

THURSDAY (P.M.)

7:00 p.m. Registration and fellowship. Team members should arrive early. Begin 72-Hour Prayer Vigil.

7:30 p.m. Send-off. Guests and Team to Conference Room
Sponsors in Sanctuary for Sponsors' Hour (Cross Service)

7:40 p.m. Introductions:

- Assistant Lay Directors introduce each other with:
Name, Family, an interesting fact.
(Write these criteria on whiteboard to remind guests. Instruct group to find a partner. Learn this information about each other and then introduce their "new friend". They may use note cards and pens provided on tables).
- Assistant Lay Director introduces Head Spiritual Director for weekend.
- Head Spiritual Director introduces other Spiritual Directors for the weekend and defines the role of the Spiritual Directors.
- Head Spiritual Director introduces Lay Director.

9:00 p.m. Lay Director's Talk on Thursday Evening

Welcome to the Great Banquet! I am glad that you accepted the invitation to come. The three days that we spend here will be a short course in Christianity in which all of us will experience the love and grace of God. We will spend the next three days in a Christian community. We will learn more about what Christianity really is and what living the life of a Christian should really involve.

We've come here by invitation, to consider where we are in our faith and to have our hearts filled with God's grace. For the next three days, I ask that we make every effort to live for the moment. Let's resist the tendency to worry about what will happen next. The Great Banquet is a well-constructed experience in which every part is important. It is much like a real banquet that has a set number of courses to be given to the guests as they eat. Even though a particular part may appear to be insignificant at the time, be assured that everything we do has its place and purpose. All that is asked of us is that we have confidence in the banquet team and live each moment in trust and confidence. God, who invited us to attend this Great Banquet, will care for us during the entire experience.

I would like to read to you from Luke chapter 14: verses 15-24, and show you the picture for our three days together. **(read this passage from the Bible)**

So here we have the story of a man who prepared a great banquet, and those who were invited had excuses as to why they were unable to attend. They were too busy with other interests and just could not spare the time. They were so caught up in their own lives and their own busy schedules that they asked to be excused. But the host had prepared a feast, and he wanted the table to be filled with guests, so he sent his servants out twice to find those who would come to enjoy the feast with him. In this story we see a picture of what the kingdom of heaven is like.

Many invitations were also sent for this banquet that begins tonight. Whether you are a guest or a team member, we are each here because we responded to the invitation to come. God himself has prepared this banquet for us and invited each guest. His Son, Jesus, is the host. He wants his tables filled. He chose us for this feast of His love, and he prepared this table for us. We did not choose to be invited, we only had the choice whether to accept or not.

When we come to the table that God has prepared for us with a spirit of self-surrender, we will experience his abundant love. He has prepared each course for us, just like one might expect to find at a great banquet. Each course will have its own flavor, and God has prepared each one with you in mind. We will experience the banquet as individuals and together. We will share deeply together in worship and communion and our eyes will be opened so that we recognize Jesus.

By Sunday night, I think you will discover that you have feasted from God's abundant love and grace. And I pray that you will find that this has been a beautiful experience. I cannot tell you what you will experience, for each of us will find it to be unique to who we are individually; but, on Sunday, you will be given the opportunity to describe these three days and what they have meant to you.

So, as we prepare ourselves for this event, I ask of you three things: your faith, your self-surrender, and your charity. Faith, first of all, in God who uses the instrument of the Great Banquet to bring us closer to Him. The Great Banquet is a tool, designed by many men and women who have labored for years to bring it about. I ask that each of us have faith that God will use this experience to bring about something wonderful in us. We will see many people working in the background to make sure that all of our needs are

met. Some will be preparing food, while others will be praying and supporting us with their acts of love.

Let's adopt a spirit of self-surrender, surrendering ourselves to God first and then to the pattern of these three days. Participate in each part of the event as it happens and try to put aside that human characteristic of worrying about what will happen next. Attempt to live fully in the present. Have faith in the team presenting this experience. The strength of the team lies not in our own efforts but in the Holy Spirit who works in us.

Lastly, I ask for a spirit of charity, putting other people's interests first. When we go from one event to another, let's be prompt, charitable and cooperative. Take advantage of the opportunity God has given you in these three days and don't waste it. We will have a wonderful time together. We will laugh, sing and enjoy each other's company. The Great Banquet is not an ordinary retreat; it is a once in a lifetime opportunity. Make the most of it and have faith that God will make it a wonderful time for you.

In order that we might prepare our hearts for these next three days, I ask that this evening we begin a period of silence, which will last until after tomorrow morning's service of Holy Communion. We are busy people living in a busy world. We are a fearful people living in a world full of fear, and we are an anxious people living in a world of anxiety. God has asked us to come away from the world for three days to experience His Presence.

God has asked us to turn off all the noise in our lives so that we might hear Him. Silence is a discipline for us so that we might begin to concentrate on God's Presence with us. It is a time to turn off the noise of this world and settle into the stillness of these three days. The Great Banquet is not a quiet personal retreat. It is quite the contrary. We will laugh together, sing together, and enjoy all the advantages that life in common can bring.

As another element of self-surrender, we ask that you now remove your watch and put it in your pocket. When you go to your room tonight, put it in your suitcase and leave it there until you return home. It really is important that we remove ourselves as much as possible from the secular time-watching world. We have a few time-watchers among us who will make sure that we don't miss any meals, and we will be allowed adequate time to rest and prepare for each day's activities. Also, if you have a cell phone or pager with you, I ask you to turn it off now and put it in your suitcase tonight. If you need or want

anything, do not hesitate to ask me or one of the Assistants to help you, even in this time of silence. If you need to take medication at a specific time, let the Assistants know and they will come and remind you of the time. The same applies to any special dietary needs; just let one of the Assistants know.

It is not easy to live in close quarters together, so be considerate of one another and cooperate willingly with the pattern of the schedule. We will ring a bell to alert everyone to come to the Conference Room (that is this room), the dining room or the Chapel. Please respond promptly. Our individual cooperation will benefit the entire group. Tonight after final dismissal take care of your personal needs quickly, doing only those things that are essential for your nightly routine. Then you can be ready to jump in your luxurious beds and sleep soundly when the lights go out. Ear plugs are available in the restrooms, so please help yourself if you'd like your space a little quieter.

Let's set our hopes high for these three days, striving to attain the greatest good the Great Banquet has to offer. By concentrating on the moment at hand, we will return to our families and jobs with a better attitude and far greater enthusiasm than if we spend our time here worrying about the things at home or at work. Let's keep our minds fastened on Jesus, and keep our hearts and minds open to what He will say to us these three days.

If anyone has a question, come to me or to one of the Spiritual Directors or to one of the Assistants at any time. Let us have charity for our fellow Christians here, and high idealism from ourselves. Let us surrender ourselves to the pattern of these three days. Let its message unfold in our hearts and minds. These three days may prove to be the most valuable of our lifetime. Let's not lessen their effectiveness by failing to give ourselves completely to the message and the experience of the Great Banquet.

Dress informally and comfortably. Wear your nametag at all times so that we can get to know one another more quickly. Smoking is allowed outside in the fenced-in area by the dumpster. Please put butts in the bucket, not the dumpster. The doors do lock in the evening, so please take something to prop them open while you smoke so you can get back in. Showers are located in the restrooms in the Gathering Space near the Gym. School is in session on Friday, so please be considerate of their space as well.

Each of us will receive one of these worship booklets. Put your name on the front, carry it with you at all times, because you will use it in the Conference Room, in the dining room and in the Chapel. All other materials will be provided.

In a spirit of self-surrender, high idealism and charity, let's prepare ourselves for further meditation. We will now go to the Chapel in silence and begin our spiritual retreat.

9:15 p.m. Go to chapel.

- Assistant Lay Directors distribute worship booklets at entrance to Chapel. Spiritual Director's meditation: "Be Still and Know that I am God" Psalm 46:10. (*Lay Director should always be prepared to do meditations if Spiritual Director is absent.*)
- Spiritual Director: *In order to set a proper focus for the responses of the guests to the Banquet, please use the following guidelines.*

SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR's NARRATIVE: "Be still, and know that I am God" Psalm 46:10. In these days, everything seems to be hurry, hurry, hurry. We are always rushing around doing things. There always seems to be somebody talking, traffic sounds, radio and television. A lot of noise in the hustle and bustle of life. Do you get as tired as I do? My tiredness is not always physical; it is emotional and spiritual as well. Tired. Bone tired. Tired in your soul and spirit. In the midst of all this commotion and noise that is in our lives, there is a still small voice of God that says, "Be still, and know that I am God".

(PAUSE)

(Spiritual Director might want to make a couple of personal examples of this point of the busyness of their life.)

There is so much noise in this world. There is a scientific term for all the background noise that is in our lives. Scientists call it "white noise". A good example of "white noise" happens as you listen to the radio in the car driving down the highway. At first, while sitting still, you have a clear signal, but as you begin to go faster, you have to turn the radio up because you can't hear it as well. The reason you can't hear as well is because of the sound of the wind blowing by the car. That wind sound is what scientists call "white noise". It gets in the way of the signal that you are receiving, or you are hearing.

Another example is the static on the radio. If you are far enough away from the radio station you get scratchiness or static in the sound, and it's very difficult to hear what is going on. You can only hear if you listen diligently. This static sound is "white noise".

One of the problems that we face in our lives is that we have a lot of “white noise” in our society. The decibel level of all the noise is so great that the Word of God, His clear signal for each of us, is literally covered up by all the noise in our lives. And even if we can barely hear it, many times we can’t pick out the message unless we intentionally listen.

This noise prevents a lot of people in our society today from hearing the Word of God. It’s not that they’re not receiving. They are receiving so much they cannot hear the clear signal, the clear message. And most of us are not inclined to intentionally listen.

And God said, “Be still and know that I am God.” **(PAUSE)**

Even if we go to church on Sunday morning and we have a very good worship service and a particularly good message from the word of God, it may not speak to us because we’re not diligently listening. It’s just there with all the other sounds that we have in our lives. God said, “Be still and know that I am God.” **(PAUSE)**

How does God work in the world? First, He speaks. When God creates, he speaks. He speaks things into being. In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. The Word became flesh. The spoken Word became flesh and dwelt among us. God spoke, and God’s Son took on human form. His name is Jesus. Our problem is that all of the noise gets in the way a lot of the time and we can’t hear the Word.

God said, “Be still and know that I am God.” **(PAUSE)**

The Lord has invited you to a banquet, a feast with Him. One of the reasons that the banquet is such a powerful experience is because we cut out all the noise for three days.

We will all get a clear signal from God for three days.

The Great Banquet eliminates the noise of the streets from which you came so that you can hear a clear signal from God. For three days, we’re going to do some intentional listening. Take this time to be still. Psalm 46 says “Be still and know that I am God”. It is a commandment if you think about it. Be still, be quiet. And when you do, then you will be able to know who I am. We are commanded to be still and Jesus said, “if you love me, you will keep my commandments”.

In the 23rd Psalm it says, “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures.” Then he restores my soul. Think about that; He makes me lie down.

(Spiritual Director may wish to give personal example, such as making kids be quiet)

And God says it to all of His children on occasion as well. To be still and know who I am. And I think God makes us be still long enough to recognize who He is and also so we can understand who we are and where we are going in this life.

And God said, “Be still and know that I am God.” **(PAUSE)**

In Matthew 6, Jesus is speaking to his Disciples as he says:

“Look at the birds of the air: they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, that not even Solomon, in all his splendor, was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, he will not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or, ‘What shall we drink?’ or, ‘What shall we wear?’ for the pagans run after all these things; and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

(Matthew 6:26-34)

You’ll notice at the end of this passage that Jesus says seek first the kingdom of God and all these other things will be yours as well.

The Disciples were obviously concerned about many things. Perhaps you are concerned as well, as you come to this Banquet. The Lord has brought you here. He has invited you to this banquet to sit with Him. He has brought us here especially to provide for our spiritual needs. To nourish us... body, soul and spirit.

The Lord asks us as we begin this banquet to trust Him. To put aside all those things that concern us - worries, cares, family issues, workplace pressures, relationships

that are strained – and maybe for the first time in our lives, seek first the Kingdom of God. We need this quiet time for reflection just as Jesus needed to withdraw to a quiet place occasionally with His Disciples. Just as David who went to a quiet place and wrote the Shepherd's Psalm said, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul."

We need to confront the fundamental questions of life such as "who am I?", and "where am I going with my life?". The only way to discover true meaning for our lives is to take the time and seek first the Kingdom of God. We need to begin at the basics, to be still. "Be still and know that I am God." **(PAUSE)**

Most of the time we are too busy for serious reflection. A critical problem in our world today is the lack of serious reflection...the fact that we can't get still long enough to hear God's word.

In Luke, chapter 10, verses 38-41, Jesus comes to visit Mary and Martha.

"Now as they went on their way, He entered a village and a woman named Martha received Him into her house and she had a sister called Mary who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to His teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving."

Martha didn't know how to be still. There was a lot of noise in her life. The scripture goes on to say,

"And she went to him and said, 'Lord do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone. Tell her then to help me.' But the Lord answered her, 'Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things. One thing is needed.

Mary has chosen the good portion, which shall not be taken away from her.'"

Jesus said to Martha, you need to be still and be like your sister, Mary, because she has chosen the good portion and that is to be still and to know who I am. Mary was still and knew who Jesus was. We can never allow activity – no matter how good it is – to crowd out times for serious reflection. We do it at our own peril. The Lord Himself has invited you to this banquet. We can begin tonight to put our lives in order by asking ourselves some fundamental questions. We can begin to discover and establish priorities for living. How do we begin?

As Socrates suggested, “know yourself”. We begin by taking a very honest look at ourselves. We need to allow the Holy Spirit to reveal our strengths and weaknesses. We need to know what they are if we are to put order in our lives.

If we are honest with ourselves, we will find that we have many more strengths than weaknesses. We will also discover some weaknesses to which we would rather not admit. We will come up against some qualities in ourselves that are not very pretty. The most important thing, however, is to realize that you are truly loved and that the Lord wishes to bless you these three days. We need to accept ourselves as we are including the qualities we wish we didn't have.

It is necessary that we know our condition if we hope to benefit from this banquet. It means being humble like the earth is humble and receives seed. So let the Word of God fall upon you like seed during these three days so that you can be like the earth, open and receptive to new growth. “Be still and know that I am God.” **(PAUSE)**

“And Jesus told this parable, ‘Blessed is he who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God. A man once gave a great banquet and invited many. And at the time for the banquet, he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, ‘come, for all is now ready’. But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a field. I must go out and see it. I pray you have me excused.’ Another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen and I must go to examine them. I pray you have me excused.’ Another said, ‘I have married a wife and therefore I cannot come.’ So the servant came and reported this to his master.”

A man gave a great banquet and there was a lot of noise in the lives of those who were invited and many of them chose not to come.

“Then the master of the household, in anger, said to the servant, ‘Go out quickly to the streets and the lanes of the city and bring in the poor and the maimed and the blind and the lame’. And the servant said, ‘Sir, what you have commanded has been done and still there is room.’ And the master said to the servant, ‘Go out to the highways and the hedges and compel people to come in that my house may be filled.’”

This is the story of an invitation to a banquet, and friends we have all been invited to this banquet together.

We are the ones who have responded to the invitation and who have chosen to come. Ponder these thoughts. Ponder your life this night. Your life is like a banquet in many ways.

Great expectation will precede some of the dishes, while caution and fear hinder the complete enjoyment of others. As a guest, we will be expected to taste and experience each course. Some of the courses are delightful. Others will taste a little bitter because of the truth that is revealed. But a concerned host, who is God our Creator and Father, gives all to us, and we need to receive and appreciate each part of this banquet. Let that be the way that we come into these three days. Let us realize we are sitting at a banquet given by Father God, and hosted by our Lord Jesus.

Lay Director leads prayers:

Let's go to God in prayer:

Lord, we offer our prayers up for those living in sin.

Lord, we offer our prayers up for those who resist your grace.

Lord, we offer our prayers up so that we will make good use of these three days.

Lord, we offer our prayers up for those of us who need this weekend the most, and for *THE ONE WHO THINKS HE / SHE NEEDS IT THE LEAST*.

Lord, we offer our prayers for those who are sacrificing themselves for our sake during these three days. Amen.

Please turn to page 4 in your worship booklet and pray with me (**PAUSE**):

Lord, you examine me and know me,

You know if I am standing or sitting,

You read my thoughts from far away,

Whether I walk or lie down, you are watching,

You know every detail of my conduct.

The word is not even on my tongue,

Lord, before you know all about it.

Close behind and close in front you fence me round,

Shielding me with your hand.

Such knowledge is beyond my understanding,
A height to which my mind cannot attain.
Where could I go to escape your spirit?
Where could I flee from your presence?
If I climb the heavens, you are there,
There, too, if I lie in Sheol.
If I flew to the point of sunrise,
Or westward across the sea,
Your hand would still be guiding me,
Your right hand holding me.
If I asked darkness to cover me,
And light to become night around me,
That darkness would not be dark to you,
Night would be as light as day.
It was you who created my inmost self,
And put me together in my mother's womb;
For all these mysteries I thank you:
For the wonder of myself, for the wonder of your works.
You know me through and through,
From having watched my bones take shape
When I was being formed in secret,
Knitted together in the limbo of the womb.
You had scrutinized my every action,
All were recorded in your book
My days listed and determined,
Even before the first of them occurred.
God how hard it is to grasp your thoughts!
How impossible to count them!
I could no more count them than I could the sand,
And suppose I could, you would still be with me.
God, examine me and know my heart;

Make sure I do not follow pernicious ways
And guide me in the way that is everlasting.

Psalm 139 (Jerusalem Bible)

LAY DIRECTOR NOTE: This same meditation (with a reflection) is used on Friday night. However, do not use the reflection on Thursday evening.

Now we are going to bed, but remember, in silence. We are all tired and need rest. So please be considerate of others. There will be time for conversation tomorrow. Don't worry about what time we need to get up. Our Assistants will awaken us with music. When the music starts, we will then have 45-minutes in which to wash and dress. As soon as you are dressed, please come here to the Chapel for worship. Again, we ask that silence be kept until after worship tomorrow morning. This will allow each of us time for our private retreat before we join with our brothers / sisters in this Great Banquet. If there is anyone who wishes to talk to one of the Spiritual Directors, feel free to remain here in the Chapel and seek them out.

Now we will hear a **closing song** and then you may leave.

Good night and God bless you!

10:00 p.m. Guests to bed in silence

10:15 p.m. Team meeting

- GET COUNT OF TEAM PLUS GUESTS!
- Assistant Lay Directors count out supplies and set up tables, poster paper, notebooks, pens and markers in Conference Room
- Community Lay Director gets table names from Assistant Lay Directors.
- Lay Director will obtain table assignments from Community Lay Director on Friday morning

FRIDAY

- 6:00 a.m.** *Assistant Lay Directors get up*
6:30 a.m. *Wake-up bell or music*
7:15 a.m. *Assistant Lay Directors check rooms for stragglers. Count to
make sure all are present*
7:20 a.m. *Morning prayers in Chapel*

LAY DIRECTOR:

Good morning, sons / daughters of God. Please read with me Psalm
34: 1-10 on page 6 of your worship booklet (**PAUSE**).

I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth.
My soul makes its boast in the Lord; let the afflicted hear and be glad.
O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together!
I sought the Lord and he answered me, and delivered me from all my fears.
Look to him, and be radiant; so your faces shall never be ashamed.
This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.
The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him, and delivers them.
O taste and see the Lord is good! Happy is the man who takes refuge in him!
O fear the Lord, you his saints, for those who fear him have no want! The young lions
suffer want and hunger; but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.

Now please join with me in the prayer:

Gracious God, help me to keep my mind focused on You this day. Help me understand
more about myself today, especially who I am in Your eyes. Lord, calm my fears, relieve
my anxieties, and teach me how to rely on You for security and support. Show me the
pathways to joy and peace so that I may truly rejoice and sing praises to You. In Jesus'
name I pray. Amen.

***Following morning prayers, introduce the Spiritual Director who will lead the
service of Holy Communion.***

Liturgy of the Word and Holy Communion by Spiritual Director using meditation: The Prodigal Son

(Lay Director should be ready to give this if needed)

HEAD SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR:

Please turn to page 8 in your worship booklet and we will begin our Service of Holy Communion (**PAUSE**).

Leader (Spiritual Director): Come and worship for all is now ready. The time to celebrate is here.

Response of the People: Let us celebrate then, not as though no change has taken place in our life, but with rejoicing for being saved to a new life!

Let's pray together the Prayer to the Holy Spirit:

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created and you shall renew the face of the earth. O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and every enjoy His consolations.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Leader (Spiritual Director): If we claim to be sinless, we are self-deceived and strangers to the truth. If we confess our sins, God is just, and may be trusted to forgive our sins and cleanse us from every kind of wrong. Let us admit our sin before God, and ask for his forgiveness.

Let's join together and pray the Prayer of Confession:

God of heaven and earth, God of flesh and spirit, the world is too much with us; late and soon, getting and spending, we lay waste our powers. What we excuse as merely human, You have condemned as sinful. We squirm at the description of our faults by prophets and apostles. We have not prepared to abandon our old ways. We prefer to hear what we already know than to think out something we have not heard before.

Forgive our lack of vision and love, for we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Leader (Spiritual Director): Hear the Good News! God has shown us how much He loves us. It was while we were yet sinners that Christ died for us.

People: We are now the people of God who once were not; once outside God's mercy, now we have received mercy.

Leader: Friends believe the Good News.

People: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Amen.

Meditation #1: THE PRODIGAL SON

(SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR):

***NOTE:** On the first day of the banquet, the focus of the talks is discovering who we are, discovering our priorities, discovering our relationship with God. The first meditation on Friday is the story of the Prodigal Son and it speaks of God's mercy and grace as portrayed by the father in the parable. The purpose of this meditation is to raise the conscious level of the guests at the banquet to discover where they are in their relationship with God.*

As we go through life we hear a lot about God, but do we really know who He is? // What do you think God is like as a person? // How does He think? // What is His way in the world? // As Jesus walked this earth He used parables... stories, such as the one of the great banquet, which we are using as our picture for these three days. Jesus used these stories to give us insight into His Father's personality and God's way with people. We learn about the Father's feeling in regard to our sinful nature in one particular story, which has come to be known as the Prodigal Son. In some ways the story really is misnamed. It easily could be called the Forgiving Father. Please listen as I read this parable and consider your own journey in life.

Luke 15: 11-32

“And Jesus said, ‘There was a man who had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property that falls to me.’ And the Father divided his living between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took his journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in loose living. And when he had spent everything, a great famine arose in that country and he began to be in want. So he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have fed on the pods that the swine ate; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, but I perish here with

hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired servants.” And he arose and came to his father. But while the son was yet at a distance, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and embraced his son and kissed him. And the son said to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.” But the father said to his servants, “bring quickly the best robe, and put it on my son; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring the fatted calf and kill it. Let us eat and make merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.” And they began to make merry.

“Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what this meant. The servant said to him, “your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has received him safe and sound.” The elder son became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, “Lo, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command; yet you never gave me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your living with harlots, you killed for him the fatted calf!” And the father said to him, “Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to make merry and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost and is found.” This story is a good picture of humanity. It is a good picture of you and me. Each of us is somewhere in this story:

- Some of us may be in the far country feeding on the husks of the world.
- Some may be on our way home.
- Maybe we're like the elder son who stayed home.
- Or some of us may be involved in the banquet at the end of this story that was given by the father for the son who returned home.

Some of the major points we can discern from this story are that:

- We separate ourselves from God.
- We have to make a conscious effort to return to God.

- We may have stayed home and really do not enjoy and appreciate the relationship that we have with God, because we have never been far from Him.

The last thing we discover in this story is that the father's love and mercy was enough to redeem the prodigal son. This tells us about God's love and mercy for us.

Let's think about how this is everybody's story. It is typical of our human condition to be self-centered. The more self-centered we become, the more miserable we become in terms of the way we live our life. The prodigal son, as he goes into the far country, is a perfect example of this. He goes away and he ends up feeding on the husks of the world.

(Spiritual Director: It would be good for you to talk about your own separation from God in your life. Use personal examples if you feel so led)

As we look at the story from the Bible, the prodigal son goes into the world, he gets involved in the world, and finally he ends up losing everything. The inheritance that was given to him is lost in the world. He ends up feeding on the same things that pigs do. A major lesson in this story is the phrase; "he came to himself". While he was in the world feeding on the husks of the world, "he came to himself." He understood his condition.

One of the most important things that all of us can become aware of is our own condition. Self-understanding is tremendously important for us when we seek to change our direction. The first step on the road back to God is not easy. It requires being open and humble enough to understand our own condition and not deceive ourselves. It is also a moment of decision when we decide "I will leave this condition, this place, and go back to my Father."

(Spiritual Director: Personal examples are appropriate as we begin to share ourselves with the guests at the banquet)

The third part of this story is God's mercy. The father was waiting for his son, as the son rehearsed what he would say to his father on the way back. God's forgiveness is complete. The sin is forgotten in the story and the son is restored to his former position in the family. The father, you will notice, would not hear of his son being one of the servants. This is how God loves us. This is God's mercy. He is always there ready for us, waiting for us to return. He was there meeting us on the road home.

(Spiritual Director: you can give a personal example at this point)

The fourth part of this story is about the brother who stayed home. For some of us, that is our story. Some of us have never felt the pain of separation from God and because we have not, we may never have realized the real love relationship that we live in. The eldest son's words to his father were that he "slaved" for him. This son did not recognize or understand the relationship that he lived in. The church today is full of people who live out their duty to God, but do not experience the great joy that a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ can bring. Their relationship to God is one of duty instead of joy. Maybe that's where you are.

(Spiritual Director: you can give a personal example here)

Conclusion: As the young son came back, there was a great banquet that was given to receive that son home. The father loved his son so much that a great party was prepared and a great banquet was given to celebrate the return of the prodigal son. All of us are in this story some place. We are either in the far country, or on the way home. We are the other son or maybe we are at the great banquet feasting on the fatted calf.

The important thing to remember as we go through this day is this: the Father is waiting for us and He wants us to be full members of his family. He also wants to make our return easy if we are in the far country. He comes to meet us on the road. He wants to share in an unending celebration, a great banquet with His children. Our call is to be willing to return. Our call is to be willing to see our own condition and enter into the joy of the banquet prepared for us.

The message of this day is that God's love is waiting for us. God's love is waiting for us to feast together at a great celebration of returning home.

Please join with me in the Lord's Prayer found on page 11 of your worship booklet:

Our Father in heaven, Holy be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today the bread we need. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us in the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

(Spiritual Director: Move to the altar area. Explain the taking of communion by intinction)

Let's join together in the Litany of Consecration.

Leader (Spiritual Director) take the bread:

The Lord Jesus, on the night of his arrest, took bread and after giving thanks to God, broke it, and said: "This is my body which is for you; do this remembering me."

People: We take this bread committed to Christ coming alive in us. Jesus said: "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never be hungry; he who believes in me will never thirst.

Leader (take the empty cup and pitcher):

In the same way, He took the cup after supper, and said: "This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood. Whenever you drink it, do this remembering me." Every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you witness to the death of the Lord until he comes.

People: We take this cup committed to Christ coming alive in us. Jesus said: "I am the vine, you are the branches. Cut off from me you can do nothing."

Leader: Come for all is now ready.

(Serve Music person first) Communion served.

SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR:

Please join me in the Prayer of Thanksgiving on page 12 (**PAUSE**):

Lord God, you are the Giver of Banquets. You open the eyes of the blind. You cause the lame to walk. You cause the dumb to speak, and you heal those who are maimed. We give thanks for your feast that you share with us, because in it you share yourself. You are our strength and shield and we offer ourselves to You. Grant to us as we go from here that by faith and good example we would walk in your light. We pray in the name of Jesus our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Immediately following the close of the service.

LAY DIRECTOR:

Before we go to breakfast, let us pray for the church, the Body of Christ. (PAUSE)

Let us pray for our families. (PAUSE)

We pray for all clergy. (PAUSE)

We pray for our nation, the United States, for our President; and all officials of our government, national, state and local. (PAUSE)

We pray for the problems we all have and for the one among us who has the tremendous problem of not having any at all.

We pray, dear Lord, for the one among us who needs your help the most, and especially for the one who thinks he/she needs it the least – for the most courageous among us, and for the most cowardly. For the most intelligent and for the most humble. We pray for each one of us that we might find here, during these three days, what you want for us – our true, authentic happiness.

We pray for those who have, who are, and who will sacrifice for us during these three days so that your grace and love will be more evident to us.

Help us to see things clearly – in the spirit of high idealism, cooperation and charity.

We offer these prayers in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Friends, the silence is over; follow me to breakfast!

8:00 a.m. Dining room for breakfast

Prayer before and after the meal (Lay Director).

Lay Director obtain table assignments from Community Lay Director.

8:30 a.m. Send guests/team to Conference Room with break

(Note: the first Speaker goes directly from breakfast to change clothes, then reports to Chapel for prayer prior to their talk. An Assistant Lay Director will go to the Chapel to get the Speaker when the group is ready in the Conference Room. Traditionally the Speakers take the hand cross with them to the Conference Room for support during the talk. Following the talk, the cross is returned to the Chapel for the next Speaker (approximately 25 minutes). Lay Director obtains table assignments.

9:00 a.m. Conference Room for table assignments

Lay Director's talk:

We are now ready to begin the work of the Great Banquet proper. Last night's period of spiritual silence is over. Last night may have been tiring, a little slow. Today will be better, tomorrow much better, and Sunday will be best of all. We will soon find ourselves enjoying this event called the Great Banquet.

I'll describe something of the format we'll be following over the next three days, although there will be exceptions. On each of the three days, we will have 5 talks, making a total of 15 talks over the course of these three days. During each of the talks, we ask for continued cooperation in giving of ourselves completely, by our total attention to the ideas the speakers express and by taking notes throughout each talk. Take a lot of notes. They will be very valuable to you, now and in the days to come. There are pens and notebooks for this purpose on your tables. Our self-surrender, by giving our complete attention to the speaker and by taking notes, is an essential element of the Great Banquet.

Following each of the 15 talks, there will be a small group discussion on the ideas presented by the speaker. In a few minutes, we will be assigned to table groups. Each table has been given the name of one of the male / female Christian leaders from the Bible. We will remain a member of the same table community throughout the weekend. At each table, we have selected a Table Leader for the weekend. The leader's job will be to keep the discussion focused on the subject of the talk just presented *and* to help each person at the table have a chance to express their personal opinions. The Table Leaders are members of the team and are available to you as a resource throughout the weekend.

The secretary will sit directly across from the Table Leader. This position of secretary will rotate to the next person after each talk. The secretary's job will be to summarize the ideas discussed at the table. Remember, everybody will be taking notes during the talk itself. But, the secretary for each table will have the additional job of writing down the ideas expressed by persons at that table during the discussion following that talk. Then, the table group will collaborate on the actual drawing and coloring of a poster. Materials have been provided to do the posters. Sometimes, a table may decide to do a skit or a song instead. At the end of each day, we will ask each table to present its summaries and posters, skits or songs to the entire group. So, take care that the

summaries really reflect what was actually discussed and determined at the table, and work to make the poster, skit or song do the same. Our posters, skits or songs may take either a serious or humorous approach. We will ask that for each talk summary and poster, one person presents the table's summary and another person from that table describes the poster or skit. This will enable everyone to participate actively. Each talk summary should be limited to just a **COUPLE OF SENTENCES**.

So, the format will be something like this – a talk; discussion by the women / men at your table; summarizing of the ideas by the secretary with the aid of all the table members; drawing posters or developing skits, with everyone assisting in some way toward their development; and, finally, the presentation of our handiwork to everyone at the end of each day.

Now, if everyone will stand up and form a circle around the sides and back of the room, I will assign each person to a table. In our spirit of charity, remember not to be critical of those selected as leaders and secretaries – probably all of us could do the job.

As I call out your name, please repeat it and go to the table assigned. The leader will be called first and will sit with their back to the speaker podium at the end of the table. The second person called will be the secretary and sit opposite the leader. Then, everyone else at that table will be called.

- ❑ **Call out names by table**
- ❑ **Assistant Lay Director alerts first Speaker, brings from Chapel.**

These are our table groups for each time we meet in this Conference Room. We ask that the leaders and appointed secretaries (and remember, those will change after each talk) always sit opposite each other. The other members of each table should take a different seat each time we come into this room – but always at the same table.

Each table should have notebooks and pens. Poster paper and markers will be distributed at the appropriate time. Please write your name on your notebook. This is your notebook to keep. It will not be picked up at the end of these three days, and no one else will look at it at any time. Again, I urge you to please take many, many notes during each of the talks. They will prove most beneficial to you later on.

Your summaries and posters may be serious or humorous. They may be posters, skits or songs. This is left to your imaginations. The summaries should be indicative of

11:15 a.m. Talk #2 GOD'S GIFT OF GRACE 30 MIN.

- Silent meditation following talk (45 secs)
(Note: make sure someone blows out the candle)
- Discussion of talk (15 minutes)
- Summary (5 minutes)
- Poster (20 minutes)

(Note: restroom breaks should be taken only during poster time. Be mindful of absences. Assistant Lay Directors should monitor)

12:15 p.m. Contact Kitchen to see if lunch is ready (Assistant Lay Director)

12:30 p.m. Dining Room for lunch

- Sing De Colores before lunch
- Sing grace before and after meal
- Introduce kitchen and servers
- Jokes, if time
- Release for break

1:35 p.m. Report to Conference Room

- Appoint new secretary
- Sing – led by Music person
- Introduce next Speaker
- Light candle

1:45 p.m. Talk #3 MINISTRY OF ALL BELIEVERS 30 MIN.

- Silent meditation following talk (45 sec)
(Note: make sure someone blows out the candle)
- Discussion of talk (15 minutes)
- Summary (5 minutes)
- Poster (20 minutes)

MAKE SURE PRAYER CHART IS UPSTAIRS FOR NEXT SPEAKER (Agape)

2:40 p.m. New places at table. Appoint new secretary.

- Sing
- Introduce next Speaker
- Light candle

3:00 p.m. Talk #4 OUR RESPONSE TO GRACE 30-45 MIN.

- Explanation and sharing of agape acts by the Spiritual Director who gave the talk Our Response to Grace.
- Silent meditation following talk (45 secs)
(Note: make sure someone blows out the candle)

- Discussion of talk (15 minutes)
- Summary (5 minutes)
- Poster (20 minutes)

4:30 p.m. Break (until 4:50 pm)

5:00 p.m. Take group to Sanctuary for photo

(Note: Special effort should be made to have all Spiritual Directors, Agape and Kitchen team members present for photo)

5:10 p.m. Photo

(After photo remain in Sanctuary. Go from Sanctuary to dinner. Assistant Lay Director should check with Kitchen when dinner is ready.)

- Sing De Colores on way to dinner

5:30 p.m. Dining Room for dinner

- Sing grace before and after meals
- Intro servers
- Announce table agape

6:15 p.m. Send to Conference Room with a short break

- Assistants present banners and general agape letters
- Sing
- Introduce next Speaker
- Light candle

6:30 p.m. Talk #5 THE WAY OF RELATIONSHIP 30 MIN.

- Silent meditation (45 secs)
- Pray out Speaker somewhere other than Chapel

7:02 p.m. Lay Director's talk after THE WAY OF RELATIONSHIP

Friends, please call to mind your favorite picture of Jesus, and keep your heart centered upon Jesus.

We've reached a point in these three days when we are beginning to have a better appreciation of the love of God – of God's love for us and the love that exists among the members of Christ's Body, the Church. Perhaps we haven't realized before what this love really meant, but we are beginning to understand it now. Perhaps we have never realized before the intensity, abundance and depth of this love among the member of Christ's Body, the Church, but we are beginning to appreciate this also.

Perhaps for the first time, we are becoming aware of what other members of Christ's Body are doing for us – the love they have for us. Many of these people we will never see, never meet, and never know. Yet, their love for us is so great that they are willing to make sacrifices for us so that the grace of God will touch our hearts. Even though many of them are far removed from us geographically, their love for us is strong; it is Christ-like. And perhaps for the first time, we are becoming aware of what real love is – that there is a real meaning to this word love – a meaning that makes sense out of this concern, this longing for our spiritual welfare. This is obviously shown in the letters of prayer and sacrifice on the walls in this conference room, and in the 72-hour prayer vigil taking place around us in the community at this time and in the chapel here.

If there is such real, such strong love evident among Christians, one for another, what must the love of God for us be like? To what degree does God go to make sacrifices for us, to assist us, to guide us, to enlighten us, to love us? Don't the passion and death of Jesus Christ make more sense now?

We are all adults, mature in our bodies. We like to think that we are mature in our minds and emotions also. But, are we mature in our understanding and appreciation of God's love for us? God has invited us to come to his great banquet. Are we beginning to taste His love from the abundant table he has prepared for us? Are we really awed when we think of Jesus Christ's death upon the cross for us? Do we take it for granted as an historical fact we believe in or do we really appreciate it? Does this love of God for us really change our lives, transform us, mold us, guide us and give sense to our lives? Do our lives project our love for God – and for our neighbor? Do we light our world and our neighbor's world?

We have just heard that a relationship with God is to be the top priority of a Christian life. It is a relationship in which we direct every aspect of our lives towards God. It's present every day, and in all the moments of our lives. In order to grow, this relationship needs to be nurtured and cared for daily. Just as a baby is nurtured, we too must nurture and care for this relationship until our entire lives are in tune with God's plan for us.

God desires to have this totally connected relationship with us. He has sought us out, called us by name, and set us apart. As he says in Jeremiah 1:5 “Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you, before you were born I set you apart.”

Let us now go, in silence, to the Chapel and meet this God of love in prayer.

7:10 p.m. To Chapel for Shepherd’s Psalm Prayer Experience (23rd Psalm) – by Spiritual Director. (Lay Director should always be ready to give meditations in Spiritual Director’s absence)

Spiritual Director: Following the Lay Director’s reflection after the Way of Relationship talk, guests and team members go to the Chapel in silence. You will lead the Shepherd’s Psalm Prayer Experience (Psalm 23) as follows.

Spiritual Director: Read the 23rd Psalm through verse 4.

“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.”

Consider this Psalm. Imagine yourself in a pasture. The Lord Jesus walking with you. “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want”, and as you are walking with Jesus, you enter a valley and you lie down on green grass beside a pond and Jesus sits there with you. “He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul.”

Imagine yourself talking to Him like the person in the Psalm. Talk to Jesus of the many things concerning your soul, your life. **(PAUSE)**

Think about your life. What are the things that trouble you? What are your fears and anxieties? What are your hopes and joys? Share with the Good Shepherd, Jesus, as a person like David in this Psalm. Walk with Jesus and go and sit beside still water with Him. Speak to him, heart to heart, concerning the things of your life. Enjoy the presence of the Good Shepherd. Speak to Him concerning the things in your life.

(PAUSE: TIME FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION - 1 TO 2 MINUTES)

“He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name’s sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil for thou are with me, thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.” **(PAUSE)**

Then after a heart-to-heart talk with Jesus, see yourself arise and walk through the valley with Jesus. Visualize Jesus saying to you, “Let’s go into your situation”. See yourself getting up from beside those still waters and beginning to follow a pathway. A pathway that may lead through a valley of the shadow of death. A valley of hidden traps. A valley that is a dead situation in many ways for you. It is a valley that has the feel of death about it, but you know who you are with and you know that this Shepherd, this Good Shepherd, Jesus, carries the right equipment to keep you safe.

See Jesus walking with you and He carries a rod and a staff and they are for your protection. He will keep you safe.

Imagine – See Jesus walking into your situation, your life. What would He do and what would He say to you? How would Jesus react to the valley of shadowy things in you? What scriptures might He offer to you to speak to your fear or your hope?

(PAUSE)

Allow Jesus to become part of you. Receive Jesus in your life in a new way in your mind and heart. See how He would begin to respond to your fears and worries, your hopes and joys, even as you walk through the valley.

(PAUSE)

The Lord Jesus has invited you to a great banquet. The second half of the 23rd Psalm changes the entire picture from one of walking through the valley with a shepherd, to a meal. Hear these words:

“Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies. Thou anointest my head with oil, my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”

See yourself at a great banquet table and you are sitting next to Jesus and around you are the many enemies that we all have. The fears that we face each day, those worries and anxieties that are enemies to our peace. Those situations and circumstances in our lives that threaten us; that threaten our jobs, that threaten our health, that threaten

our relationships with loved ones. The Lord Jesus has prepared this table, this banquet, for you in the presence of your enemies. Speak to Him of those concerns. **(PAUSE)**

See Christ getting up from beside you after you have enjoyed some of the meal and talked about many things. He comes over with a small bottle of olive oil and He pours that oil on your head and he kneels beside you and prays for you and for the many things that are your enemies in this life. Let His presence in your life strengthen you. Receive Him.

Now visualize Jesus walking with you away from the table into your life. He is going to be actively involved in your situation. Catch up with Him and become His voice, His hands, His feet. Begin to act out His response to your life; His response to your fears, your hopes, your problems, your possibilities, your worries, your joys. "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

Spiritual Director: This time of prayer and meditation needs to be ended with a prayer by the Spiritual Director asking for that which is needed for each person to be strengthened in this life. Immediately following a closing prayer, the guests need to go to the Conference Room to discuss the talk on the Way of Relationship.

7:30 p.m. Return to Conference Room

- Discussion (15 minutes)
- Summary (5 minutes)
- Posters (20 minutes)

8:15 p.m. Break

8:30 p.m. Posters and Summaries Presentation

(Note: Each table should present a one-minute summary of each talk and a poster to the entire group. Each table presents all five summaries and posters before going on to the next table)

10:00 p.m. To Chapel

- Prayers led by Lay Director
- Spiritual Director's comments
- Musician's solo
- Guests invited to stay in Chapel for a while to reflect on the day's talks
- Spiritual Directors should be available should guests wish to talk

LAY DIRECTOR:

We are going to take time for self-reflection. Please turn to page 4 in your Worship booklet.

Lord, you examine me and know me,
You know if I am standing or sitting,
You read my thoughts from far away,
Whether I walk or lie down, you are watching, you know every detail of my conduct.
The word is not even on my tongue, Lord, before you know all about it;
Close behind and close in front you fence me round, shielding me with your hand.
Such knowledge is beyond my understanding, a height to which my mind cannot attain.
Where could I go to escape your spirit?
Where could I flee from your presence?
If I climb the heavens, you are there,
There to if I lie in Sheol.
If I flew to the point of sunrise, or westward across the sea, your hand would still be
guiding me, your right hand holding me.
If I asked darkness to cover me, and light to become night around me,
That darkness would not be dark to you,
Night would be as light as day.
It was you who created my inmost self, and put me together in my mother's womb; for all
these mysteries I thank you; for the wonder of myself, for the wonder of your works.
You know me through and through, from having watched my bones take shape when I
was being formed in secret, knitted together in the limbo of the womb.
You had scrutinized my every action, all were recorded in your book, and my days listed
and determined, even before the first of them occurred.
God, how hard it is to grasp your thoughts!
How impossible to count them!
I could no more count them than I could the sand,
and suppose I could, you would still be with me.
God, examine me and know my heart,

probe me and know my thoughts;
make sure I do not follow pernicious ways
and guide me in the way that is everlasting. (From Psalm 139 – Jerusalem)

Let's now read the Reflection together, knowing these words are God speaking to us:

Reflection:

My child, think about who you are. What are your priorities, your hopes and dreams? Who do you want to become? Remember it is I who created you. I have loved you even before you began to take form in your mother's womb. Speak to me about your hopes and your fears. I love you and I want you to put your trust in me.

Please close your books and listen closely. Each night we take time for self-reflection. The form is not important, but each of us should have an opportunity to reflect on our attitude toward what Christ is asking us to be and to do. If you like, you may stay in the Chapel to reflect in your own way. If you would like to speak to one of the Spiritual Directors, please step to the rear of the Chapel and seek one out or ask someone to direct you to one of them. Before we go to bed, our Spiritual Director has a few comments.

Note to Spiritual Director: This talk is in the middle of the chapel time at the end of the first day. It is a review of the first day's experience. It can be as specific as you want to make it, including comments from each of the talks given during the day.

SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR:

Friends, you have completed the first day of a three-day banquet. This morning you were asked and challenged to discover your current priorities for life, to look at the possibility that God may have different priorities for you and to discover them as well.

(PAUSE)

We also heard that God's gift of grace is His love, that He wants a relationship with us because He loves us. This relationship is what we call grace. A relationship based upon love. God's gift to us is His grace and His grace is in the person of Jesus. We were

challenged to look at the possibility of being a bridge between God and the world. Part of the church that is to stand in the gap between the world and God. **(PAUSE)**

We were given revelation that God's gift of grace is something that we respond to. Our response is one of our faith and trust in who Jesus is, and that God does love us and wants a relationship with us.

We were also challenged to live a life that is intentional, a life that is lived in God's will. **(PAUSE)**

There is no set formula for a response. If you have given yourself to this experience, this banquet, 100%, then your response is correct. It is authentic. We have all received the same in terms of the message, but the outcome is always individual. We receive it in our own uniqueness and we respond in our uniqueness. If you've been honest with yourself and your table then you have made the right response.

Spiritual Director: Here you can add any specific comments you feel would help the participants reflect on that day's activities. This should be a short reflective time, not a sermon. It is not to give an invitation, as that will be the focus on Saturday as we look at Jesus. Spend no more than 10 minutes for your entire comments and close in prayer.

Solo by Music person

Lay Director remarks:

We are now going to bed. It is late, and we all need our rest. Please do not waste time on the way to the rooms or in the rooms, so that we do not bother others. The day has been long. When we hear the music that will awaken us in the morning, we will have 40-minutes in which to get to the Chapel. Those who wish some quiet time may stay here in the Chapel. Those who wish to talk with a Spiritual Director may seek them out here in the Chapel. The Spiritual Directors are here for our convenience.

Good night and God bless you.

10:30 p.m. Team meeting

(This should follow as soon as possible after chapel)

SATURDAY

6:00 a.m.	Assistant Lay Directors get up
6:15 a.m.	Wake-up signal
6:50 a.m.	Check for stragglers. Count to make sure all are present
7:00 a.m.	Chapel for morning prayers by Lay Director

LAY DIRECTOR:

Good morning. Please turn to page 18 in your worship booklet and join together singing “In His Time”.

CALL TO WORSHIP “In His Time”

Now please turn to page 7 in your worship booklet and let’s read together
THOUGHTS ABOUT TIME (Unison)

We talk about spending time, wasting time, killing time, and losing time. We keep time, do time, take up time and make up time. We have time to get, time to eat and daylight savings time. We have timesaving gadgets and we encounter time-consuming bores. We have quiet time, no time, good times, hard times and lean times.

We have prayer time, family time and quality time. We talk about hopes and fear of future times and we reminisce about good times of the past.

But all we really have is the present time. What am I doing in the mean time while I am waiting for the events of the future to come to pass?

SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 5:15-17 (LAY DIRECTOR READS)

“Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is.”

MEDITATION #2 “PICTURES OF JESUS” SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

(Lay Director should always be prepared to do meditations if Spiritual Director is absent.)

Spiritual Director: This is the beginning of the second day and it focuses on the message of the day. Jesus is the message of the second day. This meditation invites the guests to a relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

Through pictures of people and their responses to Jesus, the guests are able to reflect upon their own response to Jesus. The guests may even be able to see one of these responses as their own. There are many ways to respond to Jesus and these are simply a background picture for us to compare and review our own response to Jesus.

The responses are:

- 1. Peter*
- 2. The woman who anointed Jesus' feet*
- 3. Judas*
- 4. Woman with hemorrhage*
- 5. Blind Bartimaeus*

SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR NARRATIVE:

As we begin this second day, we are going to look at who Jesus is and His invitation to a relationship. We are going to look at five pictures in which Jesus encounters people. Through these pictures, we are going to look at their response and reflect upon our own response to who Jesus is and the relationship He wants to give to us.

The first picture is Peter. Mark chapter 14: verses 27-31 read:

“And Jesus said to them, ‘you will all fall away; for it is written, “I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.” But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.’ Peter said to him, ‘Even though they all fall away, I will not.’ And Jesus said to him ‘Truly I say to you, this very night, before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.’ But Peter said vehemently, ‘If I must die with you, I will not deny you.’ And they all said the same.”

Peter accepted Jesus with burning enthusiasm at first. Peter makes many promises of faithfulness even unto death. Unlike Judas there is none of the underground turning away from Jesus. Peter's problem is too much self-confidence. When Peter says to Jesus that he will not fall away no matter what, he is standing on his own self-confidence and strength, and it is his own strength that is his greatest weakness and brings him to sin. Jesus looks at Peter and with sorrow he says, “Before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times”. And Peter did deny Jesus three times.

I wonder how many things were in Peter's heart from the words that Jesus spoke when he realized that he had done just as Jesus said. The saving part of Peter was the fact that he would humble himself and ask for forgiveness. Peter understood that Jesus

loved him, and that He would forgive him and heal him of his own self-confident weakness. An important aspect of your life and my life as we respond to Jesus is to know how to ask for forgiveness and know that we have received it. And tied in with that aspect is the quality of not relying on our own strength, but standing on the strength that the Lord Jesus gives to us in all situations.

Is this your response to Jesus? **(PAUSE)**

The second picture is the woman with the ointment. Luke chapter 7: verses 36-48:

“One of the Pharisees asked Him (Jesus) to eat with him, and He went into the Pharisee’s house, and took his place at the table. And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was at the table in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw it, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner.” And Jesus answering said to him, ‘Simon, I have something to say to you.’ And he answered, ‘What is it, Teacher?’ ‘A certain creditor had two debtors: one owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they could not pay, he forgave them both. Now which of them will love him more?’ Simon answered, ‘The one, I suppose, to who he forgave more.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘You have judged rightly.’ Then turning toward the woman Jesus said to Simon, ‘Do you see this woman? I entered your house, you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. Therefore, I tell you, her sins, which are many are forgiven, for she loved much; but he who is forgiven little, loves little.’ And he said to her, ‘Your sins are forgiven.’”

In this scripture, we see that a woman of the city, probably an adulterous woman, hears that Jesus is going to be in the Pharisee’s house – a religious person’s house. And she comes to Jesus and she wipes oil and tears from his feet with her hair.

She knows that she is a sinner. She knows that Jesus is sent from God. When she hears that Jesus is in town, she goes to a place where a meal is taking place and He is present. Sitting at His feet, she anoints Him with oil and tears. She gives of herself and responds to the grace that she is given. Jesus looks at her, in her sinfulness and yet also he gives her honor and respect and forgives her sin.

Is this your story? Have you come to this banquet because you heard Jesus was here? Have you come to praise Him? To pay Him great respect? Have you come to be in His presence as this woman did? Have you come to receive His forgiveness? Is this your response?

(PAUSE)

The third picture is Judas. It's John chapter 12: verses 4-6:

“But Judas Iscariot, one of his Disciples (he who was to betray him), said, “Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?”

This, he said, not that he cared for the poor but because he was a thief, and, as he had the money box, he used to take what was put into it.”

When someone turns away from God for some time, within themselves, they already know they have betrayed Christ. He had followed Jesus for three years, but he had come to a point where he avoided the look from Jesus. He was a proud man and probably had his own way of making the world right.

We see in Judas a picture of many of us at times, in varying degrees. Decision by decision over three years, a small thing here and a small thing there, little by little, Judas began to let his own understanding of the world dictate his relationship with Jesus. During this time, Judas became disenchanted with the Son of God. He let his enthusiasm die to be replaced by disrespect and dishonesty.

Is this your story? Did you come to know Jesus and receive him enthusiastically, but slowly, over a period of time, have allowed your own 'self' to become the ruler of your soul? Has your response to Jesus been one in which you have slowly allowed your understanding, your pride, your ego, yourself, your way, and your will to become the ruling point of your life instead of Jesus?

(PAUSE)

The fourth picture is the woman with the hemorrhage. It's Matthew chapter 9:verses18-22.

“While Jesus was thus speaking to them, behold, a ruler came in and knelt before him, saying, ‘My daughter has just died; but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live.’ And Jesus rose and followed him, with his disciples. And behold, a woman who had suffered from a hemorrhage for twelve years came up behind Jesus and touched the fringe of his garment; for she said to herself, ‘If I only touch his garment, I shall be made well.’ Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, ‘Take heart, daughter, your faith has made you well.’ And instantly the woman was made well.”

A woman in a crowd says to herself, “if I can get close to Jesus, maybe just touch His robe, I will be made well.” This woman comes up to Jesus in the midst of the crowd and touches his robe, and is healed. She wasn’t interested in being noticed. She wasn’t interested in taking any of Jesus’ time. She just wanted to be healed. For twelve years she had this sickness.

Often we want to be noticed or be center stage when it comes to our faith, and God’s work in our lives. We say things like, it is I who has been healed.” “It was I who showed great strength and faith.” “It is I who has received a miracle.” Many times there is a great deal of “I” in this type of faith. This woman just wanted to be made well.

Is this your response to Jesus? Is this how you approach Jesus, like the woman who just needed to be healed.

(PAUSE)

The fifth picture is the blind man in Luke chapter 18: verses 35-43:

“As he drew near to Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging; and hearing a multitude going by, he inquired what this meant. They told him, ‘Jesus of Nazareth is passing by.’ And he cried, ‘Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!’ And those who were in front rebuked him, telling him to be silent; but he cried out all the more, ‘Son of David’ have mercy on me!’ And Jesus stopped, and commanded him to be brought to him; and when he came near, he asked him, ‘What do you want me to do for you?’ He said, ‘Lord, let me receive my sight.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘Receive your sight; your faith has made you well.’”

And immediately he received his sight and followed him, glorifying God; and all the people, when they saw it, they gave praise to God.

This is the story of the healing of a blind man. This man couldn't see, and the truth is, that is exactly where every single one of us lives in some part of our personal experience. We live in a place of blindness where we just can't see certain things happening.

We can't see how we can change, how we can save our marriage, how we can get through a job situation crisis, how we can have more faith. We are people that can't see.

A blind man encounters Jesus as Jesus was passing by. There is a paradox here because the blind man sits on the road to Jericho and he is begging, and he is blind. Jericho was a place of victory for the Jewish people, but he is blind and begging. And how frequently that is the case with some of us. We know who Jesus is, we have received the victory of His Presence in our life, but we are still blind and begging in certain areas of our life. We are like this blind man, some of us.

This man's response to the fact that Jesus was passing by was to say, "Jesus, Son of David have mercy on me." He couldn't see, but he could hear. He heard that Jesus was passing by that day, and so he cried out to Jesus to have mercy on him. Jesus asked him, "What can I do for you?" And he said, "Let me receive my sight." And Jesus healed the blind man.

Is this your response? Is there some area in your life where you are blind? You just can't see your way clear? Today, Jesus of Nazareth is passing by. Will you make the response of the blind man?

Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me.

(PAUSE)

LAY DIRECTOR *(Following the meditation.)*

Please join me in the responsive prayers for the Body of Christ found on page 8 of your worship booklet **(PAUSE)**

Leader: To every time there is a purpose and a reason for our being under heaven.
What time is it?

People: A time to love. A time to forgive one another. A time to mourn. A time to celebrate. Thanks be to God! All times are in his hands!

Leader: This is the acceptable time of the Lord. Go and live as people of God, in the name of Jesus and by the power of His Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Please close your books. Before we go to breakfast, let us spend a few minutes in silent prayer for our church, (**Pause**); our family (**Pause**); our nation (**Pause**); and our community. (**Pause**)

We also pray for the problems each one of us has, and for the one who has the tremendous problem of not having any at all.

We pray for the one who needs these three days the most, Lord, and for the one who thinks he / she needs it the least. (**Pause**)

We pray for each one of us, that we all find here during these three days what you want of us – your grace – our true, authentic happiness.

We pray for those who are sacrificing through acts of love so your grace will be made known to us.

We ask for your sense of idealism and charity, so we can share in the spirit of cooperation. Help us give not only our minds, but also our hearts to this weekend.

Accept this our prayer as together we pray the prayer Jesus taught His disciples, saying,

“Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed by thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

We will now go to breakfast. Please follow me. We will sing “De Colores” on the way.

7:30 a.m. Dining room for breakfast

- Sing grace before and after meals
- Intro kitchen & servers
- Announce pillow & table agape

8:00 a.m. Break

8:10 a.m. Conference Room:

- Appoint new secretary
- Present banners and general agape letters
- Sing

- Introduce next Speaker
- Light candle

8:15 a.m. TALK #6 TRUTH THROUGH STUDY 30 MIN.

8:45 A.M. Silent Meditation - BLOW OUT THE CANDLE

*AFTER SILENT MEDITATION LAY DIRECTOR INTRODUCES BOOK TABLE.
(Note, an extra hand cross should be placed at the podium to show guests)*

LAY DIRECTOR's talk about THE TRUTH THROUGH STUDY

You have probably noticed that each speaker who presents a talk to us has a hand cross with them, either in their hand or on the podium in front of them. Before they come into the Conference Room, the Speakers go to the Chapel, and there with several other Christians, pray to God that they may be a true instrument of the Holy Spirit in bringing Christ's love to us. Before leaving the Chapel to come to this room, they pick up the hand cross from the altar, left there by the previous Speaker, and carry it throughout their talk. Upon completion of their talk, they return to the Chapel to thank God for using them as an instrument. Then they place the hand cross back on the altar where it remains for the next Speaker.

Also, while each Speaker is here with us, several and sometimes many people may remain in the Chapel or outside this Conference Room in prayer, asking God to make the Speaker a worthy and effective channel of the Holy Spirit; that we may see, feel and understand more clearly the love of God in our lives. These people remain in prayer until the Speaker returns from presenting their talk. This is true of each Speaker...they know that while they are here with us, there is always someone praying for them, that we might be moved by the Holy Spirit working through them.

So we have Speakers offering themselves for us. We have others on their knees praying for us. We have the unknown numbers offering prayers and sacrifices in their homes and at their jobs for us; now, how about us? From now until Sunday night, it is important that we begin talking with God, truly talking with God, of our real feelings, our doubts and fears, our hopes and disappointments, our longings and frustrations. We should begin making visits to the Chapel individually, when we have the time and opportunity.

It might sound trite, but it is true nevertheless...Christ is waiting for you. Go to Christ. Speak to Him in your own words. Speak out loud, naturally, courageously. Be yourself, not someone else. Use the hand cross if you want. Jesus is your friend. Christ is your God. Talk to Him as you would talk to your own father, brother, sister, or friend.

(Insert Name of Speaker #6) during his / her talk on Truth through Study mentioned several books that would be helpful for us in understanding, with our human minds, the truth of God's message. There is a book table located just outside this Conference Room. Feel free to pick out one or more books and do some reading when you have time. You are free to keep whatever you pick out. There is no charge. They are gifts for you. Perhaps you will find one or two that will become meaningful to you, even at a brief glance.

We will now have our discussion, summary and posters on Truth through Study. You may begin your discussion.

- Discussion (15 minutes)
- Summary (5 minutes)
- Posters (20 minutes)

9:45 a.m. Conference Room:

- Practice songs, if applicable, for Dying Moments service
- Assistants present banners & general agape letters
- Sing
- Introduce next Speaker & light candle

10:00 a.m. TALK #7 SACRAMENTAL GRACE 90 MINUTES

(Because of the length of this talk and because you will want to go to the Chapel immediately following the talk, take a break half-way through the talk)

11:45 a.m. To Chapel, in silence, for Dying Moments

Have other Spiritual Directors sit in front row to model communion

HEAD SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR: SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

Please turn to page 8 in your worship booklet and we will begin our service of Holy Communion (**PAUSE**)

Leader (Head Spiritual Director):

Come and worship; for all is now ready. The time to celebrate is here.

People:

Let us celebrate then, not as though no change has taken place in our life, but with rejoicing for being saved to a new life!

Leader:

Let's pray together the prayer to the Holy Spirit: **(UNISON)**

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created and you shall renew the face of the earth. O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and every enjoy His consolations. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION:

Leader:

If we claim to be sinless, we are self-deceived and strangers to the truth. If we confess our sins, God is just, and may be trusted to forgive our sins and cleanse us from every kind of wrong. Let us admit our sin before God, and ask for his forgiveness.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (UNISON)

God of heaven and earth, God of flesh and spirit, the world is too much with us; late and soon, getting and spending, we lay waste our powers. What we excuse as merely human, You have condemned as sinful. We squirm at the description of our faults by prophets and apostles. We have not prepared to abandon our old ways. We prefer to hear what we already know than to think out something we have not heard before. Forgive our lack of vision and love, for we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON:

Leader: Hear the Good News! God has shown us how much he loves us. It was while we were yet sinners that Christ died for us.

People: We are now the people of God, who once were not; once outside God's mercy, now we have received mercy.

Leader: Friends, believe the good news!

People: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Amen.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER:

Leader: The Lord Jesus, on the night of His arrest, took bread and after giving thanks to God, broke it, and said: "This is my body which is for you; do this remember me."

People: We take this bread committed to Christ coming alive in us. Jesus said: "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never be hungry; He who believes in me will never thirst."

DYING MOMENTS COMMUNION

HEAD SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR: The purpose of this Communion service is to allow people to be freed from dying moments in their lives. The guests as they come to this banquet table are given the opportunity to share with Jesus their dying moments during the liturgy of the Communion Service. In the middle of the Communion service, after the people respond with "We take this bread committed to Christ coming alive in us. Jesus said, 'I am the bread of life . . .'" The Head Spiritual Director has the following narrative:

HEAD SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR's NARRATIVE:

Last night during our prayer experience as we visualized ourselves walking with Jesus as we read the 23rd Psalm, we came to the part where we visualized Jesus praying for us as He prepared a table for each of us in the "Presence of our enemies". Today we come to a table which is prepared for us by Jesus in the Presence of our enemies – our dying moments – those places in our lives which literally threaten us with death.

Last night this table was in our minds and imaginations. Today it is for real. This table is set before us and prepared for us and the Lord Jesus invites us to come and sit at this table which he has prepared for us, "In the presence of our enemies" – our dying moments.

I want to invite you now to come and share in the breaking of the bread. We are going to come row by row up to the communion table. We have two stations where you can come up and actually tear off a piece of bread, and as you do so, you can name aloud your dying moment. You can do it by symbolically saying “fear or anxiety, loss or whatever”; or you can be specific as “the argument I had with my spouse, my mother, my father, my children”. After you break the bread off and you name aloud your dying moment, place it in the other plate that is right next to it. After everyone has done this, then we will come a second time at the end of the liturgy and we will take a piece of bread and dip it into the cup. When you do this and you receive the element, realize that you are taking the dying moment of another man / woman, and you are symbolically taking the thing that is killing him/her. In this you are not taking on that burden, as only Jesus can save us, but rather you are fulfilling the law of Christ by helping to bear another’s burden. Along with that we pray that God’s Holy Spirit will come and be with us and by the power of His Holy Spirit, the resurrected Jesus comes and sits with us and he takes our dying moments and brings us new life.

Note: Head Spiritual Director: You should go first in naming your dying moment aloud and you should be loud enough and clear enough so that people understand the process. The Head Spiritual Director, as the leader in worship, also sets the tone for the worship service. The Head Spiritual Director should also give clear instruction and directions; otherwise, the guests do not know what to do and how to do it. It helps to have 4 team members sit up front to go first. Clear directions give the Spirit freedom in doing His work better. The Musician should provide quiet, meditative instrumental music during this portion of the service (live or CD).

Leader: In the same way, He took the cup after supper, and said: “This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood. Whenever you drink it, do this remembering me.” Every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you witness to the death of the Lord until He comes.

People: We take this cup committed to Christ coming alive in us. Jesus said: “I am the vine, you are the branches. Cut off from me you can do nothing.”

HEAD SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR's NARRATIVE:

This is the Body of Christ (*hold up the bread*) represented in the needs of this Community of faith. As we prayed and asked the Holy Spirit to come, the Holy Spirit takes these dying moments and changes them into the resurrection life of Jesus Christ. Draw near in faith and receive this holy meal, this banquet set before us.

THE SACRAMENT SERVED AND RECEIVED

(Musician plays instrumental songs or leads quiet reflective singing if practiced earlier in Conference Room)

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (page 12) (UNISON)

Lord God, You are the giver of banquets. You open the eyes of the blind. You cause the lame to walk. You cause the dumb to speak, and You heal those who are maimed. We give thanks for your feast that You share with us, because in it You share yourself. You are our strength and shield and we offer ourselves to You. Grant to us as we go from here that by grace and good example we would walk in your light. We pray in the name of Jesus our Savior and Lord. Amen.

(Head Spiritual Director can give some appropriate closing remarks about the laying down and leaving behind of those dying moments.)

12:30 p.m. Dining room for lunch (DO NOT sing De Colores)

- Head Spiritual Director may be prayed out at this time
- Sing grace before and after meal
- Announce table agape
- Intro kitchen & servers
- Long break; may rest or exercise; stay on grounds
- Assistant Lay Directors will call everyone back to Conference Room

2:00 p.m. Conference Room

Head Spiritual Director Note: *Following a period of questions on the Sacramental Grace talk, introduce prayer room visits by tables. The intent of these prayer room visits is to provide the table communities that have been developing over the past day and half, an opportunity to share in meaningful prayer experiences. Some participants will have never prayed aloud in a group. This*

experience should be meaningful for persons at a variety of levels in spiritual growth. The tone should always be one of sensitivity and inclusiveness.

HEAD SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR NARRATIVE:

In the talk on Sacramental Grace, prayer was brought up as a means of God's grace coming to us. Prayer is the way that God communicates with us and we communicate with Him. The Lay Director this morning encouraged you to take some private time for prayer. Prayer is not only private, it is also corporate. For a day and a half, you have been developing small Christian communities at your tables, and we want you to have the opportunity to pray together as tables. When your table feels that it is ready to share in prayer, let one of the Assistants know and the Assistants will take you to where we have set up places for prayer. The Assistants will be coordinating this. There is no pressure to do this at any particular time, but as the talks take place the rest of this afternoon, please contact the Assistants and they will take you out as tables to the places of prayer.

When you get there, you can sit or stand or kneel or any way you want to work it out as a table. Let's also remember that some of us may never have prayed aloud or in a group before. We need to be gentle and encouraging to one another. We have provided a small cross so that you can pass it around the group. The leader can take it and pray first and then pass it around. As it comes to you, if you do not feel like praying aloud, then just pray silently and pass on the cross. We don't want to rush this, but we also have a schedule that we have to keep. Try to keep it to about 15-minutes so it does not interrupt the flow of the weekend.

Remember when your table commonly agrees, alert one of the Assistants and he / she will take you to a place of prayer as soon as available. Let us now begin our discussion on the talk, Sacramental Grace.

- Discussion of Sacramental Grace Talk
- Summary
- Posters
- Take first, second and third tables for prayer room visits.

(Prayer room visits by tables begin for self-reflection, prayer, and sharing with brothers / sisters in Christ. Table Leaders are to feel the pulse of the table and decide when the table is ready for a prayer room visit. Assistant Lay Directors take tables to a prayer room

when convenient in the schedule. NO table should be out during any of the talks. 15 to 20 minutes during discussion seems adequate)

- 2:55 p.m. Appoint new secretary**
- Announce banners & agape letters
 - Sing
 - Introduce next Speaker
 - Light candle

3:00 P.M. TALK #8 LIFE OF CHRISTIAN ACTION 30 MINUTES

- Silent meditation (blow out candle)
- Discussion
- Summary
- Posters
- Take fourth, fifth, sixth tables for prayer room visits

- 4:15 p.m. Appoint new secretary**
- Sing
 - Announce banners & agape letters
 - Introduce next Speaker
 - Light candle

4:30 p.m. TALK #9 OBSTACLES TO GOD'S GRACE 30 MINUTES

- Silent meditation (blow out candle)
- Discussion
- Summary
- Posters
- Take any other tables for prayer room visits

- 6:00 p.m. Go to dining room for dinner**
- Sing De Colores on the way
 - Sing grace before and after meal
 - Introduce servers & kitchen

6:50 p.m. Attend Entertainment in Sanctuary (45 min)

7:35 p.m. Break on way to Conference Room

- 7:45 p.m. Appoint new secretary**
- Present agape letters & banners
 - Sing theme song
 - Introduce next Speaker
 - Light candle

8:00 p.m. TALK # 10 DISCIPLES 30 MINUTES

- Silent meditation (blow out candle)
- Discussion
- Summary
- Posters

Note to Head Spiritual Director: Hide your manual in Sanctuary for readings after Candlelight so you don't have to carry it in. Put it on lighted podium in back of Sanctuary if it's been set up already. If not, ask Agape to do that. Also, be aware you may be called on to conduct the Community communion/worship service at 8:30 pm, so you may want to prepare a message in advance, just in case.

9:10 p.m. Poster and summary presentations by tables.
Be flexible. May need to have tables pick best 2 of 5

9:40 p.m. Break (Note: stay in Conference Room)

9:55 p.m. Prepare for Candlelight
Count to make sure all are present

10:00 p.m. Go to Candlelight

HEAD SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR: SATURDAY NIGHT AFTER CANDLELIGHT

Note: Head Spiritual Director: All the talks on the second day focus on Jesus as Savior and Lord and the Son of the Living God. The Candlelight worship service is a time in which the guests experience the light of the world through His people. It is a time in the banquet when the guests are given a specific opportunity to spend time with Jesus. It is important that the Spiritual Directors not narrow the focus of this time by just talking about commitment to Jesus. This may be a time of healing, removing obstacles, a time of commitment, recommitment, etc. A time of spending a few minutes in the presence of Jesus. This time is the guests' time at the table with Jesus. The Spiritual Directors should not presume to know what Jesus would say to any guests, and therefore should give direction that is very broad in scope.

HEAD SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR'S NARRATIVE:

Friends, the banquet community has gathered here to share in your banquet and to show you the light of the world. They have come here to sit at the table with the Lord Jesus and feast with Him at his supper on your behalf. Each of you have been prayed for by name

by this community. They have done this to lift you up to the throne of grace so that you can realize more fully, in your life, God's love for you in Jesus Christ. They are the light of the world, and this is your Candlelight banquet. Let us now sing the song to them which they have sung to us as a sign of our love for them, and for one another, and especially for Jesus Christ.

Note: Head Spiritual Director: After the community has left, invite the guests and team to find a seat somewhere in the Sanctuary. The Head Spiritual Director should then lead the guests in an examination of their life. This is done from the podium at the front of the darkened Sanctuary.

HEAD SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR'S NARRATIVE:

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, he thought of you. He loves you. He created you. He wants you to be fulfilled as a person. His Son, Jesus, calls to you and says, "follow me" even as He did to the early disciples. The Lord God has brought you to this point in your life to speak to you. He personally brought you here to this banquet and set this table before you in order to share His love with you. The acts of love that you have seen during this banquet have been for the purpose of sharing in a great feast and time with the Lord Jesus Christ, and to move us all closer to Jesus.

This is your time. God brought you here. I don't know what this time means for you. For some, it may be a healing (physical, emotional or spiritual). For some, an obstacle that has been blocking your effectiveness as a disciple needs to be removed. For some, it is a time of joy, being in the Christian community for such an overpowering experience. For some, it may be dealing with forgiveness or bitterness. For someone here, it could be a recommitment or re-dedication of your life to Jesus Christ. For someone here, it may be the first time you have ever met Jesus; this may be a time when you receive Him as Savior and begin to make Him Lord of your life. This is your time. God has brought you here.

You may want to pray privately where you are in your seat or you may want to come forward and pray in the front of the Sanctuary at the altar. You may want to come alone or you may want to come with a friend. The Spiritual Directors are here for you, to help you if you need it. They are seated in the Sanctuary at various places. If you want

one of the Spiritual Directors to pray with you, come to one of us and we will be happy to pray with you and for you.

This time is your time with God. God has brought you to this point in your life.

NOTE: Instrumental music should be played softly during this time of quiet spiritual counseling and prayer. Urge retirement at a reasonable time.

SUNDAY

5:45 a.m. Assistant Lay Directors get up
6:15 a.m. Wake-up music
6:50 a.m. Check for stragglers. Count to make sure everyone is present
7:00 a.m. Morning prayers in Chapel

LAY DIRECTOR:

Good morning, children of God. Let us read together Matthew 5:1-14 found on page 13 in your worship booklet (**PAUSE**):

Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down his disciples came to him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so men persecuted the prophets who were before you.

“You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trodden under foot by men.

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid.”

We will now have a meditation by our Spiritual Director entitled “The Humanity of Jesus.”

Note to Spiritual Director: As you give this meditation, be sure that you are sensitive to the needs of the guests as well as their capabilities. Be sensitive to the examples that have taken place on the weekends and in previous talks. The message of this third day is to know the world in which we live so that we can be effective disciples in ministry. This meditation begins the third day of the Great Banquet. It looks briefly at the fullness of Jesus' divinity and His humanity. Because He is human, we can relate to Him. He understands who we are. He shares in our struggle. Because He is divine in nature as well as human, He saves. He saves us from our sin. As we look at this meditation, we want to look at the humanity of Jesus as a picture of how our humanity comes into play in our day-to-day walk in the world. All talks on the third day of the Great Banquet deal with how we know the world, in which we live and impact that world with God's grace. This meditation is the background for showing us how we impact the world with our humanity.

MEDITATION #3 - THE HUMANITY OF JESUS SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

Jesus is different from every other person who ever lived because of the resurrection. Because Jesus rose from the dead, we know that He is who He said He was.

Jesus claimed to be God and that's why the Pharisees and the Sadducees put Him to death. He said in John chapter 8, "I tell you most solemn before Abraham ever was, I Am." By saying this, the Pharisees knew exactly what He was saying. He was saying He was God.

By his miracles, His teachings, and especially by the resurrection, He gives evidence that He is God. He is what He claimed to be, or He is the greatest imposter that ever lived. But we have the resurrection as a sure sign of the truth that Jesus is God.

He was also a man. He shares our humanity. He is God with us. He is the word of God made flesh who dwelt among us. He was like us in all things except sin. And because of this, there were human qualities that He showed to the people that He touched. We also have human qualities. By showing you some of Jesus' human qualities, you can use these as a backdrop for how God would use your human qualities.

Jesus experienced compassion.

Luke chapter 7: verses 11-17 say this: "Soon afterward He went to a city called Nain, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him. As He drew near to the gate of the city, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a large crowd from the city was with her.

And when the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, 'Do not weep.' And He came and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And He said, 'Young man, I say to you, arise.' And the dead man sat up and began to speak. And He gave him to his mother. Fear seized them all; and they glorified God saying, "A great prophet has arisen among his people; and 'God has visited his people!'

Jesus experienced compassion as He was walking and saw this woman whose son had died. He took in the whole situation and as He watched, He knew that there was nothing but death present in this woman. And He said to her, "Do not weep." He evaluated the situation and He provided just what was needed. His compassion was filled with love and out of that love, His touch brought that which was dead back to life. The touch of love with a compassionate heart was what brought life into a death situation.

When has God called you to show compassion? (PAUSE)

Jesus exercised wisdom and understanding.

John chapter 8: verses 3-11 say this, "The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst they said to Him, 'Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. Now in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such. What do you say about her?' This, they said to test Him, that they might have some charge to bring against Him. Jesus bent down and wrote with His finger on the ground.

And as they continued to ask Him, He stood up and said to them, 'Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.' And once more He bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. But when they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the eldest, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. Jesus looked up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?' She said, No one, Lord.' And Jesus said, 'Neither do I condemn you; go, and do not sin again.'"

When the adulterous woman was brought before Jesus, He could easily have rendered an opinion as to what to do with the woman and more than likely it would have shown human wisdom and understanding. But, Jesus also looked deeper into the situation and realized that what was being done was being done to trick Him and was bringing shame and possibly death to a woman.

So Jesus wanted those who had brought the adulterous woman to Him to see and experience with the eyes of God. He said, "You who are without sin, cast the first stone." The people who brought this woman to trap Jesus in a paradox and a dilemma were confronted with their own actions. Jesus exercised wisdom and understanding and asked the appropriate questions.

When has God asked you to exercise wisdom and understanding? (PAUSE)

Jesus Suffers.

Mark chapter 14: verses 32-42 say this "And they went to a place which was called Gethsemane; and He said to his disciples, 'Sit here, while I pray.' And He took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly distressed and troubled. And He said to them 'My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch.' And going a little farther, He fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. And He said, 'Abba, Father, all things are possible to thee; remove this cup from me; yet not what I will, but what thou wilt.' And He came and found them sleeping, and He said to Peter, 'Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch one hour? Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.' And again He went away and prayed, saying the same words. And again He came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy; and they did not know how to answer him. And He came the third time, and said to them, 'Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough; the hour has come; the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand.'"

The night before Jesus was crucified, He faced a tremendous struggle within Himself. He suffered and agonized over facing His own death. He had to win the private victory before He could win the public victory. He chose to suffer the death on a cross and it was a choice.

Suffering is a universal human experience. We all experience suffering in our lives. But the question really is, is our suffering on our own behalf or put upon us by circumstances or do we choose to suffer on behalf of others?

How is God using your suffering? (PAUSE)

Jesus was tired.

John chapter 4: verses 5-6 say this, "So he came to a city of Samaria, called Sychar, near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and so Jesus, wearied as he was with his journey, sat down beside the well. It was about the sixth hour."

As Jesus came to Sychar, a small town in Samaria, He and his disciples were tired after a long day's journey. His disciples went into the town to buy some food and Jesus sat down on a well head. And while He was resting there, a Samaritan woman came up and had a conversation with Him. Even though Jesus was tired, He was able to speak to this woman and share with her who He was.

Even though He was humanly tired, He was able to offer this woman a relationship with God.

How does God use our human tiredness? (PAUSE)

Jesus was disappointed.

John chapter 14: verses 8-9 say this, "Philip said to him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and we shall be satisfied.' Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you so long, and yet you do not know me, Philip? He who has seen me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father?'"

Jesus had been in His earthly ministry now for quite some time and it would seem that His close disciples would be very aware of who He was. And yet, they were very slow sometimes to come to understanding and awareness of who they were walking with. Philip says to Jesus, "If you will only show us the Father then we could really believe." And Jesus says, "Have I been with you so long and yet you do not know me Philip? He who has seen me has seen the Father".

Jesus was disappointed. How many times are we disappointed by the lack of awareness and understanding in other people? How many times are we disappointed and frustrated by how slow our children learn how to do things? I wonder how disappointed God gets at how slow we are at learning His ways in the world. Jesus went on and answered Philip's question.

How does God use your disappointments and frustrations? (PAUSE)

Jesus was gentle.

Luke chapter 18: verses 15-17 say this, "Now they were bringing even infants to him that He might touch them; and when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them to him, saying, 'Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly I say to you, who-ever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.'"

Jesus was gentle in His dealings with people and it is shown very clearly in the way that He treated children. Children are very open and trustworthy towards others. As the children came to Jesus, His disciples tried to protect Jesus from the crowds. In the midst of their taking care of business, they did not receive the children. Jesus in the gentleness of His spirit, received the children.

In the busyness of life and the duties of things that take place, do you take time to speak to the child? Each of us has a child in us. Some children are physically young, some people are spiritually young. Do you take the time to be gentle with those who are

young and still growing? Or are you like the disciples and so busy doing business that you push away those who need the touch of Jesus?

How does God use your gentleness? (PAUSE)

Jesus asks for support.

Mark chapter 1: verses 16-20 say this, "And passing along by the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net in the sea; for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, 'Follow me and I will make you become fishers of men.' And immediately they left their nets and followed him. And going on a little farther, he saw James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, who were in their boat mending the nets. And immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and followed him."

As Jesus began His ministry, He knew that He needed others involved in a partnership with Him. He was aware that there was strength in numbers, and the ability to carry the message farther with others. Jesus knew when to ask for support. He asked Peter, Andrew, James and John to follow Him and to partner with Him.

Do you know when to ask for the support you need? Are you a person that likes to go it alone? Are you a person who is unwilling to work with others?

**Do you know when to ask for the support you need, either a friend's or God's?
(PAUSE)**

Jesus was angry.

John chapter 2: verses 13-17 say this, "The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers at their business. And making a whip of cords, he drove them all, with the sheep and oxen, out of the

temple; He poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. He told those who sold the pigeons, 'Take these things away; you shall not make my Father's house a house of trade.' His disciples remember that it was written, 'Zeal for thy house will consume me.'"

Jesus was angry at what was happening in the temple. Paul wrote, "Be angry but do not sin." Jesus was angry but he did not sin. His anger was not one of self-centeredness or personal frustration. His anger was because God's people had substituted religion for a relationship with God. God's people had corrupted the relationship with God and turned it into a way to make a buck. Jesus' anger was one of the righteous indignation of God.

Is your anger self-centered? Or is your anger because something has gone wrong in terms of relationship with God?

How does God use your anger? (PAUSE)

Jesus was firm.

John chapter 8: verses 12-15 say this, "Again Jesus spoke to them saying, 'I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.' The Pharisees then said to him, 'You are bearing witness to yourself; your testimony is not true.' Jesus answered, 'Even if I do bear witness to myself, my testimony is true, for I know whence I have come and whither I am going, but you do not know whence I come or whither I am going. You judge according to the flesh, I judge no one.'"

Jesus was continually confronted by and confronting the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the religious people of His day. It would have been very easy for Jesus to deny who He was. But continually He raised up in front of them, who He actually was. He kept telling people that He was the Son of God, the Messiah. He was firm in His identity and purpose.

When we are asked, "Are you a follower of Jesus? Are you a Christian?," what is your answer? Does it depend on the circumstances that you are in? Here in a church

building, in a sanctuary, in a Christian setting such as this three day experience, it is easy to answer "Yes. I am a follower of Jesus." But what about when you are at work? What about when you are in your larger family? When you are at play and in social settings?

**In all places, can you stand firm in the faith, knowing your identity as a follower of Jesus and your purpose to make Him known to the world?
(PAUSE)**

Jesus was forgiving.

Luke chapter 23: verses 33-35 say this, "And when they came to the place which is called The Skull, there they crucified Him and the criminals, one on the right and one on the left. And Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.' And they cast lots to divide his garments. And the people stood by, watching."

Because of the love of the Father in His heart, Jesus was able, even when He was crucified, to ask the Father to forgive us. Forgiveness is a hard thing because it requires that a part of us dies or a part of us be crucified because of the sins of others committed against us. Many times we are unable to forgive as Jesus did because we want some kind of payment for the way we have been victimized. Jesus was forgiving and He was able to forgive because of God's love in His heart. He forgave us our sins and it was our sin that put Him on the cross. And it says here in this scripture "and the people stood by, watching", and that's us.

What about you? Is there someone that you are holding prisoner in your heart? Are you able to forgive as Jesus forgave? Are you able to love as Jesus loved? Are you able to die to self in order to forgive?

How can God use your forgiveness? (PAUSE)

Jesus experiences despair.

Matthew chapter 27: verses 45-46 say this, "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabach-thani?' that is, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'"

Jesus experienced despair. When He was dying upon the cross for the sins of the world, He was in the darkest place. It was like a hole where He was to be buried. I am so glad that Jesus said it first. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Jesus experienced despair, hopelessness.

What about you? Are you in a place of despair, asking the same question that Jesus did? My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? If you are in that place of despair, know that Jesus also experienced it.

How can God use your despair?

How can God use your hopelessness to bring new life? (PAUSE)

Jesus was a man. He had all the human qualities and characteristics that we do, but He was also God. He was God in the flesh and He came to us to take away our sin, to forgive us and to raise us to new life. In the depths of His despair, He died. He died to self by saying, "God, it's in your hands. I give you my spirit." And out of that dying to self, three days later He rose again.

It is because of His resurrection that we have hope. It is because of His resurrection that we know He is who He said He was. He is God come to us in the flesh. All the human qualities that I have spoken of, Jesus had, but Jesus also lives today. And He shows us a way to new life, even in the depths of despair. Even in the times when we need to forgive. Even in the times when we suffer. He shows us the pathway to life, even in our tiredness and our disappointments. He shows us a pathway to stand firm as God's people. He understands us. And He shows us how to work together. This Jesus who has all these human qualities that we have, comes to us to show us the way.

How can God use you to show others His son Jesus?

How does God expect to use your humanity to give God's grace to others?

(PAUSE)

LAY DIRECTOR: *(following meditation)*

Please join with me in praying the prayer of St. Francis on page 14 in your worship booklets **(PAUSE)**:

Lord, make me an instrument of thy 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; and

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.

Join me in reading I John 4: verses 7-21 found on page 15.

Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and he who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God; for god is love. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved god but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins. Beloved if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No man has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his own Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. Who we know and believe the love God

has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. In this is love perfected with us, that we may have confidence for the day of judgement, because as he is so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and he who fears is not perfected in love. We love, because he first loved us. If anyone says, "I love God" and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him, that he who loves God should love his brother also.

We are now going to breakfast. Let's sing "De Colores" on the way to breakfast.

7:30 a.m. Dining Room for breakfast

- Sing grace before and after meals.
- Intro kitchen & servers
- Announce pillow and table agape

Note to Lay Director: Choose two Table Leaders to set the examples of speaking at Closing. Before total exhaustion sets in (and it will), write out your script of introductions, remarks, etc. for Closing.

Note to Head Spiritual Director: You may want to personally review contents of info packet to be distributed at 3 pm, as you will be explaining the items to the guests at that time. Do so in the agape room. Also, you may want to plan and write out your script for the Lay Director hand cross presentation during Closing.

8:00 a.m. Break

8:20 a.m. Conference Room

- Appoint new secretary
- Assistants present banners & general agape letters
- Sing
- Introduce Speaker
- Light candle

8:35 a.m. TALK #11 CHANGING OUR ENVIRONMENT 30 MIN

- Silent meditation (blow out candle)
- Discussion
- Summary
- No posters today
- Break as time allows

9:45 p.m. Appoint new secretary

- Assistants present banners & general agape letters
- Sing
- Introduce Speaker
- Light candle

9:55 a.m. TALK #12 A LIFE OF GRACE 30 MIN.

- Silent meditation (blow out candle)
- Discussion
- Summary
- Break as time allows

10:55 a.m. Appoint new secretary

- Assistants present banners & general agape letters
- Sing
- Introduce Speaker
- Light candle

11:00 a.m. TALK #13 THE BODY OF CHRIST 30 MIN.

- Silent meditation (blow out candle)
- Discussion
- Summary

11:45 a.m. Check with Kitchen to see when lunch will be ready

12:00 p.m. Lunch - in gym

Sing grace before and after meals
Announce table agape
Intro kitchen & servers

12:30 p.m. Break

1:15 p.m. Call back to Conference Room

1:20 p.m. Conference Room

- Appoint new secretary
- Banners, Agape Letters
- Sing
- Introduce next Speaker
- Light candle

1:30 p.m. TALK #14 STAYING POWER 30 MINUTES

- Silent meditation (blow out candle)
- Discussion led by tables' team members explaining further the reunion groups and gatherings

2:20 p.m. Appoint new secretary

- Sing
- Introduce next Speaker
- Light candle

2:55 p.m. Agape should already have large wooden cross with personal crosses upstairs (in the agape room) and ready to bring into Conference Room.

2:30 p.m. TALK #15 ESTABLISHING PRIORITIES 30 MINUTES

- Silent meditation (blow out candle)

3:01 p.m. Assistant Lay Directors distribute packets to Tables

(Packets for all participants should contain group photo, team list, table list, points to remember, suggested reading, guest applications, sponsor's responsibilities, etc. The Agape Team has the responsibility of stuffing the envelopes with the necessary materials.)

- Head Spiritual Director goes over contents of packet
- Collect any corrections of names, addresses, phone numbers, email, etc.

3:30 p.m. Introduction of individual agape letters by Head Spiritual Director

Head Spiritual Director can use the first few verses of some of Paul's letters to introduce the agape letters. Give plenty of time for individuals to read personal letters. Assistant Lay Directors and Agape pass personal letters to tables in pre-sorted bundles.

4:15 p.m. Spiritual Director and Lay Director distribute personal crosses

Team members line up against walls for "hug line"

Guests begin contemplating questions:

- "What has the Great Banquet meant to me?"
- "What am I going to do now?"

4:45 p.m. Prepare to go to Closing

Clean off tables, throw away trash, put all their materials with their suitcases in Gym. Use restroom. Line up for closing.

4:55 p.m. Go to Gym

(Note: The person(s) in charge of the Conference Room tear down will put dump truck dying moments in an envelope, seal, and give to Community Lay Director. Community Lay Director will contact Head Spiritual Director to pray over and dispose of dying moments)

5:00 p.m. Depart to Sanctuary for Closing Service

Check with Community Lay Director to make sure everything is ready
Table Communities sit together, one table to a row

THE CLOSING

- Lay Director introduces new members to their Great Banquet Community.
("Zionsville Great Banquet Community, please welcome your new members from Great Banquet # ____")
- Lay Director introduces the Great Banquet Community to the new members.
("Members of Zionsville Great Banquet # ____, please meet your Great Banquet Community")
- General remarks of thanks for help during the Banquet weekend:
 - Ask people to hold their applause until all categories have been announced.
 - Ask community members to stand for recognition by category as follows:
 - Those who set-up or took down beds
 - Those who participated in Registration or the Sponsor's Hour on Thursday
 - Those who made or brought in snack agape
 - Participants in the 72-hour prayer vigil
 - Those who helped the Kitchen Team prepare, serve or clean up meals
 - Those who attended the Candlelight service
 - Anyone else who helped in any way, including those attending this Closing
- Thanks to the Team:
 - Call off the categories of Team members: Their names, asking each to stand as their name is read. (Hint: remember Music and AV Tech)
 - Ask for applause to be held until the end of each category.
- Recognize all spouses, family members or friends that supported the team members by asking them to stand as a group.
- Recognize your spouse, if applicable, in a special way.
- Theme Song by Guests, as a thank you to God and the community for their love.
- Sharing Time - 2 questions
 - Explain to new members that this is their opportunity to respond to the love that has been shown them this weekend.
 - Explain how it is done
 - The two questions, Kleenex and hand cross are on the podium
 - Keep answers and any comments to less than 2 minutes
 - This is a time to respond to the questions, not a time to thank people
 - Ask the two pre-selected Table Leaders to model the process
 - After Table Leaders are done, instruct the guests that it's now their time
 - When it seems almost everyone has shared, announce you'll wait just a couple of more minutes for those who the Spirit is leading to come forward.

- Lay Director then introduces Community Spiritual Director, who will:
 - Make general comments to the Community about the weekend
 - Announce the Fourth Day Meeting on Tuesday evening
 - Announce upcoming Community Gatherings and Great Banquet weekends
 - Introduce the weekend's Head Spiritual Director

- Head Spiritual Director:
 - Presents hand cross to Lay Director as a symbol of his/her leadership
 - Makes any general comments about the weekend
 - Introduces and provides instructions for the liturgy of the Communion Service

- Communion Service

- Head Spiritual Director introduces Community Lay Directors

- Community Lay Directors make announcements and closing remarks