

Discussion Guide for Integrated Evangelization: How to Facilitate the Encounter with Christ

Lesson 1

A Divine Assignment

1. SELF REFLECTION: How am I personally responding to Jesus' call to bring Christ to others outside of the Church?
2. DISCUSS: Who are the people outside of our Church community? What are the effective ways we as a parish are already reaching out to these individuals or groups?
3. PRAY: Jesus, may we truly desire to lead others to you.

Lesson II

It Doesn't Have to be Complicated

4. SELF REFLECTION: What has my understanding of "evangelizing" been in the past? Something that requires a detailed plan and much preparation?
5. DISCUSS: What are some concrete, simple ways I can identify in my own life to live "integrated evangelization"?

Lesson III

Integrated Evangelization

6. SELF REFLECTION: Spend a moment reflecting upon how you value your relationship with Christ and the Church.
7. DISCUSS: Why do you desire for others to come to know Jesus and love the Church in their lives, as you do in yours?

Lesson IV

The First Focus

8. SELF REFLECTION: What are some ways you might further integrate your relationship with Christ into your daily life?
9. DISCUSS: What ways do you feel God is calling you to deeper conversion?

Lesson V

Facilitating the Encounter

10. SELF REFLECTION: In thinking about “evangelization”, have you always seen your role as being one of “facilitator”, or something else? If your role is to be a facilitator of encounter between Jesus and others, does your view or way of understanding “evangelization” change?
11. DISCUSS: How is being a facilitator different than being a teacher?

Lesson VI

Making Space

12. SELF REFLECTION: If you were the one being evangelized, what spaces or scenarios would speak most to your heart?
13. DISCUSS: Please share any stories of success you have experienced in “facilitating the encounter” and inviting others. Do you think invitations into certain spaces can be more or less successful than others, depending upon whom you are inviting? Why?

Lesson VII

Be Your True Self

14. SELF REFLECTION: Identify for yourself, the most prominent charisms, gifts, and traits that God has given you.
15. DISCUSS: What different mission fields exist within your group? Share, if you would like, what you see as your “space”.

Lesson VIII

Free From Fear and Pressure

16. SELF REFLECTION: How does viewing “evangelization” as the “art of friendship” change or support your understanding of this call?
17. DISCUSS: What does practicing the art of friendship look like in your personal individual life? What might it look like as a parish?
18. PRAY: Holy Spirit, heal us and free us from following fear or pressure in our life and relationships.

Lesson IX

How to be Freed From Fear and Pressure

19. SELF REFLECTION: Have you ever felt anxious about evangelizing? Why? What are some of the fears or pressures you have experienced?
20. DISCUSS: What are some responses we might give when an invitation is declined?

Lesson X

The Four Actions

21. SELF REFLECTION: When evangelization has been mentioned in the past, what actions did you associate with it?
22. DISCUSS: What is the difference between saying “Evangelization is about bringing others to Jesus” and “Evangelization is about Jesus wanting to come to people to meet, love, and heal them”?

Lesson XI

Praying About

23. SELF REFLECTION: Are you able to recall instances when a “chance encounter” with someone became an opportunity for **you** to grow closer to Christ?
24. DISCUSS: What are some divine appointments you have experienced recently?

Lesson XII

Praying For

25. SELF REFLECTION: Often our society is focused on completing concrete, defined actions to bring about desired results. Is it challenging to think of prayer as being “one of the most important and effective things the evangelizer does”?
26. DISCUSS: What thoughts can you share about the following: “Jesus encountered the servant through the space created by the faith of the centurion. This is what happens when we offer others to Jesus. It enables an encounter between Jesus and the other through the faith of those who know and love Jesus.”

Lesson XIII

When Jesus Saw Their Faith

27. SELF REFLECTION: Think about your own personal faith and the power it brings to your life. (Matthew 17:20 “if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed”) How does this affect your conversations with Jesus?
28. DISCUSS: Share about a time when God has answered your prayers for yourself or another, in an unexpected way.

Lesson XIV

Befriending

29. SELF REFLECTION: Call to mind an individual you think Jesus may be inviting you to befriend. Pray about whom the Holy Spirit is guiding you towards and contemplate how you might reach out to this person.
30. DISCUSS: Sharing stories of how God has reached out to us is a great way to see how God works through others. These stories can inspire us to act in ways we might not have thought about before. Share the fruits that resulted from your own experience of reaching out, or how others have impacted you by reaching out.

Lesson XV

Truly Caring for Another

31. SELF REFLECTION: What can I do to make sure I am reaching out in the true spirit of evangelization, rather than as someone tackling a project or to-do list?
32. DISCUSS: What are some actions that demonstrate to others that we are genuinely interested in befriending them?

Lesson XVI

Accompanying

33. SELF REFLECTION: How have others accompanied me on my spiritual journey? How is recognizing this within my own life helpful to me, as I look to accompany others?
34. DISCUSS: What is the difference between befriending someone and accompanying them?

Lesson XVII

Growing Closer to God

35. SELF REFLECTION: What challenges or struggles have you faced within your own life regarding institutional religion, doctrine, moral law, hierarchy, etc? How were you able to overcome them, and why?
36. DISCUSS: How may we be more helpful in encouraging people beyond just the action, and help them to understand the deep and beautiful benefits from the actions? (ex. Setting aside time to pray, reading scripture, etc.) What type of circumstances or relationships do we need in order to do this?

Lesson XVIII

What “Accompanying Another” Looks Like

37. SELF REFLECTION: Have you ever been asked a question like this, or found yourself in a similar situation? How did you respond? How was your response received?

38. DISCUSS: What do you feel are some of the biggest challenges or obstacles we face in giving a positive and encouraging response? What can we do to avoid or overcome such barriers?

Lesson XIX

A Lived Relationship With God

39. SELF REFLECTION: Spend some time with the questions posed at the end of the lesson. Talk with Jesus about this, and listen to how He wants you to grow in relationship with Him.

Lesson XX

Words of Encouragement

40. SELF REFLECTION: Spend some time reflecting upon Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI's quote.