

IF YOU WISH TO BE MY DISCIPLE.....

Notes on General and Particular Vocations

We are called to follow Jesus (Lk 9:23-25)

Intent of these notes

- ✓ *To enable the participants to listen to the voice of Jesus speaking to them in their hearts.*
- ✓ *To foster in them a deep devotion and love for Jesus.*
- ✓ *To help them to discern their future vocation if life.*

Target Audience

- ✓ With minor adaptations, all Christian audiences.
- ✓ Especially for youngsters and youth.

Uses of these Notes:

- ✓ For recollections.
- ✓ For prayer sessions.
- ✓ For personal prayer and reflection.
- ✓ For a vocational events

Requirements:

- ✓ A postcard size devotional picture of the face of Jesus for each participant
Alternatively, a big frame picture of Jesus or a big crucifix
- ✓ Writing materials for all.

Step 1: Introduction: (In the Hall)

- Meeting the participants. Welcoming them.
- Singing hymns and/or bhajans.
- Opening prayer.

Step 2. Group working,

Moderator:

1. Ask the participants, slowly and mindfully, o recite, all together, the words of the hymn below here,

If You Wish To Be My Disciple":

Ref: If you wish to be my disciple,
Take up your cross and follow me.

The foxes have their holes
The birds their nests,

But I have not a place
To take my rest. *Ref.*

Whoever loves his life
Will only lose it,
It's only sacrifice
That brings one gain. *Ref.*

All you who labor, come,
You, who are burdened,
Take up my yoke as well
And you'll find rest. *Ref.*

Take nothing for your pay,
No bread, no money.
Your treasure must be
One no moth destroys. *Ref.*

So, let your loins be girt,
Your lamps burning,
And be like men,
Who wait for m return. *Ref.*

You, who have followed me,
When your life is ended,
Will reap a hundredfold
Eternally. *Ref.*

2. Next, sing it all together.
3. Then, ask them to read again the lyrics of the hymn, all alone by themselves, and reflect on the meaning of the words.
4. Finally, sing it again all together.
5. Ask the participants to share their thoughts and feelings on the following items
 - i. What line of the hymn do you like most and why?
 - ii. Is it easy to be a disciple of Jesus? Why?
 - iii. Will the following of Jesus bring us pain or joy? How?
 - iv. What's the most needed disposition to be a disciple of Jesus?
6. Tell the participants to sing the hymn again, very thoughtfully and prayerfully.

Step 3. Photo-prayer: Praying with the photo or image of Jesus:

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1. This step ideally, should be held in the Chapel
2. The aim of this step is to bring the participants close to Jesus by just staring lovingly at his picture or image.

3. Secure, if you can, postcard size pictures of the face of Christ, or even of bigger size, one for each participant.
4. Make sure that the pictures are devotional and moving. If you cannot secure the desired pictures, you may follow these hints.
5. Make the audience gaze at a big crucifix. (*In most of our churches you will find one such crucifix.*) or at a big painting or drawing of Christ's face.
6. If nothing is available, make the participants close their eyes and fantasize on the image of Christ crucified.
7. After you have displayed the image of Christ or distributed the pictures to all the participants give them the following instructions:
 - Keep looking attentively at the face of Jesus...
 - Do not think; do not ponder... just keep staring at Jesus...
 - Try to feel what he feels... Feel with him... Feel for him...
 - (After a while) Close your eyes. Even with your eyes closed, try to see the picture of Christ.. It is now inside you... printed in your mind...
 - Open your eyes... Look again at the face of Jesus...
 - Close your eyes... Praying to Jesus...
 - : Still looking at the picture of Jesus, ask the participants to put down in writing the following points:
 - ii. How close or affectionate you towards Jesus.
 - iii. What is Jesus asking you to do to be his disciple?
 - iv. What's your answer to Jesus
 - v. Write a prayer to Jesus expressing your feelings and ask Him for courage to do whatever he may be asking you.

Step 4. Sharing and Praying in Pairs: (*If possible, hold this step in the chapel.*)

Instructions to the Participants:

1. Pick a partner of your choice.
2. Go to any corner of the room, hall or chapel and sit together.
3. Share with your partner (*be sincere and spontaneous*) what you have written
4. Pray together to Jesus.
5. Pray to Jesus for one another.

Step 5. General Session: Group Sharing, Input and Praying:

a) Group Sharing:

Sit in a close circle. Share only what you feel like sharing on the two points below:

- What you felt when you were sharing and praying in pairs.
- What you learned.

No one will disclose anything personal or confidential his companion has told him while they were sharing in pairs.

b) Input

On the occasion of the exercise, you may give the participants a short input on the meaning of Vocation and on the different Vocations open to anyone who wants to follows Jesus.

- We named the call of Jesus to follow Him, by the word “Vocation”.
- The word ‘ VOCATION’ can be taken both in a generic and in a specific or particular sense:
- A General Call’ or ‘General Vocation” is given to all Christians to follow Jesus and proclaim the Good News. We name it: “Christian Vocation”.
- The specific and individual call given to each Christian person, within their General Christian Vocation, we name “Particular Vocation”
- Particular Vocation it is Jesus calling each Christian Follower to a particular work or state of life.
- Among many possible particular calls we find the call or Vocation to the Priesthood and/or to the Religious Life, to marriage, or to single consecrated life.

c) Group Prayer.

1. Lead the participants through a prayerful reflection of the exercise you have just had.
2. Points for a silent reflection may be: What does Jesus ask me in order to follow Him throughout my life? Write it down.
3. Invite all to pray aloud and spontaneously for themselves and for one another.
4. Make profuse use of hymns such as
 - "If you wish to be my Disciple".
 - "I'll say Yes, Yes, Yes."
 - "Come, Follow Me!"
 - "It takes Courage."
 - "Follow Christ."
 - "Send Forth Your Messengers."
 - "I Have Decided."