

Faith practices

In what follows we offer a selection of ways to engage students in practices of scripture, prayer and everyday life. This list is only a starting point for engaging in these practices. Use the practices that appeal to you and the students, or come up with your own.

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Practices to engage scripture

Lectio Divina

Lectio Divina is an ancient way of reading scripture that is prayerful and meditative. There are many ways to do Lectio Divina, but it usually involves reading the text three times and listening for something different with each reading. Between readings, there is a brief time of prayerful silence. Lectio Divina can be done with a group or alone.

Here is one way of doing Lectio Divina:

1. Read through the text slowly and thoughtfully. As you read, listen for a word or phrase that grabs you or holds you – a word that is for you today. After reading through the text the first time, invite everyone in the group to share their word or phrase (without further explanation).
2. Read the text for a second time. This time, have the students place themselves in the scene or in a situation where they are speaking to God. Spend a few minutes discussing what the students envisioned after the second reading of the text.
3. Read the text for a third and final time. This time as the text is read, have the students reflect on what God is inviting them to do in response. Is God communicating something to them through the passage? Is he revealing something to them that they need to respond to? Spend a few minutes sharing and discussing with one another after this third reading of the text.

Walk with Jesus

Select a passage from one of the Gospels. Read the passage together and ask the group to answer the following questions:

1. Where is Jesus and where was he coming from?
2. Who is Jesus talking to? (crowds, disciples, Gentiles or Jews, etc.)
3. How are the people responding to what Jesus is saying or doing?
4. How are you going to respond to what Jesus is saying or doing?
5. How would you like to model Jesus in your own life?

Symbol Bible Study

Symbol Bible study can be a very effective method of introducing young people to Bible study. Ask a member of the group to read the chosen Bible passage aloud. Everyone then takes a sheet of paper and writes the symbols down the left-hand side.

After quietly reading through the Bible passage again, each person writes (next to the appropriate symbol) what they think the passage is saying. After 10 minutes of individual work, encourage the group to share their findings together.

Where there are questions, encourage group discussion to try to find out the answers together. Take a few minutes to summarise what you have discovered and close with a prayer to act on anything learned.

- CROSS: What do these verses tell us about Jesus (or the Trinity)?
- STICK FIGURE: What do these verses tell us about our human nature?
- A LIGHT BULB: Is there anything new to you in these verses?
- QUESTION MARK: Is there anything you don't understand or have a question about?
- STAR: Are these verses asking us to do anything?

Devotional Reading

Read a short portion of scripture and then ask yourself three questions:

1. What does this tell me about God?
2. What does this tell me about myself?
3. What am I going to do about it?

Go through each of the questions together as a group.¹

Proclaim Scripture to a Worshiping Community

Arrange for the students to read a scripture passage aloud to the congregation during a worship service. Prior to doing this, engage students in a discussion about why scripture is read aloud every week. What does this particular ritual have to do with the formation of the community's faith? Follow up with the students after reading to the community. What was their experience like?

¹'Confirmed', *On The Road*, Openbook Publishers, 1995, p. 20