

Planning

Allow an hour or more for this process.

It is helpful if different people take responsibility for different parts of the process - e.g. one person leading the session as a whole, and managing the time; another reading the scripture passage; another reading the passage from *The Gift of Scripture*; another being prepared to summarise the discussion and (as appropriate) decisions made by the group. These tasks should be distributed before the session begins, not least to allow the readers time to consider what they are reading.

What does the Deanery want to get from this discussion? Does it wish it to inform some decision already taken - for example to prepare a formation day on scripture for Readers and Catechists? Or does it want some such suggestions to come out of the discussion? These will have an influence on how the discussion will be led.

In order to help people listen to the reading of God's word without distraction it is better to distribute the participants' sheets immediately before reading of the extract from *The Gift of Scripture*.

Session

1. Gathering in Prayer

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Briefly introduce the session to participants. For example:

'We begin with a prayerful listening to God's word. N. will read to us from the Letter to the Hebrews and then we will keep silence together for two minutes, allowing for a deeper hearing and pondering on the word.

Then O. will read us an extract from *The Gift of Scripture*, the new teaching document from the Bishops of England and Wales.

Again we will keep silence for a couple of minutes to ponder on what we have heard, and then begin to discuss the issues raised. A range of questions are provided for us, and it has been agreed that we have an hour available for this session.'

2. Discussion

The discussion questions are intended to assist your time of discussion, but you might wish to vary them, according to local need and circumstances.

3. Conclusions

a) Where next

It is likely to be helpful for a member of the group to be invited to sum up the discussion, and highlight any decisions which have been made.

It will generally be better if this summary is provided by a different member of the group, to the one who has managed the time/led the session.

b) Prayer

Invite the group to keep a moment or two of silence and then to invite prayer for any particular intentions.

Conclude with the following prayer:

Leader: Our God and Father,
your will is that all should be saved
and come to the knowledge of your truth.
Send workers into your great harvest,
so that the Gospel may be preached to every creature
and your people, gathered by the word of life
and strengthened by the power of the sacraments,
may advance in the way of salvation and love.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Follow-up

- What needs to be done after the meeting?
- Who is taking responsibility for it?
- What needs to be reported back to the next meeting?

Opening the Gift of Scripture

Leader's Notes for Deanery Groups

One of a series of resources prepared by the Liturgy Office of the Bishops' Conference to accompany the publication of *The Gift of Scripture* a teaching document of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, and of Scotland. The document can be downloaded from www.catholic-ew.org.uk and is published by the Catholic Truth Society [www.cts-online.org.uk]. Further resources are available from www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/Scripture

Concluding prayer taken from 'Rite for Blessing on Missionaries sent to proclaim the Gospel', *The Book of Blessings* © 1987 ICEL. Editorial and other material © 2005 Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. S001a

**Liturgy
Office**
ENGLAND
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A Resource for
THE GIFT OF SCRIPTURE

