




VIDEO 2

SEEING REALITY:
THE CONTEMPLATIVE OUTLOOK



“We so often don’t see ourselves rightly, as God sees us. When we don’t see ourselves rightly, we can’t see others rightly.”

SUMMARY

In this second video, “Seeing Reality: The Contemplative Outlook,” participants are introduced to the idea of cultivating a posture of heart that sees God present in his creation—in the other person, in nature, and in circumstances. It is by receiving reality as a gift that we are able to engage with others in encounter, dialogue, and solidarity. It is this authentic relationship and posture of wonder and awe that allows a woman in a crisis pregnancy to receive herself as a gift.

OPENING PRAYER

Most Holy Trinity, we praise and thank you for loving each one of us into life. We ask for the grace to receive anew the gift of our own lives, that we may live deeply out of our true identity as your beloved sons and daughters. We pray that each person may know themselves as chosen and loved, willed into being from the very beginning of time and held in existence at every moment by your love. Father, we ask you to fill us with your light and renew us with your peace. Holy Spirit, we ask for the courage to speak your Word of life; may our actions, words, and thoughts serve to uphold and protect the dignity and worth of every person, and may our lives give radiant witness to the truth of your love. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

INTRODUCTION

Participants are invited to share something that is meaningful to them. Sharing an experience of importance is deeply humanizing and encourages the formation of trust between participants. These connections are the groundwork for building community.

Time: 15-30 minutes

Materials: *INTO LIFE: Love Changes Everything* Participant Guide

Instructions: Invite participants to share their response to the "Introductory Question".

Reminders: Remind participants of time boundaries (if any) and confidentiality.

INTRODUCTORY QUESTION

What is the most beautiful thing you've ever seen/moment you've ever experienced?

Read the question twice and allow a few moments for quiet reflection.

VIDEO #2

SEEING REALITY: THE CONTEMPLATIVE OUTLOOK



Time: 10 minutes

Materials:

Video 2: "Seeing Reality: The Contemplative Outlook"

Instructions:

Introduce video segment.

Sample Introduction:

As we prepare to watch this second video, I want to encourage us to listen with the ears of our heart. Many of us may be anxious or worried about things going on in our families and communities. Try to allow yourself the freedom to receive this time with Jesus and one another as a gift. God is present in all of his creation. Let's allow ourselves to begin to cultivate this sense of wonder in all of his gifts to us.

INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION

Time: 15-30 minutes

Space: Church, if possible, or a quiet place for reflection.

Materials: *INTO LIFE: Love Changes Everything* Participant Guide

Instructions: Transition to period of personal reflection.

Reminders:

Remind participants that this is a time for their personal reflection and that they are not required to answer every question or reflect on every Scripture passage, but should follow the promptings of God.

Suggested Scripture passages and questions are offered as aides to prayer.

Space for note-taking and journaling is provided in the *INTO LIFE: Love Changes Everything* Participant Guide.

SCRIPTURE FOR REFLECTION

JOHN 8:32

“And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

**MARK
10:51-52**

“What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asked him. The blind man said, ‘Rabbi, I want to see.’ ‘Go,’ said Jesus, ‘your faith has healed you.’ Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Was there a word, phrase, or idea that resonated with me? That was new to me?
2. In the video, one woman shares, "I'm thankful for those who believed in me even when I didn't believe in myself, and I'm grateful for those who saw the good in me, even when I couldn't see the good in myself." How do I see myself? When are times when I have struggled to see my own goodness? What does it mean for me to see myself as a gift, as a beloved child of God?
3. Is there a moment in my life when someone truly saw me and believed in me? How did this experience affect me?
4. Are there ways in which I am tempted to see others as a burden? As competitors? As a threat? As unworthy? How do I want to ask God to heal my vision?
5. What do the words "encounter," "dialogue," and "solidarity" stir up in me?
6. Is my interior posture one of receiving others or do I try to control situations and those around me? What helps me give others, creation, and God the space to unfold and be discovered?
7. In what moments has the beauty of life captured my heart? How can I cultivate this awareness of the presence of God in my daily life?
8. Is there a fruit from my prayer that I would like to share with others?

“

In a very real way, every person is holy ground, because every person is an icon of the living God.

”

DISCUSSION

After a period of personal reflection and prayer, participants re-gather as a large group for sharing and discussion.

Time: 15-30 minutes

Materials: *INTO LIFE: Love Changes Everything* Participant Guide

Instructions: Facilitator transitions to group discussion. Offer conversation guidelines, if using them.

Reminders:

Remind the group to maintain confidentiality. All comments and stories should stay within the group.

Remind participants that they are encouraged, but not required, to share.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Is there a fruit from your prayer that you would like to share with others?
2. Sister Mariae Agnus Dei, SV says, “We want to be able to look at each woman and see, not a project nor a task to be accomplished nor an argument to be won, nor even a baby to be saved, but first and foremost, a person, a daughter, made in the image and likeness of God, sacred, good, with dignity and a destiny.” Discuss this. How does this give you a new understanding of what it means to serve a pregnant woman?
3. St. John Paul II defines “the contemplative outlook” as “being able to discover in all things the reflection of the Creator and seeing in every person His living image” (*Evangelium Vitae*, §83). He invites us to see others in a new way. How are you able to see others in this light? What about those with whom you disagree or those who you may be tempted to see as unworthy? Are there ways in which this is difficult?
4. In *Evangelium Vitae* (*The Gospel of Life*), St. John Paul II also writes that the contemplative “outlook does not give in to discouragement when confronted by those

“

Having a contemplative
outlook leads to
building an authentic
relationship.

”

CLOSING

At the end of the group discussion, the facilitator should thank the participants for sharing and their involvement in the discussion. The facilitator may also ask if there are any closing questions, comments, or points of clarification before proceeding to the closing prayer.

What's coming up next? Video 3: "This is God's Work: The Power of Prayer"

In this third video, "This is God's Work: The Power of Prayer," participants will be invited to enter into a relationship of prayer with God, who is love, and to reflect on the reality of prayer as the foundation and cornerstone of a culture of life.

CLOSING PRAYER

*Jesus, we praise and thank you for your goodness and mercy.
We ask for an outpouring of your spirit upon the whole world.
We pray that every person may powerfully encounter Your
love today, and that all will come to know that life is a gift
to be cherished and protected. Please give us the grace to see
Your presence in every person we encounter, and in all the
circumstances of our lives.*

*We ask this in your name as we pray: Glory be to the Father,
to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever.*

Amen. Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of Life, pray for us.

Copyright © 2022 McGrath Institute for Church Life,
University of Notre Dame and Sisters of Life

Intoliferies.com