to my failures and confess them,
when I open my guilt-ridden heart
to You, O God,
then I realize the blessed meaning
of forgiveness.

Thus everyone who claims faith in a loving God
needs to cling to God's acceptance and concern.
Times of darkness will come,
life's storms and tempests will continue to rage,
but he shall not be destroyed by these things.

You are, O God, a place of refuge;
You do enable me to face my problems,
You do keep me from being destroyed by them.
Even within the darkness about us,
in the midst of life's turmoil,
one can often hear the voice of God:

"Even these things serve a purpose in your life.
Don't sell them short,

for they may be steps along My path for you.
Stop being stubborn and stupid

like some undiscerning jackass

that has to be driven with sticks or whips."

The faithful and the faithless both suffer

the uncertainties and insecurities of this life,
but the child of God can depend always
on the love of the Father.

It is for this reason that there is

light even in the midst of darkness
incomprehensible joy in the midst of sorrow,
and we can find

a measure of happiness and well-being
regardless of the circumstances that surround us.

Leslie Brandt

- Psalms Now

Forgiveness Meditation

Bring into your heart the image of someone for whom you feel much resentment. Take a moment to feel that person right there in the center of your chest.

And in your heart, say to that person, "For anything you may have done that caused me pain, anything you did either intentionally or unintentionally, through your thoughts, words, or actions, I forgive you."

Slowly allow that person to settle into your heart. No force, just opening to them at your own pace. Say to them, "I forgive you." Gently, gently open to them. If it hurts, let it hurt. Begin to relax the iron grip of your resentment, to let go of that incredible anger. Say to them, "I forgive you." And allow them to be forgiven.

* * *

Now bring into your heart the image of someone you wish to ask forgiveness. Say to them, "For anything I may have done that caused you pain, my thoughts, my actions, my words, I ask your forgiveness. For all those words that were said out of forgetfulness or fear or confusion, I ask your forgiveness."

Don't allow any resentment you may hold for yourself block your reception of that forgiveness. Let your heart soften to it. Allow yourself to be forgiven. Open to the possibility of forgiveness. Holding them in your heart, say to them, "For whatever I may have

done that caused you pain, I ask your forgiveness."

* * *

Now bring an image of yourself into your heart, floating at the center of your chest. Bring yourself into your heart, and using your own first name, say to yourself, "For all that you have done in forgetfulness and fear and confusion, for all the words and thoughts and actions that may have caused pain to anyone, I forgive you."

Open to the possibility of self-forgiveness. Let go of all the bitterness, the hardness, the judgement of yourself.

Make room in your heart for yourself. Say, "I forgive you" to you.

- SIUC Wellness Center

It is recommended that soft, quiet, meditative music be played to facilitate the meditation.

SESSION 8 - OPENING PRAYER

The most important things are the hardest things to say. They are the things you get ashamed of, because words diminish them -- words shrink things that seemed limitless when they were in your head to no more than living size when they're brought out. But it's more than that, isn't it? The most important things lie too close to wherever your secret heart is buried, like landmarks to a treasure your enemies would love to steal away. And you may make revelations that cost you dearly only to have people look at you in a funny way, not understanding what you've said at all, or why you thought it was so important that you almost cried while you were saying it. That's the worst, I think. When the secret stays locked within not for want of a teller but for want of an understanding ear.

Stephen King

- Different Seasons

Upon reading allow an adequate amount of time for silent reflection.

SESSION 8 - CLOSING PRAYER WITH SONG

PSALM 133 AND 134

O God, how precious it for us
and how pleasing it must be to You
when your people learn
how to live and work together in unity!

It is in the measure that we do this
that we begin to resemble You
and to carry out most effectively Your purposes
in our disjointed and discordant world.

Come, let us together bless His name,
rejoice in His loving concern for us,
declare His worth to all creatures,
and walk in obedience to His will.

It is the same God who make heaven and earth
and all of us who dwell therein.
Let us worship and serve Him together.

Leslie Brandt

- Psalms Now

PLEASE HEAR WHAT I'M NOT SAYING

Don't be fooled by me.

Don't be fooled by the face I wear.

For I wear a mask, I wear a thousand masks, masks that I'm afraid to take off, and none of them are me.

Pretending is an art that is second nature with me, but don't be fooled, for God's sake don't be fooled.

I give you the impression that I'm secure, that all is sunny and unruffled with me, within as well as without, that confidence is my name and coolness my game, that the water's calm and I'm in command, and that I need no one.

But don't believe me. Please don't.

My surface may seem smooth, but my surface is a mask, my ever-varying and ever concealing mask.

Beneath lies no smugness, no complacence.

Beneath dwells the real me, in confusion, in fear, in aloneness.

But I hide this. I don't want anybody to know it.

I panic at the thought of my weakness and I fear being exposed.

That's why I frantically create a mask to hide behind, a nonchalant, sophisticated facade, to help me pretend, to shield me from the glance that knows.

But such a glance is precisely my salvation. My only salvation, and I know it.

That is, if that glance is followed by acceptance, if it's followed by love.

It's the only thing that can liberate me, from myself, from my own self-built prison walls, from the barriers that I so painstakingly erect.

It's the only thing that will assure me of what I can't assure myself, that I'm really worth something.

But I don't tell you this. I don't dare. I'm afraid to.

I'm afraid your glance will not be followed by acceptance and love.

I'm afraid you'll think less of me, you'll laugh and your laugh would kill me.

I'm afraid that deep down I'm nothing, that I'm just no good and that you will see this and reject me.

So I play my game, my desperate, pretending game, with a facade of assurance on the outside, and a trembling child within.

And so begins the parade of masks, the glittering but empty parade of masks.

And my life becomes a front.

I idly chatter to you in the suave tones of surface talk.

I tell you everything that is really nothing, and nothing of that which is everything, of what's crying within me.

So when I'm going through my routine, do not be fooled by what I'm saying.

Please listen carefully and try to hear what I'm not saying, what I'd like to be able to say, what, for survival, I need to say but I can't say.

I dislike hiding. Honestly I do.

I dislike the superficial game I'm playing, the superficial, phony game.

I'd really like to be genuine and spontaneous, and me - but you've got to help me.

You've got to hold out your hand even when that's the last thing I seem to want or need.

Only you can wipe away from my eyes the blank stare of the breathing dead.

Only you can call me into aliveness.

Each time you're kind and gentle and encouraging, each time you try to understand because you really care. My heart begins to grow wings, very small wings, very feeble wings, but wings with your sensitivity and sympathy and your power of understanding.

You can breathe life into me. I want you to know that. I want you to know how important you are to me, how you can be a creator of the person who is me if you choose to.

Please choose to. You alone can break down the wall behind which I tremble, you alone can remove my mask, you alone can release me from my show-world of panic and uncertainty, from my lonely prison. So do not pass me by.

Please do not pass me by. It will not be easy for you. A long conviction of worthlessness builds strong walls. The nearer you approach me, the blinder I may strike back.

It's irrational, but despite what the books say about people,
I am irrational.

I fight against the very thing that I cry out for.

But I am told that love is stronger than strong walls, and
in this lies my hope. My only hope.

Please try to beat down those walls with firm hands, but
with gentle hands, for a child is very sensitive, and
I am a child.

Who am I, you may wonder?

I am someone you know very well.

For I am every man you meet and I am every woman you meet.

Anonymous

- SIUC Newman Center

SESSION 9 - CLOSING PRAYER

Spontaneous prayer offered by the member of the group.
After adequate time for everyone to share, the session
will end with a song.

El Shaddi sung by Amy Grant

WHAT SORT OF PEOPLE DOES GOD INTEND US TO BE?

To this question Christ gave an explicit answer which, if considered seriously, is a real shock to the mind. He gave a complete reversal of conventional values and ambitions, though many people miss this undoubted fact because of the poetic form and archaic language of what are now called the "Beatitudes." This revolutionary character becomes apparent at once, however, if we substitute the word "happy" for the word "blessed" (which is perfectly fair), and if we paraphrase the familiar cadences of the Authorized Version and put the thoughts more into the form in which we normally accept facts and definitions. We may further throw their real character into relief by contrasting each "beatitude" with the normal view of the people of the world throughout the centuries. We can do it like this:

Most people think:

Happy are the pusher: for they get on in the world.
Happy are the hard boiled: for they never let life hurt them.
Happy are they who complain: for they get their own way in the end.
Happy are the blasé: for they never worry over their sins.
Happy are the slave drivers: for they get results.
Happy are the knowledgeable people of the world: for they know their way around.
Happy are the trouble makers: for people have to take notice of them.

Jesus Christ said:

Happy are those who realize their spiritual poverty: they have already entered the kingdom of reality.
Happy are they who bear their share of the world's pain: in the long run they will know more happiness than those who avoid it.
Happy are those who accept life and their own limitations: they will find more in life than anybody.
Happy are those who long to be truly "good": they will fully realize their ambition.
Happy are those who are ready to make allowances and to forgive: they will know the love of God.

Happy are those who are real in their thoughts and feelings: in the end they will see the ultimate reality, God.

Happy are those who help others to live together: they will be known to be doing God's work.

It is quite plain that Christ is setting up ideals of different quality from those commonly accepted. He is outlining the sort of human characteristics which may fairly be said to be co-operating with the purpose of Life, and He is by implication exposing the conventional mode of living which is at the heart based on self-love and leads to all kinds of unhappiness.

It should be noticed that this "recipe" for happy and constructive living is of universal application. It cuts across differences of temperament and variations in capacity. It outlines the kind of character which is possible for any person, gifted or relatively ungifted, strong or weak, clever or slow in the uptake. Once more we find Christ placing His finger not upon the externals, but upon the vital internal attitude.

J.B. Phillips

- Your God Is Too Small

SESSION 10 - CLOSING PRAYER

Spontaneous Prayer offered by members of the group.

After adequate time for everyone to share, the facilitators will invite the group to join hands and pray the Lord's Prayer together.

SESSION 12 - OPENING PRAYER

PHILIPPIANS 1:2-6, 8-11

Grace and peace be yours from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to my God every time I think of you - which is constantly, in every prayer I utter - rejoicing, as I plead on your behalf, at the way you have all continually help promote the gospel from the very first day. I am sure of this much: that he who has begun the good work in you will carry it through to completion, right up to the day of Christ Jesus. God himself can testify how much I long for each of you with the affection of Christ Jesus! My prayer is that your love may more and more abound, both in understanding and wealth of experience, so that with a clear conscience and blameless conduct you may learn to value the things that really matter, up to the very day of Christ. It is my wish that you may be found rich in the harvest of justice which Jesus Christ has ripened in you, to the glory and praise of God.

- Translation from
New American Bible

SESSION 12 - CLOSING PRAYER

PHILIPPIANS 1:2-6

Grace and peace be yours from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to my God every time I think of you - which is constantly, in every prayer I utter - rejoicing, as I plead on your behalf, at the way you have all continually help promote the gospel from the very first day. I am sure of this much: that he who has begun the good work in you will carry it through to completion, right up to the day of Christ Jesus.

- Translation from
New American Bible

MEDITATION BEFORE THE EUCHARISTIC CELEBRATION

THE EUCHARIST

He was old,
tired,
and sweaty,
pushing his homemade cart
down the alley, stopping now and then
to poke around in somebody's garbage.

I wanted to tell him about EUCHARIST
But the look in his eyes,
the despair on his face,
the hopelessness of somebody else's life in his cart,
Told me to forget it.
So I smiled, said "Hi" - and gave him EUCHARIST.

She was cute,
nice build, a little too much paint,
wobbly on her feet as she slid from her barstool, and on the make.
"No, thanks, not tonight," - and I gave her EUCHARIST.

She lived alone,
her husband dead,
her family gone,
And she talked at you, not to you,
words, endless words, spewed out,
So I listened - and gave her EUCHARIST.

Downtown is nice,
Lights change from red to green, and back again,
Flashing blues, pinks and oranges.
I gulped them in,
Said, "Thank you, Father," - and made them EUCHARIST.

I laughed at myself,
and told myself,
"You, with all your sin,
and all your selfishness,
I forgive you,
I accept you,
I love you."
It's nice, and necessary to give yourself EUCHARIST.

My Father, when will we learn - You cannot talk EUCHARIST - you cannot
philosophize about it. YOU DO IT.

You don't dogmatize EUCHARIST.

Sometimes you laugh it, sometimes you cry it, often you sing it.

Sometimes it's wild peace, then crying hurt, often humiliating,
never deserved.

You see Eucharist in another's eyes, give it in another's hand held tight,
squeeze it in an embrace.

You pause EUCHARIST in the middle of a busy day, speak it in another's ear,
listen to it from a person who wants to talk.

For EUCHARIST is as simple as being on time
and as profound as sympathy.

I give you my supper,

 I give you my sustenance,

 I give you my life,

 I give you me,

I give you EUCHARIST.

Morton T. Kelsey

- The Other Side of Silence

APPENDIX B

STRUCTURED EXERCISE - ONE

FIRST NAMES, FIRST IMPRESSIONS: A FEEDBACK EXPERIENCE

Goals

1. To get acquainted with other members of a small group.
2. To discover one's initial impact on others.
3. To study phenomena related to first impressions - their accuracy and effects.

Group Size

Six to twelve participants.

Time Required

Approximately one hour.

Materials

Two sheets of paper and a pencil for each participant.

Physical Setting

Group members should be seated in a circle, with lapboards for writing.

Process

1. At the first meeting of the group, the facilitator directs that each person give their first name and one or two significant facts about themselves.
2. Participants are then instructed to turn their chairs around, away from the circle, so that they cannot see the other group members. They are told to write down as many of the first names as they can remember.
3. After about three minutes, they turn their chairs back toward the group and find out whose name they forgot. They may ask for additional information to attach to the names that they found difficult to remember.
4. The group discusses names, feelings attached to them, difficulties experienced in remembering them, and reactions of those whose names were not remembered.

5. The facilitator hands out additional sheets of paper, and participants are directed to write a group roster (names in the same order on each). Then they are asked to note briefly their first impressions of each group member.
6. These first impressions papers are collected by the facilitator. Without revealing the identity of the writers, he/she reads all impressions of the first participant, who is then asked to comment on the accuracy of the impressions, feelings while hearing them, and surprising items. Then all impressions of the second participant are read aloud, this person reacts, and so on.

Variations

1. Present impressions can be substituted for first impressions, if participants have known each other before.
2. First and present impressions can be used.

STRUCTURED EXERCISE - TWO

JOURNEY TO NOW

Goals

1. Introduction of group members on a deeper level.
2. Express fears and expectations.
3. To use the skill of giving and receiving feedback.
4. Generate self-disclosure.
5. Build cohesion and trust.

Group Size

Unlimited.

Time Required

Allow appropriate time according to group size.

Materials

Large pieces of paper (24 x 36 in.), markers, colored pencils, crayons, tape, glue, scissors, bibles.

Physical Setting

Large room in which participants may move freely.

Soft, meditative music may be playing in the background to facilitate prayerfulness.

Process

1. Participants are instructed that they are to create a story telling of their personal faith journeys. This can be done with drawings, words, phrases, scripture passages. This journey is to include the present moment. Participants are also encouraged to express their fears and expectations on these posters. They may or may not sign their names.
2. After adequate time, they are told that they will circle around the room and respond to the other group members' poster with a word or a short phrase, with what they see or experience from this poster. Every participant will review every poster.

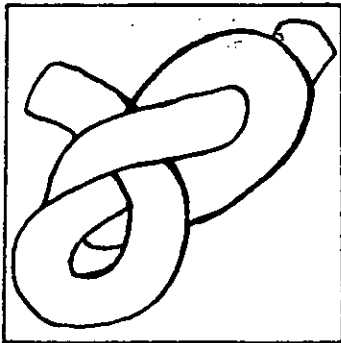
3. Upon completion of signing the other group members posters, they return to their own. Time is allowed to review and reflect on what they see written on their personal posters.
4. It is recommended that the above experience be done in silence with only the music playing.
5. Every group member shares his/her meaning in the story that they wrote, referring if needed to the poster. Feelings are also shared from the feedback given by the other group members on their poster.

VanLeeuwen and Frye
- Newman Center R.C.I.A. Program

STRUCTURED EXERCISE - THREE

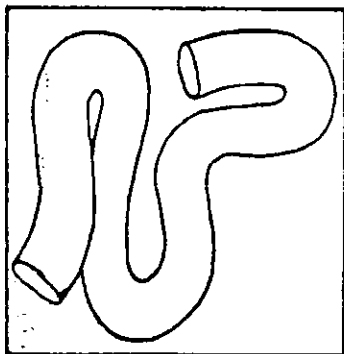
CHANGE

MY WORLD IS TIED TOGETHER: A time when things hang together and are predictable. My world is steady and secure, though not necessarily pleasant.



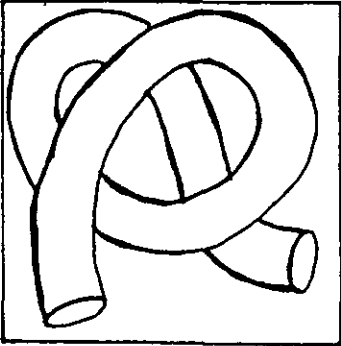
Describe one time in your life when you felt your world was secure and predictable:

MY WORLD IS UNTIED: Something either from within or from without unties my predictable and secure world. It may have been something good and pleasant or it may have been something painful and not so pleasant.



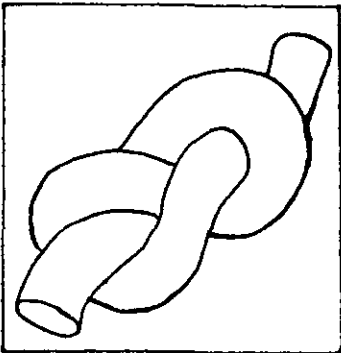
What from within or from without untied your secure and predictable world?

MY WORLD AT LOOSE ENDS: A time of transition when things do not hang together. Old patterns no longer work. New patterns are not yet clear.



How did you feel when the pieces of your life were scattered and not hanging together?

TYING MY WORLD TOGETHER AGAIN: Finally I put things together in a new, stable and predictable way that is different from the way I was.



What new or different patterns of thinking and acting emerged?

STRUCTURED EXERCISE - FOUR

CHOOSING A COLOR: A MULTIPLE-ROLE-PLAY

Goals

1. To explore behavioral responses to an ambiguous task.
2. To demonstrate the effects of shared leadership.

Group Size

Twelve participants.

Time Required

Approximately one hour.

Materials

1. Prepare the following according to the Choosing a Color Envelopes Instruction Sheet:
 - A. Envelope I: Directions for Phase I and ten to twelve smaller envelopes, each containing an instruction card for an individual role player.
 - B. Envelope II: Directions for Phase II.
 - C. Envelope III: Directions for Phase III.
2. Large envelope containing envelopes I, II, III.

Physical Setting

Group is seated in a circle.

Process

1. The facilitator discusses the concept of shared leadership. The following roles are explained:
 1. Information-seeker
 2. Tension-reliever
 3. Clarifier
 4. Gatekeeper
 5. Initiator
 6. Follower
 7. Information-giver
 8. Harmonizer
2. The facilitator places the large envelope which contains Envelopes I, II, III in the center of the

group. The group is given no further instructions or information. (The group must complete Phases I, II, III by following the directions in the envelopes.)

3. After Phase III has been completed, the facilitator leads a discussion of the entire process, with special focus on the dimensions of shared leadership.

Variations

1. The content of the exercise can be adapted to the particular learning needs of participants by changing the nature of the problem and the positions which role players are to take.

Pfeiffer and Jones

- Volume I, Exercise #12

CHOOSING A COLOR ENVELOPES INSTRUCTION SHEET

The following instructions are written on the large envelope which contains envelopes I, II, and III.

.....

INSTRUCTIONS: Enclosed you will find three envelopes which contain directions for the phases of this group session. You are to open the envelope labeled I at once. Subsequent instructions will tell you when to open Envelope II and Envelope III.

.....

Envelope I holds a sheet of paper with the following group task instructions and smaller envelopes each containing a role-player card.

.....

Instructions for Group Task: Phase I

Time Allowed: 25 minutes

Task: The group is to choose a color.

Special Instructions: Each members is to take one of the smaller envelopes from Envelope I and to follow the individual instructions contained on the card in it.

DO NOT LET ANYONE SEE YOUR INSTRUCTIONS!

(After twenty-five minutes go on to the next envelope.)

.....

Instructions for Facilitator: How to Prepare Role-Player Cards.

Envelope I holds smaller envelopes containing instructions for role and positions that role players are to take. (Two of the instructions include special knowledge.) If there are fewer than twelve participants in the group, eliminate as many of the roles and positions as are necessary, from the back, up. There must be at least nine people in the group. The information should be typed on cards. Then each card should be put in a small envelope.

1. Role: Information-seeker
Position: Support blue.

2. Role: Tension-reliever
Position: Introduce the ideas of a different
color - orange.

3. Role: Clarifier
Position: Support red.

4. Role: None
Position: None

(You have the special knowledge that the group
is going to be asked to select a chairman later
in the exercise. You are to conduct yourself
in such a manner that they will select you as
chairman.)

5. Role: Gatekeeper
Position: Against red.

6. Role: Initiator
Position: Support green.

7. Role: None
Position: None

(Same as #4.)

8. Role: Follower
Position: Against red.

9. Role: Information-giver
Position: Against blue.

10. Role: Harmonizer
Position: Against green.

11. Role: Harmonizer
Position: Against blue.

12. Role: Information-seeker
Position: Support green.

.....
Envelope II contains a sheet of paper with the following instructions:

.....
Instructions for Group Task: Phase II

Time allowed: 5-10 minutes.

Task: You are to choose a group chairman.
(After the chairman is chosen, go on to next envelope.)

.....
Envelope III contains a sheet of paper with the following instructions:

.....
Instructions for Group Task: Phase III

Time allowed: 15 minutes.

Task: You are to discuss the process that emerged during the problem-solving phase of this group session.

Special Instructions: The chairman will lead the discussion.
Sample questions:

1. What behaviors helped the group in accomplishing its task?
2. What behaviors hindered the group in accomplishing its task?

(After fifteen minutes return the materials to their respective envelopes.)

STRUCTURED EXERCISE - FIVE

THE IN-GROUP: DYNAMICS OF EXCLUSION

Goals

1. To allow participants to experience consciously excluding and being excluded.
2. To confront feelings which exclusion generates.
3. To examine processes by which social identity is conferred by the excluding group and accepted by excluded member.

Group Size

Unlimited number of groups of five or six participants.

Time required

Approximately one-and-a-half hours.

Materials

Refreshments, such as cold drinks and snacks.

Physical Setting

Room large enough so that the group can work without disturbing each other.

Process

1. The facilitator forms small groups of five or six participants each and asks the groups to seated on the floor, leaving some distance between the groups.
2. The facilitator directs each group to exclude some member based upon criteria consensually devised by the group. He tells the groups that they have twenty minutes to perform this task. When each excluded member has been selected, s/he is sent to a predetermined place in the room.
3. After each group has excluded a member and the excluded participants are seated in the special place provided for them, the facilitator tells everyone

except those who were excluded to take a fifteen minute refreshment break. He instructs those taking a break not to communicate with or include, in any way, the members of the excluded group during this time.

4. Following the refreshment break, the facilitator asks the groups to reassemble and quickly choose a spokesperson. Excluded members may not rejoin their groups at this time. He then asks the excluded group to locate in the center of the room and the nonexcluded groups to form around this group in clusters so that each group remains intact.
5. The facilitator asks each member of the excluded group to tell us why he was excluded from the group, whether he feels that the exclusion was justified, how he feels about the group that excluded him, and how he feels about the other excluded members.
6. After each excluded member has spoken, the facilitator asks the spokesperson from each group to tell what their criteria were for excluding and why they felt that the excluded member met the criteria.
7. When each spokesperson has finished, the original groups are reassembled, including excluded members. Their task is to react to the content of the previous phases.
8. The facilitator then asks the participants to form one large group. He presents a lecturette on the dynamics of exclusion, emphasizing aspects of social identity, characteristics of interactions between "stigmatized" persons and "normals," and characteristics of interactions among "stigmatized" persons. Following the lecturette, the total group is engaged in processing the experience in terms of the theory input.

Pfeiffer and Jones

- Volume IV, Exercise #124

STRUCTURED EXERCISE - SIX

GROUP DEVELOPMENT: A GRAPHIC ANALYSIS

Goals

1. To compare the development of a small group along the dimensions of task functions and personal relations.
2. To compare members' perceptions of the developmental status of a group at a given time.

Group Size

Up to twelve participants.

Time Required

Approximately forty-five minutes.

Materials

1. Pencils
2. Copies of the Group Development Graph for all participants.
3. Newsprint and a felt-tipped marker.

Physical Setting

Individuals should be seated far enough apart so as to not influence each other. They should be able to read a poster presented by the facilitator.

Process

1. The facilitator gives a brief lecturette on group development, stressing the movement from orientation to problem-solving and from dependency to interdependence. He discusses the psychological climate of the group as a correlate of group growth. Each participant is given a Group Development Graph as a part of the lecturette.
2. Participants are instructed to portray the group according to the directions on the graph.
3. Participants' marks are posted, and the group discusses patterns in the perceptions of the members. Members

should be encouraged to recall specific behaviors from recent group interactions which explain their perceptions.

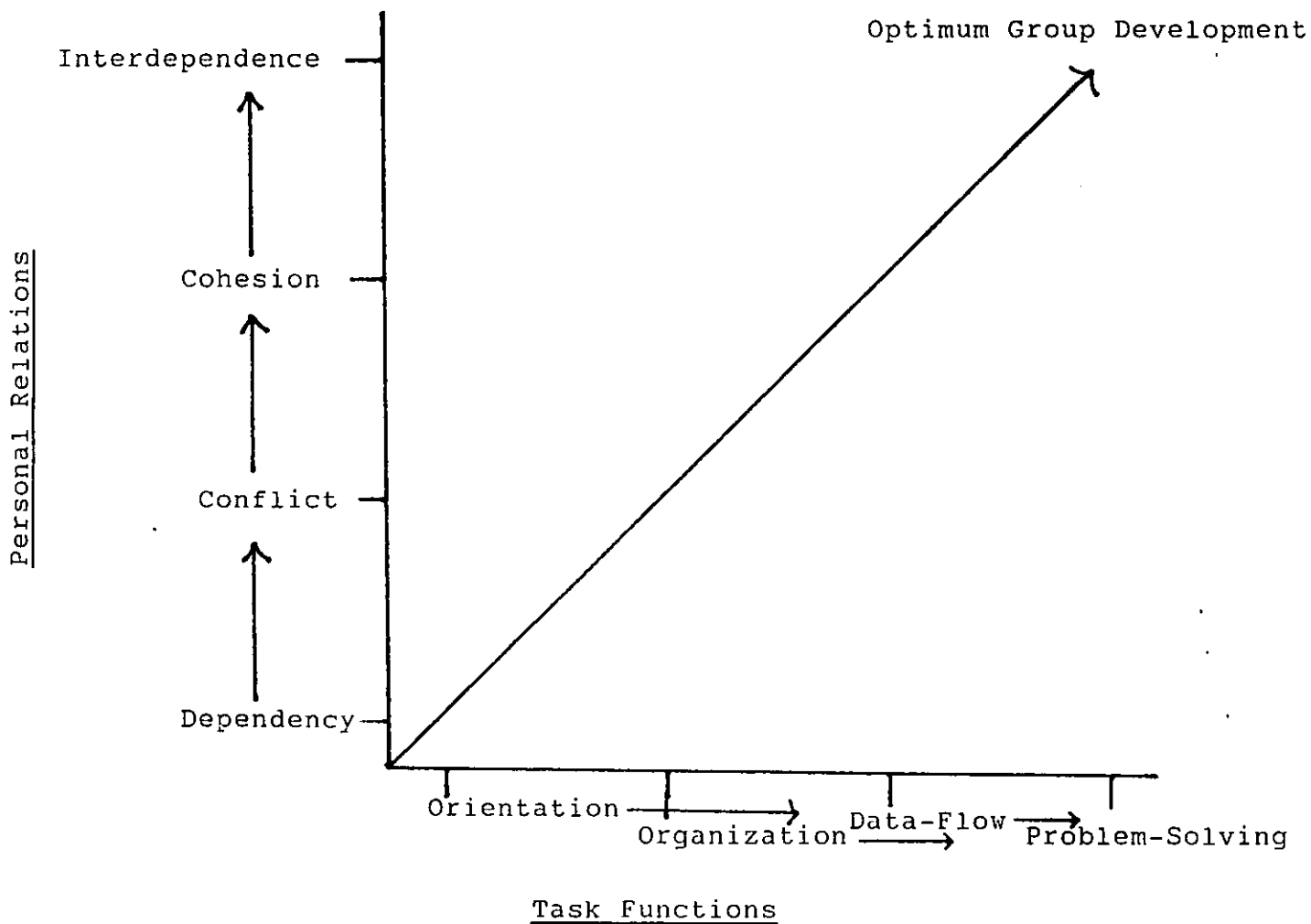
Variations

The process can be augmented by a discussion of behaviors needed to facilitate the group's growth toward optimal functioning.

Pfeiffer and Jones
- Volume II, Exercise #39

GROUP DEVELOPMENT GRAPH

Instructions: On the graph below locate the levels at which you believe your group is functioning in both personal relations and task functions. Draw a line from each point until the two lines intersect on the graph.



STRUCTURED EXERCISE - SEVEN

GROUP SELF-EVALUATIONS: A COLLECTION OF INSTRUMENTS

Goals

1. To help a group evaluate its own functioning.
2. To provide a way to examine objectively the participation of group members.
3. To explore the norms that have developed in a group which has been meeting for some time.

Group Size

Eight to twelve members.

Time Required

Varies according to the evaluative procedures used.

Materials

1. Select one of the following forms and prepare copies of it for all participants:
Group-Climate Inventory
Group-Growth Evaluation Form
Feedback Rating Scales
Postmeeting Reactions Form
2. Pencils
3. Newsprint and felt-tipped marker

Physical Setting

Participants should be seated comfortably for writing, where they can see the posted results.

Process

Each of the following forms focuses on some aspect of group life which the facilitator may wish to discuss. A general process is suggested for the use of these inventories.

1. After a typical meeting of an ongoing group, the facilitator distributes copies of the form selected.

Members are instructed to complete the form individually.

2. As soon as members finish, the data are posted on newsprint.
3. The facilitator leads a discussion of the data, eliciting specific instances of behavioral trends. He may offer appropriate theory material during this analytical stage.
4. Group members are asked to plan new behavior for the next meeting in the light of the findings.

Pfeiffer and Jones

- Volume III, Exercise #55

GROUP-GROWTH EVALUATION FORM

Directions: Rate your group on each characteristic as the group was initially and as it is now. Use a seven-point scale with 7 as the highest rating.

CLIMATE

Initially Now

- | | | |
|-------|-------|--|
| _____ | _____ | 1. I am treated as a human being, not as just another group member. |
| _____ | _____ | 2. I feel close to the members of this group. |
| _____ | _____ | 3. This group displays cooperation and teamwork. |
| _____ | _____ | 4. Membership in this group is aiding my personal growth. |
| _____ | _____ | 5. I have trust and confidence in the other members of this group. |
| _____ | _____ | 6. Members of this group show supportive behavior toward each other. |
| _____ | _____ | 7. I derive satisfaction from my membership in this group. |
| _____ | _____ | 8. I feel psychologically close to this group. |
| _____ | _____ | 9. I get a sense of accomplishment from my membership in this group. |
| | | |
| _____ | _____ | 10. I am being honest in responding to this evaluation. |
| | | |

DATA FLOW

Initially Now

- | | | |
|-------|-------|---|
| _____ | _____ | 11. I am willing to share information with other members of the group. |
| _____ | _____ | 12. I feel free to discuss important personal matters with group members. |

GOAL FORMATION

Initially Now

- | | | |
|-------|-------|---|
| _____ | _____ | 13. I am oriented toward personal goals rather than toward group objectives. |
| _____ | _____ | 14. This group uses integrative, constructive methods in problem-solving, rather than a competitive approach. |
| _____ | _____ | 15. I am able to deal promptly and well with the important problems of this group. |
| _____ | _____ | 16. The activities of this group reflect a constructive integration of the needs and desires of its members. |
| _____ | _____ | 17. My needs and desires are reflected in the activities of this group. |

CONTROL

Initially Now

- | | | |
|-------|-------|---|
| _____ | _____ | 18. This group has a real sense of responsibility for getting a job done. |
| _____ | _____ | 19. I feel manipulated by the group. |
| _____ | _____ | 20. I think that I manipulate the group. |

FEEDBACK RATING SCALES

"Feedback" is a communication to a person (or a group) which gives that person information about how he affects others. Feedback helps an individual consider and alter his behavior and thus achieve his goals.

Below are eight criteria for useful feedback. Rate the feedback that usually occurs in your group by circling the appropriate number on each of the eight scales. You also may want to make some notes for each criterion, such as particular group occurrences.

1. Useful feedback is descriptive rather than evaluative. It merely describes the sender's reaction, thus leaving the receiver free to use it or not. By avoiding evaluative language, it reduces the need for the receiver to respond defensively.

Descriptive 1 2 3 4 5 6 Evaluative

Comments:

2. It is specific rather than general. To be told that one is "dominating" will probably not be as useful as to be told: "Just now when we were deciding the issue, you did not listen to what others said, and I felt forced to accept your arguments or to face attack from you."

Specific 1 2 3 4 5 6 General

Comments:

3. It takes into account the needs of both the receiver and the giver of feedback. Feedback can be destructive when it serves only the giver's needs and fails to consider the needs of the receiver.

Takes needs of both into account 1 2 3 4 5 6 Does not take needs of both into account

4. It is directed toward behavior the receiver can change. Frustration is only increased when one is reminded of a shortcoming over which he has no control.

Directed towards
modifiable
behavior

1 2 3 4 5 6

Directed towards
nonmodifiable
behavior

Comments:

5. It is solicited rather than imposed. Feedback is most useful when the receiver himself asks a question which those observing him can answer.

Solicited

1 2 3 4 5 6

Imposed

Comments:

6. It is well timed. In general, feedback is most useful when given as soon as possible after the observed behavior (depending, of course, on the person's readiness to hear it, on support available from others, etc.).

Well Timed

1 2 3 4 5 6

Poorly Timed

Comments:

7. It is checked with the sender. For example, the receiver can rephrase the feedback he has received to insure clear communications.

Checked
with sender

1 2 3 4 5 6

Not checked
with sender

Comments:

8. It is checked with others in the group. In a training group, particularly, both giver and receiver can check their feedback: It is only one person's impression, or is it shared by others?

Checked
with others

1 2 3 4 5 6

Not checked
with others

Comments:

STRUCTURED EXERCISE - EIGHT

GROUP-ON-GROUP: A FEEDBACK EXPERIENCE

Goals

1. To develop skills in process observation.
2. To develop skills in giving appropriate feedback to individual group members..

Group Size

Two groups of five to twelve participants each. More than one pair of groups may be directed simultaneously.

Time Required

Approximately one hour.

Physical Setting

The two groups sit in concentric circles facing inward.

Process

1. The facilitator instructs participants to seat themselves according to the above instructions. Then he explains the goals of the exercise and the general sequence of activities.
2. The facilitator instructs members of the outer circle to observe individuals' effects on the group process and on group task accomplishment.
3. The inner-circle group participates in an activity chosen by the facilitator.
4. After about ten minutes, the facilitator asks the participants in the inner circle to caucus with their observers. The facilitator instructs observers to give feedback in accordance with the criteria of effective feedback, as described in "Openness, Collusion, and Feedback," The 1972 Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators, page 199.
5. The process is then reversed so that observers now become inner-circle participants. New dyads should

be formed to minimize retribution.

6. The facilitator introduces another activity, and the process is repeated.
7. The facilitator reassembles the entire group and leads a discussion of the process.

Variation

1. Two rounds of interaction can be experienced by each group. This permits observations about the effects of the feedback.

Pfeiffer and Jones

- Volume I, Exercise #6

STRUCTURED EXERCISE - NINE

CONVERSATION STARTERS: A COMMUNICATIONS EXPERIENCE

Goals

1. To emphasize the need for careful, active listening during conversation.
2. To study dynamics involved in group conversation.
3. To explore both helpful and hindering communication behaviors in a small group.
4. To make distinctions between thoughts and feelings.

Group Size

Five to seven participants.

Time Required

One and one-half hours.

Materials

A set of index cards, with the questions printed, for each group.

Physical Setting

A room large enough so that the groups will not interfere with each others conversation.

Process

1. The facilitator begins with a brief lecturette on communication skills.
2. The facilitator discusses the goals for this exercise. Then small groups are formed and assemble.
3. Each group is given the set of twenty-five cards; twenty-four with questions and one blank. The cards are placed in the center of the group face down and spread out.
4. It is explained that each member will have a turn at answering a question. Upon selecting a card the member will have time to read over the question and decide whether to answer it or not. If the member should choose not to answer the particular question,

that card is placed back into the original group of cards, face down and the cards are mixed. The member then selects another card. The one blank card is for group members to use as they so choose; sharing something that they feel important. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL A MEMBER HAVE TO ANSWER A QUESTION THAT THEY DO NOT FEEL COMFORTABLE ABOUT.

5. When one member has selected a question, the other group members will wait to select a card until after the focus is off the member answering.

Rita M. Frye

- R.C.I.A. Newman Center

CONVERSATION STARTER QUESTIONS

Instructions: Each of the following questions are to be typed or printed on 3" x 5" index cards, one question per card.

1. What are your three strongest "masculine" and your three strongest "feminine" traits?
2. To whom do you apply the term "minister"?
3. When people talk of God's presence in me I feel . . .
4. I most deeply felt God's absence when . . .
5. About humankind as image of God, I believe . . .
6. Do you believe Jesus has all the answers to all our problems?
7. Do you believe Jesus always knew how things were going to turn out?
8. I wonder what Jesus would do if . . .
9. The most important question for me about my life right now is . . .
10. What are three purposes of your parish?
11. Have you ever considered changing religions?
12. Conversation with my friends is . . .
13. When I'm in a large gathering of people, I feel . . .
14. I feel my work is . . .
15. I believe families today are . . .
16. When was the last time someone forgave you?
17. When was the last time you thought about death?
18. When was the last time you forgave someone else?
19. When was the last time you forgave yourself?
20. If I could relive one week of my life, I would choose . . .
21. Do you believe God feels our pain?
22. I most needed God when . . .
23. God most needed me when . . .
24. My most important ministry in the world is . . .
25. BLANK

STRUCTURED EXERCISE - TEN

BROKEN SQUARES: NONVERBAL PROBLEM-SOLVING

Goals

1. To analyze some aspects of cooperation in solving a group problem.
2. To sensitize participants to behaviors which may contribute toward or obstruct the solving of a group problem.

Group Size

Any number of groups of six participants each. There are five participants and an observer/judge in each group.

Time Required

Approximately forty-five minutes.

Materials

1. A set of broken squares for each group of five participants.
2. One copy for each group of the Broken Squares Group Instruction Sheet.
3. One copy for each observer of the Broken Squares Observer/Judge Instruction Sheet.

Physical Setting

A table that will seat five participants is needed for each group. Tables should be spaced far enough apart so that no group can see the problem-solving results of other groups.

Process

1. The facilitator begins with a discussion of the meaning of cooperation; this should lead to hypotheses about what is essential to successful group cooperation in problem-solving. The facilitator indicates that the

group will conduct an experiment to test these hypotheses. Points such as the following are likely to emerge:

1. Each individual should understand total problem.
 2. Each individual should understand how he can contribute toward solving the problem.
 3. Each individual should be aware of the potential contributions of other individuals.
 4. There is a need to recognize the problems of other individuals in order to aid them in making their maximum contribution.
 5. Groups that pay attention to their own problem-solving processes are likely to be more effective than the groups that do not.
2. The facilitator forms groups of five participants plus the observer/judge. These observers are each given a copy of the Broken Squares Observer/Judge Instruction Sheet. The facilitator then asks each group to distribute among its members the set of broken squares (five envelopes). The envelopes are to remain unopened until the signal to begin work is given.
 3. The facilitator gives to each group a copy of the Broken Squares Group Instruction Sheet. The facilitator reads these instructions to the group, calling for questions or questioning groups about their understanding of the instructions.
 4. He then tells the groups to begin work. It is important that the facilitator monitor tables during the exercise to enforce rules established in the instructions.
 5. When all groups have completed the task, the facilitator engages the groups in a discussion of the experience. Observations are solicited from observers/judges.

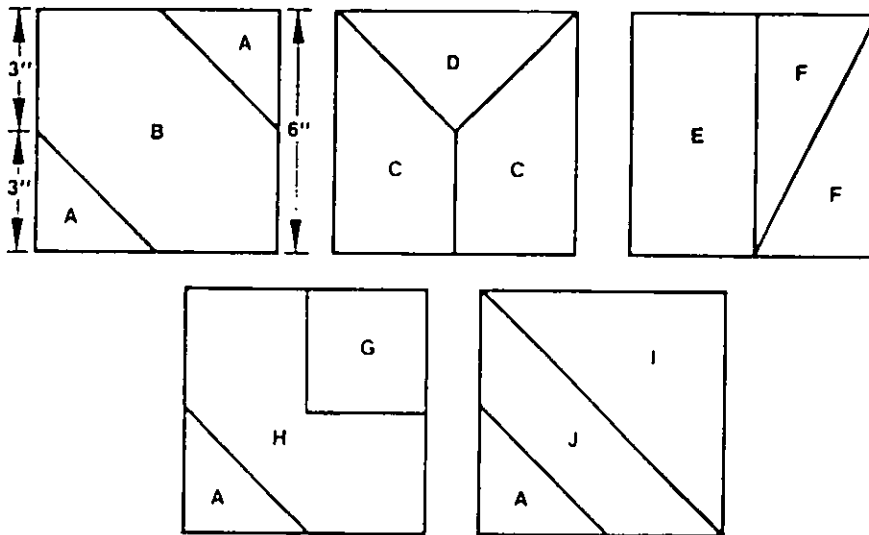
The facilitator encourages the groups to relate this experience to their "back-home" situations.

Pfeiffer and Jones
- Volume I, Exercise #7

DIRECTIONS FOR MAKING A SET OF BROKEN SQUARES

A set consists of five envelopes containing pieces of cardboard cut into different patterns which, when properly arranged, will form five squares of equal size. One set should be provided for each group of five persons.

To prepare a set, cut out five cardboard squares exactly 6" x 6". Place the squares in a row and mark them as below, penciling the letters lightly so they can be erased.



The lines should be so drawn that, when the pieces are cut out, those marked A will be exactly the same size, all the pieces marked C the same size, etc. Several combinations are possible that will form one or two squares, but only one combination will form all five squares, each 6" x 6". After drawing the lines on the squares and labeling the sections with letters, cut each square along the lines into smaller pieces to make the parts of the puzzle.

Label the five envelopes 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Distribute the cardboard pieces into the five envelopes as follows: envelope 1 has pieces I, H, E; 2 has A, A, A, C; 3 has A, J; 4 has D, F; and 5 has G, B, F, C.

Erase the penciled letter from each piece and write, instead, the number of the envelope it is in. This makes it easy to return the pieces to the proper envelope, for subsequent use, after the group has completed the task.

Each set may be made from a different color of cardboard.

BROKEN SQUARES GROUP INSTRUCTION SHEET

Each of you has an envelope which contains pieces of cardboard for forming squares. When the facilitator gives the signal to begin, the task of your group is to form five (5) squares of equal size. The task will not be completed until each individual has before him/her a perfect square of the same size as those in front of the other group members.

Specific limitations are imposed upon your group during this exercise.

1. No member may speak.
2. No member may ask another member for a piece or in any way signal that another person is to give him/her a piece. (Members may voluntarily give pieces to other members.)

BROKEN SQUARES OBSERVER/JUDGE INSTRUCTION SHEET

Your job is part observer and part judge. As a judge, you should make sure each participant observes the following rules:

1. There is to be no talking, pointing, or any other kind of communicating.
2. Participants may give pieces directly to other participants but may not take pieces from other members.
3. Participants may not place their pieces into the center for others to take.
4. It is permissible for a member to give away all the pieces to his puzzle, even if he has already formed a square.

As an observer, look for the following:

1. Who is willing to give away pieces of the puzzle?
2. Does anyone finish "his" puzzle and then withdraw from the group problem-solving?
3. Is there anyone who continually struggles with his pieces, yet is unwilling to give any or all of them away?
4. How many people are actively engaged in putting the pieces together?
5. What is the level of frustration and anxiety?
6. Is there any turning point at which the group begins to cooperate?
7. Does anyone try to violate the rules by talking or pointing as a means of helping fellow members solve the problem?

STRUCTURED EXERCISE - ELEVEN

PROCESS INTERVENTION: A FACILITATOR PRACTICE SESSION

Goals

1. To provide practice in intervening in small groups.
2. To generate feedback on intervention styles.

Group Size

Six to twelve participants.

Time Required

Unlimited. At least an hour.

Materials

1. Some object which can be held in the hands of the person designated as "facilitator for the moment": book, ashtray, chalkboard eraser, etc.

Physical Setting

A circle of chairs.

Process

1. The facilitator-participants choose a person to act as the facilitator of the group. This person holds the object in their hands.
2. Members have a "here-and now" meeting. The "facilitator" makes two interventions. When this person feels a third intervention is appropriate, they raise the object, and the meeting stops.
3. Each member writes down what they think would be the most appropriate intervention at this point. These are read aloud and discussed, and the person who appears to have devised the best intervention is designated to be the next facilitator and is given the object. Before the group meeting continues, the first facilitator is given feedback on his interventions.

4. The group holds another "here-and-now" meeting, and the process is repeated with the second "facilitator." The group works through as many cycles as time permits.

Variations

1. Members can take turns being the facilitator, instead of being designated by group consensus.
2. Co-facilitators can be used.

Pfeiffer and Jones

- Volume II, Exercise #48

STRUCTURED EXERCISE - TWELVE

THERAPIST STYLE MEASURE

Please indicate, by marking on the line below each paragraph, the degree to which it describes your typical group therapy style.

1. The group leader sees him/herself, and is seen by others as high in self confidence and self assurance; members demonstrate a willingness to be influenced by him/her and to imitate his/her style, values, behavior, and beliefs. He/she does not communicate internal conflict; is inspiring and stimulating. It is through the leader's force of personality that the group moves ahead and that people in it have specific experiences; elicits participation of the group members through challenge, confrontation and exhortation. The group leader values personal confrontation, the shaking up or unsettling and challenging of members' assumptions about themselves and sometimes refuses to accept a member's view of him/herself. The group leader has frequent dialogues with individual members; self-discloses readily and perhaps frequently. The leader emphasizes the revealing of feelings, personal values, attitudes and beliefs by demonstration; is a risk taker.

UNLIKE
ME

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

VERY MUCH
LIKE ME

2. The group leader can be characterized by: is protecting; offers friendship, affection and frequent invitations for members to seek feedback as well as support, praise and encouragement; expresses considerable warmth, acceptance and genuineness; shows real concern for other human beings in the group; establishes specific personal relationships with particular group members who he/she works with in a caring manner; is perceived by members as symbolizing giving, understanding, sympathy, openness and kindness.

UNLIKE
ME

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

VERY MUCH
LIKE ME

3. The group leader can be characterized by: gives meaning to experiences members undergo; translates feelings and behaviors into ideas; provides concepts for how to understand feelings and experiences; explains, clarifies, interprets; provides frameworks for how to change; attaches meaning to member and/or group feelings, experiences, and behavior; offers explanations for consideration; names experiences individual members and/or the group is having; may suggest that the experience be looked into.

UNLIKE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 VERY MUCH
ME LIKE ME

4. The group leader can be characterized by: concerned with the general control of the group interaction and management of the group as a social system; makes use of limit-setting (sets rules, goals, norms, time limits, directions of movement, manages sequencing, stopping, blocking, interceding, decision making, etc.); elicits, invites, questions and suggests procedures for the group to use rather than demonstrating them; emphasis on prescriptive behavior in which the form and type of action is constructed by the leader; makes heavy use of structured material (structured exercises, "games," etc.) as a mechanism for goal achievement.

UNLIKE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 VERY MUCH
ME LIKE ME

EPSY 543

- Class Handout

STRUCTURED EXERCISE - THIRTEEN

T-P LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE: AN ASSESSMENT OF STYLE

Goal

To evaluate oneself in terms of task orientation and people orientation.

Group Size

Unlimited.

Time Required

Approximately forty-five minutes.

Materials

1. T-P Leadership Questionnaire for each participant.
2. Pencil for each participant.
3. T-P Leadership-Style Profile Sheet for each participant.

Physical Setting

Participants should be seated at tables or desk chairs.

Process

1. Without prior discussion, the facilitator asks participants to fill out the T-P Leadership Questionnaire.
2. Before the questionnaires are scored, the facilitator presents a brief lecturette on shared leadership as a function of the combined concern for task and people.
3. The facilitator announces that, in order to locate him/herself on the Leadership-Style Profile Sheet, each group participant will score his own questionnaire on the dimensions of task orientation (T) and people orientation(P).
4. The facilitator instructs the participants in the scoring as follows:
 1. Circle the item number for items 8, 12, 17, 18, 19, 30, 34, and 35.

2. Write the number 1 in front of a circled item number if you responded S (seldom) or N (never) to that item.
 3. Also write a number 1 in front of item numbers not circled if you responded A (always) or F (frequently).
 4. Circle the number 1's which you have written in front of the following items: 3, 5, 8, 10, 15, 18, 19, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 32, 34, and 35.
 5. Count the circled number 1's. This is your score for concern for people. Record the score in the blank following P at the end of the questionnaire.
 6. Count the uncircled number 1's. This is your score for concern for tasks. Record this number in the blank following the letter T.
5. The facilitator distributes the Leadership-Style Profile Sheet and instructs participants to follow directions on the sheet. He then leads a discussion of implications members attach to their location on the profile.

Variations

Participants can predict how they will appear on the profile prior to scoring the questionnaire.

Pfeiffer and Jones

- Volume I, Exercise #3

T-P LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE

Directions: The following items describe aspects of leadership behavior. Respond to each item according to the way you would most likely act if you were the leader of a work group. Circle whether you would most likely behave in the described way: always (A), frequently (F), occasionally (O), seldom (S), or never (N).

- A F O S N 1. I would most likely act as the spokesperson of the group.
- A F O S N 2. I would encourage overtime work.
- A F O S N 3. I would allow members complete freedom in their work.
- A F O S N 4. I would encourage the use of uniform procedures.
- A F O S N 5. I would permit the members to use their own judgment in solving problems.
- A F O S N 6. I would stress being ahead of competing groups.
- A F O S N 7. I would speak as a representative of the group.
- A F O S N 8. I would needle members for greater effort.
- A F O S N 9. I would try out my ideas in the group.
- A F O S N 10. I would let the members do their work the way they think best.
- A F O S N 11. I would be working hard for a promotion.
- A F O S N 12. I would tolerate postponement and uncertainty.
- A F O S N 13. I would speak for the group if there were visitors present.
- A F O S N 14. I would keep the work moving at a rapid pace.
- A F O S N 15. I would turn the members loose on a job and let them go to it.
- A F O S N 16. I would settle conflicts when they occur in the group.

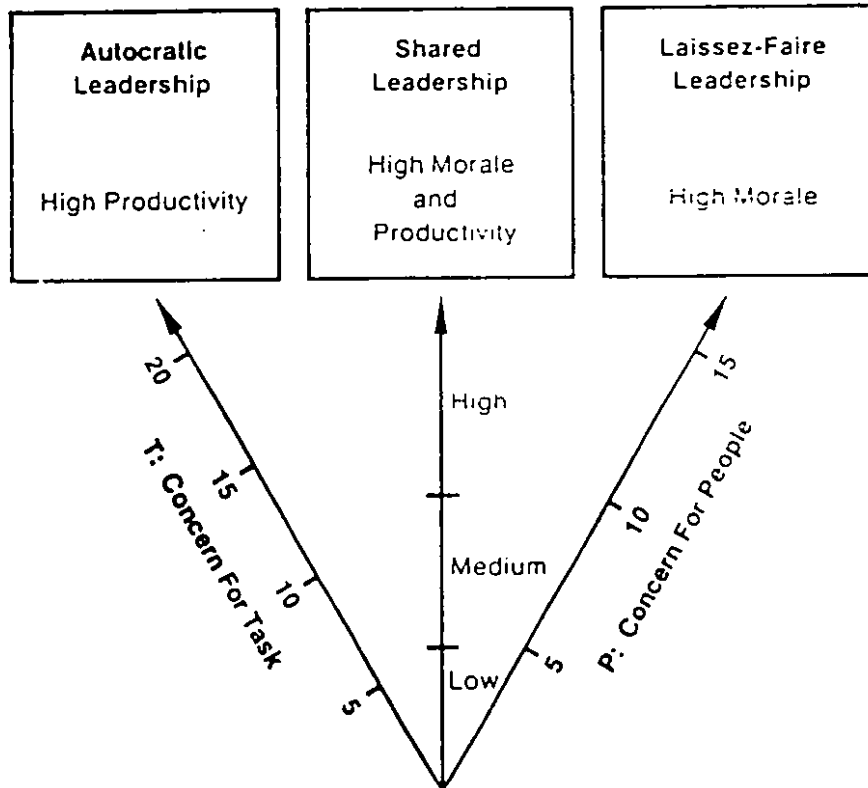
- A F O S N 17. I would get swamped by details.
- A F O S N 18. I would represent the group at outside meetings.
- A F O S N 19. I would be reluctant to allow the members any freedom of action.
- A F O S N 20. I would decide what should be done and how it should be done.
- A F O S N 21. I would push for increased production.
- A F O S N 22. I would let some members have authority which I could keep.
- A F O S N 23. Things would usually turn out as I had predicted.
- A F O S N 24. I would allow the group a high degree of initiative.
- A F O S N 25. I would assign group members to particular tasks.
- A F O S N 26. I would be willing to make changes.
- A F O S N 27. I would ask members to work harder.
- A F O S N 28. I would trust the group members to exercise good judgement.
- A F O S N 29. I would schedule the work to be done.
- A F O S N 30. I would refuse to explain my actions.
- A F O S N 31. I would persuade others that my ideas are to their advantage.
- A F O S N 32. I would permit the group to set its own pace.
- A F O S N 33. I would urge the group to beat its previous record.
- A F O S N 34. I would act without consulting the group.
- A F O S N 35. I would ask that group members follow standard rules and regulations.

T _____ P _____

T-P LEADERSHIP-STYLE PROFILE SHEET

Directions: To determine your style of leadership, mark your score on the concern for task dimension (T) on the left-hand arrow below. Next, move to the right-hand arrow and mark your score on the concern for people dimension (P). Draw a straight line that intersects the P and T scores. The point at which that line crosses the shared leadership arrow indicates your score on that dimension.

**SHARED LEADERSHIP RESULTS FROM
BALANCING CONCERN FOR TASK AND CONCERN FOR PEOPLE**



APPENDIX C

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An Introduction to the
Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

The RCIA: The Art of Making New Catholics

By Sandra DeGidio, O.S.M.

Once upon a time, in the not too distant past, adults who wanted to join the Catholic Church went through six weeks of "convert instructions" and were baptized quietly on a Sunday afternoon in a dark church with a few relatives present, two of whom probably also served as godparents. A short time later, perhaps the following Sunday, the new converts received their First Communion, but probably with little attention to the fact that they were joining the community at the Table of the Lord. Confirmation was left until the next visit by the bishop.

Since 1972, that approach to adult Baptism has changed radically, thanks to the revised Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA, for short). In this *Catholic Update*, we will look carefully at the RCIA to get a fuller understanding of the whole process by which today's Church brings new members into its communal life.

'New' aspects of the RCIA process

The RCIA makes four essential changes in the scenario at the beginning of this article. First, it restores the original order of the Sacraments of Initiation, which is Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist. The three sacraments are celebrated as one Sacrament of Christian Initiation at the Easter Vigil.

Second, the RCIA stresses the need for a *living experience* of the Church, and not just *knowledge about* the Church. Although the RCIA includes instruction in the facts of the faith, instruction is but one part of a much larger experience of *living the faith* with members of the Church. As Thomas Merton said about his own conversion to Catholicism in *The Seven Storey Mountain*, "Six weeks of instruction, after all, were not much, and I certainly had nothing but the barest rudiments of knowledge about the actual practice of Catholic life."

Third, the RCIA puts an end to the quiet, dark, almost secretive



Baptism of adults, and makes the welcoming of new Christians a public community event. In the former approach, the priest was often the only member of the parish community with whom the converts came in contact. This inevitably gave converts a very limited experience of Church members. It could also cause them to feel very much alone when they joined the community on the Sunday after their Baptism, simply because they never had the chance to get introduced to members of the parish.

Fourth, the RCIA stresses that conversion is begun by the Holy Spirit and is an extended process. The desire that a person exhibits for becoming a Christian is a response to what the Spirit has already begun and is seen in the context of a journey to faith that is most often much longer than six weeks of "convert instructions."

In many ways the new Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, promulgated in 1972, is the most radical and revolutionary document to have come from the renewal of Vatican II. It is radical because it thrusts us back to our roots and challenges us to relearn what it means to be Church. It is revolutionary because it also thrusts us forward, calling us to become the Church of tomorrow.

A thumbnail history

While the RCIA is radical and revolutionary, it is not really new. In the earliest centuries of the Church, adult Baptism was the norm. Infants were baptized only when they were children of adults who converted to Christianity.

The early Church invited people who were interested in Christianity to join the community on a journey of faith. Those who accepted the invitation became the candidates for the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist). The candidates were called catechumens and entered into a step-by-step process toward full membership in the Church. This process, called the catechumenate, included a lengthy period of formation, instruction and testing, lasting one to three years or more. It was a time of serious discernment regarding whether or not the catechumens could break with their pagan background, and accept and live the Christian faith. It was also a time for newcomers to explore with the Christian community their responsibilities in carrying out the Church's mission and ministry. Joining the Church in the early centuries was no easy matter. In an age of persecution, such a commitment was not to be taken lightly.

The entire Church would pray for and with the catechumens, instructing them in gospel values, sharing with them the faith-life of the Church and celebrating the stages of their faith journey with special rituals of welcoming and belonging. A person's coming to faith—or conversion to Christianity—was looked upon as a community responsibility and demanded total community involvement.

The final Lent before their initiation was a special time for catechumens. It was like a 40-day retreat including prayer, fasting and other self-scrutiny as they prepared to accept the faith and be received into the Church that Easter.

Initially, the purpose of Lent was totally related to Baptism. It was a time of final formation for those catechumens preparing to be initiated into the Christian community, and a time for the faithful (the already initiated) to remember and renew their baptismal commitment.

The early Church joyfully recognized the culmination of the catechumens' journey to faith and welcomed them into the saving reality of the Paschal Mystery by celebrating the

Sacraments of Initiation at the solemn Vigil of Easter, the great Paschal Feast that celebrates the life, death and resurrection of Christ. The Sacraments of Initiation were celebrated only once a year, and only at the Easter Vigil. After their Baptism there was another period of instruction for the new Christians, namely, one that led them into the deeper mysteries of faith.

Unfortunately, this beautiful, community-supported journey to faith was short-lived. With the conversion of the Emperor Constantine in 313, Christianity became a fashionable, rather than a persecuted religion. Some people even entered the catechumenate for political reasons—to get jobs or special positions in the Empire, for example—with little intention of ever being baptized. The standards of the catechumenate were relaxed, as people eventually stopped joining the catechumenate altogether and were simply baptized on request.

By the beginning of the fifth century, the catechumenate process itself had virtually disappeared. The Sacraments of Initiation became three separate sacraments celebrated at separate times. Soon adult Baptisms declined, infant Baptism became the norm, and the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults as practiced in the early Church became a lost art.

In the period following World War II, the Church began to experience a need for a fresh approach to the welcoming of new members. New ideas were put forth. In some dioceses in Africa, for example, Church leaders reached into the Church's rich heritage and began to apply the ancient catechumenate process to modern situations.

This return to former practice was motivated by a desire to assure greater stability among the converts coming into the Church. The more lengthy instruction and formation provided by the catechumenate allowed greater time for the faith of converts to mature. Such good results were reported that when the bishops assembled for the Second Vatican Council they called for a study and restoration of the process of Christian Initiation of Adults.

In 1972, after nearly 10 years of study and research, the official text (in Latin) for this new/old process of making Christians, the Revised Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, was published. The Rite once again became an integral part of the Church's sacramental system. The English version came out in 1974.

What is the RCIA?

It is important to realize that the revised RCIA is much more than an updated or expanded program of "convert instruction" like that experienced by Thomas Merton. The RCIA is a process of conversion. As we shall see later, it is divided into four continuous phases that correspond to a candidate's progress in Christian formation. But, before discussing the specific structure and phases of the Rite, let's look at the underlying principles of the RCIA.

1) The RCIA is first and foremost a process. To see it as anything else, particularly to see it as a static program, does violence to the dynamic nature of the Rite. This is true because the RCIA is for and about people: people on the move, people being remade in the image of Christ, people being reborn in the Spirit, people on a journey toward faith—and people whose faith journey cannot be programmed because programs as such do not cause conversion; only God brings about conversion.

2) The RCIA is a community event. The initiation of adults is about the Christian community initiating new members into itself, and therefore it must take place in community. In no way

can it be a private celebration or process. The RCIA sees the Church as community, as *us*, and it also sees *us* as the primary ministers of the RCIA.

3) **The RCIA ministry is basically one of witness and hospitality.** Although the RCIA involves many parishioners in various ministries, such as sponsors, catechists, pray-ers, spiritual advisers and social justice ministers, everyone in the community is responsible for ministering to the prospective converts by the witness of their lives and the openness of their attitudes. The document is particularly strong in this respect when it says: "...the initiation of adults is the concern and business of all the baptized" (RCIA, #41).



Each member of the Christian community must be equally attentive to and involved in the whole conversion process, because the total community is responsible for welcoming new members and showing them what it means to live the Christian life. When we initiate newcomers, we welcome them into the flesh-and-blood body of believers and establish a living bond between the new Christians and ourselves as Church.

4) **The RCIA is ongoing and multi-dimensional.** Christians are made, not born. That means that there is nothing automatic or instantaneous in the initiation of adults. Conversion takes time. Committing oneself to gospel values and perspectives on every level of life requires a change of heart that cannot be accomplished by an educational program alone.

While doctrinal instruction is a part of the process, the initiation of adults aims at changing the heart and transforming the spirit, not just supplying a bank of knowledge. Therefore, the RCIA includes all aspects of parish life: worship, pastoral care, counseling, spiritual direction, social justice and apostolic involvement, and education.

5) **The RCIA restores the baptismal focus of Lent, and reinstates the Easter Vigil as the honored time for initiation.** The document points out that only for serious pastoral reasons should the initiation of adults take place outside the Easter Vigil.

The focus and primacy of the Easter mystery are also restored by the RCIA. This means that the whole initiation process centers on the candidates' gradual incorporation into the Paschal Mystery—the mystery of Christ's life, death and resurrection. Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist are the sacraments which

celebrate, in one symbolic action, one's initiation into that mystery.

6) **The RCIA is a step-by-step journey punctuated by corresponding rituals.** The document sees the process of initiation divided into four basic steps. Between each of the steps, the community celebrates a special ritual which brings closure to the preceding period and moves the candidates into the next.

A walk through the process

Journeys have beginnings, middles and ends. They also have certain thresholds or signposts that signal the steps or stages along the way which help us get from one point to another in our travels. The four-step journey to faith embarked upon by candidates for Christian Initiation has such a structure.

The first step: the pre-catechumenate. The RCIA journey begins with the pre-catechumenate—a term, like the other terms used in the document, borrowed from the Church's ancient rites of initiation. The pre-catechumenate is a preliminary step in the journey of faith. It is a time for inquirers to hear the Word. But more importantly, it is a time for community members to listen to the inquirers and answer their questions. The questions most inquirers have are questions like, "Why are you Catholic?" "How do you pray?" "What are those little saucers at the doors of your church for?" "Why is Mary so important to you?" "How do you say the Rosary?" These questions are answered not with theological dissertations, but honestly from the heart and faith of each person.

The pre-catechumenate period could be compared to our inquiring about a new job. While we might be sincerely welcomed to the company, we want to take a long hard look at what the job entails and offers before accepting it. The inquirer takes that long hard look at the Church during this preliminary stage in the journey. How the community lives and shares its faith speaks volumes to inquirers during this time.

Then, just as our warm heart and inviting spirit need some accompanying physical gestures—such as a handshake or hug—when we welcome someone into our home, so the welcoming community called Church needs some rituals to welcome new members to itself during this process of initiation.

The RCIA provides such a ritual for the inquirers when they are ready to proceed to the next phase of the conversion process. This ritual is called the "Rite of Entrance to the Catechumenate." It is celebrated in the presence of the Christian assembly, preferably at Sunday Mass, so that the community can welcome the inquirers to the *second step* of their journey to faith.

The second step: the catechumenate. With their welcome to the catechumenate phase of the RCIA, the inquirers are referred to as "catechumens." The ritual and the new title signal a difference in the life of the aspiring Christians. They move from being inquirers to being people who have already begun to live as Christians, even though they are not yet full members of the Church.

At this point the catechumens are joined by sponsors from the community who serve as guides, companions and models of faith for them. The ministry of sponsor is an extremely important one. Sponsors provide personal support for the catechumens, share the Christian life with them and help to make them feel at home. Sponsors commit themselves to being a vital link between the catechumens and the community. They present the candidates to the Church and also represent the Church to the candidate throughout the RCIA process.

The catechumenate is often the lengthiest period in the RCIA process. The length is determined by the personality and the needs of the catechumen, and by the community, but it can last from several months to three years. During this time, catechumens are instructed in the faith, participate in community activities, join with the community in prayer and worship, and work actively with the community in the apostolic life of the Church.

Although the catechumens are invited to worship with the community, they are dismissed from the Eucharistic celebration after the Liturgy of the Word. Since they are not fully initiated, and cannot receive Eucharist with the assembly, they leave with their catechists (and sometimes with their sponsors) to ponder the Scripture readings they have just heard. It was because of this aspect of the catechumenate in the early Church that the parts of the Mass before Vatican II were referred to as the "Mass of the Catechumens" and the "Mass of the Faithful."

When the catechumens are ready to respond totally to God's call to faith through the Sacraments of Initiation, the RCIA once again provides a ritual to mark this step in the conversion process. This ritual is called the "Rite of Election." It is designed to take place on the first Sunday of Lent and is the Church's way of confirming God's call in the life of the catechumens. The ritual provides an opportunity for the catechumens officially to request entrance to the Church through the Easter Sacraments of Initiation, and for the community to respond to that request by saying, in effect, "We confirm God's call to faith in your life, and will welcome you into the Church this Easter."

The third step: the Lenten period before initiation. The "Rite of Election" introduces this third step of the journey and also marks the final Lent before the catechumens receive the Sacraments of Initiation. Beginning with the First Sunday of Lent, the catechumens enter into their "40-day retreat" to focus on deepening their awareness of God's grace through prayer.

To emphasize the importance of this last Lent before initiation, and to help express the penitential and reconciling aspects of the season, the Church also celebrates other rituals with the catechumens, called "Scrutinies." These are prayers of healing prayed by the community (on the third, fourth and fifth Sundays of Lent) that the catechumens will have the strength to withstand evil, and remain pure and free from sin as they journey toward initiation, continued conversion and maturing faith.

The Scrutinies are powerful rituals that also remind us, the faithful who are already baptized, of our need for the penance, healing, conversion and reconciliation that are part of Lent for all of us. Once the RCIA is implemented in a parish, Lent just isn't Lent without catechumens. While we minister to them, they provide a visible reminder to us of the meaning and purpose of Lent, and minister to us through their presence.

Then, finally, the great night arrives—the night of Easter Vigil at which the Sacraments of Initiation are celebrated and the catechumens are made one with the Body of Christ called Church. This is the community's final ritual gesture which says, "Now you belong, for you have been born again of water and Spirit. Come, you are welcome at the Table of the Lord." It is

the climax of the conversion journey, but not the end of the journey.

The fourth step: the post-initiation phase. This concluding part of the journey to faith is called the "Mystagogia," from the word *mystery*. In the early Church it was the time when the community explained the mystery of the sacraments the catechumens had experienced. Today, when the sacraments are usually explained before the Easter Vigil, this step is seen more as a time for the newly initiated and the community to move forward together toward a closer relationship with each other and toward a deeper understanding of God's Word, of the sacraments and of the lived Christian life. The RCIA places this phase in the Easter Season (the 50 days between Easter and Pentecost), but in reality this step in the journey continues for the rest of a Christian's life. We are all constantly growing toward closer relationships and deeper understandings of the mysteries of our faith.

Not just for converts

The RCIA brings us full circle. It compels all of us who have been Christians since Baptism to look critically at our roots as Church, and to renew ourselves in light of our tradition. The RCIA is really given to us for Church renewal. It affords those of us who were baptized as infants the opportunity to reassess, reexamine and renew our faith and God's part in that faith.

Once the RCIA is begun in a parish, it is a continuous process that begins and climaxes only for individuals, but never really ends as far as the *parish community* is concerned.

The initiation of adults is for the life of the whole Church, not just for converts. The presence of catechumens journeying toward initial conversion in our parishes models for us the deeper conversion to which we are all called. Conversion, after all, is not a once-in-a-lifetime thing. We all experience God's call to turn around, change our lives and improve our relationship with the Lord—especially during Lent.

Flannery O'Connor, the American novelist and short story writer, said it well when she wrote a friend who was considering converting to Catholicism (from *The Habit of Being: The Letters of Flannery O'Connor*): "I don't think of conversion as being once and for all and that's that. I think once the process has begun and continues that you are continually turning inward toward God and away from your own egocentricity and that you have to see this selfish side of yourself in order to turn away from it. I measure God by everything that I am not. I begin with that."

And so does the RCIA.

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Adult Baptism— Personal Journey, Community Journey

By Mary Bohlen



The New Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

It was a balmy spring evening. I was with a group of Catholics from several parishes brainstorming for topics for an inter-parish education series. "How about a talk on the new *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*?" suggested a young woman. "Several parishes are already into adult baptism programs."

"But—what has that to do with us! Isn't that for converts?" protested a gray-haired man. At first many nodded at his observation. But as our group grappled with the real meaning of the new rite, we found that it actually had *everything* to do with us—and with our parishes.

Indeed, the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*—set in motion by Vatican II and first published in English in 1974—is a mirror image of our own spiritual journey as Christians and embodies the whole process of Christian growth and renewal. As one writer puts it, "The first 'converts' to be affected by this rite must be *us*!" Certainly, the rite envisions the involvement of the whole community in the conversion process of the new members.

A Journey in Stages

The new ritual is really a journey into faith—first of all for converts to Christianity, but for all of us as well. It is a journey taken in successive stages and corresponding roughly to the church's liturgical year.

These stages include: 1) *the precatechumenate*—a getting-acquainted time for making preliminary inquiries into the Christian faith; 2) *the catechumenate*—a period in which the

candidate experiences life within the Christian community before Baptism; 3) *the Lenten period*—a time of purification and of more intense preparation for Baptism in the midst of the faithful; 4) *the Easter period*—the Easter vigil and post-baptismal stage of the rite. On Holy Saturday night the candidates receive the sacraments of initiation: Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist. A period of continuing instruction extends to Pentecost.

The Easter Vigil itself is a highlight of the renewed liturgy. Now streamlined and celebrated in English, it awakens in us a deeper understanding of the paschal mysteries of Jesus' death and resurrection and how our own baptismal dying and rising are linked with his.

Initiation in the Early Church

But the new rite is actually *old*—as we immediately notice when we return to the "roots" of our Christian history. In those early times the trial period before Baptism was called the catechumenate. The candidates preparing to enter the Christian Church were called catechumens. In the minds of early Christians, "baptism" was a blanket term covering the whole process of initiation. With the new rite, the catechumenate as well as this process-mentality is being restored in the 20th century.

During those early centuries, the catechumens engaged in a lengthy preparation, sometimes lasting years, during which they lived closely with the Christian community. If you read

"As the candidates prepare. . .for their initiation, the whole parish

the writing of St. Augustine, you notice how he and the other great Fathers of the Church personally took upon themselves instruction of adult catechumens. You see how, at every stage, the Fathers related their teaching to the concrete experiences of the candidates' lives.

Augustine, himself, was a former catechumen and was baptized as an adult during the Easter Vigil in 387. Later as the famous bishop of Hippo, he conducted the great ceremonies of the Easter Vigil in his own Church. He led the newly baptized, radiant in their white robes, into the midst of the faithful to share their first Eucharist together. In eloquent words, he proclaimed the significance of their "becoming one with the Body of Christ—one with him and with one another."

A Similar Process Today

The Church today wants its priests and catechists—and the whole parish community—to be equally attentive and involved in the whole conversion process, for the convert's sake as well as for the baptized, who need to realize that Christian conversion is a journey and an ongoing responsibility.

As in Augustine's time, aspiring Christians of our day need help in exchanging the worldly set of values with which their culture surrounds them for those of Christ. Only through sound Christian teaching and lots of support from a faith-filled community can today's convert keep from sinking into conformity with the spirit of the age.

Fortunately, there seems to be a growing awareness in the Church today that conversion and commitment to Christian ideals come about only through a communal effort. This is demonstrated by such movements as marriage encounter, parish renewal, prayer groups and many others. Parishes animated with the same kind of spirit seem well-prepared to share with adult converts in the way envisioned by the new rite.

The Journey Begins—Setting the Mood

Before exploring the successive stages of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, we might note the journey symbolism found in the rite's introduction. It speaks of pilgrims and new beginnings, of setting out, of stages on the way, of crossroads and crises and rest stops, of guides and companions who lead us to the final destination.

For each candidate it is a unique journey into the depth of the self and the discovery of the divine presence within. Those who prepare the candidates are to respect the personalities and life experiences of each and to treat them with great sensitivity. As the candidates move along on their journey, they should feel free to share their discoveries and doubts with the community of believers and with them plunge more deeply into the life of the Spirit. This is the best climate for the journey of adult conversion.

As we have seen, it is above all a community journey—in which each supports the others on the way. The body of believers help the candidates by their hospitality and faith-sharing while the candidates in turn inspire the believers with their generous, breathtaking response to the call of Christ in their own lives. In this way all build community in Christ together.

The Rite of Becoming a Catechumen

Now to the rite itself. The first part of the new rite of adult baptism is a beautiful ceremony of welcoming those persons who, after the preliminary period of inquiry and introduction to the life of the parish community, desire to become catechumens.

Personal Accounts of Conversion

I spent my vacation in the country with my son, a catechumen like myself. . . .When the time came that I should submit my name [for Baptism], we left the country and returned to Milan. My son also decided to be reborn along with me. . . .So we were baptized and the anxiety for our past life fled from us. . . .I was deeply stirred by the voices of the Church sweetly swelling in the singing of hymns and canticles!

St. Augustine,
Confessions.

I was not conscious to myself, on my conversion, of any change, intellectual or moral, wrought in my mind. . . .but it was like coming into port after a rough sea.

Cardinal Newman,
Apologia pro Vita Sua.

I took up a book about Gerard Manley Hopkins. . . . He was thinking of becoming Catholic. He was writing letters to Cardinal Newman about becoming a Catholic.

All of a sudden, something began to stir within me, something began to push me, to prompt me. It was a movement that spoke like a voice.

"What are you waiting for," it said. "Why are you sitting here? Why do you hesitate? You know what you ought to do. . . ."

Suddenly, I could bear it no longer. I put down the book, and got into my raincoat, and started down the stairs. I went out into the street. I crossed over and walked along by the gray wooden fence [toward a Catholic rectory] in the light rain.

And then everything inside me began to sing—to sing with peace, to sing with strength and to sing with conviction.

Thomas Merton,
Seven Storey Mountain.

The priest goes to meet the candidates and their sponsors at the door of the Church. He greets them, expressing the "joy and happiness" of the Church at their decision, and reminds sponsors and friends how their own spiritual journey is linked with that of the candidates. The candidates state their intentions and express their desire to undergo the training program.

community is called to experience its reconversion and renewal.”

The priest signs their foreheads with the cross of Christ—the first of those dramatic gestures showing how each person is called to total identity with Christ and his life-giving cross.

The priest then leads them into the body of the Church, the sacred space that symbolizes her inner life. Inside, after Scripture readings and homily, he presents them with the book of the Gospels. Prayers are said by which the whole community intercedes for the candidates' well-being.

If these ceremonies are taking place within Mass, they substitute for the Liturgy of the Word. And after it is finished, the candidates are dismissed with a blessing—as they will be at Masses during this whole period (much like the catechumens of the early Church had to leave after the “Mass of the Catechumens”). For it is only through Baptism that one becomes ready to share the Eucharist. The first stage of their journey to faith has begun.

The Catechumenate—Time of Sharing

The period of the catechumenate is above all a time for sharing. It is a time for regular meeting with priests and parish “team” primarily concerned with their formation—catechists, deacons, sponsors, godparents. The candidates are encouraged not so much to memorize answers from a catechism as to explore and discuss in everyday terms the meaning of faith.

In these shared dialogues, as they learn and experience the faith of the community, growth gradually takes place. This should happen in an atmosphere of love so that personal freedom is safeguarded and the individual is sensitively guided to commitment in Christ.

A priest who has worked successfully with the adult catechumenate urges candidate and baptized to share their personal stories. These shared experiences, he says, become “stepping stones in our journey to Christ.” The converts' experiences are often lonely—as they give up what they have for that which they do not yet possess. They are something like trapeze performers, high in the air, who have let go one bar and not yet caught the other. Sharing one another's stories helps fill the gaps and gives them a sense of God's constant and omnipresent care.

The catechumenate is a time for the parish community to look at its own inner life and spirituality and to see what image it is conveying to the newcomers. For catechumens will surely be looking for clear evidence that this parish is worth belonging to.

Is it truly a loving and caring community, the catechumens will ask, and one ready to serve the needs of the young, the aged, the poor and ill in its midst? Is it a community whose worship really brings members in union with God and each other? Is it an open community? Does it dialogue with other churches and faiths? Is it a listening community, responsive to the signs of the times as it sets priorities? Is it a welcoming community? Does it want me?

These questions show how vitally important the spirit of the parish community is in terms of the candidates' motivation to complete their journey.

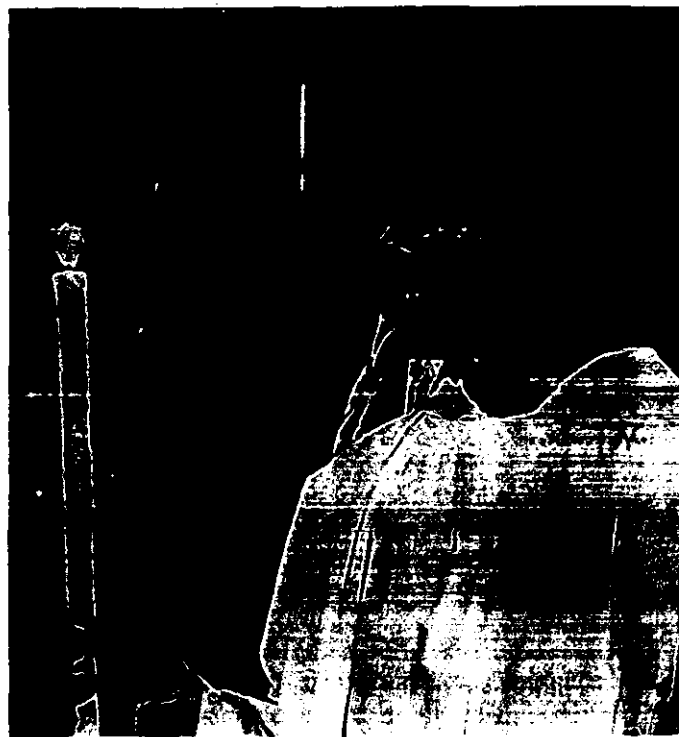
The Rite of Election—The Lenten Stage

The catechumenate draws to a close with the rite of election, which launches the next stage of the initiation process—the

Lenten period of purification and enlightenment. In this ceremony on the first Sunday of Lent, the candidates express a desire to be baptized and are formally accepted by the priest and those most intimately involved with their formation (catechists, sponsors, etc.).

This rite of ratifying and electing candidates for Baptism belongs to the whole parish community and takes place publicly after the homily at the main Eucharistic celebration held that Sunday. Godparents step forward with the candidates and testify to their good faith. The candidates then express their own intentions, and their names are entered in the book of the elect. Prayers are recited for them and for all assisting in their “advance toward Christ”—their teachers, godparents, families, the faithful—and for all not yet joined to the community of Christ.

The celebrant extends his hands over them and prays: “God our Father. . .count these adopted children as sons and daughters reborn to your new covenant. . .” Thus begins the final Lenten preparation for the sacraments of initiation at Easter.



Journeying Through Lent

The whole Lenten season is a period of more intense preparation for the candidates. Historically, Lent developed as a period of prayer and fasting for the faithful as they accompanied and supported the candidates on their journey toward their Easter Baptism.

The Sacrament of Penance, received by the faithful during this season, was seen by the Fathers of the Church as a kind of “second baptism,” which called baptized Christians to “a profound change of the whole person” and which paralleled the baptismal rebirth of the converts. Thus as the candidates prepare in a deeper, more personal way for their initiation, the whole parish community is called to experience its reconversion and renewal.

"Our journey into the risen life of Jesus will continue until he comes again."

The Gospel readings of the third, fourth and fifth Sundays of Lent narrate respectively Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman and the man born blind and his raising Lazarus from the dead. As candidates and parish members encounter Jesus in these same readings, they progress, step by step, from his offer of living water and healing illumination to a taste of his new life and the power of the resurrection.

After the homilies on these Sundays, special prayers and rites call on the Lord Jesus to stay with the candidates, to save them from the power of evil and to deliver them from all that separates them from his love.

Ideas for Your Parish

1. Look for ways to implement the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* in your own parish.
2. Offer, yearly, open programs of inquiry for interested persons. Publicize them through parish bulletins, meetings, local newspapers, personal contacts.
3. Celebrate the Easter Vigil as the parish liturgical event of the year. Encourage converts to receive the sacraments of initiation on this "great night."
4. Stress the communal dimension of infant baptism. Develop programs to prepare parents for the Baptism of their children. Remind all parties concerned that conversion is an ongoing process. (See Father Leonard Foley's "Infant Baptism—A Community Event," *Catholic Update*, May 1978.)
5. Study Pope Paul's *On Evangelization in the Modern World*. See that the spread of Gospel values is every Christian's responsibility.
6. Encourage programs of parish renewal, such as *Christ Renews His Parish*, a weekend renewal experience that calls together priests and people.
7. Consider Lenten programs for personal and parish renewal, such as the Liturgical Conference's *Ashes to Easter*.

In a special liturgy during the third week of Lent, the candidates are "presented" with the Apostles' Creed or the Nicene Creed, ancient expressions of the Church's faith and God's saving work as well as true sources of enlightenment. The following week, they receive the Lord's Prayer in a similar rite.

Easter Vigil Rites—the Great Night

Candidates and community arrive together at the "great night"

of the Easter Vigil, where the sacraments of initiation will make them "one with Christ and with one another." According to author and liturgist Father Aidan Kavanagh, O.S.B., "There is no other time of the year which serves so splendidly as a setting for sacramental initiation and its meaning." He believes that over the centuries Baptism got separated from the Easter Vigil and this "has weakened our theology both of the Church and of Christian initiation."

In the Vigil's marvelous cosmic context which gathers all creation into Christ as the central saving event of all history, the candidates are born again in the waters of Baptism.

They are then clothed in white robes, symbols of their new dignity, and presented with lighted candles, signifying "their vocation of living as befits the children of light."

Next, they are confirmed, showing the tight bond between the mission of the Son and the pouring out of the Holy Spirit. Their first Eucharist with the gathered community follows. As we have seen, the sacraments of initiation for adults (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist) are celebrated together as they are meant to be.

Post-Baptismal Journey

The period from Easter to Pentecost is one of integration and reflection for the new Christians, as they begin their new life together with the people of the parish who have shared with them their journey into faith. It is a time filled with joy and promise for the future. Whether it is fulfilled depends very much on us—the other members of our parish communities. Even after Pentecost, of course, the parish must provide follow-up support and service in the continuing formation of the newly baptized.

As baptized Christians, you and I need to remember that the new *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* holds up for us a looking glass in which we see the image and pattern of our ongoing conversion. Our journey into the risen life of Jesus will continue until he comes again and all things reach fulfillment.

The new rite also reminds us of our part in the Church's evangelizing mission—that of reaching out, inviting, inspiring and supporting the unchurched in our midst to join us in that common journey into the life of Christ to which all men and women are called. □

Mary Bohlen has been active on parish and diocesan liturgical commissions in Cincinnati, Ohio. She was recently part of an interparish adult education team that introduced parishes to the new *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*.

APPENDIX D

EXODUS MODEL OF SALVATION

Salvation History - Exodus model in terms of four-point change model.
Cycle of change, disruption, growth,
"death" appropriated by christians
as Paschal Mystery - hope.

Exodus: central and most important event in Jewish salvation history; same model applies to our own lives, think of similarities to your own stories as we review the Exodus in terms of the four-point model we've discussed.

1. WORLD TIED TOGETHER - Security of Egypt (enough to eat and a known routine. Slavery and freedom from responsibility but also trapped, powerless, vulnerable and not free to go. In our own personal Egypts we have many kinds of slavery: habits, addictions, attitudes that limit our potential and our freedom to go; but also the security of what is known, familiar; we often choose to remain enslaved because of our fear of the unknown, eg. destructive love relationships, families of alcoholics.
2. WORLD COMES UNTIED - The unexpected Moses event provides an opportunity for change and people have to decide whether to risk the unknown. Sometimes change is forced upon us, eg. death of a loved one, graduation or jilting by a lover; sometimes we choose it, eg. new job, leaving home.
3. WORLD AT LOOSE ENDS - The confusion of wandering in the desert. God brought us out of Egypt, but will He continue to be with us? Sinai Covenant, golden calves, concern about food and water and a grumbling to return to the fleshpots of Egypt. We long for the "Good Old Days" and take nostalgic trips down memory lane; struggle and question and try to redefine who we are, deal with doubts and fears.

4. WORLD TIED TOGETHER AGAIN - Entry into promised land, a new place to be and a new, special sense of being God's chosen people. Not easy paradise - had to fight and conquer many tribes already inhabiting the land. We, too, are always faced with new problems even as we reach growth plateaus.

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- R.C.I.A. Process . . .

APPENDIX E

THE BOOK OF MY LIFE

PART I

Think of your life as a book you're writing. Divide it into major sections or chapters. What characterizes each chapter and what title would you give it? Within each chapter, think about the following:

1. Who are the significant people and why?
2. What are the significant places and why?
3. What are the significant events and why? Example:
 - Did you experience losses, suffering or crisis that changed or colored your life in special ways?
 - Did you experience moments of joy, peak experiences or break-throughs that shaped or changed your life?
 - What experiences affirmed your sense of meaning about your life? What experiences shook or disturbed that sense?
4. What was the turning point (significant person, place or event) that ushered in each new chapter of your life?
5. What feelings or attitude do you recall having about each chapter of your life and each turning point? Why?

HANDOUT - TWO

COMMUNICATION
EFFECTIVENESS

I KNOW THAT YOU BELIEVE THAT YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU
THINK I SAID, BUT I'M NOT SURE YOU REALIZE THAT WHAT
YOU HEARD IS NOT WHAT I MEANT.

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GROUP FACILITATOR TRAINING

PURPOSE OF THE R.C.I.A. DISCUSSION GROUPS - WHAT THEY ARE

1. Voice immediate, personal reactions (whether good or bad) to the lectures and take home material, feelings are as important as thoughts.
2. Air questions, concerns, doubts, and clarify things not understood.
3. Begin incorporating or integrating content into personal understandings of what it means to be a Catholic christian.
4. Raise consciousness about possible personal responses (point toward growth directions).
5. Build community and provide support and encouragement for growth.

PURPOSE OF THE R.C.I.A. DISCUSSION GROUPS - WHAT THEY ARE NOT

1. Not encounter, therapy or personal problem-solving groups.
2. Not for purely intellectual, philosophical "mental masturbation" or abstract theological speculation.
3. Not to preach, inculcate dogma or teach in a formal, information-giving sense.
4. Not to judge or condemn anyone.
5. Not to be a decision-making, consensus reaching, or social-action planning group.

RULES FOR YOU IN YOUR ROLE AS COMMUNICATOR (Encourage others to do the same)

1. Speak per "I", not in third person - take responsibility for your thoughts and feelings.
2. Talk about the "here and now", avoid the "there and then".
3. Be concrete, specific and personal, not vague, abstract and general.
4. Talk to people in the group, not about them; use a person's name rather than s/he in reference. Talk to everyone, rotate the focus of your eye contact when speaking.

5. Deal with feelings as well as facts.
6. Avoid: giving advice; making evaluations of peoples thoughts, feelings, actions, etc; becoming the expert and engaging in one-to-one dialogues on an extended basis; try to solve others' problems.

RULES FOR YOU IN YOUR ROLE AS LISTENER (Encourage others to do the same)

1. Exhibit good attending behaviors: be attentive to eye contact, body posture and gestures, interpersonal distance; decide to listen, withhold judgements, resist distractions.
2. Avoid the common listening pitfalls:
 - A) Failure to attend
 - B) Concentrating more on the next point you wish to make or on how to refute someone's earlier statement than on what is being said at present.
 - C) Failure to ask for clarification or more information.
 - D) Failure the match between the received and the intended communication.

RULES FOR YOU IN YOUR ROLE AS FACILITATOR (Encourage others to do the same)

1. When it is appropriate (to clarify, to verify understanding), use the skill of paraphrasing the content of another's verbal message.
2. When it is appropriate (to clarify or ask for more development of a thought), use the skill of asking an open-ended question which invites the person to add more details, examples, feelings or reactions: specifically asks them to clarify what they have just said.
3. When it is appropriate (need to wrap up a particular point, clarify what has gone on, review for purposes of integration, provide a check-point to see whether any more needs to be added about a topic, make a transition to a new topic), use the skill of summarizing.
4. When it is appropriate (need to clarify, to help people integrate, to keep the discussion connected and moving forward, to build group cohesiveness, to encourage the people in the group to talk to each other and not just to you), use the skill of relating one person's statement to another's. This is done by noting similarities and differences and noting how one point builds upon or relates to another.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR GROUP LEADERS

RELAX: You do not have to be the expert with all the answers.

YOUR JOB IS TO:

1. Keep the discussion moving and on track; don't let it disintegrate into side issues. You might say something like, "I think we're getting off the subject here; we were discussing..." or "Can we get back to the topic?"
2. Try to involve all members of the group by inviting quiet ones to share their ideas. "_____, how do you react to what's just been said?" or "_____, is there something you would like to add?" "We haven't heard from you yet; what do you think?"
3. Avoid letting one or two people dominate the conversation. "_____, we've heard from you several times now; what do some of the rest of you have to say about this?" "This time, let's have someone else begin the discussion."
4. Try to keep the discussion as concrete and as personal as possible. Encourage people to be specific and concrete in what they say by giving examples and speaking in terms of their own personal insights, feelings, and reactions. If people go off into abstract, theoretical or philosophical statements, you might say something like "What do you mean by that; can you be more specific or give us an example?" "What does that mean for you personally in your life right now?" "Is that how you personally feel about this issue?"
5. Exhibit good attending behavior: face people directly and look at them when you either speak to them or listen to them. Let them know by your expression, your attentiveness and possibly by your verbal reaction that you are listening to them.
6. Make connections between one person's point and another's. You can do this by summarizing and noting the similarities or difference between

two statements. Or you can encourage others to make connections by asking "Does anyone else feel this way?" "How do you react to what _____ just said?"

7. Share your own insights also.

COMMUNICATION "LEADS"

To understand other person's feelings and experiences we need to attempt to enter their phenomenal field - their personal frame of reference through which they interact with their world. However, since it is impossible for us to be the other person, the best that we can do amounts to reasonably correct but approximate understandings. With this in mind, it seems desirable that we be continuously open-minded and cautious in appraising others, consider most judgments as tentative, and remember that at best we will have a limited understanding of the unique person with whom we are interacting.

Phrases that are useful, when you trust that your perceptions are accurate and the helpee is receptive to your communications:

You feel...

From your point of view...

It seems to you...

In your experience...

From where you stand...

As you see it...

You think...

You believe...

What I hear you saying...

You're... (identify the feeling, ex. angry, sad)

I'm picking up that you...

I really hear you saying that...

Where you're coming from...

You figure...

You mean...

Phrases that are useful when you are having some difficulty perceiving clearly, or it seems that the helpee might not be receptive to your communications:

Could it be that...

I wonder if...

I'm not sure that I'm with you, but...

Would you buy this idea...'

What I guess I'm hearing is...
Correct me if I'm wrong, but...
Is it possible that...
Does it sound reasonable that you...
Could this be what is going on, you...
From where I stand you...
This is what I think I hear you saying...
You appear to be feeling...
It appears you...
Perhaps you're feeling...
I somehow sense that maybe you feel...
Is there any chance that you...
Maybe you feel...
Is it conceivable that you...
Maybe I'm out to lunch but...
Do you feel a little...
Maybe this is a long shot, but...
I'm not sure that I'm with you; do you mean...
I'm not certain that I understand; you're feeling...
It seems that you...
As I hear it, you...
... is that the way it is?
... is that what you mean?
... is that the way you feel?
Let me see if I understand, you...
Let me see if I'm with you, you...
I get the impression that...
I guess that you're...

AFFIRMATIVE LISTENING

Sometimes people have a problem with a program such as this in which they talk about sensitive issues. They feel that other people are not really hearing what they are saying or that other people are judging them. It is especially difficult for people to be honest about expressing their religious feelings when they sense that other people are judging their reactions, their motives, their efforts.

These are a few suggestions we can follow in our discussions which will help everyone feel accepted and not judged:

1. Look at the speaker and pay attention to what that person is trying to say as well as to what he or she is actually saying.

2. Ask questions which help the speaker elucidate the stories, e.g.:

How did that change your view?

Tell me more...

What happened next?

What led you to that position?

How do you feel about that?

What are the options open to you?

How can I help you?

3. Avoid questions and statements which imply a judgement, such as:

Why did you do that?

Don't you think it would have been better to do this?

That was a dumb thing to do.

Why haven't you tried this or that?

Let me tell you...

DEALING WITH DIFFICULTIES IN GROUP PROCESS

DOMINATORS

In a nice but firm way, acknowledge the person and the value of the contributions s/he has been making. Then indicate that there are others in the group that have not yet been heard and/or that time constraints necessitate moving on to another topic or person.

Ex: _____, I appreciate what you've been saying; I think that we need to open the discussion to some others right now.

I can see that this is a really important issue to you _____, and I wish we had more time to hear what you had to say about it, but I think we need to move on if we're to hear from everyone.

_____, this concern seems to be a problem for you that I'm sure that we'd all like to help you with, but I'm concerned that if we spend any more time on it, we won't have a chance to hear from anyone else. Maybe you and I and some of the others could get together later and continue talking about it.

_____, I really hate to call "time" on you, but several others still have contributions they want to make also.

QUIET ONES

Make direct eye contact and invite the person's participation through some sort of open-ended question or request for their participation.

Ex. _____, what do you feel/think about this issue?

You've been very quiet so far _____, I'd really like to hear from you.

_____, you seem to/look as if you have some feelings on what we've been saying. Where are you with all this?

_____, is there something you would like to add?

GETTING OFF THE TRACK

Depending on the nature of the sidetrack, it might be important, as in dealing with dominators, to acknowledge the person speaking, and then firmly indicate that it is, however, a sidetrack. If it's not really someone's important personal issue, then it can just be dealt with simply and directly by stating it outright.

Ex. I'm afraid we're really getting off the subject here. We were talking about...

Let's get back to the main point of our discussion.

This is an interesting point, but it's not quite what we need to be talking about.

I'm not sure how we've gotten off the track, but I think we need to start over.

PERSONAL ISSUES

Personal issues should be acknowledged as important to the speaker in a gentle, caring way and then coupled with the observation that the discussion group is not the appropriate place to deal with them and possibly suggesting a different time, place or approach. See Ex. 2 & 3 under Dominators.

Ex. _____, you seem to be in a lot of pain over this particular problem. I wish we could help you solve it, but our purpose here is a little different. Perhaps you should consider talking it over with someone who is a little better qualified to deal with it.

(Caution: Don't get side-tracked discussing the merits of such a suggestion.)

LACK OF INTEREST OR ATTENTION

Probably the best way to deal with this is by making an observation about the behavior and perhaps then asking for clarification or comment.

Ex. I get the feeling that no one is interested in what we're talking about. Do we need to change the focus of this discussion?

_____, you look like you're not really with us tonight. Are we missing what's happening with you?

COUNSELORS

The "counselor" is one who takes it upon themselves to continually analyze other people, offer advice or try to solve others' problems. Again, it is probably helpful to acknowledge the person's concern but then point out that personal problem solving is not the group's focus.

Ex. _____, I appreciate the concern you are showing toward _____, but I'm afraid we really don't have the time to deal with this problem and solve it here. We're just discussing reactions to the topic.

I think it's all right for _____, to feel that way about this issue. We need to move on to other things.

It sounds to me as if we're trying to analyze _____'s feelings and behavior. That's not really our purpose here. We're discussing...

What's happening here is really off the track. We need to get back to the topic.

PREGNANT PAUSES

These are not necessarily bad and need not be feared. Perhaps people are just reflecting on what's already been said. Don't be afraid of some silence or feel that you've failed if every second is not consumed with speech.

However, there are several good uses you can make of a lull in a discussion. It may mean that a particular point is exhausted and the group is ready to move on. You can test this by summarizing what has preceded and ask if more needs to be said on the topic.

It may mean that the last speaker's statement was not clear and needs to be paraphrased or a question asked that will help clarify.

If it occurs in response to a question you have just posed, perhaps what you said was not clear and bears re-phrasing or more specificity or an illustration.

This can also be a good time for you to offer your own reactions to the topic, either by way of introduction or conclusion.

It could also be a good opportunity to tie various threads of discussion together by relating various points to each other.

GROUP ROLES

- INITIATOR - Person who opens the discussion initially, articulating its purpose and direction, and setting its general tone. Introduces new discussion topics/questions as needed and sees that the group works through its appointed agenda.
- INFORMATION SEEKER - Person who asks for clarification of ideas or opinions; requests additional information or facts.
- OPINION SEEKER - Person who looks for an expression of feeling about something, seeks clarification of values, suggestions or ideas.
- INFORMATION GIVER - Person who offers facts or generalizations. One who relates his/her own experience to the group problem to illustrate a point. One who provides relevant information about the group concern.
- OPINION GIVER - Person who states an opinion or belief about a particular idea, concerning its value rather than facts.
- CLARIFIER - Person who rewords or interprets another person's contributions to determine whether the meaning is understood. One who clears up confusion.
- ELABORATOR - Person who develops meanings or gives examples.
- COORDINATOR - Person who shows relationships among various ideas or suggestions, who pulls ideas and suggestions together, draws activities of group together.
- SUMMARIZER - Person who restates ideas that have been presented to keep discussion focused.
- EXPRESSOR OF GROUP FEELINGS - Person who senses the mood, relationships within the group and shares own feelings within the group.
- LISTENER - Person who actively listens to the contributions of others and does not participate in fringe conversations.
- ENCOURAGER - Person who is friendly, warm and responsive to others. One who praises others and their ideas. One who agrees and accepts contributions of others. One who builds upon other people's contributions.

GATEKEEPER - Person who attempts to keep communication channels open, facilitates the participation of others, regulates flow of communication, keeps group on task and on time.

ORIENTER - Defines position of group with respect to goals. Summarizes. Shows departures from agreed directions or goals. Questions direction of discussion.

EVALUATOR - Subjects accomplishment of group to "standards" of group functioning. May evaluate or question "practicability", "logic", "facts", or "procedure" of a suggestion or of some unit of group discussion.

HARMONIZER - Mediates intra-group scraps. Relieves tensions.

FOLLOWER - Goes along somewhat passively. Is friendly audience.

BLOCKER - Negativistic. Stubbornly and unreasonably resistant. Tries to bring back issue group intentionally rejected or by-passed.

RECOGNITION-SEEKER - Tries to call attention to himself. May boast, report on personal achievements, and in unusual ways, struggle to prevent being placed in "inferior" position, etc.

DOMINATOR - Tries to assert authority in manipulating group or some individuals in group. May be flattery, assertion of superior status or right to attention, giving of directions authoritatively, interrupting contributions of others, etc.

AVOIDER - Maintains distance from others. Passive resister. Tries to remain insulated from interaction.

EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GROUP PROCESS

LEADER

1. Did the leader initiate the topic well and effectively keep the group on track? How?
2. Did the leader listen well? In what ways?
3. Did the leader try to involve all members of the group? In what ways?
4. Did the leader keep the discussion moving forward but integrated? How?
5. Did the leader help others to communicate? How?
6. Did the leader prevent domination of the discussion by one or two people? How?

MEMBERS

1. Did the members participate spontaneously?
2. Was there a balanced participation of all members?
3. What was the emotional climate like?
4. Did the group depend too much or too little on the leader?
5. What was the general quality of listening among members?
6. Did the members help each other communicate? How?
7. What are some examples of some helpful behaviors that took place?
8. What are some examples of some unhelpful behaviors that took place?
9. What about interruptions or contributions overlooked?

THE BOOK OF MY LIFE

PART II

1. Thinking about yourself at present, what gives your life meaning? What makes your life worth living? If you met an old friend, what would you like to tell him/her about yourself?
2. Under what circumstances do you feel most autonomous or strong and confident? What do you like about yourself?
3. Under what circumstances do you tend to feel vulnerable and dependent? What do you do or how do you behave at those times? What do you not like about yourself?
4. Describe the kind of person you are: the beliefs, values and attitudes that are most important in guiding your life. How do these beliefs and values find expression in your life - How are you living them out? Give some examples of when those values have directly affected your life: in crisis, decisions, groups you affiliate with, causes invested in, risks taken, etc.
5. What relationships or groups are most important as support for your values and beliefs? Why, or in what ways?
6. Describe the kind of person you would like to become. What things help you do that and how? What things make doing that difficult or impossible and why?
7. Where do you feel that you are already changing, growing, struggling, or wrestling with doubt in your life presently? Where is your growing edge? What direction is your life moving and are you comfortable with that? Why or why

- not? If not, what direction do you want it to take?
8. When you think about the future, what makes you feel most anxious and uneasy - for yourself, for those you love, for society and the world? When life seems most discouraging and hopeless, what holds you up or renews your hope? Give an example.

SIUC Newman Center

- R.C.I.A. Process

THE BOOK OF MY LIFE

PART III

Recall the chapters of your life and its turning points. As you think about these again, consider whether, or how God figured at each stage:

1. Who first taught you about God? When and how? Who first took you to church and when? What attitudes and feelings did you assimilate about God and about church from your early experiences? How have those early feelings and attitudes changed and why? How do you feel about God now? About church? Draw a picture or symbol that expresses your current relationship with God. Are you comfortable with this relationship? If you want it to change, in what ways?
2. What were the "taboos" in your early life? How have they changed? What are they now? Are/were they related to God and/or church?
3. Think about the ways that God was moving or working in your life that you may have failed to recognize at the time. For example:
 - A. Times when some good came of some pain or suffering in your life; when a crisis turned out well; or when you learned from a mistake you made.
 - B. The many gifts you have: talents, personal qualities, relationships, material goods, educational or other opportunities, etc.
 - C. Times when you were very lucky or were able to do something special, enjoyable or important, etc.

- D. Times of success and happiness; times of great peace and contentment; times of great joy or excitement.
 - E. Times when you deeply experienced the love of another human being or of God.
 - F. Times of feeling "called" or pulled in a certain direction; "hunches" you followed that turned out well; or challenges you felt to become a better, more mature loving person.
4. When does God seem closest to you? When does He seem farthest away? What obstacles do you face in speaking or listening to God?
 5. Have you ever had what you define as a religious experience? What was it like and how did you feel about it? What did it mean to you? How do YOU define a religious experience? What are the most significant or most recent ones you've had?
 6. Describe some crisis or turning point in your own relationship with God. It may be a time when you began to move closer to God or farther away from Him. It need not be a major jolt or crisis. Describe what happened, how you felt at the time and how you felt afterwards.

SIUC Newman Center

- R.C.I.A. Process

THE CONCLUSION

PART IV

I imagine that today I am to die.

I ask for time to be alone and write down for my friends a sort of testament for which the points that follow could serve as chapter titles.

1. These things I have loved in life:
Things I tasted,
looked at,
smelled,
heard,
touched.
2. These experiences I have cherished:
3. These ideas have brought me liberation:
4. These beliefs I have outgrown:
5. These convictions I have lived by:
6. These are the things I have lived for:
7. These insights I have gained in the school of life:
insights into God,
the world,
human nature,
Jesus Christ,
love,
religion,
prayer.
8. These risks I took,
these dangers I have courted:

9. These sufferings have seasoned me:
10. These lessons life have taught me:
11. These influences have shaped my life
(persons, occupations, books, events):
12. These scripture texts have lit my path:
13. These things I regret about my life:
14. These are my life's achievements:
15. These persons are enshrined within my heart:
16. These are my unfulfilled desires:

I choose an ending for this document:

a poem - my own or someone else's;

or a prayer;

a sketch

or a picture from a magazine;

a scripture text;

or anything that I judge would be

an apt conclusion to my testament.

Anthony de Mello

- Wellsprings

SEEING LIFE IN PERSPECTIVE

Jesus knew when he was going to die and he planned the last hours of his life carefully. He chose to spend them with his friends at a final meal and then with his Father in prayer before his arrest.

If you had the opportunity to plan the last few hours of your life how would you choose to spend them? Would you want to be alone or with others? If you want others near you, whom do you want?

At his last supper Jesus made a final prayer to his Father. What is the last prayer you would want to make to God?

One of the great fruits of these fantasies on death is to give us not only a fresh appreciation for life but also a sense of urgency. An oriental writer compares death to a hunter crouched behind bushes taking his aim at a duck that swims placidly on the lake, totally unaware of the danger it is in. The aim of this fantasy is not to make you feel fear but to help you avoid wastage in your life.

Anthony de Mello, S.J.

- SADHANA, a Way to God

SAYING GOODBYE TO YOUR BODY

Imagine now that you have said your final farewells to everyone before you die and you have just about an hour or two of life left. You have reserved this time for yourself and for God . . .

So begin by speaking to yourself. Talk to each of the limbs of your body: your hands, your feet, your heart, your brain, your lungs . . . Say a final farewell to each of them . . . You may be taking explicit notice of them for the very first time in your life ---- now that you are about to die!

Love each one of your limbs. Take your right hand, for instance . . . Thank it for all the service it has given you . . . Tell it how precious it is to you . . . how much you love it . . . Give it all your love and gratitude now that it is going to turn into dust very soon . . . Do this in turn for each of the limbs and organs of your body, then for your body as a whole, with its special form and appearance and colour and height and features.

Now imagine that you see Jesus near you. Listen to him thank each of the members of your body for the service it has given to you in life . . . See him fill the whole of your body with his love and gratitude . . .

Listen to his speak to you now . . .

This exercise is a very valuable one for attaining that healthy love of oneself and acceptance of oneself without which it is so hard to fully give our hearts to God and to others.

HANDOUT - EIGHT

YOUR FUNERAL

This exercise is meant to reinforce the good effect of the previous one, to give you a further love and appreciation for yourself.

Imagine you see your body in its coffin laid out in a church for the funeral rites . . . Take a good look at your body, especially at the expression on your face . . .

Now look at all the people who have come to your funeral . . . Go slowly from one pew to another looking at the faces of these people . . . Stop before each person and see what they are thinking and what they are feeling . . .

Now listen to the sermon that is being preached. Who is the preacher? . . . What is he saying about you? . . . Can you accept all the good things he is saying about you? . . . If you cannot, notice what resistances there are in you to accepting what the preacher is saying. . . Which of the good things he says about you are you willing to accept? How do you feel when you hear him speak? . . .

Look again at the faces of your friends who have come to attend your funeral. . . Imagine all the good things they will be saying about you when they return home from your funeral. . . What do you feel now? . . .

Is there something you would like to say to each one of them before they go home? . . . Some final farewell in response to all they are thinking and feeling about you, a response which, alas, they will never hear now? . . . Say it, all the same, and see what this does to you. . .

Imagine that the funeral rites are over now. You stand in imagination above the grave in which your body lies, watching your friends leave the cemetery. What are your feelings now? . . . As you stand here now, look back on your life and your experiences. . . Was it all worth while? . . .

Now become aware of your existence here in the room and realize that you are still alive and still have some time at your disposal. . . Think of these same friends now from your present point of view. Do you see them differently as a result of this exercise? Think of yourself now. . . Do you see yourself differently or feel differently about yourself as a result of this exercise?

Anthony de Mello, S.J.

- SADHANA, a Way to God

AN ADVENTURE INWARD: The Soul-room and the Kingdom

Let us go on an imaginative journey from the marketplace to the sanctuary, from the crowded streets to the deep aloneness of the soul room, to see what we may find there. Let us trace a path in our imagination which any of us might follow and try to understand.

First of all let us turn into the silence . . . not hurriedly or violently, but quietly, like pulling off the leaves of an artichoke one by one. It is so much easier to be still when we are together as we are today. There is something in our common desire for silence that we do not always have alone.

First of all let us be comfortable . . . Then let us still the inner voices which scream and blast away. Let us put away our longings and desires. Let us lie fallow, inert . . . Then it is our imagination, which is our forgotten faculty, is allowed to come to life. Let us put away all our critical and analytical abilities and just be passive.

What is this silence like? It is like coming into a quiet sanctuary set off in a garden away from the marketplace, insulated from the busy-ness and confusion, the anger and desire outside. It is entering this sanctuary which can be found within each of us.

The marketplace . . . the busy streets, people coming and going, never stopping . . . never knowing where one is going or why, but always busy, working until exhaustion takes over . . . then the television, and afterwards sleep in which we forget our dreams . . . and then more busy-ness, day after day, and for what . . . ? Even a home can be filled with this kind of busy-ness, even our time of recreation . . . even the ministry . . .

The marketplace . . . everyone trying to take advantage of each other, intent on one's own gain, making the good bargain, the good deal . . . The bright lights and mechanical voices trying to sell and convince . . . keeping us busy . . . Everyone struggling and contending in the marketplace, each wearing a mask to be unknowable. Everyone afraid and expecting the worst from others, always on guard . . .

Judging, criticizing, and being judged and criticized . . . no peace and little fellowship. Almost none . . . only brief spasms of love, and then even within families judging and criticism, hostility, anger, fear. Many families live in the marketplace.

We seek to leave the marketplace, and automatically a voice booms out: THERE IS NO PLACE TO GO! YOU CANNOT ESCAPE THE MARKETPLACE BECAUSE THERE IS NOTHING BUT SLEEP AND NOTHINGNESS BEYOND IT. JUST STAY BUSY. KEEP JUDGING AS BEST YOU CAN, FIGHTING TO GAIN WHAT YOU WANT. DON'T THINK TOO MUCH ABOUT IT. YOU CANNOT MOVE OUT OF IT. .

Yet within there is another voice which speaks without saying a word and tries to draw us out of the fleeing crowd . . . tries to let us know that the marketplace is only a place of flight, a way of blind headlong flight in which we pray for a quick death and a nice funeral and nothingness . . .

Something, at any rate, draws us out of the heady, maddening confusion that is the totality of life for so many people . . . something draws us aside and suggests that we pause and look and see the black void ahead . . . Wouldn't it be better to go into our own shabby, little soul-room where we can be still and think? Yet we fear to go there . . . we fear our shabbiness. It is hard to decide, and several times the crowd surges around us and would engulf us again, but we finally turn away from it . . .

We find the entry way to our little dwelling. It is dirty and ill lighted. Inside the room is gloomy . . . oatmeal wallpaper hangs in shreds from the walls . . . the curtains are dirty and tattered . . . except for a sagging sofa and a desk piled high with clutter, most of the furniture lies in broken pieces about the room. There is an odor coming from the corner where the sink is filled with dirty dishes and a heap of rubbish and garbage pours out onto the floor. Obviously we have not spent much time here. This is a room no one has cared for, a stop-over when there is no other place to go.

Even here the television is turned on and a radio blares in the background. We dare not be alone. We carry

the marketplace into the very soul-room via the television /
so that we have no time to remember and see ourselves.

We are afraid of our own company . . . we fear that we
cannot stand ourselves and our own nothingness . . . We are
afraid of our own helplessness . . . better to hurry and
do something than to be still and face our helplessness
before the god of the marketplace . . . THE PAIN OF NOT
BEING GOD!! . . .

Morton T. Kelsey

- The Other Side of Silence

Continuation:

AN ADVENTURE INWARD: The Soul-room and the Kingdom

We are afraid of the pain that has been locked deep in our hearts, hidden under books and piles of clothing and china and useless things . . . we are afraid of our failures, follies, our sins . . . the monsters of our desires and feelings . . . the old beast within us, the old angry ego that wills never to give in . . .

No wonder it is too hard to leave the marketplace. No wonder we seek each other with masks on . . . in order to forget and not have to look within ourselves . . . Then each of us is alone in our own soul-room . . .

And now I turn off the television and the radio and let stillness reign. At first I wonder if I can endure it. A million terrors afflict me . . . Then through the silence comes a strange noise, and I am more petrified . . . What is it? A branch brushing against the roof, or a night-flying bird at the window? Or is it some malignant creature trying to break in, perhaps a thief ready to do me in . . . ? I expect the worst, programmed as I am to fear . . .

Listening intently, I realize that even before the stillness began the noise was there, but mingled with the other sounds of life, it was indistinguishable from the rest.

I can tell that the noise has been there as long as I can remember . . . It is a soft, persistent, gentle noise . . . it almost calms my fears. It is a knocking, determined and persistent, but kindly, patient. Amazing how much the sound of a knock reveals about the one who is knocking. It comes from the other side of the room. I have heard that there was door there, but that it led nowhere. I was warned to stay away from it or I might go mad . . .

The sound draws me . . . I go toward the door . . . Caught between fear and curiosity and hope, I call out: "Come in." A voice replies softly: "I cannot. The door is bolted from within."

The bolt is rusty and so are the hinges. I finally draw it back and tug at the door. At first it will not budge and then it springs open . . . and there . . . right before me . . . there He stands . . . lantern in hand, the other hand raised to knock . . . a crown of thorns upon His head, but worn with richer dignity than any jewels . . . a rich cloak with a ruby for a clasp . . . the hands are scarred. He speaks:

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to them, and will sup with them and they with me."*

I fall to my knees and cry out: "I am not worthy that you should come under my roof." Then He speaks again, and there is a note of harshness in His words: "Who are you

*Revelation 3:20

to call him for whom I died unworthy? Who are you to call unworthy him at whose door I have stood from the beginning of time and knocked." He takes me by the hand and lifts me up and steps into my little soul-room. The light of His presence transforms the dull shabbiness.

Swiftly His hand clears the confusion. In the twinkling of an eye what was torn, dirty, littered is cleared as if a river had run through it, or a legion of angels had come to cleanse and renew my soul . . . I am fresh, clean, renewed, redeemed, transformed . . . the broken in me is mended, the illness healed.

For a long time we sit and talk. I pour out my anguish, my hopes, my joys, my fears, all of me. He listens, an arm around my shoulder. I weep, and the tears themselves are cleansing. Then He takes bread and breaks it and gives it to me saying: "This is my body." He also takes wine and blesses it and hands me the cup and says: "This is my blood . . ." What wonderful things we speak of . . . great mysteries which make my heart burn within me. Then He takes me by the hand and leads me to the door . . .

I protest. I cannot go out there, but He laughs, and His laughter is the music of the spheres . . . and He takes me out into a land of such beauty that I cannot believe my eyes . . .

The room from which we came is but a basement chamber, a cellar cell of a vast mansion. Before us is a great green meadow leading down to an azure lake. Flowers are everywhere,

of every color and shape. In the distance lie range upon range of snow-capped mountains. Childlike we roll on the grass, as happy as a child on a perfect day in May. Then He points to the great stairway near the door of the soul-room . . .

He takes me toward it and says: "Come, my child, and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world . . . Come, this is your home . . . inherit it." We enter the great palace, and there are angels to wait on me and such magnificence as to defy description.

I am led down a long corridor to a room that has been waiting just for me, marked with my name. He opens the door, and there I find things just as I would have wished had O known enough about myself to understand what I really wanted . . . The colors, the furnishings fit me as perfectly as the clothes which are laid out for me to wear.

There is a beautiful pool of sparkling water behind each room . . . and there I wash and am made clean. So much dirt and grime are washed away that I am much lighter than I had thought. I am better looking than I had dreamed was possible. The rolls of fat and scars and boney joints are not really me . . . not really . . .

And then I am clothed in my wedding garments by attending friends and brought with others to a great banquet hall. There is a feast such as I had never dreamed of . . . the banquet of the kingdom of heaven, and music and gaiety and laughter. And we are filled, with just the right amount

not to be stuffed. There is fellowship with the best of friends . . . those who will be friends forever . . . who will never betray, but will bring out the best in us and give us companionship that is filled with joy.

A great curtain is pulled aside, and there, before us sitting on a throne, is the Lord Himself . . . the one who rescued me and brought me here. He is the creator, the one who made all things. He is the one who cared enough for me that He would have died if I had been the only one. He speaks as a voice within me . . .

At first I am dazzled, but then He tells me to stand beside Him. As I step close, His presence becomes humble so that I can know His love and fellowship even better. When I am with Him it is as if I were the only one. He speaks to each of us individually, and our hearts are full of joy. Then He leads us to the great treasure vault . . .

He selects gifts of the greatest value for each of us . . . jewels of every kind and precious metals. There is more than we can carry, and He tells us that we can come back for more at any time. Then He tells us: "It is time to go back into the marketplace and tell others what inheritance awaits them." We protest: "They will not believe us!" But He smiles and says: "Do you not believe me? . . . I am with you even until the end of the world. I am giving you my love to go with you. Bring that love to others, that it may cover the earth as the waters cover the sea beds . . . "

He does not hurry us . . . As we talk we bring those who are especially dear to us, our loved ones, the sick, our friends, our enemies, into His presence, and they are transformed, every one of them, by the lights which radiates from Him . . . He waits until I am ready to return . . .

I step back into my soul-room. It is a joy to be there. I feel at home, and I can't wait to go out and share what I have found. Bursting with joy, I step out into the street, into the marketplace. I see the men and women as they really are. Behind their masks, they are like me, frightened, seeking love, lonely. They need what I have found, and the light is ready to break through into one dark corner after another . . .

Morton T. Kelsey

- The Other Side of Silence