



Pilgrims of Hope

A Five-Week Small Group
Reflection Guide for Lent

ARCHDIOCESE OF SEATTLE

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A Five-Week Small Group Reflection for the Archdiocese of Seattle

LENT 2025

- WHAT:** Five 60-90 minute small group sessions of Lenten prayer and reflection based on themes from the 2025 Jubilee Year and Scripture readings for the first five Lenten Sundays in Year C.
- WHEN:** The first five weeks of Lent during the 2025 Jubilee Year, established by Pope Francis.
- WHY:** Jesus invites each person into relationship with him, especially in this season of Lent. During this Jubilee Year, as our local Church marks our 175th anniversary, we reflect on the Word of God and pray that our hearts may be open to encounter Jesus in all the ways he comes to us: in word, in sacrament, in service and in all his people. For more information about the Jubilee Year, go to archseattle.org/jubilee.
- WHO:** The simple format will require a facilitator and ideally 6-8 participants for each group. *Given the focus on sharing and listening, larger groups could be challenging.*
- HOW:** The sessions can be held at the parish or in homes. You can also adapt the materials as you see fit for a classroom or meeting.

FORMAT FOR EACH SESSION / FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

OPENING PRAYER (about 10 minutes)

- Sign of the Cross
- The designated Scripture passage is read aloud slowly by one of the participants.
- A few moments of silence follow. Then the Scripture is read a second time.
- An extended time of silent prayer follows - 3-5 minutes.

FIRST ROUND OF SHARING (about 20 minutes)

- The facilitator introduces the reflection question for the first round of sharing. Then, for 2-3 minutes, each person in the group shares once in response to the prompt. After each person shares, there is a moment for quiet reflection before the next person shares. You are encouraged to listen in silence, with no back-and-forth or dialogue at this point.
- After each person has shared, the facilitator invites all to reflect in silence for about 1 minute.

WHAT WE HEARD (about 5 minutes)

- The facilitator now invites each person to name one thing that struck them in the first round of listening. It could be something they heard or something that occurred to them as they listened. Each person shares once, briefly.

SECOND ROUND OF SHARING (about 20 minutes)

- The facilitator shares the second question for reflection. Again, for 2-3 minutes, each person in the group shares once in response to the prompt. After each person shares, there is a moment for quiet reflection.

WHAT WE HEARD (about 15 minutes)

- After the second round of sharing has concluded, the facilitator invites a conversation about what was heard in this gathering. What challenged you? What will stay with you? For you, where did you sense the Holy Spirit moving in our listening and sharing?

CONCLUDING PRAYER (about 10 minutes)

- The facilitator opens up for prayer and offers petitions, then invites EACH person to lift up ONE intention for which they would like the group's prayers.
- The intercessions are closed with the Lord's Prayer.
- If desired, conclude with a sign of peace.



Pope Francis' Prayer for the Jubilee

Father in heaven,
may the faith you have given us
in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother,
and the flame of charity enkindled in our hearts
by the Holy Spirit, reawaken in us
the blessed hope for the coming of your Kingdom.
May your grace transform us
into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel.
May those seeds transform from within
both humanity and the whole cosmos
in the sure expectation of a new heaven and a new earth,
when, with the powers of Evil vanquished,
your glory will shine eternally.
May the grace of the Jubilee reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope,
a yearning for the treasures of heaven.
May that same grace spread the joy and peace
of our Redeemer throughout the earth.
To you our God, eternally blessed,
be glory and praise for ever. Amen.

WEEK I - ORIGIN STORIES

OPENING PRAYER

- Sign of the Cross
- Song (if desired/possible)
- All pray the Prayer for the Jubilee on page 3

READING

Deuteronomy 26:4-10

Moses spoke to the people, saying:

"The priest shall receive the basket from you
and shall set it in front of the altar of the LORD, your God.

Then you shall declare before the Lord, your God,

'My father was a wandering Aramean
who went down to Egypt with a small household
and lived there as an alien.

But there he became a nation great, strong, and numerous.

When the Egyptians maltreated and oppressed us, imposing hard labor upon us,
we cried to the LORD, the God of our fathers,
and he heard our cry and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression.

He brought us out of Egypt with his strong hand and outstretched arm,
with terrifying power, with signs and wonders;
and bringing us into this country,
he gave us this land flowing with milk and honey.

Therefore, I have now brought you the first fruits
of the products of the soil
which you, O LORD, have given me.'

And having set them before the LORD, your God,
you shall bow down in his presence."

The word of the Lord.

ROUND ONE REFLECTION QUESTION: ORIGIN STORIES

- Moses instructs the people to offer the first fruits of the land to God, and to remember where they came from and what God has done for them. What's your "origin story," as a family... as an individual? How has it shaped who you are? How has God been active in your story and that of your family, your people?

ROUND TWO REFLECTION QUESTION

- In this Jubilee Year, what do we need to *remember* as a parish family, as a Church? How does this remembering challenge us in the present?

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Leader: Gathered together in Christ, let us offer our prayers.

For this local Church, and for our parish family, that we may remember and give thanks for all God has done for us. We pray to the Lord.

For all of us, that during these holy days of Lent, we may recognize that the Lord is in our midst. We pray to the Lord.

For what else do we pray this Lent?

After each has offered one intention, the leader continues:

With longing for the coming of the kingdom,
let us pray as Jesus taught us:

Lord's Prayer

Sign of the Cross

Sign of Peace

PILGRIMS OF HOPE - During the coming week, dig into origin stories - your own, your parish family's or the story of our local Church. Where do you see God's hand in those stories? What signs of hope do you discover? How does remembering our past challenge us in the present?

SEASON OF SERVICE - Become a sign of hope to others by participating in some form of service this week during this Season of Service. For more information, go to archseattle.org/seasonofservice.

WEEK II - ON THE MOUNTAIN

OPENING PRAYER

- Sign of the Cross
- Song (if desired/possible)
- All pray the Prayer for the Jubilee on page 3

READING

Luke 9:28b-33

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

Jesus took Peter, John, and James and went up the mountain to pray. While he was praying his face changed in appearance and his clothing became dazzling white.

And behold, two men were conversing with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his exodus that he was going to accomplish in Jerusalem.

Peter and his companions had been overcome by sleep, but becoming fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him.

As they were about to part from him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good that we are here; let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."

But he did not know what he was saying.

The Gospel of the Lord.

ROUND ONE REFLECTION QUESTION

- Mountaintop moments. What is a mountaintop moment for you, when you knew that the Lord was close, or when you understood something about God that you hadn't before?

ROUND TWO REFLECTION QUESTION

- Peter is filled with wonder at the glimpse of Jesus in majesty on the mountaintop, but he struggles to accept the fact that Jesus must suffer and die before he enters into his glory. What realities do we avoid? What sufferings do we struggle to face?

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Leader: To Jesus Christ, transfigured in glory, sacrificed on the cross for us, let us pray.

For this local Church, and for our parish family, that we may recognize God's glory, shining in those around us. We pray to the Lord.

For all of us, that during these holy days of Lent, we may come to know Jesus better, in his suffering humanity and in his glorious divinity. We pray to the Lord.

For what else do we pray this Lent?

After each has offered one intention, the leader continues:

Jesus has taught us to call God Father, and so we dare to pray:

Lord's Prayer

Sign of the Cross

Sign of Peace

PILGRIMS OF HOPE - During the coming week, look at a mountain. You may only have to glance out your window—there are mountains all around us! Then look around you, in your home, your neighborhood. What do you see? What beauties? What suffering or challenges?

SEASON OF SERVICE - Become a sign of hope to others by participating in some form of service this week during this Season of Service. For more information, go to archseattle.org/seasonofservice.

WEEK III - HOLY GROUND

OPENING PRAYER

- Sign of the Cross
- Song (if desired/possible)
- All pray the Prayer for the Jubilee on page 3

READING

Exodus 3: 1-8

A reading from the book of Exodus.

Moses was tending the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian.

Leading the flock across the desert, he came to Horeb, the mountain of God.

There an angel of the LORD appeared to Moses 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. I am the God of your fathers," he continued, "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob."

Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

But the LORD said, "I have witnessed the affliction of my people in Egypt and have heard their cry of complaint against their slave drivers, so I know well what they are suffering. Therefore I have come down to rescue them from the hands of the Egyptians and lead them out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey."

The word of the Lord.

ROUND ONE REFLECTION QUESTION

- Think of a time when God asked you to do something you didn't think you were capable of. How did you respond?

ROUND TWO REFLECTION QUESTION

- Moses' encounter with God leads to his mission—to bring the Israelites into the promised land. Where do you sense God calling us to mission, as individuals or as parish communities?

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Leader: To God, who is never far from those who seek him, let us pray.

For the Church, that our prayer and worship may overflow into mission. We pray to the Lord.

For all of us, that during these holy days of Lent, we may see the needs around us and respond with generous love. We pray to the Lord.

For what else do we pray this Lent?

After each has offered one intention, the leader continues:

We pattern our prayer on the prayer of Christ, and say:

Lord's Prayer

Sign of the Cross

Sign of Peace

PILGRIMS OF HOPE - Make a journey to holy ground—perhaps to the Cathedral or to one of the local churches designated as Jubilee shrines. What does your experience show you about the importance of pilgrimage as a spiritual practice?

SEASON OF SERVICE - Become a sign of hope to others by participating in some form of service during this Season of Service. For more information, go to archseattle.org/seasonofservice.

WEEK IV - FAMILY

OPENING PRAYER

- Sign of the Cross
- Song (if desired/possible)
- All pray the Prayer for the Jubilee on page 3

READING

Luke 15:20-24

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

...While he was still a long way off,
his father caught sight of him, and was filled with compassion.
He ran to his son, embraced him and kissed him.
His son said to him,
'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you;
I no longer deserve to be called your son.'
But his father ordered his servants,
'Quickly bring the finest robe and put it on him;
put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet.
Take the fattened calf and slaughter it.
Then let us celebrate with a feast,
because this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again;
he was lost, and has been found.'
Then the celebration began.

The Gospel of the Lord.

ROUND ONE REFLECTION QUESTION

- The story of the prodigal son – sometimes called the story of the “prodigal father”—is one of the most familiar of the parables of Jesus. Where do you recognize yourself--your family--in this story?

ROUND TWO REFLECTION QUESTION

- What does this Gospel reveal about the nature of family? How do we need to grow together as a parish family—a Church family?

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Leader: To God, the “prodigal father” of the whole human family, let us pray.

For the Church, that all who are preparing for baptism at Easter may find a loving home in the Christian family. We pray to the Lord.

For all of us, that during these holy days of Lent, we may be renewed in what it means to be a family of faith. We pray to the Lord.

For what else do we pray this Lent?

After each has offered one intention, the leader continues:

Let us pray as Jesus taught us:

Lord’s Prayer

Sign of the Cross

Sign of Peace

PILGRIMS OF HOPE - The father in the parable sets an example of extravagant love and forgiveness. This week, reconnect with someone you have become estranged or distant from... or pray for the courage to do so.

SEASON OF SERVICE - Become a sign of hope to others by participating in some form of service during this Season of Service. For more information, go to archseattle.org/seasonofservice.

WEEK V - SOMETHING NEW

OPENING PRAYER

- Sign of the Cross
- Song (if desired/possible)
- All pray the Prayer for the Jubilee on page 3

READING

Isaiah 43:18-21

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Remember not the events of the past,
the things of long ago consider not;
see, I am doing something new!
Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
In the desert I make a way,
in the wasteland, rivers.
Wild beasts honor me,
jackals and ostriches,
for I put water in the desert
and rivers in the wasteland
for my chosen people to drink,
the people whom I formed for myself,
that they might announce my praise.

The Gospel of the Lord.

ROUND ONE REFLECTION QUESTION

- At the beginning of Lent, we heard Moses tell the people to remember—to remember where they came from, and what God did for them. Today, we hear God speak through the prophet, “see, I am doing something new!” Do you live in the past—or the present? What gives you hope?

ROUND TWO REFLECTION QUESTION

- What is your dream for the future of our parish family—of our Church?

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Leader: To God, who calls us to new life, let us pray.

For the Church, that we may give compelling witness to God, who is ever-ancient, ever-new. We pray to the Lord.

For all of us, that during the coming Holy Week, we may be courageous in asking God to work new wonders in our lives and in our Church. We pray to the Lord.

For what else do we pray this Lent?

After each has offered one intention, the leader continues:

Let us make our prayers and praise complete by offering the Lord's Prayer:

Lord's Prayer

Sign of the Cross

Sign of Peace

PILGRIMS OF HOPE - Try something new this Holy Week. Participate in a Holy Week liturgy you haven't experienced before, or take up a different prayer practice than what you usually do.

SEASON OF SERVICE - Become a sign of hope to others by participating in some form of service during this Season of Service. For more information, go to archseattle.org/seasonofservice.