

LENTEN FAITH SHARING

Week One

Week One—Reading: Deuteronomy 8: 2-18 “Do Not forget the Lord you God.”

The Leader leads the participants through the Centering Prayer Process and Lectio Divina

Begin with **Centering Prayer.**

Sit comfortably with eyes closed.

Begin to slowly breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth.

As you slowly breathe in, image God breathing breath into your center.

As you breathe out through your mouth, let it be a moment of letting go of your anxieties, worries, anger, hatred, frustrations.

Repeat this practice several times.

1. Choose a Sacred Word or Mantra as a symbol of your intention to consent to God's presence and action within.
Whenever you become aware of distractions, sounds, thoughts of other things, simply return to the Lord with Centering or your prayer word/s.
(Repeat this exercise three to four times. Trusting that you are sitting in God's Holy presence by yourself and with other.

While sitting in silence, open your life to become aware of the presence of God with you personally and with the Share Group.

2. **Lectio Divina** – Choose a Reader. The Leader leads the Lectio Divina

Read **Deuteronomy 8: 2-18** slowly, while pausing between paragraphs for silence.

Invite participants to rest in silence for a few moments.

Invite them to savor a word, a phrase or a feeling that rises in you. Reflect on this quietly.

The Leader, after some time of silence can invite participants to share this **word** or phrase aloud.

The Reading is slowly read a second time by the Reader.

Pause for silent reflection.

The leader invites participants to share their experience using the Reflection responses below.

REFLECTION

As the Israelites were arriving at the brink of the promised land, God spoke to them, calling them to always remember how he fed them with manna, the bread come down from heaven, while they wondered in the desert. God tested and strengthened both

their hearts and wills. God wanted his chosen people to remember how for forty years, he directed their journeying in the wilderness so that He could test them and know what was truly in their hearts and was their commitment to God sincere? They were afflicted with hunger, a hunger that would hopefully lead them to hunger more for God than for earthly food.

We all know that bread and water are essential for sustaining life, yet God tells his people: "*One does not live on bread alone but on every **word** that comes from the mouth of God.*" God provided the manna for his people in the desert as a reminder to them of their need to depend on him for their daily sustenance.

Can you describe your own desert journey. What is the manna you have been fed along the way? Has your own commitment to God become sincere?

Reflection responses

1. What in the reading stirred your heart?
2. Does this Scripture story take on meaning for your life?
3. Did the story help you make connections to the Eucharist?
4. What has God taught you about yourself through testing?
5. What did you find enlightening?
6. How would you describe the Eucharist as food for your life journey?

Action – Connect with the disconnected.

How or what will you do to share your experience of Eucharist through the Scriptures and worship with someone who is not participating in the Eucharist? Can you gently and lovingly, and without judgment, ask another what prevents them from coming to experience the Eucharist? Listen! Listen! Listen! The Holy Spirit will provide the words you should speak.

Deuteronomy 8: 2-18

2 Remember how for these forty years the LORD, your God, has directed all your journeying in the wilderness, so as to test you by affliction, to know what was in your heart: to keep his commandments, or not.

3 He therefore let you be afflicted with hunger, and then fed you with manna, a food unknown to you and your ancestors, so you might know that it is not by bread alone that people live, but by all that comes forth from the mouth of the LORD.

4 The clothing did not fall from you in tatters, nor did your feet swell these forty years.

5 So you must know in your heart that, even as a man disciplines his son, so the LORD, your God, disciplines you.

6 Therefore, keep the commandments of the LORD, your God, by walking in his ways and fearing him.

7 For the LORD, your God, is bringing you into a good country, a land with streams of water, with springs and fountains welling up in the hills and valleys,

8 a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, of olive trees and of honey,

9 a land where you will always have bread and where you will lack nothing, a land whose stones contain iron and in whose hills you can mine copper.

10 But when you have eaten and are satisfied, you must bless the LORD, your God, for the good land he has given you.

11 Be careful not to forget the LORD, your God, by failing to keep his commandments and ordinances and statutes which I enjoin on you today:

12 lest, when you have eaten and are satisfied, and have built fine houses and lived in them,

13 and your herds and flocks have increased, your silver and gold has increased, and all your property has increased,

14 you then become haughty of heart and forget the LORD, your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that house of slavery;

15 he guided you through the vast and terrible wilderness with its saraph-serpents and scorpions, its parched and waterless ground; he brought forth water for you from the flinty rock.

16 and fed you in the wilderness with manna, a food unknown to your ancestors, that he might afflict you and test you, but also make you prosperous in the end.

17 Otherwise, you might say in your heart, “It is my own power and the strength of my own hand that has got me this wealth.”

18 Remember then the LORD, your God, for he is the one who gives you the power to get wealth, by fulfilling, as he has now done, the covenant he swore to your ancestors.