

Compassion helps us be present with each other. When we follow God's Spirit - which is always on the move - and are open to the people we encounter along the way, they can experience God's Spirit through our care. Through the testimony of Ruth, Orpah, and Naomi, we will witness how compassion involves deep trust, an open mind, and a soft heart. We will learn that being present with each other asks us to let go of our expectations, be flexible, and trust the Spirit, as we seek to lead compassionate lives.

*Loving Spirit,
You are active and alive, always
moving and stirring within and
around us!
Please be an encouraging wind at
our backs, giving us
open minds and soft hearts to fol-
low where you lead.
Make us flexible and present in
each moment that we might
embrace compassion by letting go
of what we expected.*

Session

4

On the Path



The Campfire

Ruth 1

Look it up in your own Bible or use the one included in this packet on the next page. The **1st Stone** is included below as a way to read and sit with this particular story!



How to Start a Fire in the Rain MANLINESS



1 LECTIO DIVINA

With others or by yourself, use the Lectio Divina to explore the text.. *EXPECT to hear God!*

- Step 1 ~ Read Ruth 1 a couple of times. Another option is to read different versions of the text. If there are more than one of you, Invite others to read different versions of the text.
- Step 2 ~ Sit quietly with the text for 5-10 minutes (called reflecting or ruminating, it means to “chew on” or “digest”). Pay attention to where your mind goes, wanders or is taken. Highlight words that stand out to you.
- Step 3 ~ Take some time to share with the others in your group what you are thinking ~ if you are by yourself, JOURNAL your thoughts and ideas.
- Step 4 ~ Pray silently, on paper or together about what you have heard or learned.
- Step 5 ~ End by sitting quietly in God's presence.

Remember, the goal of the Lectio Divina is simply to spend time with God and God's story and word.



Elimelech's Family Goes to Moab

¹ In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land, and a certain man of Bethlehem in Judah went to live in the country of Moab, he and his wife and two sons.

² The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion; they were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there. ³ But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. ⁴ These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. When they had lived there about ten years, ⁵ both Mahlon and Chilion also died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband.

Naomi and Her Moabite Daughters-in-Law

⁶ Then she started to return with her daughters-in-law from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the LORD had considered his people and given them food. ⁷ So she set out from the place where she had been living, she and her two daughters-in-law, and they went on their way to go back to the land of Judah. ⁸ But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back each of you to your mother's house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me." ⁹ The LORD grant that you may find security, each of you in the house of your husband." Then she kissed them, and they wept aloud.

¹⁰ They said to her, "No, we will return with you to your people." ¹¹ But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters, why will you go with me? Do I still have sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? ¹² Turn back, my daughters, go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. Even if I thought there was hope for me, even if I should have a husband tonight and bear sons, ¹³ would you then wait until they were grown? Would you then refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, it has been far more bitter for me than

for you, because the hand of the LORD has turned against me.” ¹⁴ Then they wept aloud again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.

¹⁵ So she said, “See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law.” ¹⁶ But Ruth said,

“Do not press me to leave you
or to turn back from following you!

Where you go, I will go;
where you lodge, I will lodge;
your people shall be my people,
and your God my God.

¹⁷ Where you die, I will die—
there will I be buried.

May the LORD do thus and so to me,
and more as well,
if even death parts me from you!”

¹⁸ When Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more to her.

¹⁹ So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem. When they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them; and the women said, “Is this Naomi?” ²⁰ She said to them,

“Call me no longer Naomi,
call me Mara,
for the Almighty has dealt bitterly with me.

²¹ I went away full,
but the LORD has brought me back empty;
why call me Naomi
when the LORD has dealt harshly with me,
and the Almighty has brought calamity upon me?”

²² So Naomi returned together with Ruth the Moabite, her daughter-in-law, who came back with her from the country of Moab. They came to Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest...

4



Questions & wonderings

- What are your first impressions of this story?
- What does the story mean by "being present"?
- How does compassion help us be present?
- What do you think it means to be with people in their hurt?
- How can you be with someone while they are hurting?
- How can you let someone be with you when you hurt?
- What do you need when you are hurting?
- Share/think about a time when someone was very present to you in your pain, hurting, loneliness...
- When have you had the opportunity to be present to another?

IMAGINE...

- What did Naomi feel when she lost her husband and sons?
- Why did Naomi want to go back to her family in Judah?
- How did Orpah feel when she went back to her family?
- What did Naomi feel when Ruth kept saying, "I'm going with you?"

This is really an amazing story of devotion, compassion, commitment and deep love. Ruth is one of the 4 women listed in the beginning of Matthew's Gospel in the lineage of Jesus! Wow, a Moabite! Verses 16-17 often show up in modern day weddings. Incredible to think they began between a Mother and her daughter-in-law!! You are encouraged to read the rest of this story! The ending is a delight!

Today's story feels hard and sad. Ruth and Orpah had a tough choice in front of them when they followed Naomi: they loved their families, and they loved one another. This story shows us what being open and present to people along the way can look like. When our compassion is strong we are alive to the feelings of others around you, open to feeling what they feel and how we can be with and support them in those feelings. Today's story feels hard and sad. Ruth and Orpah had a tough choice in front of them when they followed Naomi: they loved their families, and they loved one another. This story shows us what being open and present to people along the way can look like. When our compassion is strong we are alive to the feelings of others around you, open to feeling what they feel and how we can be with and support them in those feelings.



Bible journaling...

give it a try!!!

Bible journaling

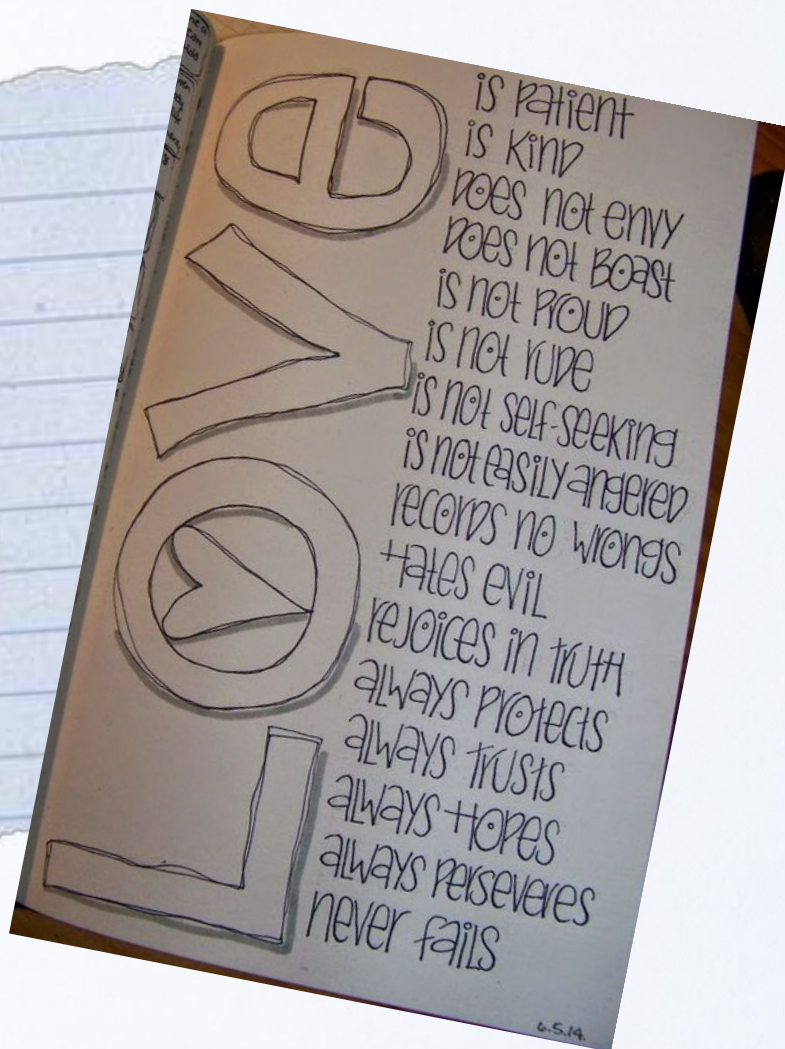
is done as an act of prayer and worship.

“Life did come with a manual”

- Joyce Rachelle

PS

You don't have to use your own bible!
Use the reading pages included!



Coloring a Prayer

Be still and know I am God...

Listen for God in the serenity around you and
give thanks for the time you have to
just BE with God for a while.

LOVING SPIRIT

you are

Active & Alive

ALWAYS MOVING AND STIRRING
WITHIN AND AROUND US

Please be an

ENCOURAGING WIND

AT OUR BACKS

GIVING US

OPEN MINDS

AND

SOFT HEARTS

TO FOLLOW
WHERE
YOU LEAD



flexible
PRESENT

IN EACH MOMENT

that we
might

EMBRACE
COMPASSION

by LETTING
GO
OF WHAT WE

EXPECTED.

amen

5

Service on the path...



HOLDING SPACE...

...it is a conscious act of being present, open, allowing, and protective of what another needs in each moment.

...it means to be with someone without judgment. To donate your ears and heart without wanting anything back. To practice empathy and compassion. To accept someone's truth, no matter what they are.

... it means to put your needs and opinions aside and allow someone to just be.

The fruit of love
is service,
which is
compassion
in action

Mother Teresa

Practicing the Art & Gift of holding another Soul!

- Can you think of someone who needs you right now?
- How are ways you could hold that person's soul in your heart and hand?
- Is there action you are called to take?

how?

1. Safety - Be a safe space - be authentic, loving and maintain confidentiality and transparency
2. Leave your ego at the door. This is not about you. This is about intentionally serving and caring for another
3. Attention - Radical listening, eye contact, good body language. Careful about commenting, responding and interrupting - unless invited.
4. Acceptance - allowing a person/group to feel what they feel!
5. Compassion
6. Non-Judgmental - this is not your story. Your opinions are irrelevant.
7. Witness - You are there to SEE and acknowledge them!



the Examen

The Daily Examen is a technique of prayerful reflection on the events of the day in order to detect God's presence and discern his direction for us. The Examen is an ancient practice in the Church that can help us see God's hand at work in our whole experience.

The method that's presented here is adapted from a technique described by Ignatius Loyola in his *Spiritual Exercises*.

St. Ignatius thought that the Examen was a gift that came directly from God, and that God wanted it to be shared as widely as possible.

The Examen can also be called Blessings & Bruises and can be done daily or whenever you feel the urge. They are a great "around the campfire" conversation and way of connecting! You can even journal or draw them.

consolation

1. the act of consoling; comfort; solace
2. the state of being consoled
3. something or someone that consoles

Other words like consolation:

relief • help • support • cheer

*Where have you felt the presence of God?
What has brought you joy this day?
Where have you found peace?
What or who has blessed you today?*



desolation

1. an act or instance of desolating
2. The state of being desolated
3. devastation or ruin
4. deprivation of companionship; loneliness
5. sorrow; grief; woe

Where you have felt an absence of God?

Have there been moments of unrest?

Do you feel "bruised"?





What is yoga? A 4 year old explains...

"OK, so yoga is just... you breathe in and out like this, then you start doing slow karate."

Yoga

Yoga began as a spiritual practice in ancient India, centering on bringing the mind, body, and spirit into oneness with the Divine. This meaningful practice has grown globally, with people of all faiths and belief systems finding nourishment in different variations - a powerful reminder of how we learn from one another. When we say, "Namaste," we connect with siblings across the world.

Breathing is the heart of yoga, and breath itself is a physical way to receive and release. As we reflect on the ways compassion makes us release, accept, and welcome, we will focus on breath alongside some basic yoga poses.



Sit on the floor, legs crossed. Take three deep, slow breaths together, with one person saying the following during inhales and exhales:

INHALE: With an open heart...

EXHALE: I am present to the Spirit within and around me.

INHALE: With an open heart...

EXHALE: I am present to the Spirit within and around me.

INHALE: With an open heart...

EXHALE: I am present to the Spirit within and around me.



Slowly rise, stand in mountain pose (Tadasana), arms straight and strong by your side, feet firmly planted on the ground. One big breath in, one big breath out. One person can say:

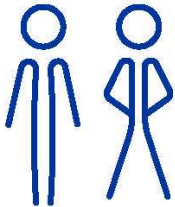
"In mountain pose, we feel our strength. We are unshakeable."



Reach your arms up to the sky, then back down as you bend into forward fold (Uttanasana), hands on the ground or resting on your shins (wherever is comfortable). Take a breath in and raise your hands to your knees, head looking forward. One person can say:

“We prepare and focus our eyes forward.”

Take a breath, and put your hands back to the ground in forward fold.



Roll your back up and rise to mountain pose. Turn to face sideways on your mat (if using). Step (or jump!) your feet apart into a V with hands on your hips. Turn your left toes slightly in, and point your right foot forward, toward the top of your mat.

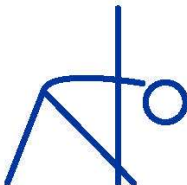


Deeply bend your right knee, place your right hand on the floor, and stretch your left arm up and over your ear in extended side angle pose (Utthita Parsvakonasana). Hold, breathe, and feel your side stretch and strengthen. One person can say:

“The Spirit stretches and opens us to new flexibility.”



With your right knee still bent, turn toward your foot, and move into a lunge with your hands on either side of your foot. Slowly straighten your right leg and bend your head toward your knee into a modified pyramid pose (Parsvottanasana), hands on the ground beside your feet.

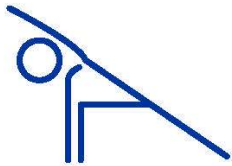


From Pyramid Pose, place your right hand on the ground and stretch your left arm to the sky in triangle pose (Utthita Trikonasana). One person can say:

“When we are open and flexible, we see the world in a new way.”

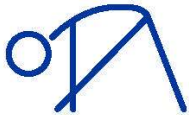
Lower your left arm and place your hands on either side of your right foot.

Raise your upper body, legs still in a V, and turn your left foot toward the back of the mat. Repeat this whole sequence on the left side.

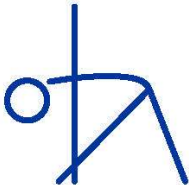


Deeply bend your left knee, place your left hand on the floor, and stretch your right arm up toward the sky in extended side angle pose. Hold, breathe, and feel your side stretch and strengthen. One person can say:

“The Spirit stretches and opens us to new flexibility.”



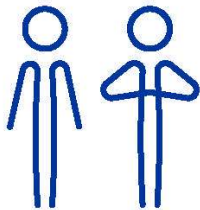
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From Pyramid Pose, place your left hand on the ground and stretch your right arm to the sky in triangle pose. One person can say:

“When we are open and flexible, we see the world in a new way.”

Lower your left arm and place your hands on either side of your right foot.



Raise your upper body, and step or hop the feet together to reach mountain pose. Reach your arms up to the sky, then draw them into prayer form, right by your heart. End with a bow of your head and hands as you share the foundational yoga greeting - “Namaste” - a call to see one another the way God sees each of us. One interpretation of the phrase is “The Light in me sees the Light in you.”