

## Small Group Gatherings Without A Set Topic

This type of gathering is an opportunity to build community and simply check in on how living (or trying to live) as a disciple of Jesus is going. Utilize questions from the LJM Discipleship Check In and let the teens bring about the discussion points if they have any. These gatherings would be comparable to “Ordinary Time” in the liturgical season. Our job is to help them live as a disciple of Jesus day to day. God does the conversion, God does the transformation, all you need to do is create the space for prayer, good conversation, help them take inventory of their relationship with God, and foster holy relationships.

### **PRAY: Pray with the teens by using prayers you’d use in your own prayer life.**

- Examples: Journaling, Writing prayers to God, Lectio Divina or Visio Divina, The Rosary, Divine Mercy Chaplet, Eucharistic Adoration, Mass, Reconciliation, Liturgy of the hours, etc.
- **Daily Prayer Formula:** Praise God, Thank God, Tell God You’re Sorry, Ask God.
  - **Praise God** (*Prayers of Praise. E.g. Divine Praises - Worship Song - Psalm 139:14*)
  - **Thank God** (*Prayers of Thanksgiving: Thank God for the Things of the Day*)
  - **Tell God You’re Sorry** (*Prayers of Reconciliation: Examination of Conscience*)
  - **Ask God** (*Prayers of Petition: Vocally Pray for Current Petitions*)
    - (The length of time is not the most important part and will vary on the day. The most important part is that it becomes a daily practice.)

### **CONNECT: Lead a check in and ask a couple questions that will help foster meaningful connection and relationships.**

- **Check In:** Have everyone share their **Peaks**(highs/victories/graces) & **Pits**(lows/struggles/thorns) since the last gathering and their current **Prayer** intention.
- Create relevant questions or use one or two from the **LJM Starter / Going Deeper Questions for Teens**.
- Utilize the Connect or Play Decks by YDisciple.
- NOTE: Ask the who, what, where, why questions and thank the students if they share something deep.

### **DISCUSS: This is the opportunity to do a discipleship check in and discuss any teen driven topics.**

- Utilize several questions from the **LJM Discipleship Check In**.
- Where have you seen God in your life this week? How did it make you feel or what did you experience?
- How is your prayer life this week? What has helped it to be solid? What has distracted you?
- What are you hearing or reading in Scripture?
- How can our group help you right now (in any area of life)?
- Is there anything about life, faith, morality that has come up that you’d like to talk about together as a group?
- NOTE: We are not trying to force answers and they may not be ready or able to answer the questions. This is ok. Be patient with them, start simple, and model vulnerable sharing for them.

### **COMMIT: Build in some sort of accountability to pursue a deeper faith life until the next gathering. End by praying with one another.**

- Ask the group what they would like to do to grow in faith until the next gathering. Feel free to suggest ideas along the way.
- Have a different teen pick a book of the bible each gathering for the whole group to read before the next gathering (discern if the amount of reading is appropriate)
- Utilize a virtue, prayer exercise, or behavior that would challenge them to grow in any of the pillars of formation: Human - Spiritual - Intellectual - Pastoral
- NOTE: Do your best to direct the students to come up with a commit on their own and guide them to take on something not too ambitious, yet still demanding.

**Pray with one another:** Have one person share their prayer intentions and then have the person to their left pray for them. The person that prayed then shares their intentions and so on.

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## **LJM STARTER QUESTIONS FOR TEENS**

1. What three words would you use to describe yourself?
2. Top TV shows or YouTube videos you are currently watching?
3. Biggest non-negotiables when wanting to date someone?
4. What's the best and worst part of your day at school?
5. What do you look forward to most each day?
6. What's something you wish adults understood about teenagers?
7. Rate your day on a scale of 1-10; 1 being awful and 10 being the best day ever.
8. What is your favorite outdoor activity right now?
9. What do you think makes your generation unique?
10. What is the worst food in the world?
11. If someone were to make a movie about your life right now, what would you call it?
12. When you are stressed, what's your go-to activity? (good or bad)
13. Who is someone you would want to model your life after?
14. If you could go on a road trip with your friends, where would you go?
15. If you could outlaw one thing in school, what would it be?
16. What's a career that doesn't exist that should? Would you want that job?
17. What do you think is the biggest misconception people have about you?
18. If you could ask God anything, what would it be?
19. Ten years from now, where do you want your life to be?
20. What's one thing you would change about the church if you were in charge?
21. What is the best advice someone has ever given you?

## **LJM GOING DEEPER QUESTIONS**

1. Do you believe in God?
2. How valuable is your relationship with God to you?
3. What is the thing you find yourself worrying about the most?
4. What's one thing about faith that's extremely important or valuable to you?
5. Do you believe your life has purpose or meaning?
6. What word would you use to describe your relationship with God (treasure, burden, roadblock, toll booth, necessity, deep)?
7. What would it take for your relationship with God to improve right now?
8. What is the main reason you continue to remain faithful in your relationship with God?
9. What makes a good friend? (Sirach 6:14-17)
10. If you could re-do anything in your past, what would it be?
11. What is something you don't understand about God that you've never received a good answer to?
12. What is the most challenging part of your life right now?
13. How's your mental health?
14. What do you want to be known for at the end of your life?
15. What do you find yourself praying about most often?
16. Do you feel like I listen to you? (Do not qualify or defend)
17. Are you genuinely happy right now or do you feel like you have to fake it?
18. Is there someone in your life that you are unwilling to forgive? If so, why?
19. What is the top reason you choose to be Catholic?
20. Do you think God wants the Catholic Church to exist?
21. How do you love something that you don't like?
22. How would you define a disciple of Jesus? Would you consider yourself to be one?