

Constructive Responses

Each of us learns in many different modes, and some of our most creative thinking in relation to meeting the challenges of media culture should explore that. We've proposed below several different kinds of ways you can think about pastoral and constructive responses. Choose one of them, or make up your own. The necessary supplies and resources for each task that we've listed can be found in the various breakout rooms. You can work on this exercise by yourself, or with other people. You'll have 40 minutes, and then we'll gather again in the main room.

The "God collage"

Using images/words from popular magazines, create a collage that shares some of your ideas about who God is, and/or what God is up to in your life.

Singing the songs of our lives

Choose one of the pop songs available here and think about how the lyrics and music could be used in a religious ed context. (The songs that are available are: "One of us" by Joan Osborne, "I don't want to wait" by Paula Cole, "From a distance" by Bette Midler, "Like a prayer" by Madonna, "Grace" by U2, and "All that you have is your soul" by Tracy Chapman.) How can a song bring you to prayer? You might try thinking about a biblical text that could inform the song, or a specific lesson plan that you could enhance with the song.

Discerning God amidst the commercial

How can we engage a television commercial as a matrix for theological reflection? Watch this television commercial at least three times, and then brainstorm ways that you could use it within a pastoral context. Think about the images/symbols that are contained within the commercial, and how they might work for, against, or with religious symbols.

Practicing our faith

The Lilly funded project on the "education and formation of people of faith" has produced a book and web site (www.practicingourfaith.org) that explores twelve practices that have historically been a part of the Christian community, but that are not explicitly doctrinal or creedal (practices such as hospitality, witness, discernment, and so on). Choose one, read a little bit of their description of the practice, and then think about how that practice takes place in a media culture and how you could further enhance it.

Sharing your story

Take some time to explore your own story of media and religion. Do some free writing, have a conversation with another workshop participant, go for a walk, meditate. Find some way to share the fruit of your reflection with the group.