

JOURNEYING TOGETHER IN HOPE: ADVENT 2020

Second Week: LOVE



Aim: Participants will have a better understanding of what Love is and to lead them through a deeper awareness that Christ shows us the immeasurable love of God, our Father.

Preparation needed: Set up a group session with family and/or roommates. Follow all health and safety considerations. You can also have this session with a group on Zoom or another platform.

Materials

1. Bible
2. An Advent wreath or a candle
3. **Gathering Song:** Ready the Way | Curtis Stephan
4. **Song of Reflection:** When Love was born | Mark Schultz

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8GGd6n5g8bo>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aKSU9Dbxvrw&feature=share&app=desktop>

Structure for session:

1. Welcome, Light the second purple candle or a candle you may have.
2. Play gathering song and followed by prayer.
3. Sharing Human Experience provided in the session.
4. Message
5. Reflection & Integration
6. Response – What are you being called to do?
7. Final prayer



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Opening Prayer:

Light the 2nd candle of the Advent wreath.

Gathering Song: Ready the Way | Curtis Stephan <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8GGd6n5g8bo>

Prayer:

*Beloved father, how beautiful it is to have a heart
With the capacity to love and forgive,
To help and understand
To believe and trust
We ask you bring us closer to you,
Open our minds and hearts
to the message you have prepared for us today.
We ask all of this in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen*

Human Experience: **We begin a conversation explaining that we will reflect on the topic of love this week. Please feel free to use the following steps or questions or your own:**

1. When we give a gift to someone, why do we give it? In other words, we like to receive gifts. Why do you think people give gifts to us? Why do we present gifts to others?
2. If the participants answer: because of a birthday, because it is Christmas, leaving the Company, etc., then ask why they choose those occasions to give something. What does gift giving represent? Or do we do it out of habit? With these questions, we lead the participants to answer that it reflects our love for a person. We want to express that we love them. And the person who receives the gift feels loved.
3. In reality, the size or price of the gift shouldn't matter. One day my 3-year-old granddaughter gave me a card that she had decorated with stickers and markers; she drew hearts as she could. It was a good gift because she expressed in her efforts the love she feels for her grandmother.

Message: **Use the following key concepts to share the message of the week.**

1. God shows his love for us in many ways; he has given us life, nature, intelligence to sustain us and live. And now he reveals his love to us by giving us the best gift we can receive, his Son, born of a Virgin, to show us the way to eternal life.
2. Jesus speaks to us of love when we read in the scriptures, Luke 10: 25-37 (The Good Samaritan).
3. Then Saint Paul tells us about the characteristics of love in 1 Corinthians 13: 4-7
4. Reflecting on both readings, how do we find the elements that Saint Paul speaks about in Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan?



Reflection, Discovery and Integration:

How is our love for others based on what Jesus and Paul express to us?

What is love? And how do we express love to others? What effect does love have on us? How love can affect a person's life?

Response: Use the following question to help you in bringing out the response which God is calling you to do with the help of the Holy Spirit.

In our life, what can we do to reflect God's Love for us towards others? Why is it important to give and express love to others?

In this time of the Pandemic, who are the persons who need our expressions of love? To whom I should reach out to tell that we love them, and we care for them? How can we respond to so much need in our neighbor, country, and the world?

Ritual Prayer:

Play the song of reflection to initiate the prayer.

When Love was born | Mark Schultz

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aKSU9Dbxvrw&feature=share&app=desktop>

Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 from the Bible. Pause for quiet reflection.

Concluding Prayer:

*Dear God,
Thank you that you love is perfect, it never fails,
and that nothing can separate us from your love.
We pray that our lives would be filled
and overflowing with the power of your love
so we can make a difference in this world.
We ask for your help in reminding us
that the most significant thing we can do in this life
is simply to love you
and to choose to love others.
Fill us with your spirit
and help us to love as you love.
Amen.*