



## LIFE TRANSFORMED: THE WAY OF LOVE IN LENT

### SESSION ONE / TURN

### DEAD TO SIN, ALIVE IN CHRIST

#### ENTERING THE WAY (Opening Prayer)

Almighty God, by our baptism into the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ, you turn us from the old life of sin: Grant that we, being reborn to new life in him, may live in righteousness and holiness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen. (Book of Common Prayer, p. 254)

#### REMEMBERING THE WAY (Scripture Reading and Teaching)

##### Scripture Reading Romans 6:3-11

What then are we to say? Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For whoever has died is freed from sin. But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Teaching: (Father Rob Laws+)

### EXPLORING THE WAY (Reflections in smaller groups)

In his letter to the Romans, Paul lays out his theological belief that baptism is the **TURNING** point in our new life with Christ. It is the time that we leave the life of sin and death behind us to be born into life that is eternal.

The Shape of the Easter Vigil (the time of Baptism in the early Church)

- The blessing of the new fire and the lighting of the Paschal Candle
- The Liturgy of the Word: The Service of Readings
- The Rite of Christian Initiation
- The First Easter Eucharist

Discuss the lesson, teachings and specific practices of turning away from forces that separate us from God and turning toward Christ. Answer the following questions.

1) Have you ever been to an Easter Vigil? If so, what was remarkable about it? If not, what part of its structure (or shape) described above intrigues you?

Additional sources: The Ignatian practice of the examen: What has brought you joy this day? What has brought you sorrow? Focus on those things that bring you joy. They are likely those that draw you closer to God.

2) Turning is a practice that involves confessing our sins as well as forgiving others. Share a story about a time when you were forgiven. How did it feel?

Additional sources:

General Confession (Book of Common Prayer, p. 359)

Reconciliation of a Penitent (Book of Common Prayer, p. 447)

### FINDING OUR WAY TOGETHER (Sharing with the larger group)

One of the greatest gifts of baptism is having a Christian family to help us in our journey. Take this time to summarize learnings from your group with the larger group, or share one or two of the sacred stories that have been shared within the small groups, offering any opportunities to TURN in your life.

### PRACTICING THE WAY AT HOME (A Practice to Take Home)

Take time before the next session to write a letter to yourself containing your hopes and prayers for this journey. Imagine that you are starting this time by facing toward the metaphorical West in your life – the habits, beliefs, or behaviors that draw you from the love of God – and make a commitment to TURN away from them. See this as an opportunity to turn to a new way of life with God, which is promised to us in baptism. Seal your letter in self-addressed envelope until the last study session.

You may also wish to consider downloading the “Reimagining the Examen” [app](#) created by Loyola Press to help you settle into a practice of turning each day. This app is free and available from the Google Play or Apple App Stores.

### BEING SENT ON THE WAY (Closing Prayer)

Almighty God, who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ overcame death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life: Grant that we, who celebrate with joy the day of the Lord’s resurrection, may be raised from the death of sin by your life-giving Spirit; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.  
Amen. Preface for Easter; Book of Common Prayer, p.222