

THE RADIX PROJECT
small groups / deep roots

**I HAVE CALLED YOU BY
NAME, AND YOU ARE MINE**

Stories of Recognition in Scripture

FALL 2025



SAINT MARK'S
EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL



THE RADIX PROJECT

saintmarks.org/radix

Since early 2020, Radix has offered the opportunity for small groups to meet over the course of six weeks to share stories, study scripture, and pray for one another.

A Radix group is a cohort of people who gather to get to know one another against the backdrop of shared stories, scripture, and prayer. This is not a working group; there is no task to be accomplished. It is about knowing one another, and being known, as we are known by God. And that is the root of spiritual transformation.

The name for this communal effort, *radix*, is the Latin word for “root.” Jesus modeled small group relationships in his life and ministry, and the early Church was structured around small groups who worshipped, prayed, and cared for one another. Those are our roots, and in our time, when so many pressures of modern life leave us feeling alone and isolated, Christian community offers us a tangible way of entering into relationships rooted in trust and mutuality.

The root word, *radix*, also gives rise to a word we hear a lot these days—radical. A radical is not one who goes their separate way, doing their own thing. A radical is one who is so well-grounded with deep roots that they are able to stretch out to the fringes of existence and offer us all a different way of being in the world. We speak of radical hospitality or radical welcome because we claim our deep roots of this life in Christ, and we are willing to claim a radical vision for our lives and for the world.

We don’t always agree, politically or theologically, and we have different life experiences—but we care for one another, we pray for one another, and the blush of life is fuller because of these relationships. It is our hope that as you reflect on these stories, you might discover how God’s graceful activity is revealed in your own life as well, and in the lives of your group members. ♦

THE RADIX PROJECT PLANNING COMMITTEE

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Please feel free to contact radix@saintmarks.org if you have any questions or concerns along the way. Thank you for your participation.

OVERVIEW FOR SMALL GROUPS

Small groups are designed to gather people of faith in settings that foster trust so that our relationships with God and one another are strengthened. When we meet each other for earnest conversation, sharing, and prayer, we deepen the bonds of affection by which we learn how to love ourselves, each other, and God more fully. In this way, small groups are intentional about providing space for prayerful support and accountability, guided by the One we know as Jesus the Christ.

For our purposes in the Radix Project, we have created a process for guiding 6–10 people in their season together, designed as six 90-minute sessions, with a plenary gathering before the first session. Each small group gathering is structured to open with prayer, to have time for check-in, scripture reading and reflection, sharing of stories, and check-out with prayer.

SMALL GROUP SESSIONS

OPENING PLENARY

Sunday, October 5 , 2025
7–8 p.m., online via Zoom only

SESSION 1:

EXODUS 1:15-21 week of October 5, 2025

SESSION 2:

EXODUS 3:1-15..... week of October 12, 2025

SESSION 3:

LUKE 2:36-38 week of October 19, 2025

SESSION 4:

JOHN 4: 7-30 week of October 26, 2025

SESSION 5:

PSALM 139: 1-15..... week of November 2, 2025

SESSION 6:

LUKE 24:13-35..... week of November 9, 2025

**Sunday groups begin October 12 and end November 16.*

RADIX 15

STORIES OF RECOGNITION IN SCRIPTURE

I suspect we all have experienced walking into an unfamiliar place and someone recognizes us and calls us by name: “Hi, Steve...” with a smile of familiarity that helps ease the unsettled feeling that we might just be alone. The first day of school, a friend calls out and helps ease the jitters. A new job, but someone befriends you. I delight in watching people connect in church before the worship service begins. A cheerful smile, a greeting, a hug of solidarity...church is at its heart, a place of recognition, of being known. Brene Brown says we need experiences of belonging to ameliorate what she calls the “modern disease of spiritual disconnection.” But she also says, “true belonging never asks us to change who we are; true belonging requires us to be who we are.”¹

Our scriptures orient to such true belonging, being known, helping us to discern who we truly are, made in God’s image, which is to say, beautiful, good, true. Countless scripture stories bear witness to a God who is steadfastly interested in who we truly are and yearns for us to discover this as well. Names are often important in the stories of recognition. Being known by name matters. The prophet Isaiah reminds us that God declares: “I have called you by name, and you are mine” (43:1). How does knowing someone’s name deepen the relationship you share?

1. brenebrown.com/art/true-belonging

Yes, we learn in the course of life to don masks intended to help us hide—from ourselves, from others, even from God, as if that were possible. But our scriptures remind us time and again that this is folly—we are worthy, we are known, we are beloved. And our hearts burn with delight when we come to realize that God has been calling to us, by name, all along. And perhaps in that moment, we are treated to the gift of recognizing God anew. Stories of recognition cut both ways. This God who claims us would have it no other way!

—Dean Steve Thomason



ESTABLISH GROUP NORMS

To foster trust, it is essential to establish group norms, a shared set of expectations for these sessions, ensuring everyone agrees on how they will spend this time together. Plan to revisit these norms as needed. Here are some aspects of relational group culture that all group members should discuss before they begin their work.

CONFIDENTIALITY

- ◆ What is allowed to be shared outside the group?
- ◆ What may be shared on social media?

RESPECT AND MUTUALITY

- ◆ Let others finish without being interrupted.
- ◆ Resist the temptation to problem-solve.
- ◆ Mutual respect is essential.
- ◆ Give everyone a chance to speak.

LOGISTICS

- ◆ What are expectations about beginning and ending on time?
- ◆ ...about informing others of an expected absence?

ATTENDANCE

- ◆ Be punctual.
- ◆ Commit to regular attendance and participation.

PREPARATION

- ◆ What, if anything, are group members expected to do to prepare for their meetings?

COMMITMENT TO PRAYER

- ◆ What is the expectation about how the group members will pray for each other during this six-week period?

ZOOM ETIQUETTE

Keep your microphone on mute when not speaking.

Practice using the technology ahead of the meeting, and ask for help as needed. Zoom resources are available at support.zoom.us

FLOW OF THE SMALL GROUP MEETINGS

Consistent weekly meetings are crucial for the flourishing of small groups, allowing participants to know what to expect. While the facilitator guides and encourages the group, everyone shares responsibility for staying on track. The following format is suggested for all 90-minute Radix group sessions:

GATHER AND OPEN IN PRAYER	.10 minutes
CHECK-IN QUESTION	.10 minutes
SCRIPTURE REFLECTION	.15 minutes
GROUP DISCUSSION	.20 minutes
CREATIVE CONNECTION CONVERSATION . .	.15 minutes
LOOK AHEAD AND PRAYER REQUESTS	.10 minutes
CLOSING PRAYER/WORSHIP	.10 minutes

IDEAS FOR CHECK-IN QUESTIONS

Pick one for each week.

1. Tell about a time you discovered God/the Holy where or when you did not expect it.
2. When has someone recognized something in you that made you feel seen?
3. Tell about a time when you were recognized by a stranger or someone you weren't expecting to encounter.
4. When and where have you been surprised to recognize someone?
5. Have you ever gone incognito or "undercover"? What was it like?
6. Who sees the "real" you?
7. Share something about your name—how you got it, what it means, whether it suits you.
8. Tell about a time you named someone or something, and the significance of the name.
9. What does it feel like, to be "called by name" and claimed as God's own?
10. Where do you go to seek God/the Holy?
11. Where would someone go to see you as your most authentic self?
12. When have you recognized Jesus in someone else?

OPENING PRAYER

Leading prayer is a responsibility that is meant to be shared among the group—it's not just for the facilitator. Decide how your group will share taking turns with opening and closing prayers. Prayers may be extemporaneous, or from a rich variety of sources, including those suggested here:

- ◆ Thanksgivings, BCP, p. 836–841
- ◆ Daily Devotions, BCP, p. 137–140
- ◆ Compline, BCP, p. 127
- ◆ A brief hymn, chant, or Taizé prayer
- ◆ A poem that connects to a theme in the scripture selection
- ◆ The Book of Common Prayer Online
bcponline.org
- ◆ The New Zealand Prayer Book Online
anglicanprayerbook.nz
- ◆ The Work of the People
theworkofthepeople.com/visual-liturgy
theworkofthepeople.com/be-still

CLOSING PRAYERS & CHECK-OUT

- ♦ The closing prayer is an opportunity for each member of the group to reflect on the time together, to name what they learned, and to ask the group to hold them in prayer with special intention for something in this time spent together, or something in their personal lives or for something in the lives of those they hold dear. The important thing is that the prayers of the group gather up those intentions as the meeting comes to an end, AND that each person commits to holding those prayers through the week, until you meet again.

In addition to including a prayer from one of the resources on the previous page, consider the following:

- ♦ The group may choose to go around and allow each person to pray for the person sitting to their right, with the facilitator opening and closing.
- ♦ Alternatively, after the intentions are named, sit in silent prayer, centered on God's mercy and presence.

SCRIPTURE STUDY GUIDE



WEEK 1

SCRIPTURE *Exodus 1:15–21*

THE king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, “When you act as midwives to the Hebrew women and see them on the birthstool, if it is a son, kill him, but if it is a daughter, she shall live.” But the midwives feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, “Why have you done this and allowed the boys to live?” The midwives said to Pharaoh, “Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women, for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them.” So God dealt well with the midwives, and the people multiplied and became very strong. And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families. ♦

QUESTIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION

1. What word or phrase stands out to you or resonates with you? What questions do you have about this passage?
2. Pharaoh (the king of Egypt) is threatened by the flourishing immigrant population of the Hebrews and responds with a two-pronged plan to manage the situation. Part I involves enforced labor (enslavement) to break their spirits. Part II—with an eye to quelling any potential future military threat—involves genocide. For that, Pharaoh conscripts the Hebrew midwives, commanding them to kill all the Hebrew males that are born in their charge. Both the text and the tradition hold some ambiguity. The Hebrew text can mean both “the

Hebrew midwives” and “the midwives of the Hebrews.” There are also strands in the interpretive tradition—midrashim—that identify these two women as Egyptian “righteous gentiles”. Both views are currently a part of discussion and debate among biblical scholars. How does each perspective on their identity affect tyour interpretation of their actions and their legacy?

3. At least two kinds of authority are in conflict in this scenario—there is Pharaoh, whose word is the law of the land, and there is God, whose law was known and kept by the Hebrew people long before Moses received the Ten Commandments. Shiprah and Puah disobey Pharaoh and even gloss over the truth when later questioned. We know their names because of their brave opposition to the one power, and their unswerving allegiance to the Other. What might their choice could have cost them?

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QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Shiphrah and Puah are an essential part of the Exodus story. We can recognize their choice, their bravery, and what it could have cost them. They are role models for civil disobedience. Describe a time when you or someone you know took a brave and potentially costly stance—one that went against the law or popular opinion. How did that feel at the time, and how has it turned out since then?
2. Moral quandaries usually involves a complex (and often contradictory!) web of thoughts and feelings. Our sense of right and wrong, our compassion for others, our allegiances to family, friends, faith community, country—all this is tested. Often at the crux of our obedience or disobedience is the recognition of the profound value of all life, from the plants to the planet, creatures and the creation, and people. What helps you recognize the image of God in people, especially in those who are least like you?
3. In our internet age we are often overwhelmed by competing and conflicting messages. Some of the loudest voices claiming to speak for our Christian faith today are saying (and doing) things that simply do not square with the life and teachings of Jesus as we know him in the gospels. How do you listen for what God might be saying? Tell about a time when you recognized God speaking or acting.

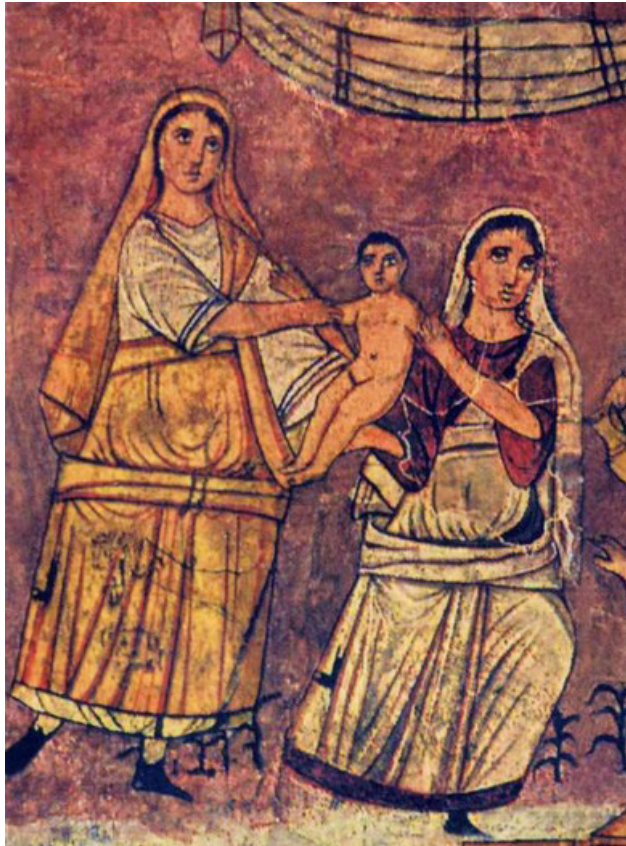


Photo by Becklectic. *Shiphrah, Puah* (Detail), ca. 245 (mural),
Dura-Europos Synagogue, Syria

CREATIVE CONNECTIONS

This detail is taken from a mural found in the Dura-Europos Synagogue in Syria. The mural includes and celebrates other women of the Exodus—each of whom made possible the life of Moses.

1. When you study this portion of the mural, what do you notice?
2. What does this communicate about these women? How does the use of color and space help tell the story?

WEEK 2

SCRIPTURE *Exodus 3:1–15*

Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. So Moses thought, “I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up.”

When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, “Moses! Moses!”

And Moses said, “Here I am.”

“Do not come any closer,” God said. “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.” Then he said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.” At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

The Lord said, “I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.”

But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?”

And God said, “I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain.”

Moses said to God, “Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ Then what shall I tell them?”

God said to Moses, “I am who I am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I am has sent me to you.’”

God also said to Moses, “Say to the Israelites, ‘The Lord, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you.’”

This is my name forever, the name you shall call me from generation to generation.” ♦

QUESTIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION

1. What word or phrase stands out to you or resonates with you? What questions do you have about this passage?
2. What connection do you make between the burning bush and the Israelites, the people of God whom Moses is sent to bring out of bondage in Egypt? What does the burning bush suggest about God’s nature?
3. The Exodus story has profound resonance for Christians as well as for Jews. What elements or patterns from the Exodus story do you recognize in other stories from scripture, from literature, or from your own life?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Tell about a time you recognized that you were standing on holy ground or found yourself unexpectedly in the presence of the holy.
2. Moses has a complicated backstory. As an infant boy born to a Hebrew woman living in exile in Egypt, he is set afloat in a basket on the River Nile to save him from Pharaoh's murderous edict and rescued by Pharaoh's daughter, who raises him in the royal palace. As a young man, he witnesses an Egyptian beating a Hebrew—"one of his own people"—and kills the Egyptian. This leads him to his own exile in Midian, where he has run in fear for his life. What might God recognize in Moses, to call him to deliver God's people? What does it mean for us that God calls Moses?
3. "I AM WHO I AM" or "I will be what I will be" is God's name in this passage. God is also twice identified as "The Lord, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob," because this God is the God with whom the Israelites are already in covenant. Implicit in God's name and title (LORD¹, the YHWH of Yahweh) is God's identity as the one who listens and hears the voices of God's people, who will come to their aid and liberate them. What name of God is the one that resonates with personal meaning for you? Which attributes of God do you recognize in that name?

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1. It is a convention in some English language books, including the *Book of Common Prayer* to use the all caps "LORD" to indicate the tetragrammaton (YHWH), the unpronounceable name of God, in the original Hebrew text, while the regular "Lord" corresponds to other Hebrew words, such as *Adonai*.



Marc Chagall (born Moishe or Moses Shagal, 1887-1985),
The Burning Bush, 1966 (lithograph, paper), Saint-paul-de-vence, France

CREATIVE CONNECTIONS

1. What do you notice in this artwork?
2. Picasso once said that when Matisse died, Chagall would be the only one who really understood what color was. What do you understand from the colors used here?

WEEK 3

SCRIPTURE *Luke 2:36–38*

For context, we highly recommend reading the full passage, Luke 2:21–40

AND the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom, and the favor of God was upon him. ♦

QUESTIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION

1. What word or phrase stands out to you or resonates with you? What questions do you have about this passage?
2. What does the second paragraph tell us about Anna and why do these details matter? Why, in your view, is Anna chosen to recognize the infant Jesus and his significance?
3. Four people recognize Jesus in this text: Mary, Joseph, Simeon, and Anna. How do their unique perspectives differ from one another? What picture of Jesus emerges from their collective impressions?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Describe a time when someone recognized something in you that you hadn't yet fully grasped about yourself.
2. When have you sensed a powerful gift in someone others ignored or did not notice? How did you choose to respond?
3. Anna was thrilled to recognize in Jesus a hope for the future of her people. What hope for the future are you starting to recognize now, in its earliest stages?



Rembrandt van Rijn (1606–1669), *Old Woman Reading (Probably the Prophetess Anna)*, 1631
(oil on panel), Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

CREATIVE CONNECTIONS

1. What does the play of dark and light suggest about Anna and her time?
2. Describe the mood of the painting. How does the painting make you feel, knowing that Anna is about to experience a lifechanging moment of recognition?

NOTES

WEEK 4

SCRIPTURE *John 4:7-30*

A SAMARITAN woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, “Give me a drink.” (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, “How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?” (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.” The woman said to him, “Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?” Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.” The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water.” Jesus said to her, “Go, call your husband, and come back.” The woman answered him, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “You are right in saying, ‘I have no husband’; for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!” The woman said to him, “Sir, I see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem.” Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You worship what you do not know; we

worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah is coming” (who is called Christ). “When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us.” Jesus said to her, “I am he, the one who is speaking to you.” Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, “What do you want?” or, “Why are you speaking with her?” Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, “Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?” They left the city and were on their way to him.♦

QUESTIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION

1. What word or phrase stands out to you or resonates with you? What questions do you have about this passage?
2. In this story, Jesus recognizes the Samaritan woman when others might overlook, or even shun her, given the societal rules of the time. Where in your own life have you felt deeply seen or recognized?
3. The woman gradually comes to recognize who Jesus is. How do you experience moments of growing recognition of God’s presence in your own journey? When have you recognized being offered something deeper than what you thought you needed?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What does it mean that Jesus recognizes the woman without rejecting her? How might that shape the way we relate to others?
2. How does the woman's recognition of Jesus as the Messiah unfold across their conversation? What helps her begin to see water in a different way?
3. The townspeople recognize Jesus for themselves after hearing the woman's testimony. How do personal stories within our communities help us recognize God more clearly?

CREATIVE CONNECTIONS

1. How does the Samaritan woman's posture and expression shape your understanding of her role in this encounter?
2. Where is your eye drawn first in this painting, to Jesus, the woman, or somewhere else? How does that affect the way you read the passage?
3. As a woman artist painting this scene, what might Gentileschi have highlighted that a male artist might overlook?

NOTES



Artemisia Gentileschi, *Christ and the Samaritan Woman*, 1637 (oil on canvas), Palazzo Blu, Pisa

WEEK 5

SCRIPTURE *Psalms 139:1–15*

O LORD, you have searched me and known me.
You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
you discern my thoughts from far away.
You search out my path and my lying down
and are acquainted with all my ways.
Even before a word is on my tongue,
O Lord, you know it completely.
You hem me in, behind and before,
and lay your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
it is so high that I cannot attain it.
Where can I go from your spirit?
Or where can I flee from your presence?
If I ascend to heaven, you are there;
if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.
If I take the wings of the morning
and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,
even there your hand shall lead me,
and your right hand shall hold me fast.
If I say, “Surely the darkness shall cover me,
and night wraps itself around me,”
even the darkness is not dark to you;
the night is as bright as the day,
for darkness is as light to you.

For it was you who formed my inward parts;
 you knit me together in my mother's womb.
I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
 Wonderful are your works;
that I know very well.
 My frame was not hidden from you,
when I was being made in secret,
 intricately woven in the depths of the earth. ♦

QUESTIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION

1. What word or phrase stands out to you or resonates with you? What questions do you have about this passage?
2. As you read the psalm, take note of your feelings. Which lines or images generated the strongest, or most surprising, emotions for you?
3. The psalmist sings of a God who knows us better than we know ourselves: deep down to the stitching of our soul, and out in all the far-flung places life takes us. How do you long to know yourself, and be known by others in the ways God knows you? In what ways do you seek this knowing, make yourself open to it?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Tell about a time you felt God's presence "in heaven" or a time you felt God's presence as you "descended into Sheol," when you experienced a time of suffering or tribulation. How did either or both of these experiences change your relationship with God?
2. Think of a time God has worked "in secret" in your life—when you were unaware of God's workings—either within you or in your outer life. Share what happened and how that has affected you.
3. What would it be like to recognize everyone, no exceptions, as someone knit in their mother's womb, as a meticulous and loving creation of God? What are the challenges? What could be liberating in it?

NOTES



Mary Southard, CSJ, (b. 1936), *The Treasure's Within* (year unknown, but after 1979)

CREATIVE CONNECTIONS

1. What elements of Psalm 139 does this painting illustrate?
2. How does it affect your understanding or appreciation of the psalm?

WEEK 6

SCRIPTURE *Luke 24:13-35*

Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, “What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?” They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?” He asked them, “What things?” They replied, “The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see him.” Then he said to them, “Oh, how foolish you are and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?” Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.” So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?” That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem, and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!” Then they told what had happened on the road and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread. ♦

QUESTIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION

1. What word or phrase stands out to you or resonates with you? What questions do you have about this passage?
2. Why do you think the two disciples could not recognize Jesus at first? What is the significance of them recognizing him after sharing a meal and breaking bread?
3. What do you think it meant to the disciples that they were the ones who were recognized and accompanied by the risen Christ? How do you think they comprehended this moment?
4. What does this passage have to say about hope in times of grief? How might the disciples’ grief and overwhelm have impacted their ability to recognize Jesus?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Where do you think Christ has shown up in your life and you may have overlooked his presence?
2. What gets in the way from us seeing Christ in the mundane moments of our everyday lives? How can we better attune ourselves to noticing moments of holiness?
3. Where in your life have you felt recognized, held, and seen in moments of despair or grief?

NOTES



Janet Brooks-Gerloff, *Emmaus Road*, 1992

CREATIVE CONNECTIONS

1. What do you notice about the use of color in this piece?
2. How does this picture portray accompaniment during times of communal grief?
3. What moves you about this piece?

NOTES

RADIX TEMPLATE

Is there another scripture selection that your group would prefer to discuss?
Use this template!

SCRIPTURE

Please name the scripture chapter and verse. Use the NRSV or NRSVue as the primary translation. If you would like to use a different translation, please also include the NRSV version and note the name of the alternate translation.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Questions in this section relate primarily to the content or context of the scripture passage and are intended for individuals to reflect on in advance of the group meeting.

1. *We always start with this question: What word or phrase stands out to you or resonates with you? What questions do you have about this passage?*
2. Your question here
3. Your question here

GROUP DISCUSSION

These are open-ended questions that are designed to generate discussion among participants that connects to their personal experience.

1. Your question here
2. Your question here
3. Your question here

CREATIVE CONNECTIONS

Select a piece of artwork, poetry, or song that connects to the passage. Provide the name and dates of the artist, along with the year the work was created, if known.

Provide no more than two questions for reflection.



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