

2004

2005



Small Faith Sharing Group Reflection Guide

Easter Season (Easter - Corpus Christi)



Developed by
The Office For
Evangelization
& the Advisory
Committee on
Evangelization

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Introduction

*This Reflection Guide is prepared for small faith-sharing group members in Catholic parishes and communities. These pages combine Cycle A readings of the Sunday Lectionary with meditations, reflection questions and the Objectives from the Personal Mandate of **Spreading the Holy Fire: A Plan for Catholics Evangelizing in the Archdiocese of Chicago** to create an evangelizing perspective to our faith.*

This Season of Eastertide is a time of joy and celebration - recalling the Resurrection of Jesus and the hope of new life with Him. During the Easter season, the Church recalls the saving action of God through Jesus to share in eternal life with God. At Easter, we celebrate sharing the banquet with God.

Each week we gather with other disciples of Christ. As we encounter Jesus in a new way, we grow to *believe* more deeply in Him. Our shared experience and belief empower us to *share* our faith with others. Together, we take our deepened belief into personal relationships with family, friends, the workplace, our parish, neighborhoods and nation to *transform* the world into God's Reign: a kinder, better, more loving place. Believe, share, transform: this is what it means to be a disciple of Jesus, to be a Catholic, and to evangelize.

As a member of a small faith-sharing group, you will gather weekly with others to grow in faith. Be open to the process of growth that comes from sharing. Be open to receiving the gift of holiness. Take responsibility to participate and encourage others to take part. The entire group benefits and grows together. As a small group member, please follow these guidelines:

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|------------------------|--|
| Prepare | Get ready for the meetings by reading the Scriptures and reflection material before the meeting. |
| Participate | Pray. Read the Scriptures when asked. Respond aloud to the reflection questions. However, you may choose to "pass" at any time without explanation. |
| Pray | Between meeting times, pray for the group leader, the other members of the group and for yourself. |
| Be Present | Commit to attend all meetings unless pressing circumstances prevent it. |
| Be Personal | Talk about your own experience and share your own thoughts about how God speaks to you through the Scripture. Listen to the stories of others in the group and refrain from giving advice. |
| Be Confidential | What is shared in the group stays in the group. Realize that some areas may be too sensitive for people to respond to the faith-sharing questions or share an insight. |
| Be Gentle | If differences of opinion arise, respect those differences. There are as many ways to experience God's presence as there are people. We are all growing and on the journey together. Make the effort to understand another's viewpoint by being tender and kind. (Ephesians 4:15). |

May this Season be a rich experience of God's love that leads you to share that love with others.

Cycle A The Gospel of John (during Easter Season)

Insights on Evangelization

The Scripture readings for the 2004-2005 Liturgical Year are from Cycle A of the Sunday Lectionary. During the Easter Season in Cycle A, Sunday liturgies draw their Gospel readings from John. While each Gospel proclaims the Good News of Jesus Christ, each of the four evangelists has a different perspective depending on the author's background, intention, audience, message and theme.

Author/Audience

Many scripture scholars believe that the Gospel of John was written by a community of disciples who followed the evangelist John. The Gospel contains much dualism such as light and dark, hunger and food, night and day, truth and deceit, belief and unbelief. Throughout the text, John includes long symbolic discourses of Jesus. Scholars disagree about when the Gospel of John was written – somewhere between 90 and 110 AD. John's Gospel contains an unfolding witness to the Son of God.

Message and Themes

John's Gospel is very different from the Gospel of Matthew, Mark and Luke. It contains a variety of symbols that describe Jesus - light, life, water, bread, shepherd and vine. Faith in Jesus leads to eternal life and the purpose of telling the story of Jesus is to inspire faith in Him.

The Gospel of John focuses on the commandment of Jesus to love. Jesus is the unique Son of God. Through His words and work, Jesus' glory is revealed through "signs" - the raising of Lazarus, multiplication of the loaves, healing the man born blind and changing water into wine at Cana. These "signs" are meant to bring about belief in Jesus as God's only Beloved Son. Only Jesus can reveal who God is.

Jesus has a unique relationship with God as Abba ("Daddy") that He invites His disciples to share. The Gospel of John has been divided into two "books" - the Book of Signs and the Book of Glory. Each plays a part in bringing people to faith in Jesus. The Book of Glory focuses on Jesus' return to the Father, and His love is fully revealed through His passion and death. The cross showed Jesus' death as a fulfillment of the Scriptures that God's plan was now realized. Jesus' resurrection began a new day and age to respond to God's grace by believing in Jesus.

How the Gospel of John Relates to Evangelizing

All who profess to be Catholic Christians are called to be active disciples of Jesus.

- Commit:** John's Gospel contains a series of dialogues that call the believer to decide to follow Jesus as Word of God, the light of the world, and the true Son of God. We are called as disciples to commit our lives to Jesus, follow Him and do God's will.
- Believe:** Believing in Jesus leads a disciple to eternal life; so are we called to believe in Him.
- Share:** As disciples, we are called to love one another. By our love for one another, people will know that we are followers of Jesus.
- Transform:** The Resurrection narratives in John's Gospel show how the disciples encounter Jesus, are transformed by the Spirit and sent with His peace to bear witness to Him. So, too, are we called encounter Jesus, witness to Him and transform lives.

Source: Fr. Donald Senior, C.P. and PHEME PERKINS, *Gospel of Matthew, Reading Guide, The Catholic Study Bible, New American Bible, Oxford Press, pages RG437-RG451*. Please review the article for more detail on this Gospel.

October 2004 - 2005

The Year of the Eucharist

Insights on Evangelization†

“All around us, people are starving for faith and love, meaning and hope. More urgently than ever, we are called to evangelize.” *Francis Cardinal George, Introduction, Spreading the Holy Fire*

The Eucharist, Jesus, is the food for humanity that fills the starving and hungry with good things – the very life of God. On the Feast of Corpus Christi, Pope John Paul II decreed The Year of the Eucharist to celebrate “*The Eucharist, source and summit of the life and mission of the Church*”.

The Year of the Eucharist began in October 2004 at the International Eucharistic Congress in Guadalajara Mexico and will end with the Synod of Bishops on the Eucharist in October, 2005. This Year encourages all Catholics to deepen their prayer life and develop a higher standard of Christian living. Two distinct ways include active celebration of the Eucharist at Mass and Eucharistic Adoration within the Church. To effectively evangelize, Catholics must give an authentic witness to Christ through their lives. The Eucharist is necessary for this to happen.

During the Year of the Eucharist, small faith-sharing communities have a unique opportunity to reflect upon the Word of God from the Sunday Lectionary.

At the 2004 Chicago Catechetical Conference, Fr. Donald Senior, C.P., President of Catholic Theological Union and a member of the Pontifical Biblical Institute, delivered a talk “Biblical Foundations of the Eucharist.” Fr. Senior presented three images found in the Gospels that are central to a Catholic understanding of the Eucharist: Communion, Meal and Sacrifice. *Communion* is that movement of belief in God that involves listening to others, appreciating diversity, with the end of achieving union with God. *Meal* is that movement of sharing in the life of God with others and inviting them to the table of the Eucharist. *Sacrifice* is that movement of self-emptying, giving of oneself out of love for others. As Eucharist, Jesus unites these movements.

Communion, Meal and Sacrifice are closely related to the goals of evangelizing: Believe, Share and Transform. Communion is built and builds upon belief through union with Christ. Meal presupposes a community who shares the Bread of Life with others and is always inviting and welcoming newcomers to God’s table. Sacrifice is based upon the intention, words and actions to bring about transformation of society and the world into God’s Reign.

By participating in the Year of the Eucharist, we should expect that the Holy Spirit will help us to grow deeper in our belief, instill in us a greater urgency to share our faith with others, and impel us to transform life into God’s Reign of love, justice and peace. Be prepared for this to happen.

This Liturgical Year’s series of Small Faith-Sharing Group reflection guides will offer materials through a progressive sequence through the Liturgical Calendar, outlined below.

Advent:	Preparing the table
Christmastide:	Preparing the meal; welcoming the Bread of Life
Winter Ordinary Time:	Inviting the guests
Lent:	Getting dressed for God’s feast
Eastertide:	Dining together with God
Summer Ordinary Time:	After-dinner talk: Building God’s community of love
Autumn Ordinary Time:	Preparing for God’s meal to come (harvest)

May the Year of the Eucharist renew our faith, hope and love to live and share the Good News.

Introduction to All Small Faith Sharing Sessions

PREPARE THE ENVIRONMENT

Optional: Prepare a small table, set up two place settings with dishes, silverware, napkins and glasses. Put a table sign next to one plate that says “Jesus” and one next to the other setting that says “Us.” You may choose another symbol and enthrone a Bible. Have small note cards and pens available. Use this or another centerpiece that symbolizes celebrating God’s banquet during the Season of Easter.

BECOME ACQUAINTED

Go around the group with each person sharing his or her hopes for the meeting.

GATHER TOGETHER IN THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST

Leader: As we gather together, we recall how God has come into our lives this past week and how God is present in our midst now.

After a moment of silence, ask the Holy Spirit to empower you and the group:

*Come Holy Spirit,
Fill the hearts of all people with the fire of Your Love.
May all accept Your invitation to know and love Jesus as Lord and Savior.*

*Fill this Archdiocese with people who welcome
and invite others to share in the Catholic faith.
Fill our Cardinal, our bishops and priests, deacons and lay ministers
with wisdom and courage to live and
preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
Fill all parish and agency staff with Your power to
evangelize those whom they serve.*

*Fill all consecrated men and women and all lay people with the grace
to become and make disciples of Jesus through
prayer, work, and daily living.
May the holy fire of Your love transform our society according to the Gospel.*

*Come Holy Spirit! With the Father and the Son,
You are worshiped and glorified forever and ever. Amen.*

EXTEND GOD’S INVITATION

On a notecard, write the name(s) of those whose lives may need the hope of the Resurrection to attend God’s banquet. Place the cards on “Jesus” dinner plate and lift all up in prayer to come to know and love God through Him.

REFLECT AND SHARE

Reflect on each question below in turn or use your own questions. Allow group members, if they wish, to answer that question before the group moves on to the next question.

READ THE SCRIPTURES

Read the Sunday Scriptures out loud together. Afterward, mention which Scripture passage touched you and why. What does the passage mean to you in your own life at this stage of your personal spiritual journey?

1st Reading: Acts 10:34a, 37-43

2nd Reading: Col. 3:1-4 or 1 Cor. 5:6b-8

Gospel: John 20:1-9

Reflection on the Gospel Reading

The Easter morning reading depicts the resurrection narrative from the Gospel of John. Mary of Magdala discovered the empty tomb and ran to tell Simon Peter and the other disciple, often referred to as the “beloved disciple.” Both disciples ran to the tomb, saw the burial cloths, and like Mary, did not see Jesus. The last verse of the Gospel is poignant - they did not yet understand the Scripture of Jesus rising from the dead.

Reflection Questions:

Believe: Do I believe and understand that Jesus is risen and alive in my life today?

Share: How does my belief cause me to run to others to tell them that Jesus is alive?

Transform: What would the world be like if others came to see and believe like the beloved disciple?

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Pray together for any petitions and any needs that you might have. Stand in a circle together and say the Our Father. Pray daily this week for the person on your right.

LEAVE TO EVANGELIZE YOUR WORLD

Reflect on your mission to grow deeper in your relationship with God. Be welcoming, offer hospitality and work for transformation in your daily life.

This coming week:

Believe/Communion: Spend time each day reflecting on Jesus’ risen presence with you during every moment.

Share/Meal: Pay attention to a newcomer or an inactive Catholic who only comes to church on Easter Sunday and start a friendship.

Transform/Sacrifice: Do some good work to celebrate Jesus’ risen presence in the world - working through you.

April 3

2nd Sunday of Easter (Divine Mercy Sunday)

READ THE SCRIPTURES

Read the Sunday Scriptures out loud together. Afterward, mention which Scripture passage touched you and why. What does the passage mean to you in your own life at this stage of your personal spiritual journey?

1st Reading: Acts 2:42-47

2nd Reading: 1 Peter 1:3-9

Gospel: John 20:19-31

Reflection on the Gospel Reading

The Gospel reading from St. John tells the story of Jesus' first encounter with the disciples and with Thomas. Jesus appeared to a scared group of people and offered them His peace. The disciples rejoiced when they recognized Jesus. Thomas missed the meeting and doubted such an appearance occurred. A week later, Jesus appeared a second time and Thomas was present. Jesus called Thomas to belief, even to the point of making physical contact with His wounds. Thomas came to believe and Jesus responded how blessed are those who believe without seeing. At the end of the passage, the evangelist notes that Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, yet the whole purpose of the Gospel is that we may come to believe in Jesus as Son of God and have life in His name.

Reflection Questions:

Believe: When have I been like Thomas and doubted Jesus' risen presence in my life? When have I rejoiced like the disciples when I recognized Jesus' presence in my life?

Share: During this Easter Season, how can I share the Good News of Jesus' resurrection?

Transform: What signs does Jesus do in my presence that help transform the world into the Reign of God?

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Pray together for any petitions and any needs that you might have. Stand in a circle together and say the Our Father. Pray daily this week for the person on your right.

LEAVE TO EVANGELIZE YOUR WORLD

Reflect on your mission to grow deeper in your relationship with God. Be welcoming, offer hospitality and work for transformation in your daily life.

This coming week:

Believe/Communion: Take a daily inventory of when you rejoice in and doubt Jesus' presence in your life. Focus on the joy and give the doubt to God.

Share/Meal: Go beyond the locked doors of prejudice or misunderstanding and share a meal with someone of a different ethnic background

Transform/Sacrifice: As Spring unfolds, do something to help clean up the environment.

April 10

3rd Sunday of Easter

READ THE SCRIPTURES

Read the Sunday Scriptures out loud together. Afterward, mention which Scripture passage touched you and why. What does the passage mean to you in your own life at this stage of your personal spiritual journey?

1st Reading: Acts 2:14, 22-33

2nd Reading: 1 Peter 1:17-21

Gospel: Luke 24:13-35

Reflection on the Gospel Reading

The Gospel reading from St. Luke is a Easter narrative about two disciples journeying to Emmaus after Jesus death. Unaware of who He is, the disciples encounter Jesus and tell Him of their disappointment in Jesus' death. Jesus revealed the Scriptures to them and joined them for supper. As Jesus broke and blessed the bread, the disciples recognized Him and He vanished from their sight. They returned to tell the others, who had also encountered Jesus, about how they came to know Jesus during their travel and in the breaking of the bread.

Reflection Questions:

Believe: How do I recognize Jesus through the Mass in the breaking and receiving of the bread?

Share: What things can I do to invite others to experience Jesus at Sunday Mass?

Transform: What would our parish be like if every seat was filled with someone who encountered Jesus in the breaking of the bread at Sunday Mass?

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Pray together for any petitions and any needs that you might have. Stand in a circle together and say the Our Father. Pray daily this week for the person on your right.

LEAVE TO EVANGELIZE YOUR WORLD

Reflect on your mission to grow deeper in your relationship with God. Be welcoming, offer hospitality and work for transformation in your daily life.

This coming week:

Believe/Communion: Celebrate Sunday Mass fully, joyfully and enthusiastically this week.

Share/Meal: Invite someone you know to come to Sunday Mass with you.

Transform/Sacrifice: Share your bread with others, especially the hungry, through some charitable activity.

READ THE SCRIPTURES

Read the Sunday Scriptures out loud together. Afterward, mention which Scripture passage touched you and why. What does the passage mean to you in your own life at this stage of your personal spiritual journey?

1st Reading: Acts 2:14a, 36-41

2nd Reading: 1 Peter 2:20b-25

Gospel: John 10:1-10

Reflection on the Gospel Reading

The reading from St. John's Gospel focuses on Jesus as the Good Shepherd. John uses the literary device "I AM" throughout the Gospel. In the Gospel text, Jesus compared Himself to the gate to the sheepfold. Other shepherds do not take care of their sheep when trouble comes, but Jesus called His own sheep by name, to enter and find pasture. Jesus' mission is the same now as it was in the first century AD: He came to give humanity life more abundantly.

Reflection Questions:

Believe: When do I hear the voice of Jesus and how is it different from the other voices of society?

Share: How am I called to act as a shepherd in my family or workplace?

Transform: How can the world have life more abundantly because Jesus lives?

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Pray together for any petitions and any needs that you might have. Stand in a circle together and say the Our Father. Pray daily this week for the person on your right.

LEAVE TO EVANGELIZE YOUR WORLD

Reflect on your mission to grow deeper in your relationship with God. Be welcoming, offer hospitality and work for transformation in your daily life.

This coming week:

Believe/Communion: Set aside 10 minutes or more everyday just to listen to the voice of Jesus.

Share/Meal: After you listen, do what Jesus tells you to share your faith with others.

Transform/Sacrifice: Do something extravagant -- abundantly -- to help others live better this week. Don't worry about receiving a reward; let God take care of that.

April 24

5th Sunday of Easter

READ THE SCRIPTURES

Read the Sunday Scriptures out loud together. Afterward, mention which Scripture passage touched you and why. What does the passage mean to you in your own life at this stage of your personal spiritual journey?

1st Reading: Acts 6:1-7

2nd Reading: 1 Peter 2:4-9

Gospel: John 14:1-12

Reflection on the Gospel Reading

The Gospel reading from St. John is a conversation of Jesus with His disciples before His passion and death. Jesus told His disciples to have faith in God and in Him. Jesus said that He would leave them to prepare a place for them. Then, He would return to take them to Himself. Thomas asked “How?” and Phillip asked to see the Father. Jesus replied that He is the way and that the Father is revealed in Him. Jesus promised that anyone who believed in Him would do greater things than He did.

Reflection Questions:

Believe: In what parts of my life am I confident that God is present? In what parts do I struggle?

Share: How do I respond when others ask, “How is God working?” or “Let me see God?”

Transform: What greater things can I imagine doing because of my faith in Jesus?

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Pray together for any petitions and any needs that you might have. Stand in a circle together and say the Our Father. Pray daily this week for the person on your right.

LEAVE TO EVANGELIZE YOUR WORLD

Reflect on your mission to grow deeper in your relationship with God. Be welcoming, offer hospitality and work for transformation in your daily life.

This coming week:

Believe/Communion: During a time of prayer this week, imagine the place that Jesus is preparing for you. Give thanks for it.

Share/Meal: Discover someone who has given up hope in living. Pray for him/her and offer a kind word of encouragement and promise to pray.

Transform/Sacrifice: Imagine that you are doing something greater than Jesus did. What would that be? What is holding you back from doing it?

May 1

6th Sunday of Easter

READ THE SCRIPTURES

Read the Sunday Scriptures out loud together. Afterward, mention which Scripture passage touched you and why. What does the passage mean to you in your own life at this stage of your personal spiritual journey?

1st Reading: Acts 8:5-8, 14-17

2nd Reading: 1 Peter 3:15-18

Gospel: John 14:15-21

Reflection on the Gospel Reading

The Gospel reading from St. John continues Jesus' departure narrative from last week. In these passages, Jesus told His disciples that the sure sign of their love for Him was to keep His commandments. Jesus' disciples will have life in and union with Jesus. Jesus promised that those who keep His commandments would be loved by His Father and that Jesus would love them and reveal Himself to them.

Reflection Questions:

Believe: What does it mean to me to know that because Jesus lives, I will live?

Share: How does this Gospel challenge my belief that others are separate from me?

Transform: How would the world be different if everyone loved Jesus by keeping His commandments?

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Pray together for any petitions and any needs that you might have. Stand in a circle together and say the Our Father. Pray daily this week for the person on your right.

LEAVE TO EVANGELIZE YOUR WORLD

Reflect on your mission to grow deeper in your relationship with God. Be welcoming, offer hospitality and work for transformation in your daily life.

This coming week:

Believe/Communion: Pray the rosary this week and reflect on the different mysteries of Jesus' life. Reflect on how those mysteries are a part of your life today.

Share/Meal: Go visit someone who is separated from others - someone who is lonely, divorced, struggling with an addiction - and offer your friendship.

Transform/Sacrifice: Be open to the promptings of the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, to do something that impacts others positively this week.

May 8

Ascension Sunday (Evangelization Sunday)

READ THE SCRIPTURES

Read the Sunday Scriptures out loud together. Afterward, mention which Scripture passage touched you and why. What does the passage mean to you in your own life at this stage of your personal spiritual journey?

1st Reading: Acts 1:1-11

2nd Reading: Ephesians 1:17-23

Gospel: Matthew 28:16-20

Reflection on the Gospel Reading

This Sunday, we take a break from the Gospel of John. This reading is from end of the Gospel of St. Matthew. The disciples encountered the risen Jesus on a mountain in Galilee. Jesus approached them and commanded them to go and make disciples of all nations, to baptize and to teach all to observe Jesus' commandments. Jesus promised to be with them, always, until the end of the age.

Reflection Questions:

Believe: How seriously do I follow Jesus' command to become and grow as His disciple?

Share: How seriously do I follow Jesus' command to make disciples of others?

Transform: How seriously do I follow Jesus' command to reach out to "all nations" – those outside of my comfort zone, immediate family or neighborhood?

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Pray together for any petitions and any needs that you might have. Stand in a circle together and say the Our Father. Pray daily this week for the person on your right.

LEAVE TO EVANGELIZE YOUR WORLD

Reflect on your mission to grow deeper in your relationship with God. Be welcoming, offer hospitality and work for transformation in your daily life.

This coming week: Read the Personal Mandate of the Archdiocesan Evangelization Plan, *Spreading the Holy Fire*. The Plan is available on-line at www.goingforth.org

Believe/Communion: Read the *Believe* objective of the Personal Mandate. Choose one strategy to grow in your faith.

Share/Meal: Read the *Share* objective of the Personal Mandate. Choose one strategy to share your faith with others.

Transform/Sacrifice: Read the *Transform* objective of the Personal Mandate. Choose one strategy to make the world a better place to live in.

READ THE SCRIPTURES

Read the Sunday Scriptures out loud together. Afterward, mention which Scripture passage touched you and why. What does the passage mean to you in your own life at this stage of your personal spiritual journey?

1st Reading: Acts 2:1-11

2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13

Gospel: John 20:19-23

Reflection on the Gospel Reading

The Gospel reading from St. John depicts Jesus' first appearance to His disciples after His death. Jesus came and stood in their midst. He offered them His peace and showed His wounds to them. The disciples rejoiced when they saw Him. A second time, He gave them His peace and commissioned them to go out. Jesus breathed on them, giving them the Holy Spirit and the power to forgive and retain sins.

Reflection Questions:

Believe: How do I rejoice when I receive the peace of Jesus?

Share: How does the Holy Spirit cause me to share my faith with others?

Transform: How does the Holy Spirit prompt me to make a difference in creating a better world for others?

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Pray together for any petitions and any needs that you might have. Stand in a circle together and say the Our Father. Pray daily this week for the person on your right.

LEAVE TO EVANGELIZE YOUR WORLD

Reflect on your mission to grow deeper in your relationship with God. Be welcoming, offer hospitality and work for transformation in your daily life.

This coming week:

Believe/Communion: Pray the Evangelization Prayer of the Archdiocese, "Come Holy Spirit," every day this week. (Available on-line at www.goingforth.org)

Share/Meal: Be open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit to greet others with hospitality, listen and share your faith as the situation allows.

Transform/Sacrifice: Be open to participating in a new ministry in your parish or in a new activity in your community that is life giving.

READ THE SCRIPTURES

Read the Sunday Scriptures out loud together. Afterward, mention which Scripture passage touched you and why. What does the passage mean to you in your own life at this stage of your personal spiritual journey?

- 1st Reading: Exodus 34:4b-6, 8-9
- 2nd Reading: 2 Corinthians 13:11-13
- Gospel: John 3:16-18

Reflection on the Gospel Reading

This very brief Gospel reading from St. John is full of power and promise. The passage is part of Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus, a Pharisee and ruler of the Jews. Nicodemus sought Jesus out at night to learn more about Him. This passage contains part of Jesus' response to Nicodemus. Jesus taught him about the nature of God's love - God loved the world. God sent Jesus to save the world and give eternal life to all who believe in Jesus.

Reflection Questions:

- Believe:* *How do I feel when I think that God sent Jesus to give me eternal life?*
- Share:* *With whom do I need to share the Good News of God's free gift of eternal life?*
- Transform:* *How does what I believe about God's desire to love the world affect how I treat the material world?*

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Pray together for any petitions and any needs that you might have. Stand in a circle together and say the Our Father. Pray daily this week for the person on your right.

LEAVE TO EVANGELIZE YOUR WORLD

Reflect on your mission to grow deeper in your relationship with God. Be welcoming, offer hospitality and work for transformation in your daily life.

This coming week:

- Believe/Communion:** In prayer this week, offer thanks to God the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit. Celebrate Each of Them with love, praise and thanks.
- Share/Meal:** If you have a family, spend time getting to know another family this week. Celebrate your connection with them.
- Transform/Sacrifice:** Do something in person to help others in need. Connect personally with them as a brother or sister in Christ.

READ THE SCRIPTURES

Read the Sunday Scriptures out loud together. Afterward, mention which Scripture passage touched you and why. What does the passage mean to you in your own life at this stage of your personal spiritual journey?

1st Reading: Deuteronomy 8:2-3; 14b-16a

2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 10:16-17

Gospel: John 6:51-58

Reflection on the Gospel Reading

This reading is a portion of the Bread of Life discourse found in Chapter 6 of John's Gospel. Jesus had multiplied the bread for the crowds and then entered a conversation that revealed Him as the Bread of Life. Jesus promised to give His body as food for the life of the world. When the Jewish leaders objected, Jesus repeated His promise. He compared His Body and Blood to the bread and drink that God provided to the Jews as manna and water in the desert during their Exodus from Egypt. Whereas the followers of Moses died in the desert, those who followed Jesus and ate His bread would live forever.

Reflection Questions:

Believe: *What does receiving the Eucharist mean to me?*

Share: *How can I share the Good News of Jesus as the Bread of Life with others?*

Transform: *As disciples of Jesus, what can we do to be bread for the world?*

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Pray together for any petitions and any needs that you might have. Stand in a circle together and say the Our Father. Pray daily this week for the person on your right.

LEAVE TO EVANGELIZE YOUR WORLD

Reflect on your mission to grow deeper in your relationship with God. Be welcoming, offer hospitality and work for transformation in your daily life.

This coming week: This Gospel is very relevant to the Year of the Eucharist we are celebrating. Read this Gospel passage every day this week.

Believe/Communion: If you can attend daily Mass or practice Eucharistic Adoration this week, do it!

Share/Meal: Be confident about telling others why you go to Mass and what the Eucharist means to you. Invite them to attend Mass or Eucharistic Adoration with you.

Transform/Sacrifice: Be bread for others this week. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you how.

Afterword

Renewal of Baptismal Vows/ Profession of Faith

I reject sin so as to live in the freedom of God's children.

I reject the glamour of evil and refuse to be mastered by sin.

I reject Satan, father of sin and prince of darkness.

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His Only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died and was buried, rose from the dead and is now seated with the Father.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the dead and life everlasting.

Comments are Welcome

Thank you for participating in these small faith-sharing group sessions, reflecting on Scripture in the light of evangelization. By virtue of baptism, everyone is called to evangelize. If you are interested in working in evangelization in a greater way, ask your pastor about joining a Parish Evangelization Team or participating in an outreach ministry at your parish.

The Office for Evangelization would appreciate your comments, experiences, thoughts and ideas on what you or your group has learned through the small-faith sharing process. You may write, call, fax or e-mail comments to:

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‡ For further reading, please confer:

Apostolic Letter, *In Novo Millenio Ineunte*, Pope John Paul II, January 6, 2001

Angelus, Pope John Paul II, June 13, 2004

Encyclical, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, Pope John Paul II, April 17, 2004

Fr. Donald Senior, C.P., "Biblical Foundations of the Eucharist", Chicago Catechetical Conference, Rosemont, IL, September 25, 2004

About the Author

Dave Pipitone is an active Roman Catholic who is husband to Cheryl, father to Emily, parishioner of St. Marcelline's parish in Schaumburg, IL. He has participated in and led small-faith sharing groups, authored faith-sharing materials for the Archdiocese of Chicago, wrote the reflection questions for *Spreading the Holy Fire: A Plan for Catholics Evangelizing in the Archdiocese of Chicago* and has contributed to *Disciples in Prayer* (Oregon Catholic Press.) Dave serves as a member of the Advisory Committee for the Office for Evangelization of the Archdiocese. He is a 2003 graduate of the Chicago Catholic Scripture School offered through the Office of Catechesis of the Archdiocese of Chicago.

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