

Practice Guide for November 23th 2025

Sacred Trusts, pt. 6—The Gift of a Temple

Suggested Ice Breaker (5 minutes)

What is one thing your body lets you do that you're genuinely grateful for (even if it also makes you feel a little old, tired, or sore)?

Opening Lectio (10 minutes)

Begin with a moment of silence to center on God's presence.

Have someone read Psalm 139:13–14 (NIV) slowly while the group listens and reflects:

*For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.
I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
your works are wonderful, I know that full well.*

Pause in silence for a moment.

Then invite someone to pray, asking the Spirit to help you receive your bodies as gifts and temples, not burdens to despise or projects to perfect.

Reflecting On Scripture (15 minutes)

Have someone read Genesis 1:26–28 and 1 Corinthians 6:19–20 aloud for the group.

Questions for Discussion:

1. What do these passages reveal about how God sees our bodies and what they're for?
2. How does it challenge or encourage you to think of yourself as both an image-bearer and a temple of the Holy Spirit?
3. In what ways does shifting from "my body belongs to me" to "this body is entrusted to me" change how you think about your everyday choices?

Community Practice (25 minutes)

Slowly read this reflection aloud:

"We don't always think of caring for the body as a part of our spiritual practice. But this is where it all begins. It can be hard and humbling to pay attention to your body, whatever state it is in, because it brings you face to face with your finiteness, your vulnerability ... You may believe that the spiritual journey takes place in a realm completely separate from the body. But the truth is that the spiritual journey is taken in a physical body, and there is a very real connection between caring for our body and deepening our relationship with God." —Ruth Haley Barton, Invitation to Silence and Solitude

Take 5–7 minutes to journal a response to these questions:

1. If I'm honest, do I tend to see my body more as a problem to fix or a gift to steward?
2. Where do I sense a need for greater integrity or wholeness in how I use my body (its desires, boundaries, or habits) and how might God be inviting me to respond?
3. What simple practices (rest, movement, food, boundaries with technology, sleep, medical care, etc.) could create space for me to love God and others more freely?

After journaling, form groups of two or three and share anything you feel comfortable sharing.

Group Discussion:

Bring everyone back together.

- What makes it hard in our culture to see our bodies as gifts and temples, rather than as projects, products, or burdens?
- How have you experienced a connection between simple embodied habits (walking, exercise, rest, eating well, limiting screens) and your spiritual or emotional life?
- As we move into a season of feasts and indulgence, what might it look like to “prepare the temple,” practicing self-control not as punishment, but as making room for the real feast of life with Jesus?

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Close your time by slowly praying this sixteenth century prayer from Ignatius of Loyola:

*Receive, Lord, my entire freedom.
Accept the whole of my memory,
my intellect and my will.*

*Whatever I have or possess,
it was you who gave it to me;
I restore it to you in full,
and I surrender it completely
to the guidance of your will.*

*Give me only love of you
together with your grace,
and I am rich enough
and ask for nothing more.*

Amen

Further Reading:

- *What God Has to Say about Our Bodies* by Sam Allberry
- *Practicing Our Faith* by Dorothy Bass
- *Invitation to Silence and Solitude* by Ruth Haley Barton