

4th Sunday of Lent Cycle B TEEN GROUPS

Materials needed: Bible, picture of Jesus, large candle, small candles for each person

OPENING PRAYER: Jesus, thank you for being our light and showing us how to live. We want to have the courage to defend the truth and help others know and love you. Amen.

READING SCRIPTURE: 2 Chronicles 36:14-16, 19-23, Psalm 137:1-6, Ephesians 2:4-10, John 3:14-21

LET'S REFLECT AND EXPLORE!

Leader: The following is a true story that happened recently. A group of college students went to a popular restaurant to celebrate a birthday. They had heard that a local band would be playing there. After paying their cover charge, they sat down to enjoy the evening.

On the stage was a picture of Jesus turned upside down. On the floor in front of the band, was a pentagram with candles burning within it. The leader of the band introduced his group to the audience by saying, "Welcome, all you Satan worshippers." The songs were vulgar and filled with gross and explicit obscenities.

Amid the room, which was filled with many people who agreed with and supported the band, one of the college students got up and walked in front of the stage, stomped out the candles, and put the picture of Jesus right side up. He then complained to the manager that he and his friends were offended. They left the restaurant. Security had to be called due to the tension and possible violence that was caused by the young man's actions.

Later, he wrote a letter to the editor of the local newspaper relating the experience. One of his statements read, "I want Jesus to bless my food, not Satan." People in the community responded in support of what the college students had done.

What is your immediate reaction to this story? Share.

LET'S TALK! *Form small groups and discuss the following.*

1. Why do you think that band chose to promote Satan, darkness, and evil? Discuss. Why do you think some people choose evil (darkness) over Jesus (light)? Discuss.
2. Why do you think the young man acted as he did? What risk did he face when he took action and went against the band and the audience? Discuss. Do you think you would have done the same? Why or why not?
3. Fear is an emotion that can paralyze us and also protect us. Give examples of both.

4. In the Gospel, Jesus is called “the Light.” As “the Light,” how does Jesus help you to confront the darkness of evil and sin in the world? Share.

5. Give an example when you or someone you know stood up to evil like the young man in the story.

LET’S LIVE IT! *Select one or more of the following actions and be prepared to share next week.*

1. This week, be a “light” to your friends by encouraging them to put their trust in Jesus.

2. Talk to and include in your circle of friends someone who may be hanging around with the wrong crowd.

3. Light a candle and ask Jesus to help you recognize him as “the Light.”

4. Recommit yourself to your Lenten practices.

5. Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation this week.

6. Pray the “Memory Verse” each day.

LET’S PRAY!

Gather around a prayer table with a Bible, a picture of Jesus, a large lit candle, and small candles for each person placed in the shape of a cross. If possible, dim the lights in the room and play soft music.

Leader: Jesus, you bring us security by banishing the darkness of sin. Help us to live in your joy and love so that we can be a light to others.

*One by one, each person lights a small candle from the large candle and returns it to its position in the cross. As each person lights his/her candle, the group says, “**Whoever lives the truth comes to the light.**”*

Conclude with “Christ Be our Light” at www.youtube.com/watch?v=UsCET8oQyuA.

Optional: Sing “We are the Light of the World,” or “I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light.”

Leader: Go forth and take the light of Christ to the world.

Share a sign of peace. Candles may be taken home as a reminder to be the light of Christ to others.