



WEEK 3 October 4 - 10 R is for RETREAT

Retreat is an important part of the discipleship path because **we cannot continually pour out without making space to be filled by God.** In the midst of busy lives, we need intentional moments to slow down, quiet our hearts, and listen for God's voice. Retreat invites us to step away from distractions and return our attention to what is true, good, and worthy of praise. It is not simply about getting away; **it is about returning to God**—receiving His grace, allowing Him to renew our hearts, and recognizing where He is inviting us to grow. When we make space for God, we are better able to bear fruit in our lives and bring His love to others.

As we continue our **C.H.R.I.S.T. Discipleship Path**, we see how Community, Holiness, and Retreat go hand in hand. When we journey together as a Community, we are known, loved, and encouraged to grow closer to Christ. As we grow in **Holiness**, we become more like Him, and through **Retreat**, we make intentional space to step away from the busyness of life, reflect, rest in God's presence, and allow Him to renew our hearts. **Together, we are becoming a community of disciples making disciples—knowing and loving Jesus and making Him better known.**

OPENING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, we come before You grateful for this time together. Help us to slow down, quiet our hearts, and make space for Your presence. In the midst of our busy lives, remind us that we need time to rest in You, listen to You, and allow You to speak into our hearts.

Help us to release the distractions and worries that keep us from You. Fill our minds with what is true, good, and worthy of praise. Show us what You are inviting us to receive, surrender, or change.

As we share together tonight, give us open hearts and listening ears. May this time draw us closer to You and help us return to our lives refreshed and ready to bear fruit.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Readings for Sunday, October 4

First Reading — Isaiah 5:1–7: God lovingly plants and cares for His vineyard, calling His people to bear good fruit through faithful living.

Responsorial Psalm — Psalm 80: The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel, reminding us that God faithfully cares for His people.

Second Reading — Philippians 4:6–9: St. Paul encourages us to bring everything to God in prayer and to focus our minds on what is true, honorable, just, and good.

Gospel — Matthew 21:33–43: Jesus teaches through the parable of the vineyard that God entrusts His people with His gifts and expects us to produce good fruit.

WATCH FATHER'S HOMILY FROM SUNDAY'S MASS. THE LINK IS ON THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY HOME PAGE.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DIALOGUE

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

1. **When you hear the word “retreat,” what comes to mind?** What makes it difficult for you to slow down and make space for God?
2. St. Paul encourages us to focus our minds on what is **true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, and worthy of praise**. What tends to fill your mind and heart throughout the week? Is it helping you grow closer to Christ?
3. **What is one thing you may need to step away from or set aside** in order to create more space for God?
4. In the Gospel, Jesus speaks about the vineyard and the fruit it is meant to produce. **What “fruit” do you think God desires to produce in your life right now?**
5. **How do you personally recognize when you need to retreat?** What are some signs that your soul needs rest, prayer, or reconnection with God?
6. Retreat is not simply about getting away—it is about **returning to God**. What helps you become more aware of God's presence in your everyday life?

PRAY

- Ask: “Lord, what are You trying to show me?”
 - Walk the labyrinth with prayer at St. John Vianney.
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ACT

- Pay attention to what you are allowing to fill your mind, heart, and schedule.
 - Choose one thing to remove or set aside this week so you can make more room for God.
 - Like the vineyard in the Gospel, ask: “What fruit is God hoping to produce in my life?”
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INSPIRE

- Let the peace and goodness God is cultivating in you overflow into the lives of others.
- Encourage someone by sharing something God has been teaching you.
- Look for one opportunity to help another person take a step closer to Christ.
- Set aside intentional “mini retreat” time this week to be quiet with God—without distractions, noise, or an agenda.

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 meeting us here tonight. Thank You for the opportunity to pause, listen, and make space for You. Help us carry this time of retreat with us as we return to the busyness of our everyday lives.

Give us the grace to protect time for prayer, to recognize Your presence, and to keep our hearts focused on what is true, good, and holy. May what we have received tonight bear fruit in the way we love, serve, and encourage others.

Help us remember that we never journey alone. Send us forth with Your peace and a renewed desire to follow You more closely.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.