



After a few moments of collective silence, the leader for the week reads the Opening Words aloud.

As a group, read the Covenant aloud and in unison.

Beginning with the leader, take turns reading the Common Disciplines aloud until all six disciplines have been read.

Beginning with the leader, each member shares his or her experiences from the previous week. The Questions of Examen (or Reflection Questions) can be used to help focus the discussion. As time permits, encourage each member to answer at least the first question in each set.

I. OPENING WORDS

Welcome to the RENOVARÉ Spiritual Formation Group [or other chosen name]. May God's Holy Spirit bless us, and may we find fellowship and encouragement during this time together.

Remember, we gather together with one purpose—to become better disciples of Jesus Christ. We do this by encouraging one another to keep Jesus' word, which, as he said, is what we naturally do when we love him (John 14:23-24). Through the grace of mutual accountability, we strive to inspire one another to love and good works.

Please keep in mind that everything said here is to be held in confidence. Only then can we feel free to share openly and honestly. All hopes and dreams, all fears and failures—even our joys and successes—are to stay within these walls. This is how we help each other.

II. COVENANT

In utter dependence upon Jesus Christ as my ever-living Savior, Teacher, Lord, and Friend, I will seek continual renewal through

- Spiritual exercises
- Spiritual gifts
- Acts of service.

III. COMMON DISCIPLINES

1. By God's grace, I will set aside time regularly for prayer, meditation, and spiritual reading and will seek to practice the presence of God.
2. By God's grace, I will strive mightily against sin and will do deeds of love and mercy.
3. By God's grace, I will welcome the Holy Spirit, exercising the gifts and nurturing the fruit while living in the joy and power of the Spirit.
4. By God's grace, I will endeavor to serve others everywhere I can and will work for justice in all human relationships and social structures.
5. By God's grace, I will share my faith with others as God leads and will study the Scriptures regularly.
6. By God's grace, I will joyfully seek to show forth the presence of God in all that I am, in all that I do, in all that I say.

IV. QUESTIONS OF EXAMEN

1. In what ways has God made his presence known to you since our last meeting? What experiences of prayer, meditation, and spiritual reading has God given you? What difficulties or frustrations have you encountered? What joys and delights?
2. What temptations have you faced since our last meeting? How did you respond? Which spiritual disciplines has God used to lead you further into holiness of heart and life?
3. Have you sensed any influence or work of the Holy Spirit since our last meeting? What spiritual gifts has the Spirit enabled you to exercise? What was the outcome? What fruit of the Spirit would you like to see increase in your life? Which disciplines might be useful in this effort?



4. What opportunities has God given you to serve others since our last meeting? How did you respond? Have you encountered any injustice to or oppression of others? Have you been able to work for justice and *shalom*?
5. Has God provided an opportunity for you to share your faith with someone since our last meeting? How did you respond? In what ways have you encountered Christ in your reading of the Scriptures? How has the Bible shaped the way you think and live?
6. In what ways have you been able to manifest the presence of God through your daily work since our last meeting? How has God fed and strengthened you through the ministry of word and sacrament?

V. LOOKING AHEAD

On which area or areas would you like to work this week? What specific exercise or exercises would you like to try?

Beginning with the leader, allow time for each member to share his or her plans for the coming week. These questions may be used as guidelines. Use copies of the Worksheet found in A Spiritual Formation Workbook (James Bryan Smith, San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, ©1993, 1999) to record what you and the other members have chosen to do. Writing these commitments down will help you remember what others are doing and give you a chance to pray for them.

VI. THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in Heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever and ever.
Amen.

After each person has had a chance to share, the leader asks if anyone in the group has a particular need or knows of situations that would benefit from prayer. Members record these concerns on their Worksheets so that they can pray for them over the coming days. In addition, the leader invites someone to lead the group in prayer for those concerns. When the prayer is finished, members join hands in a circle and pray the Lord's Prayer aloud and in unison.

VII. CLOSING WORDS

Please remember that what we have said and heard in this gathering was spoken in confidence and should remain here when we leave. May the love, peace, and power of God be with us during this week. Amen.

At the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer, the leader ends the meeting by reading the Closing Words aloud and then asking for a volunteer to lead the next meeting.