

Exercise to Confirm the Priorities

Preparing your heart: Take as much time as you need to become centered and interiorly at peace. Become aware of God's presence and welcome it. Then offer yourself to God and to the action of God's Spirit in this time of reflection and prayer.

Ask for the grace: of confirmation (joy and interior peace with Christ) from the Spirit.

Listening to the Word:

Now when the rulers, elders, and scribes saw the boldness of Peter and John and realized that they were uneducated and ordinary men, they were amazed and recognized them as companions of Jesus. They ordered them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered them, 'Whether it is right in God's sight to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge; for we cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard.' After threatening them again, they let them go, finding no way to punish them because of the people, for all of them praised God for what had happened.

After they were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. When they heard it, they raised their voices together to God. When they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the Word of God with boldness. Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need. (Acts 4:13, 18-20, 23-24, 31-35)

Suggestions for Prayer and Reflection

- Slowly read and reread the Scripture text, pausing to savour those words, images or expressions that bring you closer to Christ, with a sense of entering into the environment of consolation.
- Take the time to prayerfully review the three priorities that have emerged out of our April discernment. You may take either the shorter summary, or the fuller analysis; if you take the longer document, please only spend as much time on the details as you need to experience a sense of interior movement with respect to that priority.
- As you reflect on these three priorities, do you have the sense that they are coherent with our discernment process, and that they capture the desires of the CRC membership over last few months?
- Do you experience the freedom to recognize the call of the Spirit in our process through these priorities? Do you sense a growing "holy boldness"?

Sharing conversation as with a friend:

- At some point, you may feel drawn into conversation with Jesus. Take time also to listen to what he wants to say to you, and let this conversation lead you deeper.
- When you sense that the time of conversation is coming to an end, give thanks for what you have been given.

Make a short note:

Write down a short account, no more than ten lines, of the fruits of your prayerful reflection. This short note will form the basis for your sharing in the first round of small group spiritual conversation.