



“God does not call the qualified. He qualifies the called.”

**Emmaus Ministry for Grieving Parents
Training Session Outline
for
Retreat Leaders
Registration Coordinators
Hospitality Managers
Diocesan Liaisons**

9/12/23

as of 9/6/23

REQUIRED before Training Session

1. Sign EMFGP Retreat Team Agreement if you have not already
2. Purchase EMFGP Retreat Team Guidebook/Receive link to digital version
3. EMFGP Retreat Team Guidebook
 - Read Chapter 4
 - Review App 5
 - Read REV Appendix #11 and REV Appendix #23 (attached)
 - Review Appendices #9, #12, #13a & b, # 18, #19, #20, #21a&b
4. Printout this Training Session Outline
5. Have Training Session Outline and EMFGP Retreat Team Guidebook available during training

RECOMMENDED before Training Session

1. Complete [Self-Reflection Worksheet](#) (if you are a grieving parent)
2. Read [Sorrow Like No Other](#) booklet
3. View [What We'd Like You to Know](#) video (10 minutes)



ROMERO PRAYER

EMFGP OVERVIEW

- 2009 Beginning
- Mission and Core Values
- Why it works
- How it works
- Current EMFGP Diocesan Partnerships
- Retreat Rules

UNDERSTANDING OUR PARENTS

- **Who it is for:**

All Grieving Parents Regardless of...

- Religion
- Where they are in their spiritual journeys
- Age of child at death (from conception to old age)
- Cause of death (including miscarriage, abortion, suicide, etc.)
- Time since the death

- **How it is offered:**

- For grieving parents by other grieving parents, together with spiritual leaders, and diocesan/parish personnel
- **In ongoing cooperation with EMFGP Central**
- In compliance with the EMFGP Retreat Team Guidebook
- In compliance with REV EMFGP Retreat Guidelines (attached)--Read verbatim and provide hard copy at every retreat
- In compliance with Catholic Church teachings (App 21a)—Provide hard

- copy of Catechesis at every retreat
 - Planned using **REV App 11 and REV App 23** (attached)
 - Without judgment or assumption
 - Acknowledging that the grief of a parent is a sorrow like no other.
- **When it is offered:**
 - On an ongoing basis, ideally with at least two retreats/year/diocese
- **Resources:**
 - [*Sorrow Like No Other*](#) booklet
 - [*What We'd Like You to Know*](#) video

OUR JOB AS RETREAT TEAM MEMBERS

- Worker Bees of the Holy Spirit

OVERVIEW: RETREAT TEAM ROLES/RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Retreat Leader
2. Registration Coordinator
3. Hospitality Coordinator
4. Diocesan Liaison (s)

Additional Team Members

- Spiritual Leader [App 6]
- Parent Witness [App 14]
- Small Group Facilitators [App 15]
- Volunteers
 - Facility contact
 - Set-up/clean-up
 - Check-In
 - Hospitality
 - Retreat materials preparation-folders/candles/Parent Directory/handouts/name tags [App 12; App 18; App 19; App 20; App 20a; App 21a &b]



EMMAUS RETREAT TEAM MEMBERS

(Note: Roles can be reassigned according to your needs)

- **RETREAT LEADER**

1. Leads team
2. Leads retreat (App 5 Script) - Charley's role
3. Emphasizes REV Retreat Guidelines
4. Leads completion of REV Appendix 11 and REV Appendix 23
5. Coordinates prayer service participants (REV App 13a and REV 13b)
6. Coordinates volunteers
7. Schedules Zoom meeting 4 weeks out with Emmaus Central
8. Leads completion of Profit and Loss (Ch 8, p 58)

- **REGISTRATION COORDINATOR**

1. Communicates with parents
2. Tracks registrations/PQ responses
3. Coordinates retreat materials preparation

COMMUNICATES WITH PARENTS

- Pre-Retreat Pastoral Phone Calls [Ch 4, pp 23-26, minimum]
 - Challenges
 - Email Messages
 - Pre-call email to all
 - 2 VM messages-need to connect
 - Email assuming not coming

- PQ info via phone w/photo texted or emailed
- Goals of the Call
 - To confirm that they are grieving parents
 - To establish rapport
 - To help them feel comfortable sharing their stories and where they are in their spiritual journeys
 - To share what the retreat is and is not
 - To share EMFGP REV Retreat Guidelines
 - To answer questions about the retreat
 - To give information on the Parent Questionnaire and determine whether or not they can complete it online
 - To send PQ email with link [See email samples in *Updated Appendices/Additions*]
 - Alternative ways to get PQ info: complete manually via phone or email; send photo via email or text--or Staples will scan and email attachment
- Parent Questionnaire(s) [Ch 4, p 25]
 - Available PQ types (no photo; multiple)

TRACKS REGISTRATIONS/PQ RESPONSES

- Registration Spreadsheet [App 9]
- Registration info/PQ info

COORDINATES RETREAT MATERIALS PREPARATION

- Memorial candles [App18]
- Orientation folders [App12]
- Name tags/Parent Directory [REV App 20, 20a]
- Handouts

● **HOSPITALITY MANAGER** (See Hospitality Training Summary below)

1. Food and beverage planning/coordination/purchasing/ execution
 - Light breakfast snacks; sandwich/salad lunch/ casserole dinner
 - Ongoing snacks/beverages throughout the day
 - Environment: table clothes; simple centerpieces
2. Coordination with on-site contact

- **DIOCESAN LIAISON(S)**

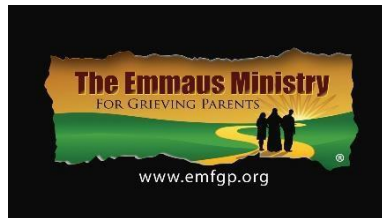
GOAL: Ideally, 2 retreats per year in each U.S. Catholic Diocese

1. FORMALLY RECOGNIZE EMFGP AS A DIOCESAN MINISTRY

- Add EMFGP to your Diocesan website as an ongoing ministry under both “Upcoming Events” and “Resources” for families and bereavement.
- Identify and encourage at least two parishes to adopt EMFGP and work together to offer retreats (or possibly offer an EMFGP retreat once/yr at your Pastoral Center, if feasible)
- Coordinate Diocesan EMFGP retreat scheduling to ideally ensure two retreats/yr
- Support diocesan EMFGP retreat teams in other ways (e.g. financially)

2. HEAVILY PROMOTE RETREATS

- Offer “*Come and See*” One-Hour Zoom Overview session(s) hosted by EMFGP for anyone in your diocese interested in learning more.
- Aggressively promote EMFGP and upcoming retreats [Ch 5; App 24]
 - Meetings
 - Vicariate
 - Pastoral Associates
 - Bereavement Coordinators
 - Deacons
 - Chaplains
 - Other
 - Diocesan newspaper article (s)
 - Diocesan brochure [App 24]
 - Bulletin ads
 - Social media
 - Flocknotes
 - Diocesan TV station interview (s)
 - Local hospitals/funeral homes (provide EMFGP cards/brochures)
 - Other



EMMAUS MINISTRY FOR GRIEVING PARENTS MISSION AND CORE VALUES

MISSION

Inspired and guided by the Holy Spirit, the Emmaus Ministry is a Catholic ministry serving the spiritual needs of all grieving parents (no matter where they are in their spiritual journeys or what religion), whose children of any age (from conception to old age) have died by any cause (including abortion, miscarriage, suicide, overdose, etc.) no matter how long ago (from a few weeks to more than 40 years ago). All of our programs are grounded in Catholic Church teachings on life after death.

CORE VALUES

1. Our total focus is on the spirituality of the individual parent's grieving process.

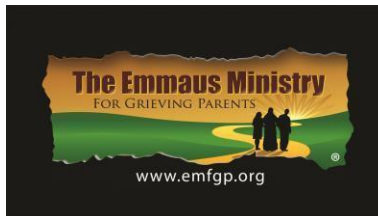
- Our retreats provide parents with spiritual nourishment and the opportunity to spend dedicated time focused on their spiritual journeys after the death of their children.
- Retreat team members handle the logistics of preparing for the retreat and having it run smoothly. What actually happens at each retreat, however, is the work of the Holy Spirit, the parents, and the children.

2. We offer spiritual retreats, not support groups, workshops, or therapy.

- Parents are never called on to introduce themselves or speak or share (Many people participate by listening only)
- Retreat team members recognize and value the confidentiality of parents.
- Parents are never required to participate in any retreat session; they choose to spend their time however they wish.
- Parents may participate in as many retreats as they wish.
- Our retreats are offered by other grieving parents, diocesan/parish personnel, and spiritual leaders under the guidance of the Holy Spirit

3. We acknowledge that the grief of a parent is a sorrow like no other and serve their spiritual needs without judgment or assumptions.

4. We offer ongoing mentoring and support, for, ideally, at least two retreats per year per diocese.



REV2 RETREAT GUIDELINES

IMPORTANT: These Retreat Guidelines should be read verbatim during the opening “Welcome” session and highlighted again at the beginning of small group sessions.

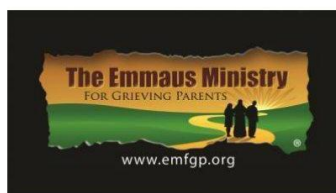
- This ministry attempts to serve the spiritual needs of the individual grieving parent. We’re not here as a support group or for group therapy. For those reasons, you will not be asked to introduce yourself or expected to tell your story to the group. We ask that you share only what is comfortable for you to do so, and only when you are ready to do so.
- It helps to remember that no matter how close we may be to each other, each of us is probably at a different stage in our spiritual journey and most likely in a different place in our grieving process.
- Some parents may want to participate here today by listening only—and that is perfectly fine. Participation happens in many ways. Please plan on contributing as much—or as little—as you like and respect the wishes of others.
- Please help us allow everyone to have time to speak. In order to permit everyone to say what they feel called to share, while still appreciating the constraints of time, you may be asked to pause when addressing a group so that someone else may be heard.
- Within these walls today, the only one with all the answers is the Holy Spirit. Please do not assume that any of the presenters, or you yourself, knows how someone else should feel or act. Feelings are neither right nor wrong, and everyone should be able to speak from their heart without being concerned that someone may correct them or challenge what they say.
- Everything that is shared by you or with you today should be considered strictly confidential, and not repeated to anyone or anywhere outside of these walls. Every one of us has the right to total confidentiality regarding our discussions today. Please do not share anything on any media without specific permission of the owner.
- At the end of each session, we will tell you where and when the next session will meet. All sessions are optional. If you are not there when it is time to begin, we will assume you have chosen not to attend that session.
- As grieving parents, we know that the last thing we want to do is increase another’s pain. For this reason, please refrain from any judgmental comments like “My son wasn’t a drug addict or a criminal, so I don’t know why he had to die.” None of our children deserved to die.



REVISED: SAMPLE ONE-DAY EMMAUS RETREAT SCHEDULE

Recommended Retreat Team				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration Coordinator • Retreat Leader • Hospitality Coordinator • Volunteers • Diocesan Liaison(s) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual Leader • Parent Witness • Small Group Facilitators • Mass Celebrant • Spiritual Director (if available) • Confessor (if available) 		
	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	RESPONSIBILITY	MATERIALS NEEDED
PRE-RETREAT	Local inquiry calls/Local manual registrations/ Follow-up phone calls (Ch 4)			Parent Questionnaire Links
9:30am-10:00am	Check In Meet & Greet		Volunteers (Retreat Team welcoming all)	Orientation Folders (App12/App 20/App21) 6' table/2 chairs 20 boxes of tissues throughout
9:30am-10:00am	Breakfast Snacks	Dining Area		
9:55am-10:00am	Retreat Team Prayer		Entire Retreat Team; Prayer Leader:	
10:00am-10:15am	Welcome/House Information Introductions General Info Retreat Guidelines (App 12)		Site Host Retreat Leader [App 5]	6' rectangular tables arranged in a square to seat 25 people 6' table for handouts 6' table for prayer shawls? Prayer shawls/scarves?
10:00am-4:30pm	Ongoing Snacks & beverages available Candles & music playing in the Chapel/Church			
10:15am-10:45am	Opening Prayer Service Candle Ritual (App 5) Blessing of Candles/Crosses Candle Lighting /Cross Distribution (App13a)	Chapel/Church	Prayer Service Leader: Retreat Leader Spiritual Leader? Reader #1: Volunteer Reader #2: Volunteer	6' table w/cloth table cloth for candles in front of altar 24 eight-day sanctuary candles Comfort Crosses Paschal Candle (or substitute)

10:45am-11:00am	Break			
	ACTIVITY	LOCATION IN YOUR FACILITY	RESPONSIBILITY	MATERIALS NEEDED
11:00am-11:40pm 11:40am-12:00pm	Reflection Open Discussion (App 6)		Spiritual Leader Retreat Leader	
12:00pm-12:45pm	Lunch/Free Time	Dining Area		
12:45pm-1:30pm	Parent Witnessing (<i>Where am I right now in my spiritual journey after the death of my child?</i>) (App14)		???	
1:30pm-2:15pm	Small Group: Mothers/Fathers Reflection Question (App15) e.g. <i>In your suffering, have you felt the presence or the absence of God?</i>		2-3 Mothers; 1 Father	3-4 small breakout areas to seat 6-8 people Names in bowl
2:15pm-2:45pm	Large Group Sharing		Retreat Leader	
2:45pm-3:00pm	Break			
3:00pm-3:30pm	Letter Writing to God, child, or other	Various	Retreat Leader	Paper/pens/container to burn letters
3:30pm-4:15pm	Parent-to-Parent Emmaus Walk	Various	Retreat Leader	Names in bowl
4:15pm-5:00pm	Choice of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconciliation • Spiritual Direction • One-on-One Parent Companionship • Chapel /Free Time 		Fr. ??? ???	
5:00pm-6:00pm	Mass (App 16)		Vigil	
6:00pm-6:45pm	Dinner/Feedback		Retreat Leader	Evaluation Forms (App 17)
6:45pm-7:15pm	Closing Prayer Service (App 13b) Sacrament of Anointing?		Spiritual Leader Retreat Leader	Sacred oil? Incense (for letters)?

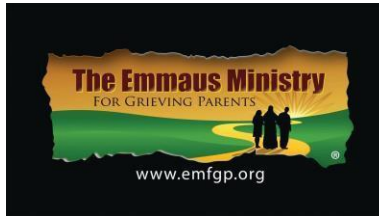


OTHER RETREAT ITEMS NEEDED

	ITEM	RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR INITIAL RETREAT [EMFGP = We will bring]
	ENVIRONMENT	
1	15-20 boxes of tissues available in all meeting spaces and in the Sacred Space where candles will burn and where Prayer Services and Mass will be celebrated [Try to use tissue without lotion, as lotion causes teary eyes to burn.]	
2	CD player, MP3, Ipad or other method to play meditation music in the Sacred Space used to house Memorial Candles	EMFGP
3	Meditation music playlists or CD's to be played during the Prayer Services and when the Sacred Space is not in use for Prayer Services or Mass, but candles are burning throughout the day	EMFGP
4	Six-foot table for Memorial Candles	
5	Six-foot table handouts	
6	Six-foot table for prayer shawls (if you are offering them)	
7	Cloth table cloths for Memorial Candles, Handouts, and Prayer Shawls tables	
8	Basket/container for Comfort Cross distribution	
	PROGRAM ACTIVITIES:	
9	A Paschal Candle, or in its absence, a sanctuary candle substituting for the Paschal Candle, representing the Light of Christ and from which all other candles will be lit	
10	For Opening and Closing Prayer Services, a brass candle lighter with bell snuffer, typically used by altar servers in parishes	EMFGP
11	Wax lighting tapers for candle lighter	EMFGP
12	If you plan to use incense in either the Mass or Closing Prayer Service:	
12a	• Thurible and censer boat with spoon	
12b	• Quick lite charcoal	
12c	• Incense	
13	A method to call participants back to activities—a singing prayer bowl or bell of some sort*	EMFGP

14	If you plan to do parent letter writing and to burn the letters to be offered with incense:	
14a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper and pens for writing. NOTE: we suggest using resume paper or some other high cotton content paper for the letters. We have found that this burns best into fine ash, while normal copy paper does not. You might want to try burning a piece of the paper you plan to use to determine that it does indeed burn to ash. 	
14b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An appropriate receptacle in which to collect the completed letters (You can reuse the basket or container used for the Comfort Crosses) 	
14c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A metal bucket or a large disposable aluminum casserole pan in which to burn the letters 	
14d	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An appropriate receptacle to hold the burned ash of parents' letters (we will use our –or your—prayer bowl) 	EMFGP
15	Business-card-sized pieces of paper folded in half containing each retreatant's name. These will be used to draw names for small group discussion and the Emmaus Walk.	
16	An appropriate receptacle in which to deposit the above single names, from which they will be prayed over and drawn before the small group discussion or Emmaus Walk. (You can reuse your basket or container for the Comfort Crosses.)	
17	Preparing name tags and candles for Walk-Ins:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4-6 blank name tags with Emmaus graphic 	
17a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-3 blank candles with extra candle back labels to affix if necessary 	
17b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scissors to cut photocopies of photos parents bring with them to size; double face tape to affix photo to candle 	
17c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extra blank Avery #22822 clear labels to handwrite child's name and affix on candle 	
18	Memorial Candles (8-day clear sanctuary candles)	
	Comfort Crosses	EMFGP?
18	Optional: prayer shawls	

*You can purchase a 7" diameter brass singing prayer bowl online for about \$50. We use it for multiple purposes, including #'s 13, 14b & 14d.



EMMAUS MINISTRY ONE-DAY RETREAT HOSPITALITY TRAINING SUMMARY

Once the site is identified, request an onsite liaison or church operations staff to review the kitchen and serving facility. It is optimal to visit the site to personally assess but, if not an option, then by Zoom or phone review with the staff the following.

KITCHEN EQUIPMENT

- Freezer
- Refrigerator
- Usable oven
- Utensils for serving
- Silverware
- Plates
- Coffee cups
- Glasses
- Serving bowls
- Creamers
- Sugars/sweeteners
- Salt and Pepper
- Coffee Urn or Keurig Coffee maker
- Electric Teapot
- Water- can the water in the church be used for drinking/cooking
- Water cooler
- Hot plates
- Kitchen towels, washcloths
- Paper towels
- Napkins
- Coffee stirrers
- ICE and large container- needed to keep water bottles cold and available

After assessing available materials, decide what needs to be purchased the week before the retreat.

SUPPLIES

If plates and coffee cups are not available, you will need (based on 25 people):

- 50 coffee cups; 50 water cups if water cooler is available
- 50 dinner paper plates (lunch and dinner); 40 small paper plates (breakfast muffins/dessert)

- Utensils: 50 forks, knives and spoons; serving utensils
- 60 napkins
- 25 soup bowls if chowder is served at lunch.
- Case of water bottles- at least 40 small bottles
- Plastic tablecloths (depends on the number of tables required)
- Centerpieces (?)

Organizing the delivery of the hospitality is so important. Identify at least two people who can assist you with the stocking of the supplies, preparation and serving of the food and the cleanup. A quiet, coordinated team will make the service of the meals a nurturing gift to the grieving parents.

MENU CONSIDERATIONS

It is nice to do a menu and display it. Gives people the feeling of a special venue.

Breakfast:

It is a late arrival at 9:30 so only small snacks are necessary.

Most people like a grab and go option such as small muffins, small yogurt containers and granola bars etc.

Juice is most welcome.

Since Covid people do not like open food or juice so it should be containers.

Lunch:

It is a short time before the lunch break and breakfast so lunch should be light. It is also a short lunch time so dessert that can be taken to the next session is great.

Depending on the season of year dictates the best options.

Winter a chowder is very popular.

Summer pasta salad is popular.

Sandwiches: small finger sandwiches of two varieties work best. Chicken salad, egg salad or ham and cheese with a vegan option such as veggie wraps.

Dessert: cookies or bars such as brownies.

Snacks:

It is helpful to have snacks on the general session tables and available all day in the dining area. Leave the cookies or brownies out after lunch.

Candy on the general session tables is welcome.

Salty snacks are often requested such as pretzels or peanuts (some people don't want the sweets).

Dinner:

There is a long interlude between lunch and dinner.

A hot meal is preferable.

Pasta such as lasagna, stuffed shells etc. is easy to serve, economical and generally liked by most people.

Pasta meals are also best for those kitchens that don't have cooking options as they keep warm or rewarm easily.

Salad is generally also well accepted and necessary for those who have aversion to cheese etc.

Bread or rolls depending on the meal

Butter

Dessert any option is great as everyone is drained and in need of a treat.

Drinks for lunch and dinner are a challenge. Coffee and tea should always be available with cream, milk and sweeteners/sugar. Lemonade, iced tea, flavored waters or sparkling drinks are options. Water should always be available. Small water bottles are preferred since the retreat moves from large to small groups and large bottles are unfinished and left behind.

Clean Up

Inquire during your site review about garbage disposal, dishwashing etc. Leave the site as clean as you found it. Leftovers usually are removed unless the staff indicates they will be welcome.