



WEEK 1 September 20 - 26 C is for COMMUNITY

As Catholics, we were never meant to walk the path of faith alone. Community is an essential part of discipleship—a place where we are known, loved, encouraged, challenged, and invited to grow closer to Christ. As we begin our C.H.R.I.S.T. Discipleship Path, we are reminded that the Church is not simply something we attend; it is a family we belong to. Along this journey, we need one another to recognize God's presence, grow in holiness, persevere through challenges, and discover how God is calling us to use our gifts. At the same time, we are called to walk alongside and encourage others. Christian community invites us to move beyond simply asking, "What do I receive?" and instead ask, "How is God calling me to build up His Church and help others grow closer to Christ?" When we journey together, we become more like Christ. Our mission: To know and love Jesus and make him better known as we become a community of disciples making disciples.

OPENING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, thank You for gathering us together as a community. As we focus on our Discipleship Path- help us to remember we are called to continual growth in our relationship with you and one another. Open our hearts to learn from one another and help us to see each person as a beloved child of God. Remove from us comparison, judgment, and the desire to prove ourselves. Give us humility to listen, generosity to encourage, and courage to share honestly. May this time together draw us closer to You and to one another, so that our community may reflect the love and mercy of Your Kingdom. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Readings for Sunday, September 20

1st Reading — Isaiah 55:6–9

God's ways are greater than our ways, reminding us that authentic Christian community requires humility: we make room for people whose stories, gifts, and paths may look very different from our own.

Responsorial Psalm — Psalm 145

"The Lord is near to all who call upon him," reminding us that God draws us together as a community where everyone is invited to approach Him and experience His compassion.

2nd Reading — Philippians 1:20c–24, 27a

Paul recognizes that his life is not simply about himself but about fruitful labor for others, challenging us to see our presence in community as an opportunity to serve and strengthen one another. "To live is Christ"

Gospel — Matthew 20:1–16a

Jesus' parable of the workers in the vineyard challenges our tendency to compare and compete, inviting us instead to rejoice in God's generosity and recognize that there is a place and purpose for everyone in His community

Additional Scripture Passages

1 Peter 4:8: "Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DIALOGUE

Take some time to reflect on this week's message and discuss with your group:

COMMUNITY — We Need One Another

- Where do you experience a strong sense of community right now? What makes it life-giving and meaningful to you?
- Jesus teaches that “the last will be first, and the first will be last.” How does this challenge comparison, jealousy, or competition within a community?
- When someone is difficult to understand or love, what would it look like to see that person through Christ's eyes?

BUILDING COMMUNITY — Our Part in the Mission

- What is one small action you could take to make your home, workplace, school, parish, or neighborhood more welcoming and life-giving?
- Think of a community where you immediately felt welcomed and like you belonged. What did people do, and how could we practice that same hospitality?
- Our mission is “to know and love Jesus and make Him better known as we become a community of disciples making disciples.” Who might God be inviting you to encourage, welcome, or accompany closer to Christ?

PRAY

- Pray for the leaders of our parish, ministries, and small faith groups. Ask God where He may be calling you to serve or lead.
- Pray for our students, families, catechists, and youth leaders as we begin another year of Faith Formation and Youth Ministry.
- Pray for someone in your community who may be lonely, searching, or in need of encouragement.

ACT

- Join us for our Kick-Off BBQ at St. John Vianney on Sunday, September 20 at 11:30 AM.
- Reach out to someone—a friend, neighbor, family member, or someone you haven't connected with in a while.
- Thank someone who has made a difference in your life or helped you feel that you belong.
- Come & See! Invite someone who is not currently in a small group to our Spiritual Journey Open House: St. Mary — Tuesday, September 22 at 1:00 PM & St. John Vianney — Thursday, September 24 at 7:00 PM

INSPIRE

- Look beyond your usual circle. Meet someone new at Mass or in our parish and help them feel that they belong.
- When you encounter someone who is different from you, choose to see them first as someone who is beloved by God.
- Ask yourself: “Who might need an invitation, encouragement, or a place to belong—and how can I be that person for them?”

Extra: Discipleship Challenge —

This week be aware of opportunities of how you can be Christ for someone and if God calls you, do it!

INTERCESSIONS FOR THE GROUP AND CLOSING PRAYER

Take some time to pray together for the persons or people on the hearts of your small group members.

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, thank you for the gift of this community and for the people you have placed in our lives. We are not only called to belong to a community—we are called to help build one. Help us to welcome, encourage, serve, and walk alongside one another so that we can become a community of disciples making disciples. May our lives together give glory to you and make your Kingdom more visible in the world. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.