

Episode 1: Welcome

PROJECT: ORDINATION JUSTICE

After you listen to this episode, the recommended process is to pray, discuss, then pray again. First, take the content of the episode to silent, personal prayer. Second, discuss it with others. Third, take the content of the discussion back to silent, personal prayer again. These are imagined as three separate sessions. Read through the guide before you begin to get a sense of the content and flow. Take what is helpful, leave what is not. Adapt this guide and/or the process to suit your needs.

PRAYER SESSION I - PERSONAL PRAYER

Set aside 20 minutes for silent, personal prayer. Find a place where you will not be disturbed. Close your eyes, slow down your breath, and draw yourself to stillness. Take your time. Place yourself in the presence of God. Once connected to God, offer gratitude for whatever you feel moved to share. This can be a simple, "Thank you for my life." After you have thanked God, move through each question in the light of the Holy Spirit. Allow the answer to each question to arise and sit with it. Then, offer it to God. Give God the opportunity to respond before moving to the next question. Spend more time listening than speaking to God.

1. What led me to this course?
2. How do I feel about embarking on this study?
Why do I feel this way?
3. What struck me—positively or negatively—in this episode?
Why did it strike me in the way it did?
4. What are my hopes/expectations for this course?
What are my fears?
5. What graces do I need from God to participate in the course?
Ask God for these graces.
6. Is there anything else I want to share with God?

Once you pray through the questions, sit silently and allow God a final opportunity to be with you. When you are ready, close your prayer session with gratitude, and ask God to continue to deepen any insights you received. Perhaps end with a favorite prayer like the Hail Mary or Our Father.

DISCUSSION/FAITH SHARING

You can host a formal gathering or have a conversation with a friend. Allot 45 minutes to one hour for discussion. For small group gatherings, determine from the outset whether the session will be a discussion or faith sharing. If you choose faith sharing, there is no crosstalk or commenting on what people share to reduce fear of criticism and promote deep sharing. Begin with an opening prayer, inviting the Holy Spirit to guide your time together. Pray for any graces you desire, such as wisdom, humility, the freedom to listen deeply, and/or connection with one another. Share on the following questions:

1. Why am I interested in taking this course?
2. What are my hopes and expectations for this experience?
3. What are my fears or anxieties?
4. What ground rules or values need to be observed for me to have a positive experience? *(for small groups that will meet on an ongoing basis)*
5. Is there anything else I would like to share?

Offer a closing prayer. Give thanks to God for any gifts you experienced in your time together. Perhaps open up the prayer time to allow others the opportunity to offer a petition or thanksgiving to God. Finish with a favorite prayer like the Hail Mary or Our Father. For small groups, set a plan for the next meeting.

PRAYER SESSION II

Set aside 20 minutes for silent, personal prayer. Find a place where you will not be disturbed. Bring the content of the discussion/faith sharing session back into your prayer. Use the same instruction from Prayer Session I (above).

1. What struck me—positively or negatively—in the sharing?
2. Bring each instance before God and ask, “What do you want me to see or understand about this?” Allow God the opportunity to teach and minister to you. Let any graces you receive deepen.
3. Did I receive any new insights? Describe each new insight to God. Allow God the opportunity to respond.

Before you close your prayer, sit silently and allow God a final opportunity to minister to you. Thank God for the graces you received. Close your prayer session with a favorite prayer.