

## WEEK THREE

Supplies:

- Bible
- Sacred Candle & Matches/Lighter
- Pens, Markers or Crayons
- Piece of Paper for Each Person

## 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 Luke 10:29-37

"But wanting to justify himself, he [a lawyer] asked Jesus, 'And who is my neighbor?' Jesus replied, 'A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So, likewise, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other

side. But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, "Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend." Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?' He said, 'The one who showed him mercy.' Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise.'"

## ENCOUNTERING EACH OTHER:

Say: When the man asked, "who is my neighbor," Jesus told him this story. Then, he asked: "who was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers." How interesting. Jesus seems to change this man's question and focus. Jesus seems to answer another question. Not, "who is my neighbor," but "whose neighbor am I called to be."

Even though they were enemies—the Samaritan and the man on the road—the Samaritan shows the man mercy. He could have walked by, ignored, avoided, or even laughed at him and told him he got what he deserved, but instead the Samaritan stopped, bandaged the man, paid for him to have a place to sleep, and ensured he would be cared for through the night. He was a neighbor who actually took the time to make sure the injured man had what he needed and gave what he could.

### Discussion Questions:

- Why do you think Jesus changes the man's question?
- Is there someone in your life you want to ignore, walk by, or avoid? What do you think Jesus wants you to do instead?

### Activity:

Give everyone a piece of paper and a marker, pen or pencil. Each family member trace his or her hand on the paper.

Write the names of the following people on the finger of your hand.

- On the thumb, write the name of a family member present at the table
- On the pointer finger, write the name of a teacher, coworker, or friend
- On the middle finger, write the name of a Sunday school teacher, minister, or pastor
- On the ring finger, write the name of a community leader or first responder
- On the pinky finger, write the name of someone you don't necessarily like—an "enemy"

Say: On the fingers of your hand, you've written the names of people in your life. Many of these are people we pray for each week, some of them each day. They are also people Jesus may be asking us to neighbor—to show kindness.

On the palm of your traced hand, write down one way you can show kindness to each of these people this week.

Share with everyone gathered one way you will show kindness to someone you've listed on your hand this week. Then, go do it!

## 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:

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## 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."