

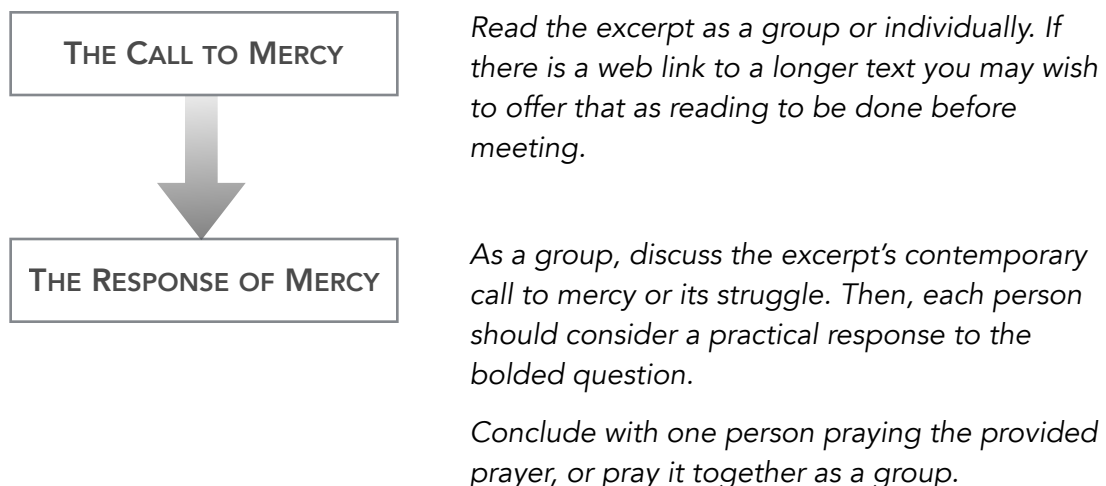
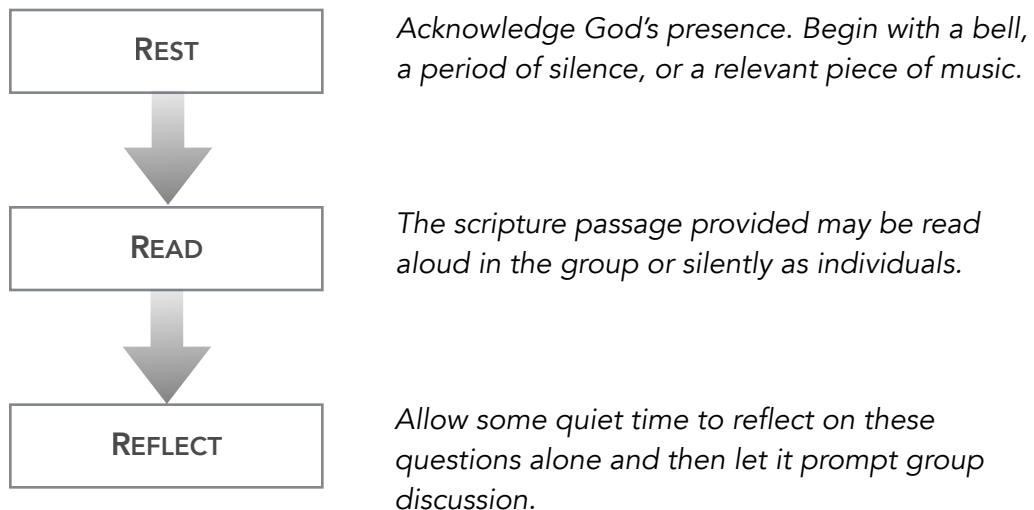


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Each week's handout sheet contains most of what you'll need to structure your gatherings. We do suggest beginning each session with a piece of music. The appendix pages offer some suggestions for music. Some weeks' "Call to Mercy" section will include an excerpt from a longer article. The appendix has links to those articles which you can choose to print and hand out if you want your group to read and discuss the full text. Finally, all of the scripture readings for each week are appended to the end of this document if you wish to print them out for your group.

Here is the suggested format for each gathering (with the exception of Appropriation Day):





CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY GIVE DRINK TO THE THIRSTY

"And whoever gives only a cup of cold water to one of these little ones to drink because he is a disciple—amen, I say to you, he will surely not lose his reward."

– Matthew 10:42

READ JOHN 4:4–15

REFLECT

- * What in this scripture passage stirs me?
 - * When was the last time I was truly thirsty for water?
 - * There is a contrast between fulfilling bodily thirst and fulfilling a deeper thirst we all have. Is it tempting to "spiritualise" thirst or hunger?
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THE CALL TO MERCY

Ronald Rolheiser, "Give Drink to the Thirsty," February 13, 1997:

"The command to be involved with the physically poor means just that, the physically poor. It is rationalizing when we turn the corporal works of mercy into something less concrete, namely, when we define the physically poor in such a wide sense so as to include everyone – 'To feed the hungry can also mean feeding those who are spiritually hungry.' 'To give drink to the thirsty can also mean giving spiritual nourishment to those who, while affluent materially, are hungry for deeper things.' There is a sense in which this is true, but that is not what Jesus intended in Matthew 25 and not what the church has perennially intended in its social teachings."

(full text here: irgi.at/1IWMIwP)

THE RESPONSE OF MERCY

Giving drink to the thirsty can be as simple as giving milk to an infant or offering cold water to a marathon runner. *How am I fulfilling my neighbour's basic needs?*

God of the Thirsty, the water of life is sometimes just that: a life-saver. Don't let us spiritualise our care for the poor. Hydrate our generosity so that we may care for those most in need. Amen.