

## NINTH LAY TALK

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# TALK #14

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## PERSEVERANCE

### Overview of All Talks

The Walk to Emmaus 72-hour experience delivers one message that is communicated through the music, meals, clergy meditations, attitudes and actions of the team members, and the talks. You will deliver one of the fifteen talks. In reality, you will deliver one-fifteenth of the Emmaus talk—one message with fifteen presenters.

Prepare your talk using the outlines provided. As a good general rule, two-thirds of the talk will come from the outline and one-third would be the speaker's original insights and illustrations.

The talks are sequenced in a defined order; each builds on the next to provide pilgrims with the complete message of Emmaus. Do not try to cover more than your assigned topic. The expanded outline intends to provide a solid understanding of the material from which your talk will be developed. The abbreviated outline helps you see the progression of the main points. *Neither outline is a script*; you will need to add personal examples to give life to the content and make it real to the hearers. Use visual aids to help convey the main points.

The Holy Spirit, as well as feedback from the team after your talk preview, will provide additional guidance for your unique presentation of this talk. Once you incorporate the suggestions offered after your preview, your presentation no longer belongs just to you but to the team God is forming to deliver the Emmaus message.

*This presentation is allotted a maximum of twenty to twenty-five minutes.*

### Overview for Speaker

This talk presents the follow-up method that The Walk to Emmaus movement provides for members of the Emmaus family. It includes an explanation of the group reunion meeting and the group reunion cards.

This talk points out that each pilgrim has a responsibility to return to his or her local congregation and become involved in its ministry. In addition, the talk emphasizes the new desire that Emmaus has kindled in the pilgrims, and to keep the flame burning requires a definite plan. The group reunion will provide this continuity since the group reunion exists to increase members' idealism, self-surrender, and spirit of charity.

The unique flavor and style of the group reunion will grow out of the participants and the locale, but the simple format can provide a structure for helping each member grow spiritually and supporting one another in fruitful apostolic action. The group offers a structure

for sharing Spirit, insight, and strength. The purpose of the group reunion is mutual support, encouragement, and accountability.

Videos and recorded songs should not be part of the talk. Any projection during the talk should be kept simple.

**This talk is scheduled for Sunday at 1:30 p.m.**

## EXPANDED OUTLINE

### PERSEVERANCE

#### Lead the Prayer to the Holy Spirit

*Please turn to page 48 in your Worship Booklet and join me in the Prayer to the Holy Spirit.*

#### Opening Story (1–2 minutes)

Choose a brief, personal story or experience that relates to the main point of this talk. If you cannot think of an appropriate introduction, consult the Lay Director or Spiritual Director for assistance. A good introduction will engage the hearts, minds, and attention of pilgrims and move them into the theme of this talk. For example, you might do the following:

Option 1: Share a specific way your life has changed because you actively participate in a group reunion or some other form of small group for accountability and support. Feel free to name the fears or obstacles that had to be overcome.

Option 2: Share the life story of someone else that illustrates the main theme of the talk.

**My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and the title of this talk is PERSEVERANCE.**

#### I. Introduction

How can we persevere in the Christian life?

A. *Persevere* is defined as

1. continuing with an undertaking in spite of difficulty, opposition, or discouragement
2. remaining steadfast in purpose

B. Our growth, development, and function as Christians require that we feed on spiritual food. That diet allows us to persevere in the life of grace. Our sharing in the Christian banquet enables us to understand the need for a continued diet of God's grace. We must learn to acquire it and keep it in our daily lives.

#### II. Perseverance

A better life is possible. Whatever we experience in this three-day Emmaus event is possible to reexperience in our Fourth Day. The treasure of The Walk to Emmaus movement—life in grace—is ours to have. (Compare the life of grace to the pearl of great price,

see Matthew 13:45-46.) But it takes effort on our part to receive and maintain that life. Christians cannot live in a vacuum but must maintain a relationship with God and others. To persevere involves maintaining:

A. Contact with Christ

1. Total security comes from encountering Christ, surrendering our will to God, and accepting the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.
2. This is a lifelong process, which requires perseverance and the hard work of remaining open to God's persistent love.
3. The feeling of security and the state of being secure differ.
4. Only that which is absolute can give absolute security.
5. Jesus Christ is the source for divine life (eternal life) in us. (See John 15:1-11.)
6. Through personal relationship with Jesus Christ, we strengthen the life of God in us.
7. Prayer, meditation, the sacraments, and the Bible make contact with Jesus Christ possible.
8. We grow and become more secure when we maintain contact with Christ using these sources of God's revelation.

B. Contact with other Christians

1. Group reunions offer a way to help each other live in grace. The groups provide mutual support, encouragement, and accountability.
2. We need mutual, Christ-centered sharing. The Greek word used in the New Testament to describe such sharing is *koinonia*.
3. The early church members met together, shared fellowship, prayed, learned about God's will, and grew in the Christian life.
4. The early church provides a model for us of community and participation in the life of Christ. We cannot convert ourselves; neither can we grow by ourselves.

### III. The cost of perseverance

The more valuable the prize, the more costly is the effort to achieve it. We pay the premium of meeting weekly in the group reunion to persevere as disciples.

A. To be effective, a group reunion incorporates these qualities:

1. seriousness—the group deals with eternal matters.
2. sincerity—the group requires honesty and openness.
3. discretion—the group meeting does not provide fodder for gossip; what participants say in a group meeting remains in the group.
4. regularity—weekly meetings are extremely meaningful [*Speaker, emphasize this point.*].

B. Explanation of the group reunion card

(The speaker includes the following primary points.)

1. *Opening prayer*—Calling on the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.
  2. *Piety*—Feeding on spiritual resources keeps us in closer contact with Christ. Sharing the moment when we felt closest to Christ makes us more aware of Christ’s activity in our lives and the lives of others.
  3. *Study*—Learning more about the Christian life.
  4. *Action: Call to Discipleship*—Sharing at what moment this week you felt you responded to God’s call to be a disciple.
  5. *Inaction: Discipleship Denied*—Failing offers areas for improvement. Where have we failed in our attempt to bring the world closer to Christ?
  6. *Plan*—What is your plan for next week? The best way to avoid apostolic disappointment and ensure apostolic success is to plan ahead and not let circumstances dictate the course of events. Group plans provide support and effectiveness.
  7. *Closing Prayer*—The Prayer of Thanksgiving reminds us that God constantly does wonderful things for us. Pray for those absent and for confidences shared.
- C. Monthly Gatherings—Gatherings provide opportunities for pilgrims to meet monthly to share and celebrate the presence of God in their lives. Perseverance becomes our aim—to help one another continue the journey in the life of grace.
- D. Serving Emmaus—A special joy grows out of serving in Emmaus. Opportunities for service include board committees, behind-the-scenes work, and the Conference Room Team.
- E. Local church—Your church is your primary Christian community. Emmaus activities supplement and enliven but never replace your local church.

*[Give a personal testimony of your perseverance.]*

#### IV. Conclusion

What are the guarantees of your perseverance?

- A. Christ’s presence—“Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them” (Matt. 18:20).
- B. Christian friends—Keep the love flowing through friendship and association with fellow seekers; participate in a group reunion and in your local church.

# ABBREVIATED OUTLINE

## PERSEVERANCE

### Lead the Prayer to the Holy Spirit

*Please turn to page 48 in your Worship Booklet and join me in the Prayer to the Holy Spirit.*

### Opening Story (1–2 minutes)

**My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and the title of this talk is PERSEVERANCE.**

#### I. Introduction

How can we persevere in the Christian life?

- A. To persevere is to continue with an undertaking in spite of difficulty, opposition, or discouragement; to remain steadfast in purpose; to persist.
- B. Our sharing in the Christian banquet enables us to understand the need for a continued diet of God's grace.

#### II. Perseverance

Whatever we experience in this three-day Emmaus event is possible to reexperience in our Fourth Day. To persevere involves maintaining:

- A. Contact with Christ—In a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, we strengthen the life of God in us. Prayer, meditation, the sacraments, and the Bible make contact with Jesus Christ possible.
- B. Contact with other Christians—Group reunions offer a way to help each other live in grace. We cannot convert ourselves; neither can we grow by ourselves.

#### III. The cost of perseverance

We pay the premium of meeting weekly in the group reunion to persevere as disciples.

- A. To be effective, a group reunion incorporates these qualities:
  - 1. seriousness—the group deals with eternal matters.
  - 2. sincerity—the group requires honesty and openness.
  - 3. discretion—What participants say in a group meeting remains in the group.
  - 4. regularity—Weekly meetings are extremely meaningful.
- B. Explanation of the group reunion card
  - 1. *Opening prayer*
  - 2. *Piety*
  - 3. *Study*
  - 4. *Action: Call to Discipleship*

5. *Inaction: Discipleship Denied*
  6. *Plan*
  7. *Closing Prayer*
- C. Monthly Gatherings—Gatherings provide opportunities for pilgrims to meet monthly to share and celebrate the presence of God in their lives.
  - D. Serving Emmaus—board committees, behind-the-scenes work, and the Conference Room Team.
  - E. Local church

*[Give a personal testimony of your perseverance.]*

#### **IV. Conclusion**

What are the guarantees of your perseverance?

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**De Colores!**