

Materials Needed

Bible, candle,
crucifix, paper,
pencils

Disciples on the Journey TEENS

4th Sunday of Lent 2010
Cycle C

Sunday Readings

Joshua 5:9a-10-12

Psalm 34:2-7

2 Corinthians 5:17-21

Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

Let's Focus *God longs to save us.*

Let's Reflect *God does not give up on anyone.*

Reader: In the Gospel, Jesus tells about a man who had two sons. The younger son took his share of his father's money, left home, and spent it all. When he hit rock bottom, he realized that he needed to return to his father. His father rejoiced because his lost son had come home.

Reader Two: The core of this parable is that God has a unique way of welcoming back anyone who repents. Despite our sins, God forgives us and gives us a renewed heart. In fact, God does not give up on anyone.

Reader Three: However, this story does not, in any way, give us the license to sin. It shows that if, through human weakness or wickedness, we do sin, we can come back. We can make a fresh start. This is the great lesson of the parable and the good news that Jesus came to bring!

Let's Explore!

Leader: The younger son took his inheritance (gifts). What gifts have you received from God? *Divide into five groups. Each group will take one letter from the word **G-I-F-T-S** and 1) name their team with that letter, 2) write as many gifts that they have from God that begin with that letter, 3) share team name and "list of gifts" with the whole group.*

Let's Talk... *Form groups of 5-7 to discuss the following questions.*

1. How can you use or misuse the gifts that God has given you? Discuss.
2. God does not give up on anyone. However, this does not, in any way, give us the license or right to sin. Discuss.
3. The parable shows us how God responds toward one who hurts him. How do you respond toward those who hurt you?
4. Love means saying "I'm sorry" and "I forgive you." Which do you think is easier to say? Discuss.
5. Think of a time when someone forgave you. How did you respond? Did this feel like a new beginning? Share.

Let's Live It! *Share an action you did last week. Select one or more of the following for this week.*

1. When you use any of your God-given gifts, thank God for the opportunity to use them.
2. Is there a person in your life that you need to forgive? Pray and ask God to help you to forgive that person and to move toward reconciliation.
3. Reflect on God's love and forgiveness and write a poem or prayer in response.
4. Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation before Easter, rejoicing in God's gift of unconditional love and forgiveness.
5. Pray the Memory Verse each day and write in your Lenten Journal.

Let's Pray! *Have the Bible open to the Parable of the Prodigal Son.*

Leader: Lord, we have seen your great compassion and unconditional love in the story of the Prodigal Son.

All: You are a God who rejoices and celebrates when we return to you. You meet us with open arms when we turn to you in faith. Thank you for always forgiving and accepting us. Amen.

Leader: Take a few moments to reflect on your weaknesses and sinfulness. *Each one in turn will pick up the Bible and say, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I'm sorry."*

When everyone has finished, pray the Our Father together.

Memory Verse *"Taste and see; taste and see the goodness of the Lord." (Psalm 34:8)*

Saint of the Week

Blessed Juan Nepomuceno Zegri y Moreno
(Feast Day: March 17)

Today's Scriptures speak of moving away from oppression and sin and toward freedom. Our Saint of the Week experienced both oppression and freedom. Blessed Juan Nepomuceno Zegri y Moreno served as a parish priest in Spain. He had a deep love for the Eucharist and for the Blessed Virgin Mary. He founded the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mercy to help the spiritually and materially poor. Unfortunately, he was falsely accused of improper behavior, which caused years of great anguish for the holy priest. He suffered in silence until the truth became evident, his innocence was confirmed, and he was exonerated. Then, in freedom, he continued serving God's people until his death in 1905. Let us ask Juan to pray for us when we are experiencing trials or when we may be falsely accused.