

## 8. ENCOUNTERING THE NEW page 39-41

**Session Outcome:** Pilgrims develop an open heart to new people, ways of living and expressions of faith.

### **PRAYER: Psalm 6**

**Psalms for the Road – Joy Cowley**

#### **On the Road**

Please, slow down  
and walk with me.  
Be my companion  
for a mile or two  
and tell me your story,  
for I have much to learn  
and every pilgrim's story  
enhances my own.  
Speak to me of yearnings  
beyond people and things  
and show me the leaning  
of your heart like a compass  
towards true north.  
It does not matter  
that we borrow  
from different books  
or use different words  
to describe the journey.  
We are on the same path  
whatever shoes we wear.

### **SONG: One Bread, One Body**

John Foley

*One bread, one body,  
one Lord of all,  
one cup of blessing which we bless.  
And we, though many,  
throughout the earth,  
we are one body in this one Lord.*

Gentile or Jew,  
servant or free,  
woman or man, no more.

Many the gifts,  
many the works,  
one in the Lord of all.

Grain for the fields,  
scattered and grown,  
gathered to one, for all.

### **SCRIPTURE: Acts 2:1-22**

We are given the power of the Holy Spirit to speak and understand a truth that overcomes all differences, languages and barriers. We are called to live this truth with integrity in our lives and to share it with others as Jesus did.

## GROUP ACTIVITY: Stepping Out

**INPUT FOR DISCUSSION:** There is a time on every pilgrimage where we are called to step out of our comfort zone and meet 'the new'. On the 'outside' of the pilgrim journey this is often a new country, a new language, a new friend, a new way of doing things, a new food. On the 'inside' of the pilgrim journey this might be a broader perspective, a deeper sense of compassion or forgiveness, a new understanding of God, a stronger confidence. All of these are gifts from God. Whilst we get excited about all these experiences, the actual newness is often uncomfortable. We don't know how to act, what to say...we feel awkward or clumsy. The call of pilgrimage is: become aware of both the outside and the inside moments of growth, without allowing our very natural sense of fear to overwhelm us.

**ACTIVITIES:** Share one of the 'new experiences' below (or create one to suit the specific needs of the group) in pairs, small groups or as an entire group. The experience should take the pilgrims beyond their normal realities/comfort zones.

- Celebrate Mass in another language (try Te Reo, Spanish, Latin, Tongan, Samoan etc.) and share traditional food from that country afterwards.
- Complete a high-ropes course.
- Watch a movie in another language without subtitles.
- Spend some time with people in a prison, refugee centre, retirement home or hospital.
- Visit someone from your Parish who speaks a different language.

**REFLECTION:** Spend some time writing and reflecting on this activity experience. Use the following questions to help guide your reflection:

1. What 'outside newness' did you encounter?
2. What 'inside newness' did you encounter?
3. What did you find exciting?
4. What did you find uncomfortable?
5. What did you learn from this experience to help you on your pilgrimage journey?

## **TOOL FOR THE JOURNEY: Examination of Conscious**

This is a prayer exercise about reflecting over the day and learning to have an awareness of where God has been present. It is not a conscience examination - it is not focussed on sin - but a consciousness examination (or an awareness of God reflection). The aim is to walk through the day in my mind and become conscious of when I was aware of God and may have consciously walked with God. With repeated practice I become more aware of God in my journey.

### **Give it a Go:**

- Become still and rested
- Thank God for the gift of the day that has been.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide you as you reflect over the day and that you will be able to see it as God sees it.
- Take time to reflect over the moments that really sit with you from your day.
- Ask yourself gently: when was I fully present to myself, God and others today?
- Pray in thanks for those precious moments.
- Ask yourself gently: when wasn't I fully present to myself, God and others today?
- Pray for reconciliation – that you might be more fully present to walking with yourself, God and others.

### **Some Wisdom:**

- If you find yourself noticing any patterns over time you might like to write about it in your journal.
- You might focus on how you have reacted or experienced certain feelings at WYD11 or toward certain people.
- Seek to become sensitive and still toward the movement of the Holy Spirit. Notice any desires, attractions, hopes, fears, hurts, worries, constant thoughts... It's the job of the Holy Spirit to lead us into freedom. Sometimes this means we are shown things we need to let go of and sometimes we are shown things we need to hold on to.