

The Faith-Filled Catholic Women's Bible Study Program

A Leader's Guide for Group Discussion

Suffering
Song: "*If Jesus Wept*"
CD 2, Track 8

Insert S-1 through S-4
Composer: Carol Browning
Faith-Filled Catholic Women's Bible Music CD

Materials Needed

Faith-Filled Catholic Women's Bible and Music CD, CD player, Participant's Worksheet, Words to the Prayer of Abandonment (on Participant's Worksheet).

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 **Suffering**, have the song "*If Jesus Wept*" from the Faith-Filled Catholic Women's Bible Music CD playing in the background when the participants arrive.

Warm Up – Optional (10 minutes)

Have the participants take a few minutes to write their answer to this question on the back of their copy of the Participant's Worksheet:

If you had the power to eliminate one kind of suffering in the world, what would it be?

Share and discuss their answers.

Opening Discussion (20 minutes)

Read the **Plan and Purpose** article on insert page S-1. Then, discuss the following questions: Why do you think bad things happen to good people? How does Jesus show us how to respond to suffering in our lives? Pope John Paul II often spoke of the salvific power of suffering. What does that mean to you?

Spiritual Awakening - Opening Prayer

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

Spiritual Awakening – Recognizing (15 minutes)

Ask for volunteers to read aloud each of the Scripture passages in the **Recognizing** section of **Spiritual Awakening** on insert page S-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 (20 minutes)

*Read **1 Peter 1:6-7 (Page 355 NT)**. Then, ask the group to share their answers to these questions: Has there been one area of your life where you feel God has (or is) testing you through some hardship? Do you think that you have passed (or are passing) the test? How has your own suffering changed the way you look at the trials of others?*

Faith in Action - (20 minutes)

Read the **Faith in Action** article "The Art of Dying" on insert page S-4. Discuss answers to the following questions: Is there someone you admire because of the way they handle suffering in their life. Share an experience about how someone close to you handled suffering during a terminal illness. What role does your faith play in helping you endure suffering in life?

Group Prayer

Leader: Heavenly Father, give us the courage to accept suffering in our life not as a burden but as an opportunity to share with You. Hear and answer these special prayers, praises and petitions as our group prayer for all those who endure suffering each day: **enter aloud all individual intentions.** We ask You this, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

As a group, pray the "Prayer of Abandonment" by Charles Foucauld.

**Father, I abandon myself into your hands; do with me what you will.
Whatever you may do, I thank you: I am ready for all, I accept all.
Let only your will be done in me, and in all your creatures –
I wish no more than this, O Lord. Into your hands I commend my soul;
I offer it to you with all the love of my heart, for I love you Lord,
and so need to give myself, to surrender myself into your hands,
without reserve, and with boundless confidence, for you are my Father.**

Fellowship (15 minutes)

After the session is completed and while refreshments are served, play softly in the background: "If Jesus Wept" from the Faith-Filled Catholic Women's Bible Music CD.

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