



Gathering Guide for Week 11 of the Summer Tour - August 24-30



“Strive to enter through the narrow gate”

*Jesus challenges us to consider our own lives and the choices we make,
for it will be difficult to make it through the narrow gate.*

In our Gospel this week, Jesus urges us to consider the choices we make in this life, advising us to strive to follow the path of His Way, the path of righteousness and truth: a life of love, integrity, humility and compassion.

And He warns us that this path is not easy, that not everyone will be strong enough to make it through that narrow gate. So, we must condition ourselves to be “strong enough” through prayer and the daily conversion that comes from effort and commitment.

Below are the steps for your Lectio Divina prayer during your Group gathering. You may choose to experience the first five steps on your own, in advance of your group gathering ... or if you are not able to join your group this week.

When you are in group, be sure to allow times of silence throughout these steps so that God may enter into your hearts.

1. Pray. Take a moment to calm yourself and open your heart to hearing what God wants you to recognize in this Gospel. (Then pray throughout...)

Heavenly Father,

Thank you for the small group that You have brought into my life. Bless each person, that their week will be filled with Your Holy Spirit and their days will be filled with the joy that our faith in You brings us.

As we each prepare for our next Group gathering, bless each of us with eyes to truly see Your Word, with ears to truly hear Your voice and with the grace to be open to the changes You want each of us to make in our lives this week.

Thank You for loving me, dear Jesus. I love You.

Amen.

2. Read. Read or/ or listen to this week's Gospel. As you read, **pray:** *God, give me **eyes to see** what you want me to see in this Gospel.*

Sunday, August 24: The 21 st Sunday in Ordinary Time; Luke 13:22-30

Jesus passed through towns and villages, teaching as He went and making His way to Jerusalem.

Someone asked Him, "Lord, will only a few people be saved?"

He answered them, "Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I tell you, will attempt to enter but will not be strong enough. After the master of the house has arisen and locked the door, then will you stand outside knocking and saying, 'Lord, open the door for us.' He will say to you in reply, 'I do not know where you are from. And you will say, 'We ate and drank in your company and you taught in our streets.' Then he will say to you, 'I do not know where you are from. Depart from me, all you evildoers!'

"And there will be wailing and grinding of teeth when you see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God and you yourselves cast out. And people will come from the east and the west and from the north and the south and will recline at table in the kingdom of God. For behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last."

The Gospel of the Lord. *Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ.*

3. Meditate. Note any word or phrase that stands out to you. Now, re-read the passage, focusing on the word or phrase that first got your attention. **Pray:** *God, give me **ears to hear** what You are telling me in this Gospel.*

4. Pray. Engage in conversation with God, expressing your thoughts and feelings related to the passage, especially the particular word or phrases that stood out to you.

5. Contemplate. Rest in God's presence, allowing yourself to be still and receive God's insights from the Scripture passage. Consider what God may be saying to you in the word or phrase that stood out to you. Consider what action or change He may be inspiring you to take. **Pray:** *God, **give me the grace** to make the changes in my life that You want me to make, inspired by this Gospel.*

6. Share. When it is your turn in Group, share what word or phrase stood out to you, why it stood out and what action you believe God is asking of you.

7. Listen. Learn. Help. When others share their experiences of what stood out to them, why and the action it inspired, try to understand and learn from what you hear. If there is something you can do for someone, as an individual or as a group, to help them with their action, offer that.

8. Reflect on additional questions. If there is time after your Lectio Divina sharing, consider these Reflection Questions:

- Have you ever felt torn between doing what is right and what is convenient? How difficult was it to choose the “narrow path”? (Or did you?!?)
- What kind of legacy do you want to leave behind? How do you want to be remembered? How might you be described if you were faithful in taking the “narrow path”?
- How prepared are you to commit to a deeper relationship with Christ and to enter through the narrow door of spiritual growth?

9. Pray.

After this moving prayer experience, you will likely want to close by thanking God.

Intersessions for the Group: Take some time before the gathering concludes to pray together for the group members.

God in Heaven,

Thank You for caring so much for me that You speak to me in Your Gospel. Please continue to give me eyes that see what You want me to see, ears that hear what You want me to Hear and the grace that enables me to change in the ways that You want me to change. Help me to always trust in You.

And thank you for the people You have placed in my life who help me on my journey to grow closer to You, to love You and to serve You and your children. I am especially grateful for the people in my small Group.

Bless all of us with a peaceful and joy-filled week ahead. And please keep us safe and healthy, especially those who are traveling.

*I pray in the Name of Your Son, Jesus.
Amen.*