

Practicing The Practice

What is Crossing Borders About?

Typically, borders are lines that separate two geographical areas. For this exploration, we are considering borders as **points of separation**, the lines imagined or real that separate us from them and you from me. In drawing these borders, we lose the diversity that leads to creativity and beauty and increase divisions in our world, which lead to conflicts. To cross a border is to erase the line, embrace the diversity, and learn from each other so everyone can flourish together as one sacred creation of God. Our faith challenges us to cross these borders so that we can learn more about God from different people and faith traditions. Crossing any kind of border will require courage, a desire to accept, and a commitment to loving and being open to that which is unlike our own experience.



* Cross a Geographic Border

Go for a walk or a drive with others in which you intentionally cross a border into another city, county, or state. When you are at the border, if possible stop, look at the ground, and note the crossing of one geographic place to another. Discuss the following questions together:

- Do you see lines that show us where the border is between geographic locations?
- Since no line is visible, how do we know we have crossed a border?
- Does it look different on the other side of the border?
- When we cross borders, are we more likely to find people who are more alike or more different than we are?
- When can it feel scary to cross a border?

* Try New Foods

Go to, or order from, a restaurant or buy foods in the grocery store that have a different cuisine, perhaps from a different cultural tradition or part of the world from food you usually eat. Try different foods and share them so that everyone can try each thing. Talk together:

- How did it feel to try foods that you have never eaten before?
- Was there something that surprised you by how it tasted?
- Did you try anything that you would want to eat again?
- How is trying new foods one way of crossing borders?

* Make a List

Supplies: pencil and paper

As a family/household, make a list of the different types of people you know. Some examples could be basketball players, Floridians, or vegetarians. Make as long of a list as you can in 3 minutes. Then read together Galatians 3:26–28. In verse 28, replace “Greek” and “Jew” with all of the different types of people on your list. After reading the Scripture, discuss what it means that all of these different types of people are children of God. Consider how reading this Scripture with these new types of people might change the way you think of others.

* The Movie Coco

Supplies: *Coco (Walt Disney Studios, 2017)*

Watch the movie *Coco* with family and/or friends. An important part of this movie happens when the characters cross, or are unable to cross, the marigold bridge. Wonder together:

- Why is the bridge important?
- What happens when the characters cross the bridge?
- Why are the worlds different on the other sides of the bridge?
- How does *Coco* learn about himself and his family from the other side of the bridge?

* New Holiday Tradition

Supplies: *internet-connected device*

As a family/household, choose a holiday that you typically celebrate. Research how people in other parts of the world celebrate that holiday. Choose one of those traditions and add it to your family's own tradition of celebrating. Alternatively, research holidays in other parts of the world or traditions that you are not familiar with. Learn about the holiday and its history and traditions. Then have a celebration for that holiday. Invite others to join you for the celebration and tell them about the holiday.

* Prayer

Holy God, give me courage to cross borders, to meet new people, to try new things, and to learn to celebrate all the different ways that you made all of the people in this world. Amen.

* Different Places

Supplies: *map or internet-connected device*

Get out a map that is large enough that everyone in your family/household/group can find everywhere you have lived or use an internet-connected device to search for a map of your city, state, country, or the world, depending on what is needed. Ask each person to share what they remember about living there and the people they met. Even though people in different places can have different customs and values, invite each person to share how they felt they belonged in that place. Wonder what made it challenging to belong. Discuss what you can learn from different people who live in different places.

* Conversation Starters

- What place have you gone that felt different? What did you learn by going there?
- What tradition or activity have you learned from someone else that you have enjoyed?
- If you could go anywhere and try something new, what would it be?
- Have you ever become friends with someone you did not think you would be friends with at first? Who? Why did you feel this way at first?
- What are different points of separation you've noticed in your own life and community? How have they impacted your life? How have they impacted your faith and ability to know God?
- What is a situation in which you've been excluded? What is a situation in which you've excluded others? How could someone have challenged that exclusion?

For more ideas and resources about Crossing Borders, visit [FPCLexFormation.org](https://www.FPCLexFormation.org)