Session One

SILENCE
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WELCOME (30 minutes)
• Refreshments and /or food served
• Light-hearted and social atmosphere

PROCLAIM (5 minutes)
• Host leads opening prayer

Let us begin with a very slow and intentional signing of the cross.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

Lord, on this Lenten journey, give me the courage and commitment to walk the steps of the Calvary Road with You. As You say to the lepers and the sinful woman, “Your sins are forgiven” may I, too, welcome Your loving mercy, drenching my soul with healing. When the stories of my life feel too great for my human heart, may I hear Your words, “have faith. I am with you always.” As the apostles responded to Your call to “come and follow me” help me find the courage to leave that which holds me back – fear, anger, doubt, pride. Sear into my soul the conviction of the blind man who cried out “Lord, that I may see” and help me to embrace a vision of life that brings civility and true justice. As You say to the apostles “this bread is my Body, take and eat. Do this in memory of me” may I celebrate the Bread of Life in Your Eucharist, and allow it to satisfy the hungers of my soul. So, dear Lord, on this Lenten journey, please guide me as I navigate the rocky ground that blocks me from hearing Your Word, so that I may “yield thirty, sixty and a hundred fold” in kindness and good works.
Amen. ©JFB

Watch the video (7 minutes 50 seconds)
DISCUSS (40 minutes)

- As a practice of awareness, contemplate what forms of distraction you use to avoid facing inner pain? Share about those distractions with your group.
- What form of prayer sustains you in dark times of turmoil?
- Is there a faith-filled friend or mentor who has helped anchor you in turmoil? Share about them and what you admire most. What of their qualities and prayer practices do you try to model?
- Share about a time in your life when you had to let go of your attachments to past mistakes or failures. From that reflection, recognize your own patterns for how you let go of your attachments to past mistakes or failures. Are your practices healthy and helpful? Is there a deep understanding of your belovedness in Christ’s eyes for you?

CLOSING PRAYER (5 minutes)

- Read the following prayer with your group for closing prayer.

_In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen._

_We are going to take 2-3 minutes of silence to contemplate upon a single word. Today our word is FORGIVENESS._

_Close your eyes. Take seven full and deep breaths in and out. As you breathe, let any thoughts or distractions fall away. Imagine a shield raised around you, protecting you from any outside anxiety or worry, responsibility or pressure, and allow this time of silence to be felt deep within. As you begin the 2 minutes of silence, use your mind’s eye to explore forgiveness. Allow thoughts to move through people, places, or experiences where Christ wants to speak this word into your life. _[2 minutes of silence]_ As we begin to return back to one another, let us close our time by praying the Lord’s Prayer together. Our Father…_

_In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen._