

*I Have
Greatly
Desired...*

*Middles Lenten Prayer Guide
Appendices*

This Middles Resource Guide is designed for High School and Middle Schoolers. The adult book is not needed to complete this guide.

Contact Sara-Racicot@cdolinc.net with questions or for speaking requests for this study.



Behold the Lamb by Emma McGill

Appendix Table of Contents

APPENDIX 1

Small Group Meetings Tips

P. 6

APPENDIX 2

Praying with Scripture

P. 7

APPENDIX 3

I Thirst Meditation

P. 11

APPENDIX 4

How to Mass Journal

P. 16

APPENDIX 5

HEART Communion Time Prayer

P. 17



Appendix

Appendix 1: *Small Group Meetings (Discussion Tips)*

- Begin with prayer. It can be spontaneous and from the heart or you can use a memorized prayer.
- Invite the Holy Spirit into your discussion.
- Take a moment of silence to review the reflection questions from that particular week.
- Discuss:
 - Any of the reflection questions
 - What is Christ revealing to you in prayer?
 - What is something that struck you in the passages or meditations?
- Remember, be selective in the questions that you ask. Resist the urge to cover all the provided questions, but rather aim for deep conversation on one or two questions. Focus on honesty, depth, and a chance for everyone to share.
- Close your conversation with prayer, interceding for each other, and those you love. Express your gratitude for God's goodness.

Appendix 2:

Praying with Scripture

If you struggle to pray with Scripture, to visualize a scene, or to hear the Holy Spirit during your Scripture prayer, this is an extended and helpful set of instructions to try to disarm you and encourage you in your Scripture prayer.

Step One: Settle Down

A basic difference between reading scripture and praying with scripture happens from the very beginning when you set about to start the process. Choose a method to “settle down” or “get in the right head and heart space.”

Here are some easy methods you can try:

- Imagine Jesus’ face looking at you as you look at Him. Soak in the feeling of being seen by Jesus and He being seen by you. Let the intimacy between you and Jesus sink in and sit in the moment.
- Take note of what is distracting you (could be stressors, simple noises, your to do list, etc.). Imagine holding your distractions in your hands and then handing them over to the Blessed Mother, just as children hand their moms things to hold while they go play. She will take care of these things until you are done with your Scripture and she will give them back if you want them back.
- Say a short prayer to the Holy Spirit:
 - “Speak Lord, your servant is listening.”
 - “Come Holy Spirit.”
 - “Holy Spirit, you are welcome here.”
 - “Holy Spirit, you do the work.”

Step Two: Make an Act of Trust

Another difference between reading scripture and praying with scripture is that when we pray with scripture we “savor” it. Think about what that means—to savor something. Savoring involves slow, appreciative, reflective enjoyment of an object. Imagine the difference between a meal that is savored and one that is quickly eaten for sustenance. The savored meal is slowly delighted in, each flavor, texture, and scent is appreciated. The quickly eaten meal is barely recognized besides for the nutrients that are deposited on its way through our system.

When you pray with scripture you will savor parts of the stories and words that you likely haven’t noticed before. You will read slowly and in the mindset that the Holy Spirit, Himself, will bring out new images, emotions, and small details, thereby allowing you to receive something you might have normally glanced over.

This savoring requires a very important element, an act of trust in the Holy Spirit to actually show up and do the work that praying with Scripture requires. It also requires an act of trust that we are allowed to use our imagination to pray. We often wrestle in prayer with what is the voice of God and what is our imagination. Our skepticism and desire for certainty can get in the way of letting the Holy Spirit use our imaginations as His instrument. In your praying with Scripture it is proper to lay this battle of deciphering down and trust that what you are imagining and experiencing is from the Holy Spirit.

Step Three: Read Slowly, Use Your Senses, Emotions, and Intellect, Notice What Stands Out.

It is also important to note that when you pray with a bible passage you will read it slowly, and "savoringly." Use your five senses to imagine the scene. Be aware that the Holy Spirit works in different ways for different people and at different times. If it is difficult to actually visualize details (which is a common struggle), remain at peace with how He directs your prayer. He uses our senses, emotions, and intellect to reveal Himself. Take note of any images, words, feelings, questions, or sensations that stick out. It is important to remember that you do not need to know why they stood out. That is for the Holy Spirit to reveal in His own time, for now just take note of 'it', whatever 'it' is, and go back to 'it' as you read the passage again.

Step Four: Read Slowly Again Noticing Any Movements of Imagination, Emotion, Images, Etc.

Read the passage slowly again. Notice the nugget that you picked up on your last reading (step 3). Savor that nugget by allowing extra time on that one word, scene, question, or emotion, and repeat your act of trust to the Holy Spirit to do the work. Resist the urge to control the direction of the prayer, but ponder what is placed in front of you. Let the idea, image, or emotion develop. Remain in the truth that the Holy Spirit guides all prayer and directs all revelation and He will do the work.

Step Five: Final Reading

Read the passage a final time with the same openness and savoring as before. Do not fret if answers or explanations do not come. Instead, this may be the Holy Spirit's way of inviting you back to this passage for another session later.

Step Six: Closure and Thanksgiving

Thank the Holy Spirit for this time and for His action in your prayer. You can be specific if there is a certain moment or consolation you received or you can be thankful simply for what you know was accomplished without you being aware of it. If you like, you can journal at this point about your experience and any consolations or experiences you received. You can ask the Holy Spirit to reveal if there is an action He wants you to take from this experience. Say a Glory Be to end your session giving Glory to God for his living, moving, active Word.

Appendix 3:

I Thirst Meditation

I THIRST FOR YOU.

It is true. I stand at the door of your heart, day and night. Even when you are not listening, even when you doubt it could be Me, I am there: waiting for even the smallest signal of your response, even the smallest suggestion of an invitation that will permit Me to enter.

I want you to know that each time you invite Me, I do come always, without fail. Silent and invisible I come, yet with a power and a love most infinite, bringing the many gifts of My Spirit. I come with My mercy, with My desire to forgive and heal you, with a love for you that goes beyond your comprehension. A love in each detail, so grand like the love I have received from My Father. "I have loved all of you as the Father has loved me..." John 15:10

I come longing to console you and give you strength, to lift you up and bind all your wounds. I bring you My light, to dispel your darkness and all your doubts. I come with My power, that allows me to carry you: with My grace, to touch your heart and transform your life. I come with My peace, to calm your soul. I know you like the palm of my hand. I know everything about you. Even the hairs of your head I have counted. Nothing in your life is unimportant to Me. I have followed you through the years and I have always loved you even when you have strayed. I know every one of your problems. I know your needs and your worries and yes, I know all your sins.

But I tell you again that I love you, not for what you have or ceased to do, I love you for you, for the beauty and the dignity

My Father gave you by creating you in His own image. It is a dignity you have often forgotten, a beauty you have tarnished by sin. But I love you as you are, and I have shed My Blood to rescue you. If you only ask Me with faith, My grace will touch all that needs changing in your life: I will give you the strength to free yourself from sin and from all its destructive power. I know what is in your heart, I know your loneliness and all your wounds, the rejections, the judgments, the humiliations, I carried it all before you. And I carried it all for you, so you could share My strength and My victory. I know, above all, your need for love, how much you are thirsting for love and tenderness. Yet, how many times have you desired to satisfy your thirst in vain, seeking that love with selfishness, trying to fill the void within you with passing pleasures, with the even greater emptiness of sin.

Do you thirst for love?

“Come to Me all you who thirst ...” (John 7:37). I will satisfy you and fill you.

Do you thirst to be loved?

I love you more than you can imagine ... to the point of dying on a cross for you.

I THIRST FOR YOU. Yes, that is the only way to even begin to describe My love for you.

I THIRST FOR YOU. I thirst to love you and to be loved by you. So precious are you to Me that I THIRST FOR YOU. Come to Me, and I will fill your heart and heal your wounds. I will make you a new creation and give you peace even in your trials.

I THIRST FOR YOU

You must never doubt My mercy, My desire to forgive, My longing to bless you and live My life in you, and that I accept you no matter what you have done.

I THIRST FOR YOU.

If you feel of little value before the eyes of the world, it doesn't matter. There is no one that interests me in the whole world than you.

I THIRST FOR YOU.

Open up to Me, come to Me, thirst for Me, give me your life. I will prove to you how important you are for My Heart. Don't you realize that My Father already has a perfect plan to transform your life, beginning from this moment? Trust in Me. Ask Me every day to enter and take charge of your life and I will. I promise you before My Father in Heaven that I will work miracles in your life. Why would I do this?

Because I THIRST FOR YOU.

All I ask of you is that you entrust yourself to Me completely. I will do all the rest. From this moment, now, I behold the place My Father has prepared for you in My Kingdom. Remember that you are a pilgrim in this life traveling back home. Sin can never satisfy you, or bring the peace you seek. All that you have sought outside of Me has only left you more empty, so do not tie yourself to the things of this world; above all, do not run from Me when you fall.

Come to Me without delay because, when you give Me your sins, you give Me the joy of being your Savior. There is nothing I cannot forgive and heal; so come now, and unburden your soul.

No matter how far you have strayed without a destination, no matter how often you have forgotten Me, no matter how many crosses you bear in this life; I want you to always remember, one thing that will never change.

I THIRST FOR YOU – just you, as you are.

You don't need to change to believe in My love, for it will be your confidence in that love that will make you change. You forget Me, and yet I am seeking you every moment of the day – standing before the doors of your heart and calling.

Do you find this difficult to believe? If so, look at the Cross, look at My Heart that was pierced for you.

Have you not understood My Cross? Then listen again to the words I spoke there, for they tell you clearly why I endured all this for you: “....I THIRST” (John 19: 28)

YES, I THIRST FOR YOU.

As the rest of the psalm, I was praying says of Me: “... I waited uselessly for compassion, I waited for someone to console me and I did not find it.” (Psalm 69: 20).

All your life I have been desiring your love. I've never ceased searching for your love and longing to be loved by you in return. You have tried many things in your goal to be happy. Why not try opening up for Me your heart, right now, more than you ever have before?

When you finally open the doors of your heart and you finally come close enough, you will then hear Me say again and again, not in mere human words but in spirit: “No matter what you have done, I love you for your own sake. Come to Me with your

misery and your sins, with your problems and needs, and with all your desire to be loved.

I stand at the door of your heart and call...

Open to Me, for I THIRST FOR YOU...

“Jesus is God, therefore His Love and His Thirst are infinite. He, the Creator of the universe, asked for the love of his creatures. He has thirst for our love ... These words: “I THIRST” ... Do they echo in our soul?

Inspired by Saint Mother Teresa and written by Fr. Joseph Langford, MC (co-founder of Mother Teresa's Priest Community)

Appendix 4:

How To Mass Journal

In order to Mass Journal:

- First, make a plan to bring your Lenten Guide with you and something to write with.
- Start before Mass, by writing your intention for this Mass. Journal any praise, thanksgiving, or petitions you want to offer.
- Next, before Mass, invite the Holy Spirit to move in your heart to bring something to your attention today during Mass. Say a simple prayer like, "Come, Holy Spirit, teach me, guide me, speak to me."
- Pay attention to anything you feel the Holy Spirit showed you, said to you, or brought to your attention to during Mass. You don't have to know why something stood out, just note that it did stand out to you.
 - This could be a word or phrase from a reading, song, or the homily, an image that came to your mind, a new conviction about an action you need to take in your life, a consolation or new understanding about God's love for you, or even something you notice that's new in the Church or during the liturgy. Sometimes, it might even be something that happened randomly with someone else in a different pew that was called to your attention like a mother interacting with a child or another person's reverence at Communion.
- Write down anything that the Spirit calls your attention to.
- After Mass, reflect on and journal about what God may be trying to teach you, inspire you to do, or give you in this moment.
- Praise and thank God for the gift of this Mass.

Appendix 5: *Heart Prayer*

Use the acronym HEART to help you with ideas of how to spend your special communion time with Jesus.

**Bring this prayer with you to Mass for communion time.*



He is **H**ere! Use your eyes of faith and imagination to acknowledge Jesus is truly with you! What does it feel like when He is with you? What does He say to you? How does He seem (excited, loving, strong)?



Emotions. Acknowledge how you are feeling right now with Jesus. What excites you? Share with Him all the things that excite you and make you happy. (Maybe it's Him!) Tell Him about fun things you have done or will do. He loves to share in your joy. Tell Him what is bothering your heart right now. Relate to Him your fears, worries, or needs. Jesus is there to comfort you, protect you, and take care of you.



Around your heart room. Show Him around your heart room. What do you show Him? What do you and Jesus do together in your heart room?



Requests: Do you have anything to ask Jesus? Anything you or your family needs? Trust that He cares so much about what you care about and wants to take care of you. Now ask Him if He has anything to request of you. Does He have any favors He wants you to do or anyone He wants you to love for Him?



Thank Him and praise Him. Tell Him thank you for being so amazing. Tell Him what you love about Him. Tell Him what you think is amazing about Him. Thank Him for all the things He has given you and especially for wanting to be with you and loving you. How does He react when you thank Him and praise Him? Imagine it now and notice it!

