

The Faith-Filled Catholic Women's Bible Study Program

A Leader's Guide for Group Discussion

Sacrifice
Song: "Shadows Gather, Deep and Cold"
CD 2, Track 7

Insert R-1 through R-4
Composer: Kathy Powell
Faith-Filled Catholic Women's Bible Music CD

Materials Needed

Faith-Filled Catholic Women's Bible and Music CD, CD player, Participant's Worksheet, Copies of the First Eucharistic Prayer (1 each), One copy of the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

Setting the Stage

Before this session, mail (or e-mail) any member of the group that may not have been present at the last session the Participant's Worksheet for this session. Also, send a reminder of the date and time of the session as well as directions to the meeting place (if different from the church). To enhance an atmosphere of **Sacrifice**, have the song "*Shadows Gather, Deep and Cold*" from the Faith-Filled Catholic Women's Bible Music CD playing in the background when the participants arrive.

Warm Up - Optional (15 Minutes)

Have each participant write the numbers 1 through (?) (however many participants there are in the group) down the left side of the back of the Participant's Worksheet. Below this list, jot down one sacrifice you have made at some time in your life and one sacrifice that YOU DID NOT MAKE. After everyone is finished, ask the first person to read the two sacrifices she wrote down. Identify them as A. and B. The challenge for everyone else is to identify (by listing it behind the appropriate number for each person) the sacrifice that is "false" from each participant's list of two sacrifices. For instance if I believe person #3's second sacrifice is false (or did not happen) then my answer for #3 on the back of my Participant's Worksheet would be "B." Some examples of sacrifices could include: a) I quit a full time job and stayed home for two years when my daughter was born. b) I took a second job working three nights a week for six months when my husband changed jobs. c) I often did the cooking at home when I was a teenager to help my mother out. d) I cancelled my membership to the gym in order accommodate a friend's schedule so we could workout together. e) I did my mother-in-law's taxes for her after my husband's father died and refused to accept any payment. (etc.) Encourage the participants to be creative enough to make the "false" sacrifice very believable. The challenge is for each participant to fool the others. Compare your scores after the test when each individual identifies the sacrifice that they made up.

Opening Discussion (15 minutes)

Have the participants discuss the following questions: What do you remember about the role of sacrifice in the Old Testament? Why were sacrifices so important to the Hebrew people? After brief discussion, read the **Plan and Purpose** article on insert page R-1. Then, have each participant share her answers to the following questions: What sacrifices do you make routinely in life? Who do you think these sacrifices are for? Do you often think about everyday sacrifices you make in the context of your faith?

Spiritual Awakening - Opening Prayer

Pray together the **Prayer** at the top of insert page R-2.

Spiritual Awakening - Recognizing (10 minutes)

Ask for volunteers to read aloud each of the passages in the **Recognizing** section of **Spiritual Awakening** on insert page R-2. Remind the participants that each reader will pause for a few seconds of silence after each passage to allow anyone to offer any spontaneous thought, prayer, praise or thanksgiving that this Scripture might inspire.

Spiritual Awakening - Reflecting (15 minutes)

Read **Genesis 22:1-19 (Page 34 OT)**. Then, ask the participants to share their answers to these questions: How important is sacrificing in defining your relationship with God? If you made a list of things most important in your life, where would God fall on that list? Why is it so difficult sometimes to answer God's call to have faith in the circumstances in our lives?

Spiritual Awakening - Reflecting (15 minutes)

Prayerfully read the First Eucharistic Prayer. Pause after each line and/or paragraph to discuss what you think the words mean. Then, read this paragraph (#1419) from the Catechism of the Catholic Church:

Having passed from this world to the Father, Christ gives us in the Eucharist the pledge of glory with him. Participation in the Holy Sacrifice identifies us with his Heart, sustains our strength along the pilgrimage of this life, makes us long for eternal life, and unites us even now to the Church in heaven, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and all the saints.

Ask: How are you united with Christ's perfect sacrifice at Mass? How does attending Mass affect your life?

Group Prayer

Leader: Dearest Jesus, accept our prayers, praises and petitions this week with our deepest appreciation for the sacrifice You offered to the Father on our behalf: **enter aloud all individual intentions.** Inspire us to participate fully in Your sacrifice not only in our worship but in how we live our daily lives. Amen.

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Have each participant complete this sentence (silently if preferred) with some cross they are currently bearing.

O Jesus, I embrace the cross of _____.
Because you carried your cross for me, I carry this cross for you.

Fellowship (15 minutes)

After the session is completed and while refreshments are served, play softly in the background: "*Shadows Gather, Deep and Cold*" from the Faith-Filled Catholic Women's Bible Music CD.

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