

FAITH & FELLOWSHIP MEETING (1 HOUR)

Opening Statement *{Facilitator calls the meeting to order on time, reads out loud the opening statement and then passes this sheet to the left (Next Person). The next person reads out loud and leads the next section; then passes the sheet to the left, etc. If the number of people allows for multiple groups (ideally 6-8 per), the attendees should be divided up into small groups by “counting off” and a copy of this sheet and the Gospel passage should be given to each group.}*

Welcome. We are here because we believe that we are not the mere biological result of chance. Rather there is a God who purposefully created us and the world in which we live. Reason alone could lead us to know that God exists. But through the Bible, especially through the words and example of Jesus Christ, God has revealed that our perfect joy comes only from living in a personal relationship with Him.

We are here today because we want to love God better, love ourselves better, and love our neighbor better. We gather as a group because God created us to live in community, and because Jesus modeled community as the way to God. If we try to journey alone, we will likely get lost.

None of us are perfect. None of us know the way all of the time. We all fail. We all need help. So we come to listen to the word of God and to share our strengths and challenges; our joys and sorrows – for our own good and the good of all of us. Please remember that nothing said during this meeting is to be shared outside of the meeting.

Let’s all take a moment in silence to clear our mind of any distractions and place ourselves in the presence of God.

{One minute of silence}

Prayer of Lordship *{Next Person}*

Let us start our time together by praising our God. God is our Father. He is our brother and friend Jesus. God is our advocate and guide the Holy Spirit. But God is also our Lord. For us to enter into a proper relationship with our God, we must recognize that God is God and we are not. Therefore we pray the following prayer of our desire to surrender to God as Lord of everything we are or have. Please close your eyes and pray with me in silence.

{Sign of the Cross}

Father, I surrender my life to you as my Lord. My very existence is Your gift to me. Make me mindful that I am because You Are! Focus my eyes to recognize Your Divine Image reflected in creation. Fill my ears with the words You have spoken. And place on my lips ceaseless praise of You.

Jesus, I surrender my heart to you as my Lord. Recreate my heart in the image of Your Sacred Heart. Help me to love You my Lord and my God with all of my heart. Help me to love others according to the example of Your Divine Mercy. And use my hands to reach out to my brothers and sisters.

Holy Spirit, I surrender my thoughts and will to You as my Lord. Fill me with your presence in every breath I take. Give me Your wisdom, understanding and knowledge. Take possession of my thoughts, emotions and imagination. Conform my will to Yours. And direct my legs along the path that brings me closer to You.

Lord God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I surrender all that I am or have to You as my Lord. You are the Lord of my time and my talents. You are the Lord of my family and my relationships. You are the Lord of my money and my possessions. You are the Lord of my life and of my death.

{Sign of the Cross}

I invite you to open your eyes

Thanksgiving {Next Person}

It is important to recognize the many great blessings God has bestowed on us in His love. Let us now take a moment of silence to call to mind the things we would like to thank God for.

{One minute of silence}

In order to confirm an “attitude of gratitude,” let us go around the circle and verbalize our thanks for one or two of these, beginning with words such as, “Thank you Lord for _____.”

{The person who is leading this portion of the meeting should begin and set the example.}

I invite you to pray out loud with me the “Gloria.”

All: Glory be to the Father...

Reflection on the Gospel Reading for the Upcoming Sunday {Next Person}

At this time, we will listen to the Gospel reading for this coming Sunday. After that, we will all have the opportunity to share how God is speaking to you personally through this passage – what God is saying to you; how God is moving in your life; what God is placing on your heart as you listen to this passage. It is not necessary for anyone to be a biblical scholar. There is no right or wrong statement. The goal is merely to be authentic. Please keep your sharing personal: “I think...” “I feel...” There should be no seeking of agreement, voicing of disagreement, or seeking to “fix” anyone else.

As with our prayer of thanksgiving, we will go around in a circle. If you do not have anything to say when it is your turn, just say “pass.”

{The person leading this section should read the Gospel passage out loud. After going around the circle, read the scripture passage again out loud and go around again. Close by reading the passage a third time out loud and allow for a moment of silent reflection.}

[Optional (only if time permits): Sharing How God is Acting in your Life {Next Person}

With the time remaining, we are invited to share how God has been acting in our life recently. It might be something positive or challenging; an affirmation, answer to prayer, or a new insight. Remember we are not called to comment on or judge anything said by another and everything said here is confidential. We will go around in a circle, but feel free to “pass.”]

{Note: The facilitator must politely end the Reflection/Sharing time with 5-10 minutes left to allow time for Prayers of Petition and insure the meeting is completed in one hour.}

Prayers of Petition {Next Person}

At this time, trusting in God’s love and concern for us, let us place all of our needs before Him, silently calling to mind our prayer intentions.

{Moment of silence}

As we go around in a circle, we are invited to briefly verbalize one or two petitions that are near to our heart. Please feel free to “pass.”

{Leader begins. After going around the circle once, the leader states the following.}

We offer up all of these prayers to our loving God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And, we ask for our Blessed Mother’s intercession as well as we pray together the “Hail Mary.”

All: Hail Mary...

Announcements & Closing Prayer {Facilitator}

Facilitator makes announcements (if there are any).

Let us now close with the prayer given to us by Jesus:

All: Our Father...

I invite any of you who have time to stay for some refreshments and fellowship.