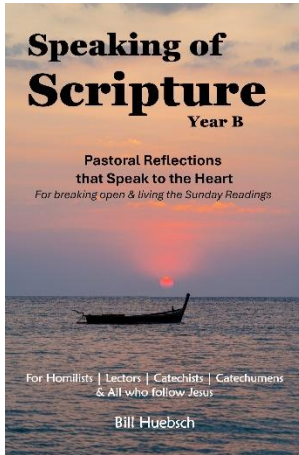


How to Lead Faith Sharing

with

The Question of the Week & Breaking Open the Word

*A whole week of reflection on Sunday's Readings:
parish-wide faith-sharing based on breaking open the Word!*



The parish is centered on its Sunday Liturgy as the source of its life and the goal of each week. **The Liturgy of the Word** unfolds each week to guide and sustain us. In *Speaking of Scripture*, you receive a powerful reflection on each week's Sunday Readings—along with a Question of the Week for personal reflection, faith sharing at home, or throughout the parish. Here is your guide to leading successful faith sharing in your parish. [Find *Speaking of Scripture Year B* here.](#)

How to Lead Faith Sharing Principles

1. **Sunday Mass is our source.** Weekly faith sharing in our parishes or congregations should flow from the Sunday liturgy – the readings, the gathering together, the experience of communion.
2. **Keep it simple.** When leading such faith sharing, keep it simple and easy for people to do. Do not make it into a theological discussion or speculative debate about doctrine or the Scripture.
3. **Break open the Word.** We use an ancient practice of the church, as old as the church itself really. It's the method that was used on that road to Emmaus.
4. **Make the Sunday readings more available.** Provide everyone in the parish with access to the readings from each Sunday liturgy. Create some starter questions to help people peer into the text and apply it to their daily lives.
5. **Teach people to share their faith.** It is the doorway to the Sacred, the work of the Spirit in their lives, and the turning point which leads to holiness.

The Method

Breaking open the Word is an easy process to lead and follow.

Make the Question of the Week widely available. You may print it in your weekly bulletin or newsletter or post it to your web site. The Question leads people of faith to look into the text itself and then apply that to their lives

Ask questions such as these to initiate step one of the process:

- ▶ What word or phrase struck me as I heard the reading?
- ▶ What idea or image came to mind?
- ▶ What story did I hear being told, in my own words?
- ▶ What really touched me in this reading?

Then turn the view inward, asking the person of faith to look into his or her life, through the lens of the reading.

- ▶ To what or whom is Jesus calling me in this reading?
- ▶ How can I follow the teaching of Jesus in my daily life?
- ▶ What challenges do I face when doing so?
- ▶ What one promise or hope do I take away from this time of faith sharing.

When to Share Faith

In the week following each Sunday, this process is used throughout the parish for faith-sharing at the beginning of each gathering:

- when the staff gathers for its weekly meeting
- when the finance committee gets together on Tuesday night
- before every session of religious education during the week
- when the classes meet in school
- when families are driving home, having supper, or finding a few moments to talk.

A Simple Guide

Use the form below as a handout if needed to help support the sharing of faith throughout the parish. Modify or change it as needed for your needs.

Sharing Faith Together

The Question of the Week
Breaking Open the Word

1. The Call to Prayer

Leader: My friends, let's pause to spend a few moments in prayer and conversation with each other. [Lead all in the Sign of the Cross] + In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

2. The Word of God

Leader: May the Lord be in our hearts as we recall and re-listen to a reading from last Sunday's Liturgy of the Word.

[Re-read all or part of the one of the readings from the Sunday liturgy. If the reading is long, select 3 or 4 verses for this moment.]

3. The Faith Sharing Question

Each week's Question is at the conclusion of the talking points in Speaking of Scripture.

Leader: As we consider this Sacred Scripture, I invite you to think about it in two dimensions.

- ▶ First, ask about the text itself, to draw attention to the Scripture.
 - What word or phrase in this text caught your ear?
 - What story did you hear, or what image did you get?
 - What touched you as you heard this reading?
- ▶ Second, when the first sharing about the reading itself is complete, move to a conversation about the people's lives based on the Question of the Week provided in *Speaking of Scripture*.

4. The Prayer. At the end of the sharing period, invite folks to pray in one of the following ways:

- ▶ The Lord's Prayer out loud together
- ▶ Spontaneous prayers
- ▶ A moment of silent prayer
- ▶ Listen to a recorded hymn