

Icebreaker: What makes you unique and different from anyone else in the group? OR Highs and lows for the week.

Opening Prayer *God, our Father, You redeemed us and made us Your children in Christ. Through Him You have saved us from death and given us Your Divine life of grace. By becoming more like Jesus on earth, may I come to share His glory in Heaven. Give me the peace of Your kingdom, which this world does not give. By Your loving care protect the good You have given me. Open my eyes to the wonders of Your Love that I may serve You with a willing heart.*

1 God, infinitely perfect and blessed in himself, in a plan of sheer goodness freely created man to make him share in his own blessed life. For this reason, at every time and in every place, God draws close to man. He calls man to seek him, to know him, to love him with all his strength. He calls together all men, scattered and divided by sin, into the unity of his family, the Church. To accomplish this, when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son as Redeemer and Savior. In his Son and through him, he invites men to become, in the Holy Spirit, his adopted children and thus heirs of his blessed life.

1. How is Christ inviting us to live in His blessed life, here and now?
2. What gifts has God blessed me with that will help me to seek, know, and love Him?

545 Jesus invites *sinners* to the table of the kingdom: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."²⁵⁸ He invites them to that conversion without which one cannot enter the kingdom, but shows them in word and deed his Father's boundless mercy for them and the vast "joy in heaven over one sinner who repents."²⁵⁹ The supreme proof of his love will be the sacrifice of his own life "for the forgiveness of sins."²⁶⁰

3. In several places throughout the gospels, Jesus speaks of the importance of just one lost sheep or one lost coin, and He tells us that there is great joy in heaven over just "one sinner who repents." What does this teach me about the worth and dignity of every human person, including myself?
4. How should this affect the way I live my life?

605 At the end of the parable of the lost sheep Jesus recalled that God's love excludes no one: "So it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish."⁴¹⁰ He affirms that he came "to give his life as a ransom for many"; this last term is not restrictive, but contrasts the whole of humanity with the unique person of the redeemer who hands himself over to save us.⁴¹¹ The Church, following the apostles, teaches that Christ died for all men without exception: "There is not, never has been, and never will be a single human being for whom Christ did not suffer."⁴¹²

5. How can I respect and love each individual person who comes across my path every day, in imitation of Christ?

Closing Prayer *(group may add intercessions first)*

O most holy heart of Jesus, fountain of every blessing, I adore you, I love you, and with lively sorrow for my sins I offer you this poor heart of mine. Make me humble, patient, pure and wholly obedient to your will. Grant, Good Jesus, that I may live in you and for you. Protect me in the midst of danger. Comfort me in my afflictions. Give me health of body, assistance in my temporal needs, your blessing on all that I do, and the grace of a holy death. Amen.

²⁵⁸ Mk 2:17; cf. 1 Tim 1:15.

²⁵⁹ Lk 15:7; cf. 7:11032.

²⁶⁰ Mt 26:28.

⁴¹⁰ Mt 18:14.

⁴¹¹ Mt 20:28; cf. Rom 5:18-19.