

Practical Guidelines for the Encounter with Christ

1. In General

- Begin punctually. Wait to give announcements or take care of other team business after the Encounter.
- Begin with the prayers opening any Movement activity:
 - Come, Holy Spirit
 - Hail Mary
 - Glory Be
 - Christ Our King
 - Virgin Most Prudent.
- Keep in mind that the Encounter with Christ is a fundamental activity of formation and perseverance for Movement members and should have a spirit of prayerfulness and openness.
- The Team Leader should designate the Gospel reader and the person to make the spontaneous prayer prior to commencing the Encounter.
- Encounter with Christ should not usually run longer than 1 hour 15 minutes.

2. The Gospel Reflection (15 minutes)

- The source of the Gospel Reflection is *lectio divina*, (which literally means “divine reading”). The first to use the expression *lectio divina* was Origen (circa 185-254), who affirmed that to read the Bible profitably it is necessary to do so with attention, constancy and prayer.
- Because the Encounter is not a liturgical celebration, don’t add, “the Gospel of the Lord” or other liturgical forms before or after the Gospel is read.
- The Gospel reflections should be brief, spontaneous and simple. This is not the moment to bring in exegesis, to raise questions or to debate another member’s comment. The intent is to absorb Christ’s way of thinking and to learn to apply the Gospel to our daily life.
- The summation of the Gospel reflection must be exactly that: a summary of the main ideas offered, not a restatement of every point the secretary has written down.

4. The Case Study (45 minutes)

- As cases are presented, it is extremely important to bear in mind that the cases must be actions (“A person did x”) and must be true. Television shows, stories, interesting statements or mere feelings are not appropriate cases. (Ex: “The pope urged us to go to confession” is not a case; “the pope went to Confession on Good Friday and then heard confessions himself” is.)
- Participants should strive to state the case as briefly and simply as possible, without unduly influencing the discussion with commentary at this point (Ex: Better to say, “A man gave his front row seat at a papal audience to a boy with a potential vocation” than “I was so impressed by the generosity and selflessness of a man who gave up tickets to a papal audience.”) At the same time, cases should provide enough detail for the subject to be understood. (Not: “A man’s selflessness.”)
- As cases are being presented, no one should offer additional commentary or questions. Members should vote for the cases most useful to the team, not necessarily the most intriguing story.
- Anonymity should be preserved involving the private lives of persons well known to other team members.
- To preserve the depth and spontaneity of the discussion, team leaders should allow only the secretary to take notes during the Encounter, and no one should refer to lists of virtues or other “cheat sheets” during the discussion. The effort in judging the case is to discuss how the world would judge it versus how Christ and Regnum Christi would judge it, not to list as many virtues as apply.
- In the ten minutes allotted “to act” on the case, members may share what are commonly known as “lights,” that is, their personal resolutions to apply Christ’s criteria more faithfully in their own lives. The team must also make a concrete joint resolution addressing either the roots of the problem discussed or the problem itself. The resolution may be ambitious or a very simple one, but it must help the team to be conscious of the problem discussed.
- Every Encounter concludes with apostolic commitment. This commitment is the fruit we are looking for from the encounter, something which truly motivates us to change our own attitudes and to effectively influence the world surrounding us. Don’t allow the resolutions to dissipate into generalities, but make them concrete so that they are put into practice.
- The team leader may need to gently bring the discussion back to the main point or coax the case study along with leading questions to ensure that all aspects of the case are adequately discussed. For example, in the “judging” phase, the team leader may ask, “How would the world judge this case? How are we encouraged to think of it as Regnum Christi members? What parallels do we see in the Gospel?” and the like. However, as the team grows in experience, allow the conversation to flow organically, rather than progressing methodically from one topic to the next.

5. Review of Apostolic Commitment (15 minutes)

- Use the first part of this time to review the team's apostolic commitment or make a new one. Don't try to work out details (times, dates, cost) during this time, but discuss how the team's apostolate is going and what needs to be improved in order to better reach souls (Are we working person to person? What feedback are we getting which should be addressed at our next apostolic meeting? What fruits do we need to pray for?)
- The second portion of this time is used to review the concrete apostolic proposal from the previous Encounter. Unlike the review of commitments, it is appropriate here to add brief comments so that the team can see how God is blessing the team and its members and know the fruits of their work, if any.
- The Encounter concludes with the usual prayers ending a Movement event:
 - We give you thanks
 - Christ Our King
 - Virgin Most Prudent

The secretary stores the notes in the team notebook.