

NCYC

Post NCYC Participant Retreat Day Outline

Long Beach, Ca | Walking on Water | November 10-12, 2022



How to use this resource:

This resource was created by the Pre/Post Material Sub Team to aid pilgrimage groups in preparing and reflecting on their NCYC experience. This resource was created as a day retreat but each session could also be used individually.

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SESSION I | WE'RE IN THE BOAT



THE N STANDS FOR “NAVIGATING.”

Just like Jesus had called his disciples to get in the boat and set sail, he calls us to embark on our journey. When Jesus had asked this of his disciples, storms were already developing in their course. In our lives, Jesus calls us to navigate through our own personal storms while he leads and journeys with us.

As you and your group are processing your experience from your pilgrimage to NCYC, take some time together to reflect on the community you have formed among the group. *The following will hopefully help as follow-up to your NCYC experience . . .*

1. WHAT IS YOUR COMMUNITY (BOAT)? | 45 MIN

Your boat may represent a situation, place, or time in your life that you may have felt unaccompanied and looked for someone to console, comfort or guide you through that time or place.

Take a few moments to reflect on a time, place, or situation where you may have experienced being alone or unaccompanied. Then use the following activity to express those feelings by using the boat as an analogy for those who accompanied you during that time.

Let's Build Your Boat

Use the following [link](#) to make a boat or watch the [video](#). Alternatively, you can have participants color a boat printed on paper.

When you have 'built'/made your paper boat, take a few minutes to decorate or make simple designs on it. Include the names of those in your 'boat'/community that have accompanied or are accompanying you on your life's voyage. What is/are something(s) that might be causing you some instability or storminess on your life's voyage.

If possible, gather in small groups of 2 or 3 to share with one another your boat and anything you'd like to share about what you have written.

Large Group

After sharing in small groups, ask for anyone who might like to share their boat and story with the larger group. (This is optional, as some may not wish to share to a large group).

1. Were there any common causes of instability?
2. Were there any similar people accompanying them?
3. What might be some ways to overcome or work through any instability?
4. Is **or** was your 'boat' too small? **or** too big? Are **or** were there any holes in your 'boat'?

After sharing in large group, you may want to have a place to 'show' the groups boats to the community OR perhaps make a larger version and attach them to it or have a way to display them... it's up to your creativity.

2. LET'S LOOK TO THE SCRIPTURES | 45 MIN

Choose one of the scriptures or assign one to each small group

JESUS WALKING ON WATER | [VIDEO](#)

- Matthew 14: 22-33
- John 6: 16-21
- Mark 6: 45-51

JESUS CALMS THE STORM | [VIDEO](#)

- Mark 4: 35-41
- Matthew 8: 23-27
- Luke 8:22-25

Small Group Discussion

Depending on the size of small groups give 15-20 minutes. In the scripture you were given, please share with one another your reaction(s) to the scenario as related to the questions given...

1. What reactions might the Disciples have had?
2. Why do you think they may have reacted that way?
3. What emotions might have been present among those in the particular story?
4. How might have YOU reacted in that situation?

Reflection Questions for Individuals

These may take a total of 20-25 minutes. These can be done quietly for journaling individually for 15 min and then as a large group sharing for 10 min.

1. When in your life have YOU encountered others who have come into **your 'boat'**?
2. Were those who came into your **'boat'** invited by you? Or self-invited?
 - a. What was the outcome? (Positive or not)
3. What/who keeps your **'boat'** afloat? (i.e. people, events, experiences, God, etc.)
4. Who was your 'crew'?
 - a. Who kept watch, handled the ropes, etc. (*all the things necessary to keep the 'boat' moving forward*)? How has my 'boat'/community changed?
 - b. Have the people in my 'boat' changed {both physically &/or personally}?
 - c. Are those who help keep your 'boat' afloat any different or have those people changed (i.e. different people than before)?
5. After returning from this NCYC experience together, has the company in your boat changed? Are there new people/experiences that are helping to navigate you now?
6. On Thursday evening, Sr. Josephine Garrett reminded us that when we are in the boat, we are not defined by the circumstances around us, we are defined by Jesus Christ. How has that focus helped you to be more attentive to responding to the circumstances around you since returning home from NCYC?

3. CLOSING PRAYER | 10 MIN

A *Sailor's Prayer* is presented here by ***Mosaic Whispers***. In a time of uncertainty and social isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic, members of Mosaic Whispers from throughout the years unite to sing their alumni song *Sailor's Prayer* virtually. 85 voices, 29 years. *Sailor's Prayer* is written by Rod MacDonald, arranged by Jon Krivitzky and sung by past and current members of Mosaic Whispers, the oldest all-gender a cappella group at Washington University in St. Louis. Sound mixing by P. Daniel Newman, video editing by Reynolds Whalen.

[VIDEO](#)

A SAILOR'S PRAYER LYRICS

Though my sails be torn and tattered
And my mast be torn about
Let the night wind chill me to my very soul
Though the spray might sting my eye
And the stars no light provide
Give me just another morning light to hold
I will not lie me down, this rain a-ragin'
I will not lie me down, in such a storm
And if this night be unblest,
I shall not take my rest
Until I reach another shore
If the only water left is but salt to wound my thirst
I will drink the rain that falls so steady down
And though night's blindness be my gift
And there be thieves upon my drift
I will thank the fog that shelters me along
I will not lie me down, this rain a-ragin'
I will not lie me down, in such a storm
And if this night be unblest,
I shall not take my rest
Until I reach another shore
Though my mates be drained and weary
And believe all hopes are lost
There's no need for their bones
On that blackened bottom
Though death waits just off the bough
We'll not answer to him now
He shall stand to greet the morning light without us
I will not lie me down, this rain a-ragin'
I will not lie me down, in such a storm
And if this night be unblest,
I shall not take my rest
Until I reach another shore

A BOATER'S PRAYER

We ask for your blessings
And hedge of protection
Upon this boat that we love.
Bless her Lord,
From Bow to Stern
And Starboard to Port.
Please guide us as we navigate
Unfamiliar waters.
Protect us from unseen dangers.
And above all, Lord be
Our anchor in the storm.

SESSION II | IN THE STORM



THE C STANDS FOR “CLOUDS.”

Clouds are usually a sign of a storm or weather pattern coming. As we anticipate hard times in our lives, we continue to show fortitude and hope towards what comes after the storm.

On any journey in life, we often find ourselves in a storm. Storms could be any sort of challenge that disrupt our plans, try to steer us off our path, or distract us from what we are trying to do. Our challenge, in a storm, is to remember to keep our sights fixed on Jesus. When we can cry out, “Lord, save me,” like Peter, in the storms of our lives, we are responding with faith. We cry out, believing that God will hear us. We know that our God will never abandon us, but always embraces us with love.

1. VIDEO INTRODUCTION | 8 MIN

Begin by watching “Why Does God Let Bad Things Happen?” with Fr. Mike Schmitz. In this video, Fr. Mike clears up God’s intervention in the world and His will. [VIDEO](#)

2. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS | 10 MIN

In small groups or individually in journals, answer the following questions.

1. What challenges or “storms” have you been through in your life?
2. Was there anyone who was there to support you or walk with you through that storm? Who were they? How did they help you?
3. On Friday morning, Mike Patin reminded us that there are three things that believers do when they are in a storm – *show*, *row*, and *know*. Do you remember what each of those steps entailed? How have you been able to use them to navigate through the storms in your life?

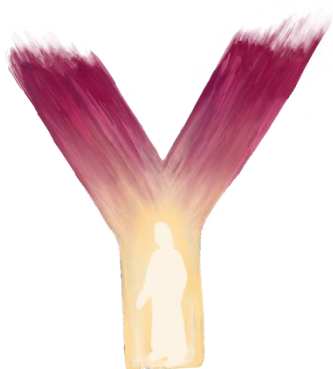
3. RECONCILIATION SERVICE | 50 MIN

For Group Leaders, this would be a great time, if possible, to provide an opportunity for the teens to participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Walking through an Examination of Conscience with them, encouraging them to think about the storms or challenges that they are currently struggling with in their life, and giving them the opportunity to go to confession.

If you don't have priests available for Reconciliation, you could also invite the teens to write down their struggles and challenges, the "storms" they are currently facing in their lives, and then build a bonfire that the teens could throw that piece of paper into, as a symbolic offering up of those storms and turning them over to God.

SESSION III | STEPPING OUT OF THE BOAT



THE Y STANDS FOR “YES.”

Jesus is the lighthouse amidst the storm, guiding us in the right direction. Just like how Peter is called out onto the water, we also are called to say, “Yes!” to Jesus even when we think things are impossible. Jesus makes the impossible possible even if it is doing something crazy like walking on water. He makes our paths straight and guides us through the rockiness of the water.

1. OPENING PRAYER | 5 MIN

Pray the Litany of Trust. Use the written prayer to pray together as a group or use the sung version for a prayerful reflection.

From the belief that I have to earn Your love

Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear that I am unlovable

Deliver me, Jesus.

From the false security that I have what it takes

Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear that trusting You will leave me more destitute

Deliver me, Jesus.

From all suspicion of Your words and promises

Deliver me, Jesus.

From the rebellion against childlike dependency on You

Deliver me, Jesus.

From refusals and reluctances in accepting Your will

Deliver me, Jesus.

From anxiety about the future

Deliver me, Jesus.

From resentment or excessive preoccupation with the past

Deliver me, Jesus.

From restless self-seeking in the present moment

Deliver me, Jesus.

From disbelief in Your love and presence

Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being asked to give more than I have

Deliver me, Jesus.

From the belief that my life has no meaning or worth

Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of what love demands

Deliver me, Jesus.

From discouragement

Deliver me, Jesus.

That You are continually holding me,

sustaining me, loving me

Jesus, I trust in You.

That Your love goes deeper than my sins and failings and transforms me

Jesus, I trust in You.

That not knowing what tomorrow brings is an invitation to lean on You

Jesus, I trust in You.

That You are with me in my suffering

Jesus, I trust in You.

That my suffering, united to Your own, will bear fruit in this life and the next

Jesus, I trust in You.

That You will not leave me orphan, that You are present in Your Church

Jesus, I trust in You.

That Your plan is better than anything else

Jesus, I trust in You.

That You always hear me and in Your goodness always respond to me

Jesus, I trust in You.

That You give me the grace to accept forgiveness and to forgive others

Jesus, I trust in You.

That You give me all the strength I need for what is asked

Jesus, I trust in You.

That my life is a gift

Jesus, I trust in You.

That You will teach me to trust You

Jesus, I trust in You.

That You are my Lord and my God

Jesus, I trust in You.

That I am Your beloved one

Jesus, I trust in You

2. ICEBREAKER | 20 MIN

You could substitute (or add) any other trust activities as an opening icebreaker for this session. Anything that would encourage them to work together or to rely on others would fit well to introduce the topic of trust. Here is an example of a trust obstacle course.

Preparation

In an enclosed area, set up a series of simple obstacles that must be completed to pass across the room. The obstacles can be scattered throughout the space, but they should be distributed so that a person needs to complete one or more of them to make it from one side of the room to the other. The space should also be large enough that it will take at least a few minutes for someone to make their way across the room.

EXAMPLES

- Cones to weave between and walk around
- A plank on the floor to walk across
- A yarn web to climb through
- A table to crawl under
- Other stationary objects as obstacles to move around

Instructions

Assign each person a partner. One partner will be blindfolded, the other partner will be the “caller.” Put all the blindfolded participants on one side of the room and the callers on the other side of the room, with the obstacles in between. The task of the blindfolded participant is to safely make their way from one side of the room to the other. The task of the caller is to call out instructions to their partner to help them safely navigate their way across the room. This activity works best with a larger group, where many people are trying to cross the room and a lot of voices are calling out at the same time.

On ‘go’ invite all the callers to start instructing their blindfolded partner how to make their way across the room safely. Continue until each blindfolded participant has successfully made it to the opposite side of the room.

Reflection

In a large group, ask the following questions.

1. For the blindfolded participants: What was most challenging for you?
 - Answers may include things such as, I didn't know what was in front of me, it was hard to listen for my caller's voice while everyone else was shouting around us, it was hard to only listen to my caller's voice, I kept running into obstacles that I had to work through, etc)
2. For the callers: What was most challenging for you?
 - Answers may include things such as, it was hard to make sure my voice was being heard among the crowd, it was frustrating when they weren't listening to what I was telling them to do, it was stressful to know that I was the one responsible for the wellbeing and success of my partner, etc
3. For everyone: How might this activity represent our faith lives?
 - Answers may include things like, there are lots of distractions in our lives which try to distract us from listening to the one voice we should be listening to (God)

3. REFLECTION/SHARING | 30 MIN

Reading

Have a participant read Matthew 14:27-29.

Reflection

Think about the faith and trust that Peter is displaying in Jesus when he decides to step out of the boat at that moment. None of the other disciples were willing to. But Peter was willing to step out into that stormy sea, placing his trust in Jesus. He says: "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." Jesus responds: "Come." And Peter steps out in faith.

1. What is the most afraid you have ever been?
2. Who is someone who called you to step out of a "boat" during this NCYC experience?
How did that feel?
3. Has there been a time when you have called someone to step out of a boat in their life?

There comes a point in every journey when you must have the courage to step out, maybe you have reached the physical destination to which you were journeying, or maybe you have just reached a point in your journey where it's time to leave the boat and step out in faith to what's next.

1. What is a situation in your life when you heard Jesus say "come" and you responded? How did you feel in that moment? How did you feel afterwards?
2. Peter stepped out of the boat on his own. As we shared this NCYC journey together, how were you supported to find the courage to step out of the boat together?
3. What new situations did you find yourself in at NCYC Long Beach where you had to find courage or rely on the support of others around you?

4. CLOSING PRAYER | 5 MIN

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think I am following Your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please You does in fact please You. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that, if I do this, You will lead me by the right road, though I may know nothing about it. Therefore I will trust You always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for You are ever with me, and You will never leave me to face my perils alone. Amen.

From Thomas Merton, Thoughts in Solitude

SESSION IV | LORD SAVE ME



THE C STANDS FOR “CALMNESS.”

When we decide to trust and follow Jesus, he makes our storms calm. Jesus not only can walk on the water, but he can control the waters too. Even in our darkest times, we know there is light at the end of the tunnel, or a sun that shines after a storm

After Peter steps out of the boat, and his human frailties take over, he calls out for Jesus to help him. Jesus responds, as the Son of God would, with love, compassion, a helping hand, and a lesson. Jesus always seizes the teachable moments – something a pilgrimage never lacks. His example saving Peter, and then teaching him to trust, is fodder for pilgrimage preparation.

Through it all, Jesus remains calm, and calms Peter’s anxieties. Even as Peter began to sink, Jesus’ calm and control reassured him.

This session strives to help us understand how no matter who we are, we need Jesus to save us. It will help the pilgrim understand that pilgrimage is about the journey everyone makes to our Lord so we can say, “Lord, save me,” and then experience his love. It is those three words that truly prepare us then utter the phrase, “Truly, you are the Son of God,” as we meet Him in the Eucharist.

1. OPENING PRAYER | 5 MIN

Opening Song: suggestion “Lord, I Need You” by Matt Maher | [VIDEO](#)

Reading: Matthew 8:23-27

Opening Prayer: Lord, you know our frailties. You are stronger than any of our weaknesses. Help us to trust in your greatness that we too might be great. Save us from ourselves and from all that threatens to move us away from you.

2. PILGRIM ACTIVITY | 30 MIN

Preparation

In this activity, you will need paper placemats, art charcoal, water basin & water, dish soap, and towel. Give each participant a paper placemat. Notice how clean it is.

Instructions

Pass out charcoal pieces. Let the participant draw a picture of their typical day. Encourage them to be creative and have fun. As they draw their hands will get dirty. When they are done, or when time runs up, have them look at their hands. EWWW!

We all sin! All our hands get dirty, just because. It's not because we set out to sin, it's because we are just human. We can be careful and not get TOO dirty, but everyone gets some dirt. But not to worry – Jesus is here to help!

Have a large bowl of (overly) soapy water & wash hands. Notice how “easy” it is to clean our hands. Sometimes it takes some rubbing and scrubbing, but not too much work. Notice how your hands are different. They FEEL clean, they smell clean. They can get dirty again, but not as easily right away. The drawing is still there, just like our memories, but that doesn't mean our hands have to be dirty.

Summary

While the participants are drawing, begin the conversation about how we rely on Jesus to save us. How he came for that purpose – to set us free from the evil that binds us.

One of the beauties of Catholic theology as opposed to some Protestant theologies, is that we always start from the point of being made in the image and likeness of God and then falling to sin. We are not sinful creatures that are worthless, we are children of God who fail. Like any parent, though, God wants what is best for us, and is there to help us!

3. DISCUSSION | 30 MIN

Read Matthew 8:23-27 again.

Think about how terrified the disciples must have been. A horrible storm rocking their boats. And yet, Jesus just tells the wind to calm down. But let's also remember that the disciples were in a boat together. They shared this experience.

Discussion/Reflection questions:

1. When have you been terrified? More importantly, when have you been calmed?
2. When have you been unable to do something that needed to be done? Who helped you?
3. What is your reaction to being helped? Sometimes it is difficult to say Thank You, especially when we feel like we should have been able to do it ourselves.
4. Being calm can take work. Develop a personality of calm takes a lot of work. One way to help develop that sense of calm in our day-to-day life is prayer. By recognizing the presence of God and then including God in our decision-making we can become more prayerful. It becomes easier to let Jesus take the wheel.
 - a. What is your preferred prayer type? Do you like prayers with set words or do you like to just talk? Do you like it quiet or in the midst of other commotion? Do you prefer to pray alone or in a group?
5. On Saturday morning, Jessica Cox challenged us to think outside the shoe – in what ways or in what situations have you had to be creative or persevere through challenges?

The word liturgy comes from ancient Greek and literally means “the work of the people.” It is work we do to honor and worship God. When we have done the work of prayer on our own, we are ready to do the work of prayer together. We join our voices together and pray as one to God, all while recognizing that Jesus truly is the Son of God.

Suggested – close the retreat with Mass and weave the themes from the retreat into it.

Culminate with the theme “Truly You are the Son of God” and help the young people recognize the Real Presence in the Eucharist and how that recognition and communion changes us.