

Morning of Grace™

April 2018 Format

Schedule of Activities:

9:00-9:15

Registration and Breakfast

Women sign in and fill out name tags and, if desired, bless themselves with Holy Water. They also pick up the brochure for this event and any other flyers that are on the resource table. They may also place prayer intentions in the intention basket if one is provided.

Suggested breakfast items: Coffee, tea, water, muffins, bagels, fruit

9:15-9:30

Opening Song/Welcome/Theme/Grace/Opening Prayer

a) **Song:** Ask women to refer to the brochures for the lyrics to the Women of Grace theme song (if space is available, you may wish to gather in a circle for the song)

b) **Welcome:**

1) Welcome the women and thank them for taking the time out of their busy schedule to come and join in the sacred sisterhood during this Morning of Grace

2) Instructions: **“Before we begin our program we have a few housekeeping details...”**

-Give location of the bathrooms, silence all cell phones and, **“please remain seated during presentations to minimize distractions for those around you and for the speaker.”**

Note to Facilitators: You might like to use this technique to quiet the room. It is a good idea to practice this at the beginning of the morning. **“I will raise my hand when silence is needed. When you see me raise my hand, please be silent and raise your hand too so that the room will become quiet very quickly.”**

c) **Theme: Mary has been chosen by God for a unique mission and purpose in the life of His people and His Church.**

d) **Grace: I pray for the grace to come to a greater understanding and appreciation of the Blessed Virgin in the life of the Church and in my own personal life.**

If you choose, you can share with the ladies that grace is the **“free and undeserved help that God gives us”** out of His abundant love. (Catechism of the Catholic Church paragraphs 1996-2000)

e) *Opening Prayer*

“Let us ponder...Mary our Blessed Mother, loves each of God’s children as her own. In the light of Her Holy Spouse, let us reflect upon the gift of true and holy on friendships.”

All pray the 2nd Joyful Mystery while listening to: *Praying the Rosary with St. Therese of Lisieux* CD. (This CD is recommended as there is a meditation before each Hail Mary that will allow the women to be receptive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.)

9:30-10:00 *DVD Viewing*

a) Watch DVD entitled: Friendship: Life’s True Elixir with Dr. John Cuddeback
1st Episode of 5, #11090 -11094 <http://www.womenofgrace.com/en-us/media/tv/details.aspx?id=1420>

10:00-10:15 *Testimony*

a) Introduce speaker- give brief biography

“Please refer to your brochure for the prayer for ourselves and our speaker.”

b) **“Let us welcome the Holy Spirit into our hearts and into the heart of our guest speaker as we pray...”**

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of thy faithful and enkindle in them the fire of Thy love. Send forth Thy Spirit and they shall be created and Thou shall renew the face of the earth. Amen.

c) Testimony

d) **“Ladies, after hearing this beautiful testimony we encourage you to prayerfully consider sharing your testimony in the near future.”**

10:15-10:20 *Reflection Time*

a) “Now please refer to the questions in your brochure for reflection. I will read them aloud as you read them to yourselves.

1) 1. A true friend becomes a mirror for us who reflects the truth of who we are. As I reflect upon this, I ask myself, who are my true friends as opposed to friendly acquaintances? What do I have in the way of virtue that helps me become a true friend? Where in the light of the Holy Spirit, do I see I need improvement?

2) St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta tells us, “The most terrible poverty is loneliness. We were made for communion. What does friendship and virtue have to do with happiness?

Take a few minutes to reflect on these questions and ‘incline the ear of your heart’ (Proverbs 4:20). You are welcome to close your eyes as the music plays if you wish.”

b) *Ave Maria* – violin and piano instrumental (Schubert) or a CD of the song.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IIuFZhn8tIQ>

10:20-10:45 *Group Sharing*

Instructions: “Before we break into small groups, remember just as in the foundational study discussion time the discussion is confidential. Please use the questions from the brochure. Share whatever you feel comfortable sharing and allow the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion. After the group comes together, please appoint a woman to facilitate the questions, guide the sharing time, stay on task and give the 5 minute warning before the discussion ends. To remember your group number, please write down your number on your brochure.”

Note to facilitators: Sharing time is 20 minutes. An easy method of helping the ladies to get to know each other is to limit the sharing groups to 4 ladies and to count off from 1-5 or another number so that there will be no more than 4 in a group. **In order for the women to remember their number, have them write it on their brochure.** It is imperative that the facilitators participate in the small group sharing. Please allow time in your small group for everyone to have an opportunity to share. **Be aware of the 5 minute warning before sharing time ends.**

10:45-10:55 *Women of Grace Updates*

- a) Tell the women to refer to page 3 of the brochure as you share the Women of Grace Updates
- b) Announce date of the next Morning of Grace, upcoming online and local studies, conference and retreats. Women of Grace Exclusive, Amazon Smile opportunity, Facebook and Twitter information.

“We would like you to take a Saints Perpetua and Felicity holy card before you leave today.” (Show the holy card to the women as you share information about their lives.)

“St. Perpetua kept a diary during her last days, while she awaited her execution. This account was passed down to encourage other Christians to witness to the world with their lives—to teach others that greater than life itself is knowing Jesus and being loyal to him.

Perpetua’s account records the events that took place in Carthage, Africa, in the year 202, when the Emperor Severus issued an anti-Christian law forbidding anyone to be baptized and become a Christian. At that time twenty-two-year-old Perpetua was a catechumen, studying to become a Christian. She was also the mother of an infant son. Perpetua was arrested along with four other catechumens, including Felicity, her slave woman, who was about to give birth to a child. While they were awaiting death, Perpetua and her companions were baptized. Shortly before the scheduled execution, Felicity gave birth to a baby girl. During childbirth, she had cried out in pain. Someone hearing her asked her how she would ever endure the suffering of martyrdom. She replied, ‘Now it is I who suffer what I am suffering; then, there will be another in me who will suffer for me, because I will be suffering for him.’

On the day of their execution, the martyrs left their prison ‘joyfully as though they were on their way to heaven’ and entered the arena, where they were killed before the cheering crowd. Perpetua and Felicity were beheaded; the others were killed by wild beasts. ‘No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.’ John 15:13.

Saints Perpetua and Felicity pray for us.”

10:55-11:00 *Closing Song/Closing Prayer*

- a) *Make me a Channel of your Peace*
- b) *to holy St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi* (attachment)

Suggestions for Facilitators:

Please pray about developing a core group of 4-6 women, “Mary’s Handmaids,” to help with the duties for the monthly Mornings of Grace. This is an essential piece for the

ongoing success of Mornings of Grace in your area. "...the harvest is abundant but the laborers are few..." Matthew 9:37

Carefully review each monthly format thoroughly as there will be additions or changes depending on the theme and grace.

To prepare for this month's Morning of Grace, purchase the Saints Perpetua and Felicity holy cards.

Reviewing the "8 B's of a Facilitator" on page 26-27 in the *Full of Grace Women and the Abundant Life* Facilitator Guide is helpful. It is particularly important to begin and end on time. You might consider, after the program has ended, for the women to have continued conversation during clean up time. This typically is a ½ hour time period.

Suggestions for Supplies:

It is suggested that there is no charge for this morning of grace so to offset expenses, a pot luck breakfast could be provided by several of the ladies. Many times, ladies are very willing to contribute specific items when they are asked. **A donation jar can be placed on the resource table for monetary donations to offset expenses.**

Items that will provide a warm, welcoming setting include: Sign in Sheet, Name tags, Event brochures, Flyers (Young Women of Grace and Women of Grace), Prayer Intention Basket with small slips of paper and pencils, Holy Water, Statue of Blessed Virgin, **Saints Perpetua and Felicity holy cards**, open Bible, and Catechism of the Catholic Church. If you have a flower arrangement on the table, this could be presented to the speaker as a gift after the testimony.

Suggestions for Speaker:

Have the speaker give a 5-7 minute testimony. Have the speaker write out the testimony as this will assist in staying within the time period. Suggest that the speaker follow the format given in the Women of Grace foundational study that is "I was, Jesus did, I am." Speakers may be chosen from testimonies given during the foundational study sessions or Morning of Grace sharing times. Encourage the women to share their testimonies of spiritual, emotional or physical healing as everyone has a story to tell and this can provide an opportunity to show how God has blessed them.

In appreciation for the speaker's fiat, send a personal note or phone call to let her know that her sacred sisters are holding her in prayer. Share with her this Scripture passage, to reflect upon, as she prepares her testimony.

Jeremiah 1:5-9 -Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you. Before you were born I dedicated you, a prophet to the nations I appointed you. "Ah, Lord God!" I said, I know not how to speak; I am too young." But the Lord answered me, Say not, "I am too young." To whomever I command you, you shall speak. Have no fear before them, because I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord. Then the Lord extended his hand and touched my mouth, saying See I place my words in your mouth!

Resources:

Email Invitation: (sample attached) Send 2 weeks before the gathering and a reminder email sent again two days before the event

Brochure: (sample attached) It is a landscape page layout, vertically folded brochure

Women of Grace theme song (lyrics and music by Lynn Cooper) available for purchase from www.womenofgrace.com

Praying the Rosary with St. Therese of Lisieux CD- available from www.womenofgrace.com

Women of Grace Journal for Daily Prayer and Reflection, Issue 01; entitled: Women of Grace Journal - Mary Through Saintly Eyes: Who is Mary http://www.womenofgrace.com/en-us/library/default.aspx#s_20_3

Friendship Novena <https://couragec.org/wp-content/uploads/Friendship-Novena-PDF-Updated-Oct-2016.pdf>

DVD series entitled: Friendship: Life's True Elixir 1st Episode of 5, #11090 -11094 <http://www.womenofgrace.com/en-us/media/tv/details.aspx?id=1420> available free as an exclusive member or the entire series for purchase from www.ewtnrc.com or order by phone 1-800-854-6316

Please allow five to ten business days for delivery if ordering the series.

Catholic Bible, Revised Standard Version

Saints Perpetua and Felicity holy cards available <https://www.ecrater.com/p/14139746/saints-perpetua-and-felicity-holy-card?>

Make me a Channel of your Peace <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZIIgSt7pEqc> or the CD song

Prayer to St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi (attachment)

