

RETREATS

Purpose: To equip both retreat leaders and participants with the tools, understanding, and spiritual disposition necessary for fruitful retreat experiences that foster deep interior growth and mission readiness.

I. Introduction

Retreats are intentional periods set apart from ordinary life to encounter God, reflect deeply on personal and communal life, and foster growth in virtues, spiritual discernment, and apostolic readiness.

Objectives:

- Cultivate a rhythm of silence, prayer, and reflection.
- Encourage participants to notice God's presence in daily life.
- Develop skills for spiritual leadership and accompaniment.
- Foster communal discernment and mutual support among formandi.

Audience:

- **Participants:** Formandi seeking interior growth, clarity of vocation, and renewed commitment to mission.
- **Leaders/Facilitators:** Formators, spiritual directors, and missionary mentors guiding the retreat experience.

II. Theological and Spiritual Foundations

1. Biblical Basis:

- Jesus' retreats into solitude (Mk. 1:35, Lk. 5:16) as models for prayer and discernment.
- The Exodus narrative as a journey into wilderness for transformation (Ex. 3:1–12).

2. Church Tradition:

- Ignatian Spiritual Exercises: structured discernment and interior reflection.
- Monastic retreats: silence, simplicity, and attentiveness to God.
- Contemporary missionary spirituality: retreat as preparation for apostolic service.

3. Spiritual Principles:

- **Silence and Solitude:** creating space for the Spirit to speak.
- **Detachment and Reflection:** evaluating attachments to deepen interior freedom.
- **Contemplation in Action:** connecting interior transformation with external mission.

III. Core Content for Formation Sessions

A. For Participants:

1. Preparation for Retreat:

- Personal discernment and goal-setting.
- Clearing schedules and responsibilities to create mental space.
- Journaling initial intentions and expectations.

2. During the Retreat:

- Daily rhythm: prayer, reflection, spiritual reading, and guided exercises.
- Practices: examen of conscience, *lectio divina*, contemplative silence, and journaling.
- Community reflection: sharing insights in small groups without forcing outcomes.

3. Post-Retreat Integration:

- Writing a synthesis of spiritual insights and practical resolutions.
- Identifying concrete actions for personal growth and mission readiness.
- Committing to follow-up accompaniment or accountability.

B. For Leaders/Facilitators:

1. Retreat Design:

- Duration: 1–3 days for short retreats, 6, 8 and 30 days for intensive retreats.
- Structuring prayer, talks, reflection periods, and communal activities.
- Flexibility: balancing program structure with participant needs.

2. Guiding Participants:

- Cultivating a safe, prayerful, and confidential environment.
- Providing individualized spiritual accompaniment and discernment guidance.
- Observing participant engagement without undue interference.

3. Leadership Attitude:

- Practicing presence, empathy, and humility.
- Avoiding over-direction: fostering interior freedom.
- Facilitating group dynamics, conflict resolution, and prayerful dialogue.

IV. Practical Guidelines

- **Retreat Environment:** peaceful, simple, natural, if possible, conducive to prayer.
- **Daily Schedule:**
 - Morning prayer and reflection
 - Meditation or guided talk
 - Silence or contemplative walk
 - Group sharing or spiritual accompaniment
 - Evening examen and journaling
- **Materials Needed:** Bible, spiritual readings, journal, writing materials, meditation aids.
- **Communication:** minimal external distractions; phones and devices limited to emergencies.

V. Tools for Self-Reflection and Assessment

1. Journaling Prompts:

- “Where did I sense God’s presence today?”
- “What movements of my heart need attention?”
- “What attachment or fear is holding me back from full surrender?”

2. Daily Examen:

- Noticing consolations and desolations.
- Evaluating choices, attitudes, and openness to God’s grace.

3. Leader Observation Sheet:

- Engagement in prayer and reflection
- Participation in group sharing
- Emotional, spiritual, and social responsiveness

VI. Practices to Cultivate Retreat Fruitfulness

- **Silence and Mindfulness:** at least 30–60 minutes daily without conversation.
- **Lectio Divina:** structured reading, meditation, prayer, contemplation, and resolution.
- **Guided Reflection:** weekly or daily talks on virtues, mission, or interior growth.
- **Spiritual Companionship:** optional one-on-one sessions with the leader.

VII. Accompaniment Guidelines for Leaders

Accompaniment is the intentional, prayerful, and supportive guidance a leader provides to formandi as they grow spiritually, emotionally, and missionally. It is not about controlling or prescribing but walking alongside, facilitating growth, and fostering discernment.

1. Principles of Accompaniment

1. **Presence** – Be genuinely present, both physically and emotionally. Your attentive presence communicates God’s care.
 - *Practice:* Maintain eye contact, listen fully, and avoid distractions during interactions.
2. **Patience** – Growth is gradual. Respect the pace of each formandus.
 - *Practice:* Avoid rushing answers; allow silence for reflection.
3. **Non-judgmental Listening** – Create a safe space for sharing thoughts, doubts, fears, and insights.
 - *Practice:* Respond with empathy, not immediate correction.
4. **Spiritual Discernment** – Help formandi recognize God’s movements in their lives without imposing your interpretation.
 - *Practice:* Ask open-ended questions: “Where do you feel God leading you?”
5. **Confidentiality** – Respect privacy, ensuring trust and freedom to share honestly.
6. **Encouragement of Autonomy** – Foster responsible freedom; accompany, do not control.
7. **Integration of Prayer and Reflection** – Anchor all accompaniment in prayer and reflective practice.

2. Practical Accompaniment Strategies

A. Individual Accompaniment

- **Personal Check-ins:** Schedule regular meetings to discuss insights, struggles, and progress.
- **Guided Examen:** Walk through daily reflections, helping identify consolations, desolations, and spiritual movements.
- **Goal Setting:** Collaboratively define realistic spiritual or personal goals (e.g., cultivating a virtue, deepening prayer life).
- **Accountability:** Encourage commitment to concrete steps without judgment or pressure.

B. Group Accompaniment

- **Facilitating Sharing:** Lead small-group discussions, encouraging respectful listening and mutual support.
- **Prayer Circles:** Guide participants in shared prayer, teaching techniques like Lectio Divina or imaginative prayer.
- **Modelling Behaviour:** Demonstrate humility, patience, and charity; formandi learn as much from example as instruction.
- **Conflict Mediation:** Help groups navigate interpersonal conflicts with clarity, empathy, and charity.

3. Tools and Techniques for Leaders

1. **Journals and Reflection Logs** – Encourage formandi to record daily prayer, insights, and challenges; review periodically.
2. **Spiritual Exercises** – Use structured exercises like Lectio Divina, imaginative prayer, or silent retreats.
3. **Assessment Tools** – Optional checklists for virtues, emotional regulation, or mission readiness to guide reflection.

4. **Storytelling and Testimonies** – Share personal or scriptural experiences to illustrate concepts.
5. **Role-Playing** – Practice situations like ministry challenges, peer accompaniment, or leadership scenarios.

4. Responding to Challenges

- **Resistance or Reluctance:** Gently explore underlying reasons; encourage dialogue, not confrontation.
- **Spiritual Dryness or Discouragement:** Normalize the experience; suggest prayer, reflection, and patience.
- **Emotional or Relational Struggles:** Offer guidance, listen empathetically, and refer to professional help if needed.
- **Overdependence on the Leader:** Gradually encourage autonomy; emphasize personal discernment and prayer.

5. Stages of Accompaniment

Stage	Focus	Leader's Role
Initial Formation	Orientation, self-discovery, and trust	Build rapport, introduce prayer and reflection practices, observe natural pace
Intermediate Formation	Growth in virtue, discernment, and mission awareness	Encourage introspection, model spiritual habits, facilitate deeper reflection
Advanced Formation	Mission readiness, leadership, and apostolic action	Guide integration of prayer, action, and service; promote autonomous decision-making and responsible freedom

6. Key Questions for Accompaniment

- What movements of the Spirit are you noticing in your daily life?
- Where do you feel challenged or tempted?
- How do you perceive God's invitation to growth or mission?
- What supports or hinders your freedom and discernment?
- How are you integrating prayer and reflection into your daily life?

7. Self-Care for Leaders

Accompanying others is spiritually and emotionally demanding. Leaders should:

- Maintain personal prayer, reflection, and retreat practices.
- Seek mentorship and peer support.
- Set healthy boundaries to avoid burnout.
- Reflect regularly on one's own growth and blind spots.

8. Integration into Retreats

- Leaders should model accompaniment during retreats by walking alongside participants in prayer, silence, reflection, and group exercises.
- Incorporate structured one-on-one sessions and guided group discussions.
- Use reflection exercises to facilitate insight and integration after each talk.
- Encourage journaling, mutual encouragement, and feedback loops between leader and formandi.

Summary: Accompaniment is a **holistic, prayerful, and relational practice**. It combines spiritual guidance, attentive listening, reflective exercises, and support for autonomy. Leaders walk alongside formandi, helping them discern God’s presence, cultivate virtues, deepen prayer life, and prepare for mission, all while maintaining trust, confidentiality, and a spirit of charity.

VIII. Assessment and Follow-up Tools

1. **Participant Self-Assessment:**
 - Reflection journal review
 - Personal growth checklist: prayer life, clarity of mission, emotional regulation
2. **Formator Feedback:**
 - Observations on participant engagement, openness, and spiritual growth
 - Notes on group dynamics and personal breakthroughs
3. **Integration Plan:**
 - Follow-up sessions post-retreat
 - Accountability for resolutions and mission-oriented actions

IX. Recommended Resources

- **Spiritual Classics:**
 - *Spiritual Exercises* – St. Ignatius of Loyola
 - *The Imitation of Christ* – Thomas à Kempis
 - *Interior Castle* – St. Teresa of Avila
- **Contemporary Guides:**
 - *Retreat Handbook* – Thomas H. Green
 - *The Art of Spiritual Direction* – William A. Barry & William J. Connolly
- **Prayer and Meditation Apps:** optional, for guided practice outside retreat

X. Conclusion

Retreats are powerful instruments of formation when approached intentionally, with openness to God’s grace and guided by skilled leaders. By cultivating silence, reflection, and discernment, participants experience deeper interior freedom, renewed mission readiness, and the skills necessary to accompany others in spiritual growth. Leaders, in turn, grow in empathy, wisdom, and the ability to foster transformative retreats that balance structure and freedom.

Retreat Themes by Stage of Formation

1. Early Formation / Initial Discernment

Focus: Self-discovery, vocational awareness, and personal relationship with God.

Retreat Themes & Talks:

Theme 1: Discovering God’s Call

1. *The Call to Follow* – Mat. 4:18–22 – Reflection: How is God inviting me?
2. *Hearing God’s Voice* – 1 Sam. 3:1–10 – Reflection: How do I listen for God daily?
3. *God’s Love for Me* – Ps. 139:1–18 – Reflection: How does God see me uniquely?
4. *Faith in the Unknown* – Heb. 11:1–3 – Reflection: How can I trust God’s guidance?
5. *Responding with Yes* – Lk. 1:26–38 – Reflection: What keeps me from saying “yes” to God?

Theme 2: Opening to Grace

1. *Recognizing God's Presence* – Acts 17:24–28 – Reflection: Where is God active in my life?
2. *Moments of Consolation* – Ps. 23 – Reflection: When do I feel God's comfort?
3. *Overcoming Resistance* – Rom. 8:28–30 – Reflection: How can I embrace God's plan?
4. *The Gift of Prayer* – Phil. 4:6–7 – Reflection: How do I communicate with God?
5. *Inviting the Spirit* – Jn. 14:26 – Reflection: How can I cooperate with the Holy Spirit?

Theme 3: Self-Knowledge in Christ

1. *Who Am I in Christ?* – 2 Cor. 5:17 – Reflection: What does it mean to be “new in Christ”?
2. *Strengths and Weaknesses* – 1 Cor. 12:4–11 – Reflection: How can my gifts serve others?
3. *Authenticity Before God* – Ps. 51:6 – Reflection: Am I honest with God about my life?
4. *The Light of Conscience* – Rom. 2:14–15 – Reflection: What is my inner guide saying?
5. *Living with Purpose* – Col. 3:23–24 – Reflection: How can I live intentionally for God?

Theme 4: Trust and Surrender

1. *Letting Go and Letting God* – Lk. 12:22–34 – Reflection: What attachments hold me back?
2. *Faith Over Fear* – Is. 41:10 – Reflection: How can I trust God in uncertainty?
3. *Guided by the Spirit* – Rom. 8:14 – Reflection: How do I follow God's lead?
4. *Prayer as Conversation* – Mat. 6:6 – Reflection: How can I deepen my prayer life?
5. *Courage to Begin* – Jos. 1:9 – Reflection: What steps of faith do I need to take?

Theme 5: Foundations of Community Life

1. *Living in Communion* – Acts 2:42–47 – Reflection: How do I relate to others in faith?
2. *Mutual Support and Growth* – Gal. 6:2 – Reflection: How can I bear others' burdens?
3. *Forgiveness and Reconciliation* – Mat. 18:21–22 – Reflection: Who do I need to forgive?
4. *Serving Together* – 1 Pet. 4:10–11 – Reflection: How can I use my gifts for the community?
5. *Witnessing in Word and Deed* – Mat. 5:14–16 – Reflection: How do my actions reflect God?

2. Intermediate Formation / Deepening Spiritual Life

Focus: Interior freedom, virtue formation, and living missionally.

Theme 1: Freedom in Christ

1. *Breaking Chains* – Gal. 5:1 – Reflection: What freedom is God calling me to?
2. *Detachment from Worldly Attachments* – Lk. 14:33 – Reflection: What can I release to follow Christ?
3. *Freedom in Obedience* – Jn. 8:31–32 – Reflection: How does obedience lead to true liberty?
4. *Overcoming Fear* – 2 Tim. 1:7 – Reflection: What fears limit my growth?
5. *Living Authentically* – Rom. 12:2 – Reflection: How can I live fully in Christ?

Theme 2: Growing in Virtue

1. *Faith as Foundation* – Heb. 11:1–6 – Reflection: How is my faith active?
2. *Hope in God's Promises* – Rom. 5:1–5 – Reflection: How does hope sustain me?
3. *Charity in Action* – 1 Cor. 13:1–13 – Reflection: How do I love concretely?
4. *Humility and Service* – Phil. 2:3–8 – Reflection: How can I serve without seeking reward?
5. *Perseverance in Trials* – Jam. 1:2–4 – Reflection: How can I grow in virtue through challenges?

Theme 3: Prayer and Contemplation

1. *Listening in Silence* – Ps. 46:10 – Reflection: How do I cultivate inner stillness?
2. *Lectio Divina Practice* – Ps. 1 – Reflection: How can Scripture guide me daily?
3. *Imaginative Prayer* – Lk. 10:38–42 – Reflection: What insights does prayer reveal?

4. *Examen of Conscience* – Ps. 139:23–24 – Reflection: What movements of the heart do I notice?
5. *Union with God* – Jn. 15:4–5 – Reflection: How can I remain in Christ consistently?

Theme 4: Experiencing God in Daily Life

1. *God in Ordinary Moments* – Col. 3:17 – Reflection: How do I see God in daily tasks?
2. *Gratitude and Awareness* – 1 Thes. 5:16–18 – Reflection: How can gratitude transform my life?
3. *Responding to God's Invitations* – Mat. 25:14–30 – Reflection: How do I use my gifts responsibly?
4. *Discernment of Spirits* – 1 Jn. 4:1–6 – Reflection: How do I recognize God's guidance?
5. *Peace in God's Presence* – Phil. 4:6–7 – Reflection: How do I cultivate inner peace?

Theme 5: Community and Mission

1. *Building Spiritual Friendships* – Eccl. 4:9–12 – Reflection: How do I support companions in faith?
2. *Bearing One Another's Burdens* – Gal. 6:2 – Reflection: How do I live solidarity with others?
3. *Witness in Service* – Mat. 5:16 – Reflection: How does my life reflect God's love?
4. *Collaboration in Mission* – Acts 2:42–47 – Reflection: How can we work as a faith community?
5. *Compassion and Presence* – Lk. 10:25–37 – Reflection: Who needs my attention and care today?

3. Advanced Formation / Mission Readiness

Focus: Apostolic zeal, leadership, service, and spiritual accompaniment.

Theme 1: Living Missionally

1. *The Great Commission* – Mat. 28:16–20 – Reflection: How am I sent?
2. *Being Salt and Light* – Mat. 5:13–16 – Reflection: How do I witness in daily life?
3. *Mission of Love* – Jn. 13:1–17 – Reflection: How do I serve sacrificially?
4. *Courage in Witness* – Acts 4:19–20 – Reflection: What risks must I take for truth?
5. *Trusting in God's Providence* – Lk. 10:1–12 – Reflection: How do I depend on God in mission?

Theme 2: Servant Leadership

1. *Leading by Example* – Mk. 10:42–45 – Reflection: How do I serve those I lead?
2. *Humility and Responsibility* – Phil. 2:3–8 – Reflection: How do I remain humble in leadership?
3. *Decision-Making in Faith* – Jam. 1:5 – Reflection: How do I discern wisely?
4. *Encouraging Others* – 1 Thes. 5:11 – Reflection: How do I build others up?
5. *Conflict Resolution with Charity* – Mat. 18:15–17 – Reflection: How do I reconcile differences?

Theme 3: Spiritual Accompaniment

1. *Walking with Others* – Jn. 21:15–17 – Reflection: How do I guide with love?
2. *Listening Deeply* – Jam. 1:19 – Reflection: How can I listen to understand?
3. *Encouraging Growth* – Gal. 6:1–2 – Reflection: How do I support transformation?
4. *Balancing Guidance and Freedom* – Prov. 3:5–6 – Reflection: How do I respect God's work in others?
5. *Discernment in Accompaniment* – 1 Cor. 2:14–16 – Reflection: How do I rely on the Spirit in guidance?

Theme 4: Integration of Prayer and Mission

1. *Prayer as Foundation for Action* – Col. 4:2 – Reflection: How do I let prayer guide my ministry?
2. *Discernment of Opportunities* – Is. 6:8 – Reflection: How do I hear God’s call in mission?
3. *Perseverance in Ministry* – Gal. 6:9 – Reflection: How do I remain faithful under challenges?
4. *Balancing Contemplation and Action* – Lk. 10:38–42 – Reflection: How do I integrate both in life?
5. *Relying on the Spirit* – Acts 1:8 – Reflection: How does the Spirit empower my mission?

Theme 5: Living as Witnesses

1. *Joy in Mission* – Phil. 4:4–7 – Reflection: How do I maintain joy amidst challenges?
2. *Authenticity in Witness* – Jn. 8:31–32 – Reflection: How do I live truthfully?
3. *Courage to Proclaim* – Acts 4:29–31 – Reflection: Where must I speak boldly?
4. *Service to the Least* – Mat. 25:31–46 – Reflection: How do I reach the marginalized?
5. *Faithfulness in Everyday Life* – Col. 3:17 – Reflection: How do I witness daily?

Retreat Talks Guidelines – Early Formation / Initial Discernment

Theme 1: Discovering God’s Call

Talk	Scripture	Leader Notes / Reflection Questions	Exercise
1	Mat. 4:18–22	Discuss how Jesus calls the disciples; reflect on God’s invitations in participants’ lives.	Journaling: “Where is God inviting me today?”
2	1 Sam. 3:1–10	Highlight Samuel’s openness; teach attentiveness in prayer.	Guided meditation: Listen silently for God 10–15 min
3	Ps. 139:1–18	Explore God’s intimate knowledge of each person; discuss self-worth in God’s eyes.	Journaling: “How does God see me uniquely?”
4	Heb. 11:1–3	Discuss trust in the unknown; reflect on faith in personal life.	Examen: Identify moments of fear and trust today
5	Lk. 1:26–38	Mary’s “Fiat” as a model; explore obstacles to saying yes.	Small group sharing: “What prevents me from saying yes to God?”

Theme 2: Opening to Grace

Talk	Scripture	Leader Notes / Reflection Questions	Exercise
1	Acts 17:24–28	God’s presence everywhere; encourage noticing God’s activity in daily life.	Journaling: “Where have I seen God today?”
2	Ps. 23	God as shepherd; reflect on experiences of consolation.	Meditation: Visualize God guiding me through my day
3	Rom. 8:28–30	God works in all things; explore embracing life’s challenges.	Journaling: Identify one challenge to surrender to God
4	Phil. 4:6–7	Prayer as communication with God; explore reducing anxiety.	Guided prayer: Present worries to God
5	Jn. 14:26	Holy Spirit as teacher; reflect on how Spirit aids growth.	Reflection: “How can I cooperate with the Spirit today?”

Theme 3: Self-Knowledge in Christ

Talk	Scripture	Leader Notes / Reflection Questions	Exercise
1	2 Cor. 5:17	Being new in Christ; reflect on personal transformation.	Journaling: “How am I being renewed?”
2	1 Cor. 12:4–11	Gifts and talents; discuss using them for mission.	Exercise: List personal gifts and possible applications
3	Ps. 51:6	Authenticity before God; discuss honesty in prayer.	Meditation: Examine areas of life needing honesty
4	Rom. 2:14–15	Conscience as guide; reflect on moral awareness.	Journaling: “What is my conscience telling me?”
5	Col. 3:23–24	Living intentionally for God; reflect on purpose.	Action plan: One step to align daily life with God’s call

Theme 4: Trust and Surrender

Talk	Scripture	Leader Notes / Reflection Questions	Exercise
1	Lk. 12:22–34	Letting go of attachments; explore dependence on God.	Journaling: Identify one attachment to release
2	Is. 41:10	God strengthens us; reflect on trusting God in fear.	Guided meditation on God’s protection
3	Rom. 8:14	Being led by the Spirit; reflect on following God’s guidance.	Journaling: “Where is God guiding me?”
4	Mat. 6:6	Private prayer; discuss cultivating intimacy with God.	15-minute silent prayer session
5	Josh. 1:9	Courage to act in faith; discuss obstacles to bold steps.	Group discussion: “Where am I called to be courageous?”

Theme 5: Foundations of Community Life

Talk	Scripture	Leader Notes / Reflection Questions	Exercise
1	Acts 2:42–47	Living in communion; explore sharing and mutual support.	Journaling: “How do I contribute to community?”
2	Gal. 6:2	Bearing one another’s burdens; reflect on solidarity.	Small group exercise: Share ways to support others
3	Mat. 18:21–22	Forgiveness; discuss letting go of grudges.	Reflection: “Who do I need to forgive?”
4	1 Pet. 4:10–11	Using gifts in service; discuss practical application.	Exercise: Plan a small act of service
5	Mat. 5:14–16	Witness through life; explore personal example.	Journaling: “How can I be light to others?”

Retreat Talks Guidelines – Intermediate Formation / Deepening Spiritual Life

Theme 1: Freedom in Christ

Talk	Scripture	Leader Notes / Reflection Questions	Exercise
------	-----------	-------------------------------------	----------

1	Gal. 5:1	True freedom in Christ; discuss areas where participants feel “trapped.”	Journaling: “What is holding me back from freedom in Christ?”
2	Lk. 14:33	Detachment; explore letting go of limiting attachments.	Meditation: Identify one attachment to release
3	Jn. 8:31–32	Freedom through obedience; reflect on aligning with God’s will.	Examen: Observe moments of obedience/resistance
4	2 Tim. 1:7	Overcoming fear; discuss fear as a barrier to growth.	Guided visualization: Confront a fear and hand it to God
5	Rom. 12:2	Authenticity; reflect on living fully in Christ.	Journaling: “Where am I not fully myself in Christ?”

Theme 2: Growing in Virtue

Talk	Scripture	Leader Notes / Reflection Questions	Exercise
1	Heb. 11:1–6	Faith as foundation; explore how faith is lived daily.	Journaling: “How is my faith active?”
2	Rom. 5:1–5	Hope sustains; reflect on personal sources of hope.	Examen: Identify moments of hope in the day
3	1 Cor. 13:1–13	Charity in action; discuss expressing love in practical ways.	Group discussion: Share acts of charity performed recently
4	Phil. 2:3–8	Humility and service; explore serving without seeking reward.	Journaling: “Where can I serve humbly today?”
5	Jam. 1:2–4	Perseverance in trials; reflect on virtues developed through challenges.	Meditation: Recall a recent challenge and lessons learned

Theme 3: Prayer and Contemplation

Talk	Scripture	Leader Notes / Reflection Questions	Exercise
1	Ps. 46:10	Silence and listening; practice interior stillness.	10–15 min silent meditation
2	Ps. 1	<i>Lectio divina</i> ; teach slow reading and reflection on Scripture.	Guided Scripture reflection and journaling
3	Lk. 10:38–42	Imaginative prayer; reflect on visualizing encounters with Christ.	Guided imaginative prayer session
4	Ps. 139:23–24	Examen of conscience; identify consolations and desolations.	Journaling: Daily examen
5	Jn. 15:4–5	Union with Christ; reflect on remaining rooted in prayer.	Personal reflection: “How do I remain in Christ daily?”

Theme 4: Experiencing God in Daily Life

Talk	Scripture	Leader Notes / Reflection Questions	Exercise
1	Col. 3:17	God in ordinary moments; discuss noticing God in daily activities.	Journaling: “Where have I seen God today?”
2	1 Thes. 5:16–18	Gratitude; explore how gratitude transforms life.	Gratitude exercise: List 5 things you are grateful for
3	Mat. 25:14–30	Stewardship of gifts; reflect on using God-given talents responsibly.	Action plan: Identify one gift to use this week
4	1 Jn. 4:1–6	Discernment of spirits; teach recognizing God’s guidance.	Meditation: Review daily decisions and Spirit’s guidance
5	Phil. 4:6–7	Peace in God’s presence; discuss cultivating inner peace.	Guided breathing and prayer for peace

Theme 5: Community and Mission

Talk	Scripture	Leader Notes / Reflection Questions	Exercise
1	Eccl. 4:9–12	Spiritual friendships; explore mutual support in formation.	Small group: Identify ways to encourage one another
2	Gal. 6:2	Bearing burdens; reflect on solidarity.	Journaling: “How can I support someone in need?”
3	Mat. 5:16	Witness through life; reflect on personal example.	Discussion: Share a time when your witness impacted others
4	Acts 2:42–47	Collaboration in mission; explore teamwork in ministry.	Exercise: Plan a small group service activity
5	Lk. 10:25–37	Compassion and presence; discuss reaching the marginalized.	Journaling: “Who needs my attention or help today?”

Retreat Talks Guidelines – Advanced Formation / Mission Readiness

Theme 1: Living Missionally

Talk	Scripture	Leader Notes / Reflection Questions	Exercise
1	Mat. 28:16–20	The Great Commission; reflect on personal role in mission.	Journaling: “How am I being sent?”
2	Mat. 5:13–16	Being salt and light; explore daily witness.	Group discussion: Examples of personal witness
3	Jn. 13:1–17	Mission of love; discuss servant leadership.	Experiential: Small act of service
4	Acts 4:19–20	Courage in witness; explore standing firm in faith.	Role-play: Sharing faith in challenging situations
5	Lk. 10:1–12	Trust in God’s providence; reflection on dependence on God in mission.	Journaling: “Where am I called to trust God more?”

Theme 2: Servant Leadership

Talk	Scripture	Leader Notes / Reflection Questions	Exercise
1	Mk. 10:42–45	Leading by example; discuss servant leadership principles.	Journaling: “Where can I lead by serving others?”
2	Phil. 2:3–8	Humility and responsibility; explore humility in leadership.	Reflection: Identify areas to practice humility
3	Jam. 1:5	Decision-making in faith; discuss seeking God’s wisdom.	Guided meditation on upcoming decisions
4	1 Thes. 5:11	Encouraging others; reflect on building others up.	Small group sharing: Praise and encourage one another
5	Mat. 18:15–17	Conflict resolution; explore reconciling differences with charity.	Role-play: Addressing a conflict constructively

Theme 3: Spiritual Accompaniment

Talk	Scripture	Leader Notes / Reflection Questions	Exercise
1	Jn. 21:15–17	Walking with others; reflect on guiding with love.	Journaling: “How can I support someone spiritually?”

2	Jam. 1:19	Listening deeply; explore active, empathetic listening.	Exercise: Practice active listening in pairs
3	Gal. 6:1–2	Encouraging growth; reflection on fostering transformation.	Small group: Share mentoring experiences
4	Prov. 3:5–6	Balancing guidance and freedom; discuss respecting God’s work in others.	Journaling: “Where do I need patience in accompaniment?”
5	1 Cor. 2:14–16	Discernment in accompaniment; reflect on relying on the Spirit.	Meditation: Seek Spirit’s guidance for guiding others

Theme 4: Integration of Prayer and Mission

Talk	Scripture	Leader Notes / Reflection Questions	Exercise
1	Col. 4:2	Prayer as foundation; discuss letting prayer guide ministry.	Journaling: “How does prayer influence my actions?”
2	Is. 6:8	Discernment of opportunities; reflect on responding to God’s call.	Guided reflection: “Where am I being called to serve?”
3	Gal. 6:9	Perseverance in ministry; discuss staying faithful amidst challenges.	Journaling: Identify one area to persist faithfully
4	Lk. 10:38–42	Balancing contemplation and action; discuss integration in daily life.	Meditation: Plan a daily routine balancing prayer and mission
5	Acts 1:8	Relying on the Spirit; explore Spirit’s empowerment in mission.	Journaling: “How am I cooperating with the Spirit?”

Theme 5: Living as Witnesses

Talk	Scripture	Leader Notes / Reflection Questions	Exercise
1	Phil. 4:4–7	Joy in mission; reflect on maintaining joy amidst challenges.	Journaling: “Where do I find joy in my mission?”
2	Jn. 8:31–32	Authenticity; explore living truthfully in word and action.	Reflection: Identify areas of incongruence
3	Acts 4:29–31	Courage to proclaim; discuss speaking boldly with love.	Role-play: Sharing faith respectfully in difficult contexts
4	Mat. 25:31–46	Service to the least; reflect on reaching marginalized populations.	Small group: Plan a concrete act of service
5	Col. 3:17	Faithfulness in everyday life; explore integrating faith in all actions.	Journaling: “How do I witness daily?”

Reflection Exercises and Group Activities

Common Exercises:

- Journaling prompts after each talk.
- Examen of conscience at the end of day.
- *Lectio divina*: slow reading and prayer with a Scripture passage.
- Guided silence and contemplative walks.
- Small group sharing on insights or challenges.
- Role-playing service or mission scenarios.

Leader Notes:

- Encourage participation but avoid forcing sharing.
- Adapt exercises to group size and retreat length.

- Observe participants for emotional or spiritual struggles and provide support.
- Keep the environment prayerful, simple, and distraction-free.

Handouts and Participant Materials

- Retreat booklet with:
 - Daily schedule
 - Scripture references
 - Talk summaries and reflection questions
 - Journaling pages
 - Suggested exercises for personal prayer