**Contemplative Journey Encounter Father Weekend Retreat**

**Friday Night**

17:30-18:30 Pick up and meet at a pastor’s Home

18:30-19:00 Orientation for the weekend

19:00-20:30 Supper at the pastors Home (**Encounter Father – An Invitation**)

20:30-21:30 Drop off at homes

**Saturday Morning**

07:00-08:00 Pick up and meet at West Park Cemetery

08:00-09:00 Retreat in the Cemetery (**Encounter Father in the Light of Eternity**)

09:00-09:15 Refreshments

09:15-10:00 Travel to Roodekrans Botanical Gardens

10:00-12:30 Personal Retreat (**Encounter Father in Scripture**)

12:30-13:30 Lunch @ Hillfox McDonalds

13:30-14:30 Travel to Zoo Lake

14:30-15:00 Reflections on the Morning Experiences

15:00-15:15 Refreshments

15:15-16:45 Group Games at Zoo Lake (**Encounter Father in Play**)

16:45-17:00 Travel to Dave’s Home

17:00-18:15 Supper at Dave’s Home – Preview of Mall session

18:15-18:30 Walk to Mall

18:30-19:45 Mall Retreat (**Encounter Father in Crowds**)

19:45-20:15 Meet at Wimpy to Debrief Mall Experience

20:15-20:30 Walk to Dave’s House

20:30-21:30 Drop off at homes

**Sunday Morning**

08:00-09:00 Pick up and Meet at St. Martins in the Veld

09:00-09:30 Preview the Service

09:30-11:00 Attend Church Service (**Encounter Father in Worship**)

11:00-11:30 Drive to Emmarentia Dam

11:30-11:45 Refreshments

11:45-12:30 Debrief Church and the Weekend Experience

12:30-13:30 Picnic Lunch

13:30-14:30 Drop off at homes

**Encounter Father Retreat**

**Preparing to Connect with Father God (**30 Minutes)

**Silence** – spend a few minutes in silence!

**Confession:** What could hinder me from relating to God today? Do I have anything that I need to confess?

**Read and Reflect on Scripture:** Mark 6:30-32

*The apostles then rendezvoused with Jesus and reported on all that they had done and taught. Jesus said, "Come off by yourselves; let's take a break and get some rest." For there was constant coming and going. They didn't even have time to eat.*

**Journal Your Thoughts:**

1. In what ways has my life been like that of the people in the passage?

2. What am I hoping to achieve or experience during this retreat?

3. What invitation is God extending to me through the passage?

**Connecting through Scripture** (30 Minutes)

Slowly the following scriptures a few time - enter into the experience. Meditating on words as the text intersects with your hopes and dreams. Turn your reflection into prayer as you speak it out to God. Reflect on what God is saying to your heart through the text.

**Scene 1: Matthew 26:69-75**

*Meanwhile, as Peter was sitting in the courtyard, a girl came over and said to him, "You were with Jesus, for both of you are from Galilee." But Peter denied it loudly. "I don't even know what you are talking about," he angrily declared. Later, out by the gate, another girl noticed him and said to those standing around, "This man was with Jesus--from Nazareth." Again Peter denied it, this time with an oath. "I don't even know the man," he said. But after a while the men who had been standing there came over to him and said, "We know you are one of his disciples, for we can tell by your Galilean accent." Peter began to curse and swear. "I don't even know the man," he said. And immediately the cock crowed. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said, "Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." And he went away, crying bitterly.*

What key words stand out to me? What is Father saying to me?

**Scene 2: John 21:9-17**

*When they landed, they saw a fire of burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread. Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you have just caught. Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep." The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep.*

What key words stand out to me? What is Father saying to me?

**Connecting Through the Ten Commandments** (30 Minutes)

**1. I am the Lord your God: you shall have no other gods before me.**

\* Has my love for God - Father Son Holy Spirit – decreased lately? How and why?

\* Are there things or people that have become gods in my life?

**2. You shall not make for yourself any idol.**

\* Have I made an idol of money, success, technique, the praise of others, food, drink, etc.?

\* Have I tried to manipulate him rather than live responsively to him?

**3. You shall not dishonor the name of the Lord your God.**

\* Have I treated God lightly?

\* Have I been hypocritical -- living a form of righteousness but denying its power?

**4. Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy.**

\* Do I set aside a day each week for prayer, worship, rest and play?

\* Do I do unnecessary work, business or activity on my day of rest?

**5. Honor your father and mother.**

\* Have I failed to do my respect my parents in any way?

\* Have I done anything to offend or exploit my parents or my family?

**6. You shall not commit murder.**

\* Have I failed to show respect for all life?

\* Have I had murderous thoughts about others?

**7. You shall not commit adultery.**

\* Have I indulged in any kind of inappropriate sexual thoughts or acts?

\* Have I done anything to offend, abuse or manipulate the opposite sex?

**8. You shall not steal.**

\* Have I been dishonest in any respect in my personal or work life?

\* Have I stolen goods or reputation from others?

**9. You shall not bear false witness.**

\* Have I told lies?

\* Have I failed to speak out when I knew that others were lying?

**10. You shall not covet anything which belongs to your neighbour.**

\* Have I envied the good fortune of others -- their reputation, accomplishments or stuff?

\* Have I been greedy, materialistic or selfish?

**Connecting through God’s Deeds** (15 minutes)

*I will meditate on all your works and consider all your mighty deeds. Your ways, O God, are holy. What god is so great as our God?* Psalm 77:12-13

Make a list of God's works and deeds that come to mind and meditate on them.

**Connecting through Creation** (30 Minutes)

Spend 5 minutes looking at each of the following items in creation and write down what God is saying to you or what you learn about God:

\* The Grass

\* A Tree

\* The Hills

\* The Sky

\* A Stream

**Connecting through Walking** (15 Minutes)
Take a walk and aim to connect with God each step of the way. Start a conversation with God and keep it going for as long as you are walking.

**Words for Reflection**

*Almighty and most merciful Father,*

*We have wandered and strayed from your ways like lost sheep.*

*We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts.*

*We have offended against your holy laws.*

*We have left undone those things that we ought to have done;*

*and we have done those things that we ought not to have done; and there is no health in us.*

*But you, O Lord, have mercy upon us in our need.*

*Spare those who confess their faults.*

*Restore those who are penitent,*

*according to your promises declared to mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

*And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake,*

*that from this time we may live a disciplined, righteous and godly life,*

*to the glory of your holy name. Amen.*

"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me--watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly." (Matthew 11:28-30)