



Leader Guide

Group Study Overview

The following is a sample schedule for how to spend each of the sessions for your small group study. If your study group does not know each other, then before beginning session one, set up a time to gather for fellowship and getting to know one another. This will allow for discussion and prayer to be more fruitful as you go through the study.

1. Pray Lectio Divina. (20-30 mins)
2. Recap. Share any thoughts you've had since the last small group pertaining to the Process of Evangelization & Discipleship, discussion last time, etc. (5 mins)
3. Watch the video content. (6-10 mins)
4. Personal Reflection. Reflect, journal, and pray through the personal verification questions. (10-15 mins)
5. Emmaus Walk. Simply a time for a 1-on-1 discussion and prayer. Pair off and share your personal reflection. Conclude the time with pray with one another - what is one thing for which you are grateful and want to thank God? What is one thing you need prayers for at this time? (15-20 mins)
6. Small Group Discussion. (20-30 mins)
7. Practical Application. Are there any particular conclusions you all have come to from prayer and discussion today? Is there anything you feel called to start putting into practice, either in your personal life or as a parish staff/team? If so, what and how will you go about beginning it? Who will hold you accountable? (5-10 mins)
8. Closing Prayer. Suggestion - Beacons of Light Prayer. (2 mins)
9. Going Deeper. Assigned reading from the "PED Diagram Info Packet" that gives a more in-depth explanation of the content covered in the video and discussion.

Total Running Time: 90 mins - 2 hours

Here are some additional suggestions to help make the time as fruitful as possible:

- *Consider the space and environment where you are gathered. Is it comfortable? Void of outside distractions? Can you provide a meal or snacks and coffee?*
- *Make sure the space is set up ahead of time and is equipped to stream the videos. Print the individual participant page for each person; review the leader guide for each session to be familiar with content, focus, and discussion questions.*



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Lectio Divina

Use the following to lead your group in praying Lectio Divina at the start of every session.

- 1. Begin in prayer. You may choose to create your own or you may find the following helpful:
Come Holy Spirit. (Pause and repeat slowly). Heavenly Father, I know that you want to speak to me. Remove any obstacles or distractions that would inhibit you being able to speak to me. As a Father speaks to His Beloved, allow my heart to hear your words of love. (Pause, and then continue with Lectio - reading the passage the first time)*
- 2. Lectio. In this first reading, familiarize yourself with the passage. Have someone read the passage. Allow for 30-60 seconds to process.*
- 3. Meditatio. Have someone read the passage again, being attentive to words, phrases or images sticking out. Write them down. Allow for 2-3 minutes of silence for people to consider: what do you think the Lord is trying to say? How does this passage relate to you?*
- 4. Oratio. After time has passed, open it to the group to share what has struck them from the reading and what God has been saying.*
- 5. Contemplatio. Read the passage a third time really focusing on the word or phrase. Allow everyone another minute or two to journal and reflect on this passage and what the Lord is saying to their hearts. Are there any practical actions that is needed in order to bear fruit today, and in the days to come?*
- 6. Close in prayer - thank God for speaking. Pray an Our Father.*



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Session 1:

The Adventure Begins

1. Lectio Divina (20-30 mins)
 - *Pray Lectio Divina with **Luke 24: 13 - 35**. See the Lectio Divina guide for how to lead.*
2. Introduction (5 mins)
 - *Take some time to discuss the following:*
 - What are you hoping to glean, personally or professionally, as we begin this six-week journey together? What fears or concerns do you have?
3. Video (5-6 mins)
 - *Watch the video content for **Session 1**.*
4. Personal Reflection (10-15 mins)
 - *Allow for participants to spread out or go to the Chapel as they process through the questions provided on the back of the Participant Guide for Session 1.*
 - At what moment do you feel that your faith journey began?
 - Who is someone that has accompanied you along your journey of faith? What was that relationship like? How did they help you? What did accompaniment look like?
 - Who is someone you are accompanying?
5. Small Group Discussion (20-30 mins)
 - *Begin in prayer, then discuss the following: (Suggested responses are provided.)*
 - **What images in the video connect with someone on a spiritual journey?**
Adventure, beauty, twists and turns, messiness, a partner on the walk, looking for direction, stopping to rest, movement
 - **How might your own journey of faith be represented if you think about the hiking metaphor?**
Encourage participants to consider hills (highs) and valleys (lows), and moments of challenge or messiness in their journey. Have you ever felt lost? Did you consult a person or a particular resource to help you during that time? Have you ever felt stuck in your walk with God?
 - **What does it mean to you that "Evangelization happens at the pace of relationship"? What does that look like?**
Consider people who have accompanied you in your journey or people you have accompanied. How did your relationship with them play a role in your/their coming to faith?

Having a personal relationship with someone helps us to know when we can challenge them, when we might need to be more gentle in our approach, when is an appropriate time to proclaim the Gospel to them. We have to earn the right to be heard and build trust with them, which we'll talk more about in the next session.

▪ **What has accompaniment looked like in your own life?**

Who are some key people who have challenged you in your faith or encouraged you to grow? What did those relationships look like? Did they pray with you? Talk with you? Provide some type of catechesis?

▪ **"Life with Christ is the greatest adventure." Do you feel that this speaks true to your own life, why or why not? Do you think this is the feeling and experience for most people that we serve? What is their experience of a relationship with Jesus?**

Consider the life of Pope Saint John Paul II as you think about a life with adventure. The dictionary defines adventure as an unusual or exciting, typically hazardous, experience or activity; an exploration of an unknown territory. How does that apply to our life of faith, our life with Jesus?

When we look at the lives of the saints, we see people who lived adventurous lives, but more often than not, people feel stuck in the everyday and don't see their lives as an adventure. A life with Jesus in some ways is unknown, and thus an adventure, and yet we know who God is and trust Him, and are willing to go into the unknown with Him leading us.

▪ **What experience or knowledge do you have about the Process of Evangelization and Discipleship?**

- *If the knowledge of the participants is limited, you might use this as an opportunity to look through the diagram together pointing out key pieces. See pages 5-6 of the PED packet.*
- *Evangelization is the proclamation of the Gospel through relationship and catechesis provided by the Christian or the Church*
- *Discipleship is the journey of the individual in their relationship with Jesus, and the Church*

▪ **How might a better understanding of the Process of Evangelization and Discipleship help you with your ministry? How might it help with Beacons of Light and the Evangelization Pathway?**

By understanding the PED you will have a better knowledge of where people are in their walk of discipleship, and by doing so, you will know how to meet their needs and assist them in moving from one stage of discipleship to another. The end goal is to help people grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ and become missionary disciples who make other disciples.

Additionally, we want parishes to create Discipleship Pathways in their parishes for youth and adults.

6. Emmaus Walk (15-20 mins)

- *Allow participants to pair off. Remind them that they are to use this time to discuss their personal reflection and any other thoughts from small group. Make sure to leave time to pray with one another. The following is a guide for Emmaus partners:*
 - *What stood out to you from the video? Personal prayer? Small Group?*
 - *Where have you seen God at work in your life? For what are you thankful?*
 - *Where are you struggling right now? For what do you need prayers?*

7. Practical Application (5-10 mins)

- Are there any particular conclusions you have come to from prayer and discussion today?
- Is there anything you feel called to start putting into practice, either in your personal life or as a parish staff/team? If so, what and how will you go about beginning it? Who will hold you accountable?

8. Closing Prayer (2 mins)

Mary, Mother of the Church and our Mother, present our prayer of thanksgiving to your Son. Beg from Him the graces we need to be faithful disciples who follow Him with enthusiasm and joy. May our witness to the love of God bear fruit in our archdiocese, parishes, homes and hearts. Teach us to be God's joyful witnesses, to radiate Christ in all we do, so that all people might know, love and follow your Son through this life and into the next. Amen.

9. Going Deeper

- *For next time, ask the group to read "PED Diagram Info Packet" pages 4-7. Have them take notes or mark any questions they have for next time.*



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Session 2:

Building Bridges of Trust

1. Lectio Divina (20-30 mins)
 - *Pray Lectio Divina with **John 1: 35 - 42**. See the Lectio Divina guide for how to lead.*
2. Recap (5 mins)
 - *Offer a brief recap on what was covered last session, including:*
 - *Evangelization happens at the pace of relationship*
 - *The importance of accompaniment in evangelization*
 - *Journey of faith represented by the hiking metaphor*
 - *Invite participants to share any further thoughts or reflections they've had since the last small group pertaining to prayer or discussion from last session or from their assigned reading from the PED Packet.*
 - *Reiterate that the hope is through this study we can better understand the work of Jesus and the Holy Spirit in our lives as disciples; we can grow together as a team; and we can better serve people by understanding where they are in their walk of discipleship and providing what they need to help facilitate movement to the next stage.*
3. Video (5-6 mins)
 - *Introduce today's focus with something like:*

Today we are going to unpack the first three stages of discipleship -- pre-trust, trust, and curiosity -- by looking at what it means to "build bridges of trust."
 - *Watch the video content for **Session 2**.*
4. Personal Reflection (10-15 mins)
 - *Allow for participants to spread out or go to the Chapel as they process through the questions provided on the back of the Participant Guide for Session 2.*
 - *Reflect on the people in your life and experiences you've had that have built bridges of trust to Christianity, Jesus, and the Church.*
 - *Have you had an experience that has hindered your trust with Jesus or the Church? Reflect on what happened. What or who helped you to rebuild trust?*
5. Small Group Discussion (20-30 mins)
 - *Begin in prayer, then discuss the following: (Suggested responses are provided.)*
 - **What images in the video connect with building bridges of trust?**

Walking across bridges; emphasis on relationships and friendships; joy and beauty
 - **What about Andy's testimony was striking to you? What or who played a role in Andy's progression through these early stages of discipleship?**

Andy shares about growing up in a Christian household and his family's love of music, particularly spiritual negro hymns. Friendships and relationships were key. He had Christian-Catholic friends who were willing to talk openly with him; they lived with joy and purpose.

- **How does Andy understand holiness? What did his relationship with Nick teach him about what it meant to be a disciple of Jesus? What does holiness look like for you, and how does that connect to being a disciple of Jesus?**

He thought holiness meant that everyone had to be and look the same. Coming to know Nick, he saw someone who was living life fully alive. He didn't just understand the teaching of the Church, but he followed the rules and they enriched his life and his relationships. This is what Andy saw as compelling.

- **What does Andy say was a struggle for him in his journey? How can we learn from this to avoid making similar mistakes in our work with others?**

A new "discipler" was given to him in college; someone who didn't know him or know where he was and what he needed. This emphasizes that relationships and knowing people are key in our ability to walk with them and challenge them to grow. It's also important to note that we may not be called to accompany every person, nor are we necessarily called to accompany them through every stage of discipleship.

- **What motivates you to share the Gospel with others?**

The ideal is that we share the Gospel with a pure heart (Matthew 5: 8). That we desire to love others because of the love we have first experienced (1 John 4: 19), and we want others to encounter the love of God through us.

- **How does the Gospel story we prayed with earlier relate to today's focus of building bridges of trust and these early stages of discipleship?**

John's disciples trusted him and his direction to follow Jesus. Even then, they approached Jesus with caution and Jesus invited them to simply "Come & See." There wasn't a commitment, but an invitation to something more.

6. Emmaus Walk (15-20 mins)

- *Allow participants to pair off. Remind them that they are to use this time to discuss their personal reflection and any other thoughts from small group. Make sure to leave time to pray with one another. The following is a guide for Emmaus partners:*
 - What stood out to you from the video? Personal prayer? Small Group?
 - Where have you seen God at work in your life? For what are you thankful?
 - Where are you struggling right now? For what do you need prayers?

7. Practical Application (5-10 mins)

- Are there any particular conclusions you have come to from prayer and discussion today?
- As a parish (family of parishes), do we have any bridges of trust in place to help build relationships with people?
- Is there anything you feel called to start putting into practice, either in your personal life or as a parish staff/team? If so, what and how will you go about beginning it? Who will hold you accountable?

8. Closing Prayer (2 mins)

Mary, Mother of the Church and our Mother, present our prayer of thanksgiving to your Son. Beg from Him the graces we need to be faithful disciples who follow Him with enthusiasm and joy. May our witness to the love of God bear fruit in our archdiocese, parishes, homes and hearts. Teach us to be God's joyful witnesses, to radiate Christ in all we do, so that all people might know, love and follow your Son through this life and into the next. Amen.

9. Going Deeper

- *For next time, ask the group to read "PED Diagram Info Packet" pages 8-11. Have them take notes or mark any questions they have for next time.*