



## CONVERSATION AND CONSULTATION, FALL 2022

### Spiritual Conversation Facilitator Guide Jesuit Communities

The facilitator is responsible for facilitating the conversation, and engaging as a regular participant.

#### Facilitating the Small Group Conversation

Below is an annotated participant guide for the small group conversation. Text from the guide is in black; facilitator notes and materials are italicized and in purple.

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### Small Group Conversation Guide

#### *With Notes for Facilitators*

#### 1. Opening Reflection and Prayer

*Welcome and thank participants.*

*Invite participants to begin with quiet reflection on the following scripture passages (read by you or your designee).*

*Jeremiah 29: 11-12*

*For I know well the plans I have in mind for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for woe, so as to give you a future of hope.*

*When you call me, and come and pray to me, I will listen to you.*

*(pause)*

*Deuteronomy 30: 11-14*

*For the law I am laying down for you today is neither obscure for you nor beyond your reach.*

*It is not in heaven, so that you may need to wonder, "Who will go up to heaven for us and bring it down to us so that we can hear it and practice it?"*

*Nor is it beyond the seas, so that you may need to wonder, "Who will cross the seas for us and bring it back to us so that we can hear and practice it?"*

*No, the word is very near to you. It is in your mouth and in your heart for you to put into practice.*

*After a brief period of quiet reflection on the scripture, invite participants to recite this prayer together (included in Participant Guide)*

**Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your people.  
And kindle in them the fire of your love.  
Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.  
And you will renew the face of the earth. Amen.**

## 2. Check-in

*Moving around the circle, ask participants to check in briefly using these or similar questions; you may wish to give them a few brief moments to reflect on and prepare their responses before beginning.*

- a. *How are you doing as you come into this meeting?*
- b. *Where would your attention be, or what would you be doing, if you were not here right now?*

## 3. Sharing I: Each group member is invited to share what they wish from the fruits of their preparatory reflection. While one member is sharing, others listen attentively, noting what they are hearing and feeling, and withholding any response to the sharing.

*Remind participants of the three reflection questions:*

- a. *Where and in what ways do I see the Spirit present and moving in my ministry, and among the people with and for whom I minister?*
- b. *How do I hear the Spirit calling our Province to Minister to the People of God: what opportunities might the Spirit be inviting us to pursue; what future do I imagine and desire for the Province and its ministries?*
- c. *What obstacles might we face in pursuing this future, and how might we face these obstacles?*

*Give participants a few moments to recall their reflection and what they have decided to share with the group.*

*Invite participants to share, in turn, what they wish from their reflection, keeping these guidelines in mind:*

- a. *Participants share only once in this round.*
- b. *The sharing should be focused only on the participant's own reflection prior to the meeting; ask participants to refrain from commenting on what others have said, or from adding to their reflection based on what they have heard others say.*
- c. *Participants ought to listen attentively, with "fresh ears" and curious minds, and without any sort of filtering or judgment.*
- d. *Participants ought to refrain from making any comments except when engaged in their own sharing,*
- e. *Sharing may be done in order, moving around the circle; the facilitator may choose to begin or may ask someone else to begin. An alternative method is to allow people to share "at will," but note that additional time may be needed for this since pauses between sharing will likely be greater.*
- f. *Participants may pass when moving around the circle; after all others have shared, return to those who have passed to ask if they would now like to share.*
- g. *When all have had an opportunity to share, thank them, and then invite them to reflect quietly for a few moments on what they have heard from one another (see question prompts below).*

## 4. Sharing II: Each group member is invited to share their experience of listening to others:

- a. What did I hear?
- b. Was I struck by any common themes?
- c. Is there something I expected to hear, but did not?
- d. Was I especially moved or touched by something someone said?
- e. Where did I experience harmony or resonance with others as they shared? Where did I experience dissonance?
- f. Did any insights occur to me?

*After a period of quiet reflection on the question prompts, ask participants to share their experience of listening to one another. NB: the above questions are prompts to aid their reflection, not a “laundry list;” there is no need or expectation for anyone to respond to all the questions.*

*In this round, the same procedures and “rules” apply as in round one, with these additions:*

- 1) Participants should not use this time to add to or clarify anything they said in the first round; the sole focus is on the experience of listening to others.*
- 2) Participants should refrain from challenging, disputing or judging in any way what they heard from others. While differences may be noted, they ought not to be judged or “litigated.”*

- 5. Review:** Group members are invited to look back on the whole conversation and note the principal themes of the sharing, paying attention especially to areas of strong convergence, and any notable differences in perspective. The group might then ask: what movements of the Spirit did we experience or recognize?

*Invite participants to reflect quietly for a few moments on the conversation as a whole.*

- 1. What notable themes emerged in our conversation?*
- 2. Where did we find strong convergence in our perspectives?*
- 3. What notable differences in perspective are there among us?*
- 4. What movements of the Spirit did we experience or recognize?*
- 5. To further the apostolic planning, what are the most important things the steering committee should know about our conversation.*

*Invite participants to share their responses at will, that is, allow people to add their response freely from the floor, but ask that they not speak a second time until all have had an opportunity to speak.*

*When all have said what they wish, open the floor for a conversation seeking and leading to agreement on what they believe should be included in the report to the steering committee, understanding that the report form invites responses to the four questions above.*

*This period should not be used to argue positions, reconcile differences, tie up loose ends, or introduce new information. It is simply to come to an honest review and shared report on the principal features of the conversation preceding.*

*Inform participants that the reporter will provide group members a copy of the report when completed.*

*Remind participants that they may offer additional individual comments using the link found in their participant guide.*

*Thank them for their participation, and remind them that they will be invited to participate in a follow-up conversation in early 2023 to review and reflect upon the steering committee’s reflection on and processing of these fall conversations.*

Guidelines for Time Distribution (approximate)

	<b>Six Participants</b>	<b>Eight Participants</b>
<b>Opening Reflections and Prayer</b>	3 minutes	3 minutes
<b>Check-in</b>	5 minutes	6 minutes
<b>Sharing I</b>	22 minutes	30 minutes
<b>Sharing II</b>	18 minutes	24 minutes
<b>Review</b>	12 minutes	12 minutes