



# CREATING A CULTURE OF CALLING

## Ways to Use Reflective Writing: A Tool for Discerning Calling

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### WAYS TO USE THIS CURRICULUM:

*\*\*Please note that the following are only suggested lengths of time. Faith formation leaders who are leading the Reflective Writing workshops in these various formats can adjust them at their discretion according to their best judgment, the total time allotted, and the particular needs of participants.*

#### MINI-RETREAT:

Faith formation leaders can use this curriculum for a 3-hour Mini-Retreat for their congregation. Option to invite outside participants. Use the following format:

- Arrival and social time – 15 minutes
- Use full Teaching Script – 30 minutes
- Reflective Writing Time – 1 hour
- Large Group Reflection – 15 minutes
- Small Group Reflection – 30 minutes
- Large Group Reflection – 15 minutes
- Departure and social time – 15 minutes

*\*\*Option for faith formation leaders to provide snacks and drinks. This is recommended. Option also to provide breakfast and/or lunch, which would lengthen time at the beginning and/or the end of the mini-retreat.*

#### FOLLOW-UP SUNDAY SCHOOL SESSION:

After the Mini-Retreat, faith formation leaders can offer a series of follow-up times of Reflective Writing on Sundays either before or after church services. Recommended at least five consecutive Sundays. Faith formation leaders will have handouts available for participants. Use the following format:

- Opening Prayer
- Summary of Reflective Writing – 5 minutes
- Reflective Writing Time – 25 minutes
- Large Group Reflection – 15 minutes
- Closing Prayer

*\*\*Please note: faith formation leaders should **use the script on the following page** to summarize Reflective Writing in Follow-up Sunday School Sessions*



## **FOLLOW-UP SUNDAY SCHOOL SCRIPT:**

- Your calling is not 'something you figure out' or make happen.
- Instead, calling is something you listen for.
- God reveals your calling to you through intentional reflection.
- You must know and experience your identity as God's beloved children in order to live out your calling in powerful ways.
- Reflective writing can be a tool to help get you there.
- This is a set apart space to intentionally reflect on the details of your life, to hear God's voice, and to discern where God is calling you in any given season or circumstance.
- The main idea is that God uses the particular details of your life as clues to your calling in the world.
- Reflective Writing brings your awareness to what those clues are and what they mean for how God made you and your vocation.
- Key phrase here: "Listen to your life"
- Vocation is not a goal that you pursue, but a calling that you hear.
- Reflective Writing helps you hear God's voice more clearly – helps you sift through other voices (culture, media, family, friends, coworkers etc) so you can more clearly hear God's voice and the voice of your truest self that God speaks to.

*\*\*Option for faith formation leaders to incorporate other Scriptures, prompts, or images as they feel led to supplement the handout. (Example: prompt or image specific for season of Lent).*

*Faith formation leaders can ask the following questions for group reflection:*

- Week 1: Reflect on the experience of writing. What surprised you? What came up in you?  
*Option for group members to share their writing.*
- Week 2: How was it listening for God's voice? What, if anything, did you sense God saying?  
*Option for group members to share their writing.*
- Week 3: What have you been learning about yourself through Reflective Writing?  
*Option for group members to share their writing.*
- Week 4: Where are you right now in your own discernment of your calling? Where do you sense God leading, if at all?  
*Option for group members to share their writing.*
- Week 5: What has it been like to write in a Sunday school setting? What has it been like to share with and hear from others in the church?  
*Option for group members to share their writing.*

## **SUNDAY SCHOOL SESSION:**

Faith formation leaders can offer a condensed Reflective Writing workshop on a Sunday either before or after church services. Use the following format:

- Use full Teaching Script – 30 minutes
- Reflective Writing Time – 20 minutes
- Large Group Discussion – 10 minutes
- Closing Prayer

*\*\*Please note: Faith formation leaders can use questions from either the Small Group Reflection or the Large Group Reflection.*



## SMALL GROUP MEETING:

After doing a Mini-Retreat, faith formation leaders can offer a series of follow-up meetings for Reflective Writing in church small groups. Recommended five meetings. Faith formation leaders will make handouts available to small group leaders to distribute to group members that they will bring with them to each meeting. Use the following format:

- o Social Time
- o Opening Prayer
- o Summary of Reflective Writing – 5 minutes
- o Reflective Writing Time – 25 minutes
- o Group Reflection and Sharing – 15 minutes
- o Closing Prayer

*\*\*Please note that faith formation leaders can also offer Reflective Writing in a small group format without having done the mini-retreat. In that case, small group leaders will use the full 30 minute teaching script for Reflective Writing in the first meeting rather than the summary.*

*\*\*Please note that small group leaders only need to give the summary or full teaching of Reflective Writing during the first small group meeting. If giving a summary, they can use the following script:*

- o Your calling is not 'something you figure out' or make happen.
- o Instead, calling is something you listen for.
- o God reveals your calling to you through intentional reflection.
- o You must know and experience your identity as God's beloved children in order to live out your calling in powerful ways.
- o Reflective writing can be a tool to help get you there.
- o This is a set apart space to intentionally reflect on the details of your life, to hear God's voice, and to discern where God is calling you in any given season or circumstance.
- o The main idea is that God uses the particular details of your life as clues to your calling in the world.
- o Reflective Writing brings your awareness to what those clues are and what they mean for how God made you and your vocation.
- o Key phrase here: "Listen to your life"
- o Vocation is not a goal that you pursue, but a calling that you hear.
- o Reflective Writing helps you hear God's voice more clearly – helps you sift through other voices (culture, media, family, friends, coworkers etc) so you can more clearly hear God's voice and the voice of your truest self that God speaks to.

*\*\*Option for faith formation leaders to incorporate other Scriptures, prompts, or images as they feel led to supplement the handout. (Example: prompt or image specific for season of Lent).*

*\*\*Small group leaders can ask the following questions for group reflection:*

- Week 1: Reflect on the experience of writing. What surprised you? What came up in you?  
*Option for group members to share their writing.*
- Week 2: How was it listening for God's voice? What, if anything, did you sense God saying?  
*Option for group members to share their writing.*
- Week 3: What have you been learning about yourself through Reflective Writing?  
*Option for group members to share their writing.*
- Week 4: Where are you right now in your own discernment of your calling? Where do you sense God leading, if at all? *Option for group members to share their writing.*
- Week 5: What has it been like to write in a small group setting? What has it been like to share with your small group and to hear from other members? *Option for group members to share their writing.*
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