

Conversation That Invites Worship



Liturgy for Discernment In a Time of Tragedy

Ritual

(Silence, a song, lighting of a candle...a ritual that helps us recognize the presence of God.)
Use a candle that is "housed" in a candle holder with sides, such as a luminaria. The goal is for the light to be visible but somewhat shrouded by the holder.

Invite one person in your group to light the candle.
Invite another person in your group to offer a one sentence INVITATION
"God, we come together, seeking your light, your word, your hope."
Take some time to sit in silence and quiet yourself, focusing on God.

Relating

(Checking-in. Attending to each other. "How are you?")

Going around the circle of participants, and encouraging a time of LISTENING and no CROSS TALK, ask each person "How Are You?" Each person should answer the question as many ways as they want (How they are emotionally, physically, spiritually). As each person finishes – they in turn invite the next person. As each person speaks others are invited to be a PRAYERFUL PRESENCE. Truly listening. Praying for the person as they share how they are.

Receiving

(Attending to God through prayer using Lectio Divina or holy reading of scripture as the content)

Psalm 61

Invite one person in your group to read Psalm 61.
Read slowly and intently. Linger over each verse in the Psalm. The reader should read as if she/he is extending a wonderful invitation or reading a letter from a beloved friend.

A time of silence follows – participants are invited to consider what stood out to them or "shimmered" for them as they listened.

Invite the same person to read again.
Invite the participants to listen and notice ... again.

A time of silence follows the reading – participants are asked to compare their "noticings" from the first reading to the next.

Ruminating

(Each person shares what they noticed during the prayer.)

Reflecting

(Touching into our call/mission. The group answers the following question: "Given what we've heard and shared, what is God's call to us?")

"Given the incidents of this past week, specifically the shootings and tragedies at Virginia Tech, are there intersections between what you noticed in the scripture readings and what you are pondering regarding the tragedy?"

Allow a time of silence for the group to reflect. (You might need to restate the question)

As a tangible way of illustrating the group's reflections – use colorful markers or paints to illustrate on large sheets of paper the various "noticings" shared.

Responding

(Out of listening, we offer something tangible.)

"If our group CALL is _____ (to offer a display of hope, to write a letter, to commit to prayer, to create a facebook page, etc...) what is our response?"

Returning

(Closing prayer. Offering ourselves/efforts to God.)

Invite the group to offer their efforts, thoughts and call to God.