

WEEK FOUR

Supplies:

- Bible
- Sacred Candle & Matches/Lighter
- A Piece of Paper
- A Pair of Sissors

WELCOMING GOD:

Gather together, and welcome God into this time and space through the lighting of a candle. Take this moment to pause briefly and sit quietly in this light for a few moments allowing time for everyone to relax their body, mind, and spirit for this time. In these moments, the invitation is to become aware of God's presence with and amongst you as a family.

SHARING WITH GOD AND ONE ANOTHER:

Say: "If anything is on our minds that makes it difficult for us to focus, let's share it now and then let it go."

- Whoever leads this portion might share what is on his or her mind to model this. Give time for each person to respond. When everyone has responded that would like to, invite everyone to place their hands out and lift them up as we give these distractions to God.

OR you can invite the family to pray together as one person leads, saying the following:

"Dear Loving God, The One who knows our hearts, celebrates our victories, grieves with us during our losses, and gives us the strength to overcome our challenges. Please help us to let go of the distractions we name now, so that we can openly share with our family and may encounter you in a special way today. Our distractions are... (let there be silence here, so everyone has an opportunity to name aloud what is distracting them).

In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen."

ENCOUNTERING GOD:

Read aloud: John 6:1-15

- Take turns reading the Scripture or have a different family member read the Scripture each week.

"After this Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias. A large crowd kept following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick. Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples. Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near. When he looked up and saw a large crowd coming towards him, Jesus said to Philip, 'Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?' He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. Philip answered him, 'Six months' wages would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little.' One

of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, 'There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?' Jesus said, 'Make the people sit down.' Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they sat down, about five thousand in all. Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. When they were satisfied, he told his disciples, 'Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost.' So they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets. When the people saw the sign that he had done, they began to say, 'This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world.' When Jesus realized that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain by himself."

ENCOUNTERING EACH OTHER:

Say: Together, imagine being that little boy with the loaves and the fish, just walking through with your lunch when someone asks you to give it away.

Discussion Questions:

How do you think the little boy felt?

How would you feel if someone asked you to give away your lunch to feed such a large group? Would it feel possible?

Say: The boy gives Jesus his bread and fish, and Jesus feeds 5,000 people with it. Then, he gives the boy back enough leftovers to fill 12 baskets! That doesn't make sense... unless there is something about serving God we can learn here.

Activity:

1. Say: How many corners does our paper have? (Allow time for everyone to count their corners) What if you wanted to give away one of your corners to someone else?
2. Cut off a corner of your paper, and give that corner to someone else in the family.
3. Hold up the paper.
4. Say: Alright, now, I have given a corner away. How many corners do I have now?
5. Allow everyone to answer.

Say: Five corners! We started with a paper that had four corners, and now it has five. This is the way it was with Jesus and the boy's bread and fish: the more he gave away, the more he had to share! (Allow everyone to take turns cutting a corner off the paper until you've all decided there's a big enough mess. Keep counting the multiplying corners along the way!)

Discussion Questions:

- What surprised you about what happened when we cut the corners off the paper?
- What surprised you about Jesus' miracle?
- Can you think of something you can do or give to serve others this week?

ENCOUNTERING GOD TOGETHER:

Say: "May we pray together as a family..."

Let us share our prayers for the world: for our country and leaders, for other countries and their leaders...

Let us share our prayers for the church, ministers, and spiritual leaders...

Let us share our prayers for our teachers, first responders, friends, and others in the community...

Let us share our prayers for our family and our own specific needs..."

If you would like to record the people for whom you pray, use the next few lines to do so:

ENCOUNTERING TRANSFORMATION TOGETHER:

Pray aloud together:

God, we welcomed you here and read Your Word,
we prayed and we spent time with you,
we rested in your love for us,
and we did this all together.

Now, we promise to love one another and others as you love us.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

BLESSING ONE ANOTHER FOR OUR ENCOUNTERS WITH THE WORLD:

Invite family members to bless one another using any of the examples below or their own blessings.

Examples:

- "I love you. God loves you. I pray God blesses you."
- "God loves you exactly like you are—and so do I."
- "I love the gifts God has given you and how you bless the world with them."