

WEEK TWO

Supplies:

- Bible
- Pens, Markers or Crayons
- Plates for Each Person
- Sacred Candle & Matches/Lighter
- Gummy bears, Marshmallows, m&ms or Small Treats

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 Matthew 4:1-11

"Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.' But he answered, 'It is written, "One does not live by bread alone, but by every word

that comes from the mouth of God.” Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, ‘If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, “He will command his angels concerning you”, and “On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.”’

Jesus said to him, ‘Again it is written, “Do not put the Lord your God to the test.”’ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor; and he said to him, ‘All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Away with you, Satan! for it is written, “Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.”’

Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.”

ENCOUNTERING EACH OTHER:

Say: Jesus went to the wilderness knowing how long he would be there. He went to the wilderness to fast—to intentionally not have the bread that the devil tried to offer him.

Activity:

1. Place 1 gummy bear or marshmallow on a napkin in front of each person.
2. Explain that they have a choice: they can eat the one treat now, or they can wait until after you finish this week’s Family Encounter to get a small handful more.
3. Each person share what you would like to do.

*By way of a reminder: this is a zero-judgment time. Everyone gets to make his or her own choice free from scrutiny. :)

Say: We might say that, for Jesus, his time in the wilderness was like making this choice we are being asked to make. He could turn rocks into bread right at that moment, or he could wait until the fasting time was over, and he would be cared for in greater ways. He chose to wait—even when he was being tempted.

Discussion Questions:

- Which choice did you make—to eat the treat now or to wait to receive more?
- If someone chose to eat the one treat immediately: Why did you choose to eat the treat now?
- If someone chose to wait until the end of the Family Encounter: What made you choose to wait for a treat?
- Can you describe what it is like to wait for something you want?

Say: When Jesus was being tempted, he responded to it by quoting scripture (His Bible). In that, he found comfort and strength and a way to wait well.

What things help you to wait? What do you do while you are waiting?

Say: Let's take turns sharing one thing we are waiting for and, throughout this week, let's pray for each other that we can wait well. When we finish...those of us who chose to wait for the treats can have a handful!

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."