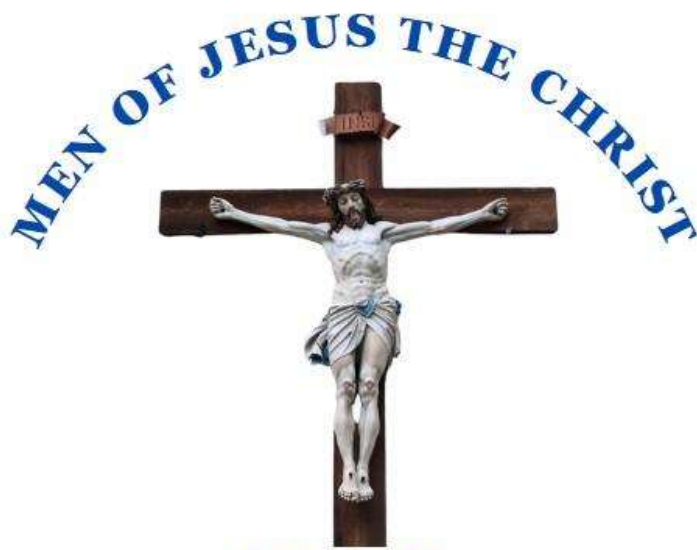


MEN OF JESUS THE CHRIST

MEMBER GUIDEBOOK



**Catholic Men
Catholic Faith
Making Disciples**

July 2025

WELCOME

Let us begin this welcome message by stating clearly that you do not need Men Of Jesus The Christ Men Of Jesus The Christ needs you!

As a lay-led ministry within the Catholic Church, we have embarked on the most important mission of any of our lives – helping to renew our One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church as the means to save our world!

And, that mission calls us to grapple with many unique challenges that can only be accomplished or overcome by obeying our Lord's Greatest Commandment and seeking to fulfill His Great Commission to "Go and make Disciples of All Nations".

If you are wondering "How can I help?", that must begin with what we are each called to do to become the healthiest person that we can become. First, we must do whatever we can to maintain good physical health; we should all understand what that means. Secondly, we ought to do whatever we can to develop and/or enhance a healthy mental mindset (think attitudes). Our third major health concern (that is totally denied by the secular segment of our culture) is to do all that we can and all that we should to continually optimize our spiritual well-being. There is only one absolutely certain way that can lead everyone to perfect spiritual health, and that way is seeking to become a perfect Disciple of Jesus The Christ.

The path of Discipleship with Jesus is not easy. But, we do not have to (nor can we) travel this life-changing sojourn alone. There is a growing band of brothers who truly long to welcome and support you - as you embark on the joyful journey of becoming a serious and grace-filled Man Of Jesus The Christ.

As you are introduced, through these following pages, to how Men of Jesus The Christ (MOJTC) are called to travel this journey of faith together; you will be blessed with learning of the four (4) indispensable elements that comprise every human organization: Members, Means, Leader, and Goals. These key elements, in conjunction with other proven guidance, and with Jesus as our Leader - offer a no lose formula for contributing positively to the accomplishment of the most important Mission.

We encourage you to read and study well all that is offered within this "Men Of Jesus The Christ Member Guidebook"

PREFACE

The purpose of our **Men of Jesus the Christ (MOJTC)** ministry is to help to bring about the renewal of our Catholic Church from the bottom up; one member at a time starting in our local faith communities, as we seek to obey our Lord's Greatest Commandment:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.” (Mark 12:30-31),

and to fulfill his Great Commission:

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you (MT 28:19-20).

Men of Jesus the Christ (MOJTC) gather weekly to strengthen our Catholic faith through a repeatable weekly meeting pattern that includes worship, prayer, sharing, reflection, a brotherhood of support and selected additional periodic events like retreats, lectures or social gatherings.

This guidebook is designed to provide guidelines and tools for our weekly gatherings and for growing our faith daily in between those gatherings.

We should each be challenged to seek an intimate personal relationship with our Lord and Savior, and to make our pilgrimage of faith a living reality within his One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church and to support our brothers and our families in this journey.

The guidance offered herein is intended to provide the framework through our reason, empowered by the Holy Spirit, and in conformance with the Holy Bible and the Catechism of the Catholic Church - while fostering good fellowship among all of our brothers in Christ.

ABOUT OUR MEMBERS

- Our members proclaim Jesus the Christ as the Lord of our life and accept his One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church as his true church.
- Our members accept sacred Scripture, sacred Tradition and the teaching authority of the Magisterium of the Catholic Church as the interpreter and the safeguard of the teachings of Jesus.
- As members, we each accept our sinfulness, and strive through our regular participation in the Mass and the Sacraments to repent and seek God's mercy and forgiveness.
- We gather weekly to share the Good News of the Gospel, and to witness the blessing of that truth in our lives.
- We are committed to learning the meaning of Discipleship in Jesus the Christ, and to willingly and actively live our lives in accord with that challenge.
- We are committed to create and/or participate in activities and programs that benefit those people less fortunate who live among us.
- Our members accept Jesus' admonition to "go and make disciples of all nations", by seeking to encourage other men to participate in our weekly gatherings in His name.
- Non-Catholic men, who are seeking to grow in faith, are welcome to participate in our weekly gatherings.
- We should all be open to the fullness of faith as revealed to us by Christ and his Church.
- Our challenge of "Imperative_Renewal" is revealed herein: **"Whoever has ears ought to hear what the Spirit says to the Churches. I know your works; I know that you are neither cold nor hot. So, because you are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. Those whom I love, I reprove and chastise. Be earnest therefore and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, [then] I will enter his house and dine with him, and he with me"**.

Revelation:3: 13, 15-20

ABOUT OUR MEANS

- Our means of faith is rooted in our suffering; in Jesus' and my acceptance of our redemptive suffering as God's perfect pathway to peace.
- Our means originates through Christ's One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church; composed of her members, her means, her leaders and her goals.
- Our means of faith is in our obedience to God's truth as revealed in, with and through sacred Scripture, sacred Tradition, and the teaching authority of the Catholic Magisterium.
- Our means of faith is real in the Sacraments – signs that convey God's love for us through: Baptism, Reconciliation, Eucharist, Confirmation, Holy Orders, Matrimony and the Anointing of the Sick.
- Our means of faith include our personal and communal prayers; especially the Mass where we worship and praise God, express sorrow for our sins, and intercede on behalf of others.
- Our means of faith is centered on the real Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ - offered to us as the source and the summit of our life-giving communion among God the Father, Jesus the Son, Holy Spirit the Power, and all His Holy People.
- Our means of faith is reflected in our prayers of petition for the intercession of our Blessed Mother Mary and all the Saints; that they, like Christ, might turn us toward communion with God our Father.
- Our means of faith is expressed through our weekly gatherings of our members. It is here that we give glory and honor and praise to our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ; through prayer, song, witnessing and sharing the truth of the Gospel in our everyday lives
- Our means of faith is clarified, certified, and reinforced through, with and in the Church's gift of the Universal Catholic Catechism.
- The Resurrection Event: "This I declare brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery. We shall not fall asleep, but we will all be changed, in an instant, in the blink of an eye at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. And when this which is corruptible clothes itself with incorruptibility and this which is mortal clothes itself with immortality, then the word that is written shall come about: "Death is swallowed up in victory. Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" 1 Corinthians 15:50-55

ABOUT OUR LEADER

- Our leader is "one who probes us and knows our heart; who tries us and knows our thoughts; who sees if our way is crooked, and leads us in the way of the old". Psalm 139: 23-24
- Our Leader says, "They departed in tears, but I will console them and guide them; I will lead them to brooks of water, on a level road, so that none shall stumble". Jeremiah 31:9
- Our leader tells us that "the wise shall shine brightly like the splendor of the firmament, and those who lead the many to justice shall be like the stars forever". Daniel 12:3
- Our leader is one who "Thanks be to God always leads us in triumph in Christ and manifests through us the odor of the knowledge of him in every place". 2 Corinthians 2:14
- Our leader challenges us "to enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road broad that leads to destruction and those who enter through it are many. How narrow the gate and constricted the road that leads to life". Matthew 7: 13-14
- Our leader instructs us that "whoever enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens it for him, and the sheep hear his voice, as he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out". John 10: 2-3
- Our leader admonishes us to "go and lead the people whither I have told you. My angel will go before you". Exodus 32: 34
- Our leader is our shepherd. "In verdant pastures he gives us repose; beside restful waters he leads us". Psalm 23:2

ABOUT OUR GOAL OF DISCIPLESHIP

- No disciple is above his teacher, no slave above his master. It is enough for the disciple that he becomes like his teacher, for the slave that he become like his master. Matthew 10:24-25
- If anyone comes to me without hating his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, and even his own life he cannot be my disciple. Luke 14:26
- Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. Luke 14:27
- In the same way, every one of you who does not renounce all his possessions cannot be my disciple. Luke 14:33
- As I have loved you, so you should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another. John 13:34-35
- By this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples. As the Father loves me, so I love you. John 15:8-9
- They strengthened the spirits of the disciples and exhorted them to persevere in the faith saying "It is necessary for us to undergo many hardships to enter the kingdom of God." Acts 14:22
- Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. Matthew 28:19-20
- Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. [Jesus} said to them again, Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." John 20:19-21
- Appearance to the Disciples: "Now a week later his disciples were again inside and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you". Then He said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe."
- "Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed."

John 20: 26-27, 29

ABOUT OUR GATHERING SEQUENCE

As Men Of Jesus The Christ gather weekly to give glory and honor and praise to our Triune God, we seek to go about offering our words and actions in a disciplined, prayerful, reverent, and loving manner that allow all brothers the opportunity to grow in our faith.

In order to assure that every individual present can participate in a comfortable and collaborative environment (regardless of how familiar or experienced they may or may not be), we follow a “Gathering Sequence” that is fashioned after our participation in the universal sequence of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

Our Sequence is intended to:

- Keep our focus on the essential elements of our celebration of prayer, song, and Sacred Scripture; while avoiding unholy or impious distractions or disruptions.
- Maintain discipline - while also allowing for the freedom of the Holy Spirit to influence our individual thoughts, words, and actions.
- Guide even strangers (newcomers) through our sequence of prayers, reflections, songs, and sharing in a comfortable, coherent, and committed way.
- Foster the timely beginning and ending of our gatherings; to ensure that every member can depend with certainty that their personal time commitments will be honored.
- Allow any MOJTC member to attend any one of a number of other MOJTC groups for prayer; just as we might move comfortably from one Catholic Church to another for the Mass.

While the overarching purpose of specifying our “Gathering Sequence” is intended to empower and enhance the way we give glory, honor and praise to our Lord Jesus The Christ, it should also foster good fellowship with good humor – in ways that can enliven and enrich our gatherings.

Just as we have come to learn and appreciate the disciplines associated with our celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass - our commitment here is to be open to the truth of Sacred Scripture; with a particular emphasis on the Holy Gospel for the coming Sunday. This challenges us to prepare well for, and to keep holy the Sabbath.

The Coming of the Son of Man; “And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming upon the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He will send out his angels with a trumpet blast, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other”
Matthew 24: 30 – 31



GATHERING SEQUENCE

- “HAVE MERCY ON ME A SINNER”
- REFLECTION: FROM “ONE BREAD ONE BODY”
- INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEN
- RECITATION OF CHRIST’S CALLING

OUR PURPOSE:

TO KINDLE THE FIRE OF OUR LOVE FOR, AND OUR PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOU OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS THE CHRIST; THAT WE MIGHT HELP TO RENEW YOUR ONE HOLY CATHOLIC AND APOSTOLIC CHURCH FROM THE BOTTOM UP; ONE MEMBER AT A TIME.

OUR MOTTO: JESUS IS LORD.

OUR MISSION: GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES.

OUR ATTITUDE WHAT WE ARE IS YOUR GIFT TO US.

WHAT WE BECOME IS OUR GIFT TO YOU. *AMEN*

- *OPENING SONG*
- *OPENING PRAYER*
- *LIVES OF THE SAINTS*
- *LITURGY OF THE WORD*
- *GOSPEL FOR NEXT SUNDAY*
- *CALL TO SILENCE*
- *LEAD WITNESS*
- *OPEN SHARING*
- *INTERCESSORY PRAYER*
- *MEMORARE / CLOSING PRAYER*
- *CLOSING SONG*
- *THE LORD’S PRAYER*



MARIAN GATHERING SEQUENCE

- “HAVE MERCY ON ME A SINNER”
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- RECITATION OF CHRIST’S CALLING
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- *LITURGY OF THE WORD*
- *GOSPEL FOR NEXT SUNDAY*
- *CALL TO SILENCE*
- *LEAD WITNESS*
- *OPEN SHARING*
- *ROSARY / SHORT VERSION*
- *INTERCESSORY PRAYER*
- *MEMORARE / CLOSING PRAYER*
- *CLOSING SONG*
- *THE LORD’S PRAYER*



ABOUT OUR PRAYING

As witnesses to the love of God through his Son our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit through the intercession of our Blessed Mother Mary and all of the Saints, our prayers are the means by which:

- We give glory, honor, praise, and gratitude to our Creator God who has blessed each one of us with our very lives, and all that is in them.
- We express our personal love for our Triune God, for our Blessed Mother Mary, and for all the Saints.
- We appeal to the Source of all that is good, that He will bless each one of us with those needs that He deems necessary for our benefit, and for the benefit of all those who we love and serve.
- We are also called to offer prayers of love and compassion for those special souls in our lives who have died; that our appeals on their behalf might aid in the purgation of their offenses, and bring them to the everlasting joy of the Beatific Vision.

How Men Of Jesus The Christ pray each time that we gather has evolved significantly over the years. And, the specific prayers that we have listed on our “Prayer Card”, have also been revised several times over our history. What has not changed over our history is that each member must decide if the measure of my love for my God is honestly expressed in my gratitude for the entirety of His will for my life: for all of the good that truly blesses me, for all of the not- so-good that often challenges me, and even for those terrible misfortunes that may occasionally cause me to question the truth of God’s love in my very life.

It is not only through our verbal prayers expressed in community with our MOJTC brothers that we seek to communicate with our Triune God, our Blessed Mother, and the Saints; it is also through our own silent prayers. In the solitude of our personal prayer times, we are challenged to open ourselves in meditation and contemplation; so we might be guided to the fullness of the truth that will set us free.

To the Exiles: **“For I know well the plans I have in mind for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare, not for your woe! Plans to give you a future full of hope. When you call me, when you go to pray to me, I will listen to you. When you look for me, you will find me. Yes, when you seek me with all your heart, you will find me with you, says the Lord, and I will change your lot; I will gather you together from all the nations and all the places to which I have banished you, says the Lord, and bring you back to the place from which I have exiled you.”**

Jeremiah 29: 11 – 15

OUR PRAYERS (A):

HAVE MERCY ON ME A SINNER

Dear Lord Jesus, have mercy on me as a sinner. Please allow me: To know You more clearly, To love You more dearly, To serve You more nearly, To trust You more purely, To lead others to You more surely; that we might all help to renew your One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church – from the bottom up; one member at a time. Amen.

THE MEMORARE

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known, that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession, was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother. To thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen

THE CHRISTOPHER PRAYER

Father, grant that we may be bearers of Christ Jesus your son. Allow us to warm the often cold impersonal scene of modern life with your burning love. Strengthen us by your Holy Spirit to carry out our mission of changing the world or some definite part of it for the better. Despite our lamentable failures, bring home to us that our advantages are your blessings to be shared with others. Make us more energetic in setting right what we find wrong with the world instead of complaining about it. Nourish in us a practical desire to build up rather than tear down, to reconcile instead of polarize, to go out on a limb rather than crave security. Never let us forget that it is far better to light one candle than to curse the darkness and join our light this day with yours. Amen.

PRAYER OF SAINT FRANCIS

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love. Where there is injury, pardon. Where there is doubt, faith. Where there is despair, hope. Where there is darkness, light. Where there is sadness, joy. O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled, as to console; to be understood, as to understand; to be loved, as to love. For it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life. Amen

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Breathe into us Holy Spirit that all of our thoughts may be holy. Move in us Holy Spirit that our work, too, may be holy. Attract our hearts Holy Spirit that we may love only what is holy.. Strengthen us Holy Spirit that we may defend all that is holy. Protect us Holy Spirit that we may always be holy. Amen

THANK YOU LORD

Lord, we thank You for your special presence to us during this time. We thank You for the opportunity to know You and your ways better. Open our hearts so that we will put into practice that which You have revealed to us. Thank You Lord for the gift and the love of your sacred Word. Amen

OUR PRAYERS (B):

PRAYER TO ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the Devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly hosts, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan, and all the evil spirits, who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen

PRECIOUS BLOOD PRAYER

Almighty and eternal God, You have appointed your only-begotten Son the Redeemer of the world, and willed to be appeased by His Blood. Grant, we beg of You, that we may worthily adore this price of our salvation, and through its power, be safeguarded from the evils of this present life, so that we may rejoice in its fruits forever in heaven; through the same Christ our Lord. Amen

RESPECT FOR LIFE PRAYER

God of life and love, You created us in your image and sent your Son to bring us life. Instill in us a respect for all life, from conception to natural death. Empower us to work for justice for the poor. Nourish us that we may bring food to the hungry. Inspire us to cherish the fragile life of the unborn. Strengthen us to bring comfort to the chronically ill. Teach us to treat the aging with dignity and respect. Bless us that we might share your love and compassion with all members of our human family. Bring us one day into the glory of everlasting life. We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

HAIL HOLY QUEEN

Hail! Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness, and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious Advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us; and after this our exile show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary. Pray for us O holy Mother of God. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.
Amen

NEW EVANGELIZATION PRAYER

Lord, pour out your Spirit so that we might have the confidence to proclaim the Good News to others, and to be witnesses to the Gospel in our everyday lives. In moments of hesitation, remind us: If not me, then who will proclaim the Gospel? If not now, then when will the Gospel be proclaimed? If not the truth of the Gospel, then what shall I proclaim? God Our Father, we pray that through the Holy Spirit we might hear the call of the New Evangelization, grow in confidence to proclaim the Gospel, and boldly witness to the saving grace of your son Jesus the Christ, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen

PRAYER TO SAINT JOSEPH

Dear Saint Joseph, Help me to be like you. Help me to be obedient to the teachings of the Church and faithful to God's commands. Help me to patiently endure my cross each day. Let me be a model of holiness and a pillar of virtue. I solemnly promise to embrace God's will and accept the challenge to work tirelessly for my family's salvation. Be my guide and companion on this journey. Saint Joseph, Terror of demons, pray for us. Amen

ABOUT PROCLAIMING GOD’S WORD

- Proclaiming God’s Word is an honor and a privilege.
- Each man who feels called to proclaim the Gospel for our members should sense both the honor and the responsibility that goes with the privilege.
- In proclaiming the Gospel, we have a crucial role to play in fostering a deepening of our members’ relationship with Jesus the Christ.
- Our presence and our proclamation of the Word will nurture our assembly’s prayer.
- When the Sacred Scriptures are read, God himself speaks to us his people, and Christ, present in his own word, proclaims the Gospel.
- In imparting the Word of the Lord to the assembly, we feed our brothers with the Bread of Life and provide nourishment for them to continue their life of prayer and to further develop their relationship with our Triune God.
- Preparation by one who will proclaim the Word is twofold; it is both spiritual and technical.
- Using the “Workbook for Lectors” to guide both our spiritual and technical preparation for proclaiming the Word of God is an essential aspect of our responsibility.
- As the time when we are to proclaim God’s word approaches, we need to ask ourselves “Am I well-prepared to proclaim the Word?”
- Our “Prayer of Preparation” is an essential part of preparing to proclaim God’s Word.

Doxology:

“Now to him who can strengthen you, according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret for long ages, but now manifested through the prophetic writings, and according to the command of the eternal God, made known to all nations to bring about the obedience of faith, to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ be glory forever and ever, Amen.”

1 Corinthians 16: 25 – 27

GUIDANCE FOR PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

This is guidance for your role in proclaiming the Gospel for the upcoming Sunday.

It could be from: Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John.

Other resources to provide assistance are:

1. “Workbook for Lectors, Gospel Readers, and Proclaimers of the Word (LTP)” with the appropriate text.*
2. Our group guidance document – “About Proclaiming God’s Word”(prior page)
3. A “Prayer of Preparation”.

When the Facilitator indicates that you will proclaim the Gospel:

1. Move to the lectern.
2. Settle yourself.
3. State to the gathering: **“A reading from the Holy Gospel according to: (Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John)”**.
4. Pause briefly.
5. The men will respond with: “Glory to you O Lord”. and will also ‘sign’ their forehead, their lips, and their heart while silently expressing the words: “Let your Word be in my mind, on my lips, and within my heart” or other appropriate prayer.
6. **PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL**
The “Workbook for Lectors...” has a wealth of guidance for how to actually proclaim the Word including emphasizing certain words (bolded) and pronunciation of uncommon words, especially names and places of the old testament. Use this guidance; including a study of the “Ministry Of The Word Basics”; found in the front of the workbook. **Avoid the common error of reading too rapidly.**
7. Pause briefly at the end --- then state in closing: **“The Gospel of the Lord”**.
8. The men will respond with: “Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ”
9. Return to your seat and sit in silence.

***Note:** New American Bible readings are taken from the “Lectionary for Mass for use of the Dioceses of the United States of America” copyright 2001.

ABOUT THE CALL TO SILENCE

**Your way I need revealed to me, to live my life in You.
In silence and in solitude, You guide me to be true.**

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path..” – Ps 119:105

- Too often, as we are immersed in the noisy clamor of the world around us; we may either become uncomfortable with silence, or we may be unable to find that genuine silence - that can bring us true peace.
- As we gather each week to hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus the Christ proclaimed, we also have the opportunity to: Pause for a moment of silence as we reflect on - **“The presence of Jesus among us”**.
- **“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them”**.
Matthew 18:20
- The brief silent pause that we take following the proclamation of the Gospel, may very well be the most important one minute of our busy, hectic, noise-filled days.
- How we use that moment of silence “only God knows”.
- That moment might also challenge us to make “silence and solitude” an active part of our personal prayer life.

**“Make me know Your ways, LORD;
Teach me Your paths.” Psalm 25:4**

ABOUT WITNESSING

Witnessing is a means to share my faith. It is about being led by the Holy Spirit. It is a voluntary decision. It ought to be thought of as an opportunity to love my Lord Jesus the Christ, and to love my Brothers in Christ.

My free-will decision, whether to offer a witness (or not) ought to be made in, with and through prayer and discernment. My human inclination to avoid the call to witness is normal. Only through God's grace can any one of us witness the truth of God's love. Asking for the intercession of our Blessed Mother Mary - before I decide – is a blessing that is always available to me.

Prayer, reflection on the Sunday Scriptures, and preparing my witness talk are the pre- requisites.

In preparing for my witness, I should read and reflect on all three of the scripture readings plus the psalm for the coming Sunday. This will help me to fully integrate the Gospel into its sacred context.

Sunday's Gospel is our primary focus. We are each called to be open to God's grace as we read and reflect on the Gospel several times (Lectio Divina).

Through our openness to the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, we seek the knowledge, understanding, wisdom, courage, counsel, piety, and fear of the Lord that will bless our brothers.

My witness may focus on the overall Gospel message, or on just one verse or phrase or word that seems to be speaking to me in a special way.

The more I share about my life experiences, my relationships, my suffering, and my personal journey of faith, the more I will reflect the love of Jesus to my brothers.

I am the human expert on myself, and on my relationship with my God. This fact and Jesus' admonition to "Be not afraid" should bless me with peace.

I can share openly and honestly here; knowing that I will not be betrayed. What we say here – stays here!

My witness talk should fit within 10 - 15 minutes in order to allow time for our group prayers, sharing, and hymns.

I am encouraged to pose two (2) or three (3) questions to my brothers. These are to be challenges to help to catalyze our open sharing. They might be questions that challenged me while I was preparing my witness talk. Copies ought to be passed out following my witness.

Promises of Redemption: "It is I the Lord; there is no savior but me. It is I who foretold, I who saved; I made it known, not any strange god before you; you are my witnesses, says the Lord. I am God, yes, from eternity I am He; there is none who can deliver from my hand: who can countermand what I do? Isaiah 43; 11 – 13

ABOUT LECTIO DIVINA

Lectio Divina, meaning "**Divine Reading**," is a traditional Christian practice that involves reading, meditating, praying, and contemplating Scripture to deepen one's relationship with God. The concept was notably described by Origen in the 3rd century, with his view of "Scripture as a sacrament". In a letter to Gregory of Neo Caesarea Origen wrote: "When you devote yourself to the divine reading ... seek the meaning of divine words which is hidden from most people". Origen believed that The Word was incarnate in Scripture and could therefore touch and teach readers and hearers. Origen taught that the reading of Scripture could help move beyond elementary thoughts and discover the higher wisdom hidden in the "Word of God".

THE FOUR "R"s OF LECTIO DIVINA

- **LECTIO (Reading)**

Take your time and read the passage. Get a sense of what it is saying. Read the passage a second time. Listen for any words or phrases that strike you, and listen in your heart.

- **MEDITATIO (Reflecting)**

Read the passage again, slowly. As you pause on the words or phrases that strike you, take time to consider what the word, phrase, or passage means, particularly in your life.

- **ORATIO (Responding)**

Read the passage again, slowly. Consider now how God has spoken to you in this passage and respond back to him. You may want to consider how this passage is asking you to act differently.

- **CONTEMPLATIO (Remaining)**

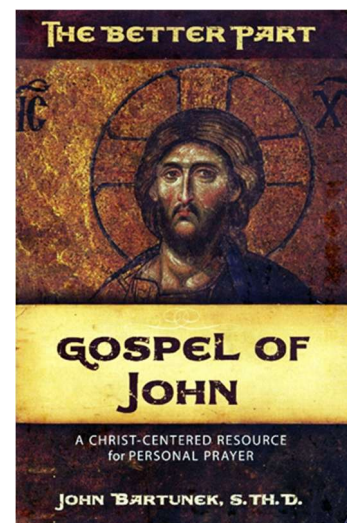
Now take some time to simply remain in the presence of God.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS:

Consider secluding yourself in a quiet place at a specific time every day. Read the passages out loud so you may be more open to what is being offered.

Consider Fr. John Bartunek's Lectio Divina-based study of the Gospels titled "The Better Part" from Sophia Institute Press.

Picking a consistent time in the morning develops the discipline of entering into God's presence before the distractions of the day begin to occupy your mind.



ABOUT OPEN SHARING

WHAT WE SHARE HERE - STAYS HERE!

- Sharing is a gift of myself --- who I am, how I feel, about my attitudes, my joys, my hopes, my struggles, and my suffering.
- I may struggle mightily to share what is in my heart.
- To share openly and honestly is a decision to love my brothers with confidence, to trust that they love me, that they care about me, and that they truly yearn for me to grow in truth and love.
- Sharing is not a time to offer help to a brother who may really be struggling, but to empower our brothers with love.
- No matter how well-intended advice-giving might be, it can be perceived as arrogant, and stifle another's willingness to share.
- Sharing is not a time to ask questions or make comments about matters unrelated to how a brother's witness or sharing affects me.
- To listen deeply to the sharing of a brother, I must turn off my urge to judge, to offer help or healing, to teach willfully, or to dominate the sharing.
- If I truly listen and avoid thinking about my own sharing, I am offering love and respect to those brothers who are willing to share.
- It is very important that during another brother's sharing; not to interrupt, not to comment, not to react, not to belittle.
- Sharing openly, honestly, and thoughtfully should: open me up to my brothers, be rooted in Sacred Scripture, witness to our solidarity, bind us together in love, and confirm us as equal members of the Living Body of Jesus the Christ.

WHAT WE SHARE HERE - STAYS HERE!

ABOUT SERVANT LEADERSHIP

“Many hands make light work” is the means by which Men of Jesus the Christ (MOJTC) can function effectively, efficiently, and productively; and allow all of our gathered members to worship our Lord reverently and joyfully.

The functions that must be fulfilled for each gathering include: **1) Overall Coordination, 2) Meeting Discipline, 3) Liturgical Guidance, and 4) Physical/Facility Support.** These four (4) functions ought to be fulfilled by no less than four (4) responsible members. This will help to facilitate load sharing, and ensure adequate back-up. Each MOJTC group requires the following functional support:

OVERALL COORDINATION: Two (2) members need to pair-up to ensure that: planning, communications, meeting functions, and record-keeping all receive the necessary attention; even if/when one of the members may be absent. Duties include:

- Recruitment of a member to proclaim the Gospel.
- Recruitment of a member to offer a personal witness.
- Recruitment of a member to offer the "Call to Silence" following the proclamation of the Gospel.
- Preparation of a weekly email communique, and delivery to all members.
- Maintenance of the Member Roster, contact information, and a week- by-week attendance record; especially for those who are new members.
- Integration of new members into the group; according to the guidance document "About Mentoring a New Member".
- Procurement and timely distribution of the publications that augment the Holy Bible as our resource materials: “Catholic Missalette”, “Workbook for Lectors & Proclaimers”, “One Bread One Body”, the “Men of Jesus the Christ – Member Guidebook”, and the “Into The Breach” pamphlet.

MEETING DISCIPLINE: One (1) member must take responsibility for ensuring that every meeting starts and ends promptly at the scheduled time. Duties include:

- Calling the group to attention precisely at the scheduled start time.
- Beginning with the Sign of the Cross, and reciting “Have Mercy On Me A Sinner”.
- Noting any "first timers", and asking them to give a very brief (30 second) introduction; i.e. birth place, residence community, marital/family status, and church affiliation --- following our introductory reflection.
- Acknowledge the member who will read the relevant, introductory Gospel reflection from “One Bread, One Body”.
- Announce the member who will proclaim the Gospel (and other Scripture readings – for the Second week).
- Announce the member who will offer his personal witness.
- NOTE: this should be done about one (1) minute following the “Call to Silence”.

- Initiate a "hands-on" prayer (by two members at the lectern) in support of the brother who will be offering his witness.
- Bring to a "close" the period of Open Sharing and initiate Intercessory Prayers; to allow remaining prayers, closing song, and necessary announcements to be completed in a timely manner.
- Bring to a "close" Intercessory Prayers in order to finish our worship by the scheduled dismissal time.

LITURGICAL GUIDANCE: One (1) member must take responsibility for assuring that our brothers can offer prayer, praise and adoration to our Lord according to our "Gathering Sequence" (see Member Guidebook). Duties include:

- Leading our members in the "Recitation of Christ's Calling" so our "Purpose, Motto, Mission, and Attitude" continue to be instilled in us through our communal recitation.
- Selecting and leading our assembly in our "Opening Song" that should set the tone for receiving the Gospel message.
- Selecting and leading our assembly in our "Opening Prayer" to prepare our hearts, our minds and our souls for the presence of Our Lord.
- Offering a reflection on a chosen Saint of the Day; as a means for our members to be enriched by the example of these holy men and women who have given themselves faithfully and heroically to Jesus and to his Church. Offering a brief synopsis of the readings for the coming Sunday; in order to open us to receiving the Gospel.
- Leading our assembly in "The Memorare" following our Intercessory Prayers; which acknowledges our Blessed Mother's spiritual role in our everyday lives.
- Selecting and leading our assembly in our "Closing Song" that should put the finishing touches on our celebration.
- Leading our closed circle to end with The Lord's Prayer and the Sign Of The Cross.

PHYSICAL/FACILITY SUPPORT: Two (2) members should team up to set-up tables and seating; sanctify the offertory table/space with: Bible, Crucifix, statues, pictures, and a candle; lay out sequence sheets, prayer cards, and/or Missalettes and songbooks; begin playing suitable recorded music and prepare coffee and/or soft drinks; if/as decided locally. Other duties include:

- Arriving about forty-five (45) minutes before the scheduled start time to complete the facility set-up before members arrive.
- Setting up and connecting a Bluetooth speaker system (or Smartphone) to those members who are off-site, and who want to be digitally connected "live" into the specific gathering.
- Assuring that the Bible is opened to the appropriate scripture selection, and the candle is lit.
- Completing the take-down and clean-up; ensuring that all supplies are stored and secured appropriately.
- Collecting refreshment donations, maintaining finances, and purchasing necessary supplies and refreshments; as required.

SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES: Despite the specific duties (as defined above), it needs to be understood that those men who have accepted MOJTC leadership team responsibilities, must be ready, willing and able to share those responsibilities with and among one another. As a result, each "servant leader" needs to be able to substitute for any of his brothers (who comprise the group

leadership); should any of them be absent from a gathering. This is to make certain that the Gathering Sequence can go on fruitfully, and without interruption. Additionally, each “Servant Leader” ought to be willing to share with other members such duties as: selecting and leading prayers, selecting and leading songs, studying and preparing to present the Saint of the Day, presenting the “Call to Silence”, and offering a prayer over the man who will witness to the gathering. The more men who can participate as “Servant Leaders”, during any weekly gathering, the more fully will we act out our Lord’s call to **“love one another as He loves us”**. However, it is also necessary to balance the “sharing of responsibilities” with sufficient instruction and experience to avoid preventable missteps.

GROUP ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS: It has been customary over our history to celebrate the yearly anniversary of each group’s founding. Typically, Mass is celebrated by a priest who has some relationship with the group members (pastor or other friend, etc.). The **Gathering Sequence** is adjusted to allow time for the Mass and the other key elements of the celebration to fit within our normal one (1) hour sequence. The actual day of the Anniversary celebration ought to be close to the regular gathering day of the week, and the founding date.

Refreshments and fellowship are always a welcome option following our anniversary worship time.

INCLUDING THE HOLY ROSARY: It has also been customary over our recent history to recite a shortened version of the Holy Rosary (during the months of May and October) to honor our Blessed Mother Mary. A specific **“Marian Sequence”** has been developed that allows our altered gatherings to proceed normally; with sufficient time within our sequence to recite an abbreviated Rosary. The details are provided in the Marian Sequence sheet, a supporting Rosary prayer sheet (both included), and a Rosary guidance pamphlet. Rosary leaders ought to be identified in advance.

GUIDANCE AND DIRECTION: The development, review, critique, and approval of various groups: changes, guidance functions, and documents are facilitated by a core group of members who are personally committed to the long term advancement of the Men of Jesus the Christ (MOJTC) ministry. This leadership team is currently composed of representatives of all local groups. We have a formal “Charter” (included), and respectfully refer to ourselves as the Spiritual Strategy Team (SST).

ONE BODY, MANY PARTS

“As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ.

“For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit. -

1Corinthians 12: 12-13

ABOUT MENTORING A NEW MEMBER

When a new man attends one of our gatherings for the very first time, all of our members should actively seek to be welcoming, to create a comfortable environment, and to offer assurances of safety - that our new brother will never be betrayed.

- Engaging a new man in communion with our group ought to be gradual, deliberate, and according to the individual's openness and self-assurance and is done primarily by the men who have agreed to collaborate on the "Overall Coordination" of the group.
- As the leaders seek men to fill the two (2) weekly volunteer functions (Proclamation and Witnessing), they should invite the newcomer to actively participate; when they deem him open to the opportunity.
- If the new man seems open and willing to continue attending, explain our use of the "Workbook for Lectors"; as our primary scriptural resource document. Cost @ \$15
- A typical "Mentoring" sequence ought to unfold as follows:
 1. Allow a new man four (4) meetings to get comfortable.
 2. During this time, provide and encourage the daily use of "One Bread One Body", and the "Workbook for Lector" for personal scripture study.
 3. Sit with the brother soon after he has attended his 4th meeting and offer him a copy of our "Member Guidebook" gratis.
 4. Briefly explain the content of the "Guidebook", encourage that it ought to be studied seriously; as an aid to personal, spiritual growth. At any time after the new member has received his "Member Guidebook", he can be invited to proclaim the Gospel.
 5. Make certain the new member has studied the several guidance documents; "About Proclaiming".
 6. Ask the brother if he has any questions and offer help during the coming week of prayer and preparation.
 7. After a man has proclaimed the Gospel for the first time (following that day's gathering sequence) he should be thanked, affirmed, and offered any correction or advice (if any is appropriate).
 8. Once our new member has proclaimed a Gospel to the group for the first time, he becomes a candidate to offer the group his personal witness.
 9. Allow at least several more weeks before asking if the new member is willing to offer his personal witness.
 10. During this time, suggest that the new member continues to study our entire "Member Guidebook"; but especially the several pages on "Witnessing" and "Sharing".
 11. Prior to a new member offering his "first witness", it is crucial that he not feel pressured in any way. Rather, all brothers need to be supportive, affirming, and understanding.
- Witnessing is always a VERY BIG DEAL! It is always voluntary, and it can only come about through the personal relationship between our brother and his God.
- Most men who offer their witness on the Gospel (according to the directions in our "Guidebook"), agree that the giver of the Gift gets much more in return than his receivers.
- "Open Sharing" by our members (following the newcomer's witness) is our opportunity to offer thanks and affirmation. For a "first-time witness", our "gifts of gratitude" will be Divine!

ABOUT THE SECOND WEEK OF THE MONTH

The Second Week of the month is reserved for open sharing on the Sunday Scriptures by all brothers present; no one brother will offer his personal witness on the Gospel during this gathering.

- I am called to read and reflect on all three (3) of the Sunday readings plus the Psalm; in preparation (Lectio Divina) for sharing how these Scriptures have influenced my thoughts, my words, and/or my actions.
- I am encouraged to also use the ""Workbook for Lectors", "One Bread, One Body", and "The Word Among Us" to help to flesh out my understanding of how God's Word might be speaking to me through this guidance
- One of our group's facilitators will usually prepare scriptural challenges (questions) that are intended to catalyze our open sharing. These helps are typically distributed to our members prior to the Second Week gathering.
- This Second Week format ought to challenge me to prepare in a much more committed way than for the other weeks of the month when, in contrast, I would be the recipient of a brother's personal witness.
- My attitude in preparing for our Second Week gathering ought to be as though I am actually preparing to give my personal witness; knowing that each one of my brothers ought to be preparing likewise.
- My personal review of and prayer over our guidance "ABOUT SHARING" may be just what I need to empower me to express my love for Jesus and my love for my brothers.
- Proclamation of all three (3) of the Sunday readings plus the Psalm - during this gathering offers our Church's wisdom; that we might be blessed with the Gospel in unity with the broader, mystical truth of God's Holy Word in its entirety.
- My desire for the gifts of the Holy Spirit ought to: guide my participation, lead me to the truth, bless my brothers, and empower us all to love one another.

ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL STRATEGY TEAM (SST) CHARTER

Purpose:

To be leaders of Catholic men for the purpose of growing in our faith. To provide oversight, review and strategic direction of all facets of the Men of Jesus the Christ (MOJTC) prayer groups. This includes content, operation, evaluation, improvements and any other issues which arise. Develop, review and approve documents which provide the necessary guidance and direction for the operation, and for any future advancement of the MOJTC Ministry.

Name:

Spiritual Strategy Team (SST)

Membership:

Members are volunteers from the regular attendees of Men of Jesus the Christ prayer groups. Membership should be maintained at between 8 and 12 members. A quorum will consist of 60% of the members.

Communications:

Primary means of communications will be via email. Meetings will be held as necessary to facilitate decision making and to support the advancement of the Ministry. Final decisions and documents will be provided to all participants of the MOJTC for review and feedback.

Decisions:

The team will reach decisions by consensus; i.e. the majority must be in concord or harmony; and even though some members may differ, all agree to support the final decision. All decisions require a quorum.

Facilitators:

Facilitators will be sought to assist the SST in developing agendas, running meetings, writing meeting summaries, maintaining documents, keeping an active MOJTC Roster, and a ledger of income and expenses.

Authority:

All decisions and actions of the SST must be in compliance and conformance with the Universal Catechism of the Catholic Church. Conflict resolution will be done in accord with the principle of subsidiarity.