

The Encounter with Christ : The Essence and The Practical



REGNUM CHRISTI

Love, Serve, Build

Overview: The Essence

- The purpose of the Encounter is **to help us meet the living Christ**, our Savior, more intensely each day. By applying what we read and meditate on in the Gospel, by analyzing our personal fidelity to apostolic and spiritual commitments, and by contemplating contemporary occurrences in the light of the Gospel, **we come to recognize Christ walking by our side** RCH 591
 - all should participate with **simplicity, spontaneity, interest and happiness**, seeking in each encounter the light, strength and motivation which the Lord has especially prepared for each of us and for each team. RCH 616
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Overview: The Practical

- Never to exceed 1hr 15 min
 - Strive to begin on time
 - Ideally held in an RC center, but this is flexible
 - Can be led by the Team Leader or another delegated member
 - Deal with distractions before starting
 - Secretary takes notes for the Team Leader
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Gospel Reflection: The Essence

- **Reading and reflecting on the Gospel prepare us spiritually for the review of commitments to follow. They are also excellent means for uniting us to Christ and assimilating his criteria. We want to learn to view every person, thing, situation and occurrence through his eyes, and to feel about them as he feels.**
RCMH 600
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Gospel Reflection: The Essence



We approach the gospel as we view and appreciate a work of art – letting it impact me and speak to me, noticing what is resonating with me spiritually and listening for God’s personal message to me through his Living Word.

This differs from a bible study where we may concentrate on exegesis, or contemporary analysis or catechesis contained in the passage.

Gospel Reflection: The Practical

- Readings are chosen by Section director – can be next Sunday's Gospel, or selected Gospels meant to address the needs of the participants and the major elements of RC spirituality
 - All members should have an opportunity to read the Gospel passage.
 - The gospel is read standing, after the opening prayer, then all kiss their bibles and sit
 - A few moments of silent reflection follow – length depends on needs of team.
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Gospel Reflection: The Practical

- Participants then freely offer their brief and spontaneous reflections.
 - Moderator or Secretary summarizes lights to end the gospel reflection
 - The Gospel reflection should never exceed 15 minutes total.
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Review of Commitments: The Essence

- We draw **spiritual strength** from this practice of **discovering our personal relationship to God's plan for us**. The review should be done with **simplicity and sincerity** in an atmosphere of both fraternal **charity and militancy**, as it helps to stimulate the positive and tactfully but effectively correct the negative or mediocre in us. **RCH**
605
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Review of Commitments: The Practical

- Does not necessarily need to be done out loud, can be done privately, at the discretion of the Section Director
 - Commitments to work on are selected by the Team Leader, 2 from each area, based on the needs of the team. Never select the commitment about maintaining a life of grace, as it's imprudent to ask people to state whether or not they are in a state of grace.
 - To these, the participants may choose to add one or two personal or apostolic commitments particular to the team
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Review of Commitments: The Practical

- The commitments are read aloud by the moderator or the secretary. Every team member responds simply: “fulfilled,” “not fulfilled,” or “partially fulfilled,” without adding excuses, justifications or commentary of any kind. (In case this review is not made publicly, a few seconds of silence should follow the reading of each commitment).
 - This second part of the Encounter concludes with a brief spontaneous prayer made by one of the members on behalf of the entire team. The prayer should give thanks to God, ask for his help, strength and light, and place each participant’s intentions in his hands. The prayer should make no mention of the results of the commitment review.
 - The commitment review should take no longer than 5 minutes
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Case Study: Essence

- **Next we try to find God as he reveals himself to us in the occurrences of everyday life. Looking at real life with faith reveals God's saving plan, and disposes us to collaborate with Him in carrying out His plan even in the face of evil. The case study is a search for a new vision of life, a vision based on both human and Gospel values. It is a search for God's will in life's events and for his vision of the world. The case study calls us to apostolic action for the sake of a world that needs us to make Christ and his kingdom present to it. RCH 608**
 - **Comes from Encyclical Mater et Magistra, John XXIII, 1961**
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Case study: The Practical

- Each member presents an event, happening or occurrence.
 - The event chosen can refer to any of life's dimensions: social, economic, moral, political, family-related, religious, or human.
 - The case should preferably be current, not necessarily of global importance, but something which provokes consciousness of a human problem, awakens a sense of solidarity, and nourishes our spirit of fight for authenticity in the Christian spirit
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Case Study: The Practical

- The Case Study should take no more than 45 minutes
 - It should be a natural conversation – not a check list of criteria to evaluate
 - From the proposed cases, the team votes to select one. Cases should be selected based on how beneficial they will be to the participants and how common the situation is.
 - Once the case is chosen, three steps follow:
 - seeing
 - judging
 - acting
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To See

- What problems or dilemmas does it present?
 - What are the causes and consequences?
 - common or how representative is this case?
 - Try to pass from the particular (situational) to the universal (focused on the virtue involved), offering similar cases. The effort here is not so much to make a precise analysis, but to bring all the participants to a better understanding of the issue at hand
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To judge

- the case in light of the Gospel using any relevant Gospel passages, attitudes or acts of Christ, or parallel situations in the Gospel to help us interpret the case and the problem it reveals
 - make a judgment about what the world would say about this case: the values or anti-values which can be seen
 - **Never forget however that the most important thing is to encounter Christ, and our judgments are made in light of Christ and his word**
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To Act

- to forge Christian criteria in ourselves and to enlighten and strengthen our wills according to the imperatives which have come to light in the previous phases of the encounters
 - We act on two levels: personally and apostolically
 - We accomplish this in three ways: the light of the Gospel allows each of us to rectify something in our own lives which needed correction; we also act on the causes which are at the root of the problem which has been discussed; when possible, we can also act directly to address the people or problem discussed- but this aspect is not the primary focus
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Review of Apostolic Commitment

- This stage should take no more than 10 minutes
 - In this phase we seek to develop and stimulate apostolic zeal. It has two stages:
 - 1) First the participants examine the course and progress of the apostolic commitment of the team.
 - 2) Secondly, the team reviews the fruits obtained from the fulfillment of the resolution of the previous week's Encounter (the resolution of the case study).
 - This is followed by the closing prayer.
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Considerations

- Given the frequency of the Encounter in Movement life, teams should strive seriously to use every necessary means not to fall into routine.
 - Give the Encounter its proper time, neither stretching it out nor cutting it short
 - strive to live it in a spiritually focused atmosphere, ever aware that it is a formative activity
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Considerations

- Again...

all should participate with simplicity, spontaneity, interest and happiness, seeking in each encounter the light, strength and motivation which the Lord has especially prepared for each of us and for each team.

Questions?