

## Session 6

## Sent to our own peripheries

### Introductory activity

5mins

Invite participants to share something that has stayed with them from last week

### Prayer

10mins

*Lectio Divina* using the gospel of the day, or the Sunday gospel, or one of the paragraphs below from *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Gospel of Joy [2013]):

27. I dream of a 'missionary option,' that is, a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church's customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channelled for the evangelization of today's world rather than for her self-preservation.

46. A Church which 'goes forth' is a Church whose doors are open. Going out to others in order to reach the fringes of humanity does not mean rushing out aimlessly into the world. Often it is better simply to slow down, to put aside our eagerness in order to see and listen to others, to stop rushing from one thing to another and to remain with someone who has faltered along the way. At times we have to be like the father of the prodigal son, who always keeps his door open so that when the son returns, he can readily pass through it.

47. The Church is called to be the house of the Father, with doors always wide open. One concrete sign of such openness is that our church doors should always be open, so that if someone, moved by the Spirit, comes there looking for God, he or she will not find a closed door. There are other doors that should not be closed either. Everyone can share in some way in the life of the Church; everyone can be part of the community, nor should the doors of the sacraments be closed for simply any reason. This is especially true of the sacrament which is itself "the door": baptism. The Eucharist, although it is the fullness of sacramental life, is not a prize for the perfect but a powerful medicine and nourishment for the weak. These convictions have pastoral consequences that we are called to consider with prudence and boldness. Frequently, we act as arbiters of grace rather than its facilitators. But the Church is not a tollhouse; it is the house of the Father, where there is a place for everyone, with all their problems.

### Activity

15 mins

Invite participants to share:

- their understanding of particular groups who may feel or are perceived to be excluded because of their life situation or who see themselves as 'outsiders'.

- their top three reasons for people leaving the church or lapsing, e.g., patriarchy/misogyny, homilies which are dull and uninspiring, lacklustre liturgy, reluctance to embrace change, lack of participation in decision-making, insipid outreach., etc.
- their suggestions for a feasible action to address each one.

Small group sharing/discussion.

**Input** **10mins**

James Martin offers five key points in Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation on the family, *Amoris Laetitia* (The Joy of Love [2016]). Watch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KJtv611PIHI>

**Activity** **15mins**

Invite participants to choose two of the following questions reflect on:

- What did you learn?
- What remains with you?
- What comforted/consoled you?
- What challenged/confused you?
- What surprised/amazed you?
- What inspired/excited/ gave you great hope?
- What made you uncomfortable?
- What implications are there for your parish?

Small group sharing.

**Input** **10mins**

When presenting *Amoris Laetitia*, Cardinal Baldisseri said:

In accompanying frailties and treating wounds, the principle of gradualness in pastoral care reflects divine teaching: how God cares for all His children, beginning with the weakest and furthest away, so 'the Church turns with love to those who participate in her life in an imperfect manner', because the all have to be integrated into the life of the ecclesial community.

What do you understand by the law or principle of gradualness? Do you think it applies to the institutional Church itself? Watch Bishop Barron explain it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-5ruTwxILqs>

**Activity** **15mins**

Invite participants to choose two different questions from the list above to reflect on.

Small group sharing.

**Input**

**10mins**

Read the short summary of the lengthy document (PDF) or found here:

<http://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2016/04/08/160408b.html>

**Activity**

**15mins**

Invite participants to choose two different questions from the list above to reflect on.

Small group sharing.

**Input**

**10mins**

Watch Fr James Martin SJ explain his book *Building a Bridge: How the Catholic Church and the LGBT Community Can Enter into a Relationship of Respect, Compassion, and Sensitivity* [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j\\_Lglcqe6rY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j_Lglcqe6rY)

**Activity**

**15mins**

Invite participants to reflect on:

- What did you learn?
- What remains with you?
- What comforted/consoled you?
- What challenged/confused/raised questions for you?
- What surprised/amazed you?
- What inspired/excited/ gave you great hope?
- What made you uncomfortable?
- What implications are there for your parish?

Small group sharing.

**Course conclusion**

**10mins**

Considering what you have heard/learnt in this session, spend some time looking back at your chart, list and statement. There may be something you wish to change/add to bring it all to conclusion. By now you should have a deeper understanding of the elements that make up a spirituality of service. You may wish to share your statement with someone else. The resources below will enable you to keep developing your understanding and living out a spirituality of service so that as well as practising your faith you are 'faithing' your practices.

Go you are sent...!

## Online resources

Comprehensive resources for parishes are found here including animations and video clips: <https://amoris.ie/>

Dr Rocio Figueroa from Good Shepherd College explains *Amoris Laetitia* here: <https://www.nzcatholic.org.nz/2018/01/18/16605/>

Dr Anna Holmes

<http://www.tuimotu.org/a/xTIFiJE>

The *National Catholic Reporter* has a study guide available here

<http://ncrnews.org/documents/Amoris%20Laetitia%20Study%20Guide.pdf>

Blessed to be Family

<https://www.catholicenquiry.org.nz/booklet/parish-resources/>

and many articles here: <https://www.ncronline.org/feature-series/amoris-laetitia/stories>

The Catholic Bishops of England and Wales have resources here:

<http://www.cbcew.org.uk/CBCEW-Home/About-Us/The-Pope/Amoris-Laetitia-The-Joy-of-Love>

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops has short videos on each chapter here:

<http://www.cccb.ca/site/eng/office-for-evangelization-and-catechesis/4847-amoris-laetitia-webcast-series-english>

The North American Catholic Divorce Ministry has resources for parishes here:

<http://www.nacsd.org/>

<http://www.nacsd.org/index.php/awareness/divorce-the-family-additional-reading>

<https://amoris.ie/amoris-laetitia/>

The Global Catholic Climate Movement has resources here

<https://catholicclimatemovement.global/world-meeting-of-families-celebrates-creation/>

James Martin's full address is found here:

<http://learn.ctu.edu/content/building-bridge-rev-james-martin-sj>

He is interviewed here:

<https://blog.franciscanmedia.org/sam/to-build-a-bridge-an-interview-with-james-martin-sj>

He has five spiritual insights for LGBT here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mdO87dmgMMk>

Here is his talk from the World Meeting of Families in Dublin

<https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2018/08/23/father-james-martin-how-parishes-can-welcome-lgbt->

[catholics?utm\\_source=Newsletters&utm\\_campaign=97ecb58081-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2018\\_08\\_23\\_09\\_11&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_0fe8ed70be-97ecb58081-58651685](https://www.catholic.com/newsletters/97ecb58081-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_08_23_09_11&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_0fe8ed70be-97ecb58081-58651685)

Joy Cowley

<https://www.wn.catholic.org.nz/the-inn-and-the-stable/>

Does this hymn describe your parish?

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W3Pb77ylz\\_Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W3Pb77ylz_Q)

<http://www.stjohns-lc.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/All-Are-Welcome.pdf>