

Getting to know Jesus Christ

Only where God is seen does life truly begin. Only when we meet the living God in Christ do we know what life is... Each of us is the result of a thought of God. Each of us is willed, each of us is loved, each of us is necessary. There is nothing more beautiful than to be surprised by the Gospel, by the encounter with Christ. There is nothing more beautiful than to know him and to speak to others of our friendship with him.

Pope Benedict XVI

We now listen to a personal faith sharing from a catechist who will witness to their encounter and friendship with Jesus Christ. This can be followed by a short time of sharing in your group.

Prayer

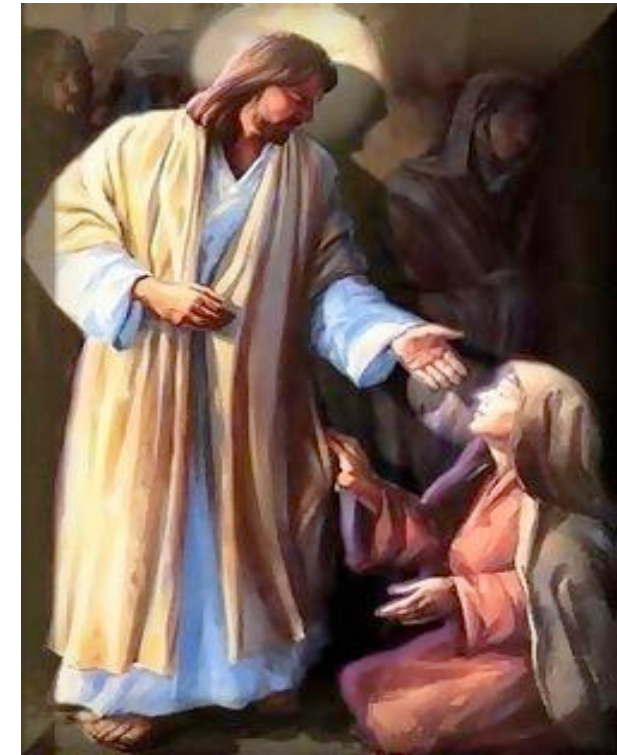
God our loving Father,
as we seek the face of your Son
may your Word enlighten us
and your Spirit guide us.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ.
Amen.



Following on from this reflection there are seven more reflection sheets which focus on each of the 'I am' Sayings of Jesus. Here are some ideas as to how you might use like these reflections in your group:

- You could reflect on all of the 'I am' sayings as a whole group during one or more sessions.
- You could select a smaller number of 'I am' sayings to reflect on as a group.
- You can share out the 'I am' reflections among the group for reflection in pairs and feedback your thoughts to the whole group.

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1. Reflecting together on the I am sayings of Jesus

In the Gospel of John we find the 'I am' sayings of Jesus. These sayings give us an insight into Jesus, a window into his identity. By reflecting prayerfully together on these sayings it can help us to understand how his grace is at work in our lives. In and through these sayings Jesus Christ reveals something of who he is to those who seek him.

Here are the seven 'I am' sayings. Jesus Christ says:

I am the Good Shepherd (JOHN 10:11)

I am the Bread of Life (JOHN 6:35)

I am the Light of the World (JOHN 8:12)

I am the Way, the Truth and the Life (JOHN 14:6)

I am the Gate (JOHN 10:7)

I am the Resurrection and the Life (JOHN 11:25)

I am the Vine (JOHN 15:1)

Jesus says 'To have seen me is to have seen the Father... if you know me, you know my Father too'. (JOHN 14:9.7) As we come to know Jesus Christ we grow in faith and our relationship with God. By growing in our relationship with Jesus Christ we also come to understand ourselves more fully too.

Christians believe that God became man in Jesus Christ, that he died for us and rose from the dead. We believe then that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead and is alive. All of us then can encounter and grow in a personal friendship with Jesus Christ.

Two Popes have in recent times made the following invitations:



I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them; I ask all of you to do this unfailingly each day. No one should think that this invitation is not meant for him or her... The Lord does not disappoint those who take this risk; whenever we take a step towards Jesus, we come to realise that he is already there, waiting for us with open arms. Now is the time to say to Jesus: "Lord, I have let myself be deceived; in a thousand ways I have shunned your love, yet here I am once more, to renew my covenant with you. I need you. Save me once again, Lord, take me once more into your redeeming embrace". How good it feels to come back to him whenever we are lost!

Pope Francis, *The Joy of the Gospel*, 3