

Session 1

What is Spirituality?

Introductory activity

5mins

Invite participants to reflect on:

- What are my feelings/associations/questions when I hear the word 'spirituality'?

Small group sharing.

Prayer

10mins

Lectio Divina using the gospel of the day or the Sunday gospel.

Input

5mins

NZ theologian Neil Darragh gives a simple, general and very helpful definition of spirituality:

Spirituality is the whole combination of beliefs and practices which animate and integrate people's lives.

Activity (see handout)

20mins

Invite participants to draw up a chart like the one below on a large sheet of paper or a spreadsheet/table/chart on whatever device they are using. Record aspects of their own spirituality by listing their various practices or rituals under the suggested headings (they may be daily, weekly, monthly, etc.):

personal					
family					
religious					
cultural					
social					
work/professional					
voluntary					
recreational					
community					
environmental					
seasonal					
holiday					

For example: Sunday Mass, daily prayer, litter walk (weekly), two hour shift at SVdeP/CAB/Red Cross/Soup Kitchen (weekly), child minding (weekly), tramping (monthly), rosary (daily), coffee with friends (weekly), Bible prayer group (weekly), help with transport for child's team (weekly), walking bus (weekly), community garden help (weekly), church linen laundry (weekly), church cleaning (monthly), hospital visitor

(weekly), lawn-mowing for neighbour, shopping for elderly person (weekly), lunch time run (daily), etc.

Now list some of the beliefs that inform/shape/underpin these practices.

For example: giving back to the community, the value of outreach, care for our planet, respect for elders, importance of community, Eucharist is the source and summit, Jesus came that we may have life to the full, the dignity of every person, etc.

Small group sharing (note, participants will refer to/build on this chart and list in the following sessions).

Input **10mins**

Issue handout of definitions of spirituality.

Invite participants to:

- Note the ones that are not explicitly Christian.
- Select the three most appealing definitions.

Activity **10mins**

Small group sharing of reasons for choice.

Large group discussion of insights/questions raised

Input **15mins**

Watch Colleen Griffith [Why Spirituality Matters: Engaging the Tradition](#) (Duration: 14.28) and jot down key points. (Note that two of the definitions Griffith gives are on the sheet supplied.)

Activity **15mins**

Invite participants to reflect on:

- What was new/confusing/challenging/clarifying/affirming/uncomfortable/raised questions for you? (List any words whose meanings you may need to look up/ask about.)

Large group discussion of insights/questions raised

Homework

- Considering what you have heard/learnt in this session and the chart/list you constructed with your practices and beliefs, try to write a couple of sentences/paragraph beginning with/including: A spirituality of service... Don't worry if you can't write much at this stage. You will build on it each week.

- Begin a glossary to be added to each week.
- Explore one further resource listed below and be prepared to share your findings at the next session.

Action

- Considering what you have heard/learnt in this session and any implications that this may have for your own spirituality of service, commit to a concrete action. Add it to your calendar/diary.

Further resources

Ronald Rolheiser

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oPrJRBLGzm8>

He explains his four non-negotiable essentials of Christian spirituality briefly:

<http://ronrolheiser.com/the-litmus-test-for-being-christian/#.W3ThdugzbD4>

St John in the Wilderness

<http://www.stjohnadulthood.org/spiritual.htm>

Joan Chittister

<http://www.joanchittister.org/joan-chittister-videos>

Robert Barron

<https://www.wordonfire.org/resources/video/thomas-merton-spiritual-master/4670/>

Boston College

<https://www.bc.edu/bc-web/schools/stm/sites/encore/main/2012/Vision-of-the-Mystics.html>

[The Gift of Friends](#)

Melissa Musick Nussbaum

<https://www.ncronline.org/columns/my-table-spread>

Sandra Schneiders

http://www.liturgy.co.nz/spirituality/reflections_assets/schneiders.pdf

Richard Rohr has many youtube presentations on spiritual topics, e.g.,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qGXkHUxOzII>

Explore his other resources here: <https://cac.org/>

Daniel O'Leary

<http://www.djoleary.com/index.htm>

He Rau Toroa - Maori Spirituality

Pa Henare Tate

http://www.katorika.co.nz/uploads/4/9/0/5/49053725/2010phd_tatetowards

[_some foundations of a sustematic maori theology.pdf](http://www.katorika.co.nz/uploads/4/9/0/5/49053725/2010phd_tatetowards_some_foundations_of_a_sustematic_maori_theology.pdf)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fQZCTBS29tc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ff1au-C23xA>

<http://www.katorika.co.nz/>

Find out about the Sisters of Compassion and go on a Wellington Pilgrimage

<https://compassion.org.nz/suzanne-aubert/pilgrimage-in-wellington/>