

Lesson 44: What do we mean by the "life-work" of communities?

The Resurrection of the Lord
Easter Day
April 12, 2020

General Concept: Life-work of communities refers to the aspirations, ideals, strivings, and experiences of the people for their common good.

Biblical References: *Matthew 28:1-10*

Age-Level Concepts

- The people in the communities also have their aspirations, ideals, experiences, and problems.
- The people strive to achieve their aspirations and ideals and struggle-out their problems through their life-work.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

- Make a pop-up map of their community, locating where the local church is and other important institutions of the community
- Identify the dominant source of living of the people in the community
- Mention the problems, needs, and situations of the people in the community that need to be addressed

Materials: The Holy Bible (preferably the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV]), song chart, offering plate or basket, Used Calendar for Sunday's Phrase and Memory Verse, TV or Laptop -Internet Ready for Google Map Presentation, cut-out drawing of an arrow with a marking, "Moving Forward.", and pen or marker.

Biblical Background

The resurrection is one of the most important aspects of our Christian faith. Without faith that Jesus was raised from the dead, perhaps there would be no Christianity. It was not the ethical teachings of Jesus or his noble death that gave birth to the Christian church that spread throughout the Roman Empire. Rather, it was the news of his resurrection.

It was when the first Christians believed in the Risen Christ that they looked back to ask about the meaning of his birth, of his life, and his death. Apostle Paul was right when he wrote to the Christians in Corinth, saying: *"If Christ has not been raised, then your faith is a delusion and you are still lost in your sins. It would also mean that the believers in Christ who have died are lost. If our hope in Christ is good for this life only and no more, then we deserve more pity than anyone else in all the world"* (I Cor.15:17-19). Indeed, how would the so-many victims of injustice in this world obtain justice if there would be no hope for the resurrection?

The earliest confession summarizing the whole faith of the first Christians was the confession that *"Jesus is Lord"* - a title conferred on him because of his resurrection. Sometimes the church would make the cross the center of its faith. Of course, this is not wrong. The Risen Lord is no other than the Suffering Servant who gave himself for us. But the cross is an appropriate symbol for the Christian faith only if it is an empty cross. The foundation and center of the Christian faith is not death but life; not tragedy, but victory beyond tragedy; not a gloomy fascination with a dead sacrifice, but a triumphant faith in the Living Lord.

Jesus had been raised to life! This is where the Christian faith begins. And for us Christians, it is the one event in history, which gives meaning to all history, including our own.

In Matthew 28:1-10, we are told about that early Sunday morning when Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb of Jesus. Then, suddenly there was a violent earthquake. And an angel of the Lord came down from heaven, rolled the stone away, and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid that they trembled and became like dead men.

An angel is believed to be a messenger of God. That is precisely what the word *angel* means - a messenger. The dramatic descriptions of what happened - like the violent earthquake, the lightning appearance, the white clothes, the stone rolled away, and the trembling guards - all these speak of the importance and urgency of the message that the angel had come to proclaim. It is a powerful message that no one, not even the guards nor the huge stone could hinder its proclamation. It is a message that everyone should listen to.

There is a threefold message that comes from the Risen Christ through the angel. It is a message for the women who visited the tomb of Jesus. It is also a message for all of us who remember and celebrate the Risen Christ.

First of all, our Risen Lord is saying to us, *"You must not be afraid! He has been raised!"* These were the words of the angel to the women (v.5). Perhaps, Mary Magdalene and the others were still overwhelmed with fear, when they went to see the tomb of Jesus on that resurrection morning. But we may say that at least they had overcome their fear a little bit. Unlike the men disciples of Jesus, these women were able to muster enough courage to go and see the tomb of this dangerous person, an enemy of the state, even if they knew that soldiers were guarding his tomb. Who would not be afraid after seeing their Lord and Master being arrested and undergo a mock trial, tortured and finally crucified? The disciples had to run for their own lives. Who knows, they might be the next to be crucified.

With the imposition of *Pax Romana* (Roman Peace) under Augustus Caesar, the Jewish people had been living in fear. Palestine was heavily militarized. The people must have to follow the wishes of the Roman authorities and their local collaborators. Anyone caught disturbing the Roman Peace would be considered a rebel of the Roman Empire and would be meted out the capital punishment of crucifixion. Death was used to instill fear in the hearts of people.

Our Lord Jesus Christ was accused of being a disturber of Roman Peace. He was accused of many things. He was accused of claiming to be the Messiah, the one who would come to liberate the people from their Roman oppressors (cf. Lk. 24:21). He was accused of claiming to be the King of the Jews (Jn. 19:19). And this would mean that he usurped the authority of King Herod, the one who was appointed by the Roman Empire as King of the Jews. He was accused of misleading the people and inciting them not to pay taxes to the Roman Empire (cf. Mt. 22:17). From the eyes of the Roman and Jewish authorities, Jesus indeed was public enemy number one. And, therefore, he must be crucified.

Jesus was a victim of false accusations and mistrial. The truth of the matter is that he came to proclaim in words and deeds the truth of God's Kingdom by curing the sick, forgiving and accepting sinners, giving hope to the poor and outcasts of society, and challenging the hypocrisies of the powers-that-be. His message was so powerful that it had shaken the very foundations of the Jewish religion and the Roman Empire. Hence, the powers-that-be was threatened by the truth that he proclaimed, and by the life that he lived.

Jesus knew from the very start that faithfulness to God's mission would mean crucifixion. Many times he was tempted to give up. But every time this temptation comes to him, he would rather say: *"Worship the Lord your God, and He alone you shall serve"* (Mt. 4:10), *"Not my will but you will be done"* (Mt. 26:39).

And now that he had accomplished God's mission, he was saying to his disciples through the angel, *"You must not be afraid!"* Jesus was raised from death. This would mean that death, which the Roman Empire used to instill fear in the hearts of people, is not the end. The life Jesus lived is more powerful than death; it is a life that goes beyond death.

Secondly, our Risen Lord is also saying to us: *"Come and see."* The angel of the Lord said to Mary Magdalene and the other women: *"Come and see the place where he was lying"* (v.6). This was an invitation for the women to see for themselves the truth of the resurrection. It is an invitation for them to personally experience its reality. Unless they would be able to see and experience themselves, they may not be able to have the passion and commitment to proclaim it and to live by it.

Belief in the resurrection is not just intellectual assent. To believe in the resurrection is to live in the power of the Risen Christ. It is to live the life that the Risen Christ had lived.

To live in the power of the resurrection is like the story of the Lost Son, who took his inheritance from his father and went away to a faraway place and spent everything he had in an easy kind of life devoid of meaning and purpose until he had nothing to eat (Lk. 15:32). He had to experience living and eating with the pigs before he was able to realize life's meaning and purpose in his father's house. He went back to his father and asked for forgiveness. His father was so gracious enough to accept him, and he said, *"Let us celebrate, for my son was lost but now is found; he is dead but now he is alive"* (v.32).

To live in the power of the resurrection is like Zaccheaus, the tax collector. He was despised by everyone because he was a traitor to his people and a corrupt official of the Roman government (Lk.19:1-9). No one would ever dare to talk with him as a friend or to come to his house as guests. But when Jesus said to him, *“Zaccheaus, I will come to your house today”*, he felt a sense of joy. Then, he said to Jesus, *“Lord, I will give one half of my money to the poor, and if I cheated anyone I will pay back four times as much.”* He was a changed person! Indeed, he experienced the power of the resurrection.

Resurrection is not something that would happen only after we have died. Rather, it is something that we could experience every day as we bring hope amid hopelessness, forgiveness amid sinfulness, life amid death.

Hence, the best proof of the resurrection is not the empty tomb, but the lives of countless people through the ages that have been changed by the power of the Risen Christ. If someone would ask us to prove the reality of the resurrection, we must not only point to the empty tomb, but rather we must be able to say like the words of a song, *“For once I was lost, but now I’m found; Was blind, but now I see”*. This, I believe, is the best proof that Jesus Christ our Lord is alive, indeed!

And finally, our Risen Lord is also saying to us, “Go and tell!” The angel of the Lord said to Mary Magdalene and the other women, *“Go quickly now, and tell his disciples, ‘He has been raised from death, and now he is going to Galilee ahead of you; there you will see him!’ ”* (v.7). The women left the tomb in a hurry, afraid and yet filled with joy, and they ran to tell his disciples.

Our experience with the Risen Lord is not something that we have to keep to ourselves, but rather it is something that we have to share with others, especially those who have not experienced it themselves. Telling the Good News of the Risen Christ is an urgent task. The women had to go in a hurry; they had to run with joy to tell the Good News (v.8).

One of the problems of churches today is that they seem to have lost the sense of urgency as well as the joy to go and tell the Good News of the Risen Christ. For the church to recover the joy and the sense of urgency to go and tell the Good News, it should also experience what the women disciples had experienced. The church, in other words, must recover its courage to be and in proclaiming its genuine faith in the Risen Christ.

It is quite significant to note that the angel instructed the women to go to Galilee. Galilee was the center of Jesus’ ministry. Jesus ministered to the people of Galilee. The angel’s instructions would simply mean that it is in ministering to people that we experience the reality of the Risen Christ. It is in going to our own Galilee, to our place of ministry that we experience the empowering presence of the Risen Christ. He promised to be there with us. (*Dr. Luna Dingayan*)

Suggested Lesson Outline

Greeting Time

Post A Phrase that invites the class to center oneself to Sunday's lesson.



Welcome each student with a smile and a hug. After gathering around, say this statement “ Whoever you are and whatever you are on life’s journey, all are welcome here. We are here for a purpose.”

Songs of Gathering “Not By Might”

Not by might , nor by power but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts.
Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit says the Lord
This mountain shall be removed 3x
But by my Spirit says the Lord.

“They’ll Know We Are Christian by Our Love” Hymnal of Faith Journey, 677

We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord,
We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord,
And we pray that all unity may one day be restored,

Chorus: *And they’ll know we are Christians by our love, by our love,
Yes, they’ll know we are Christians by our love.*

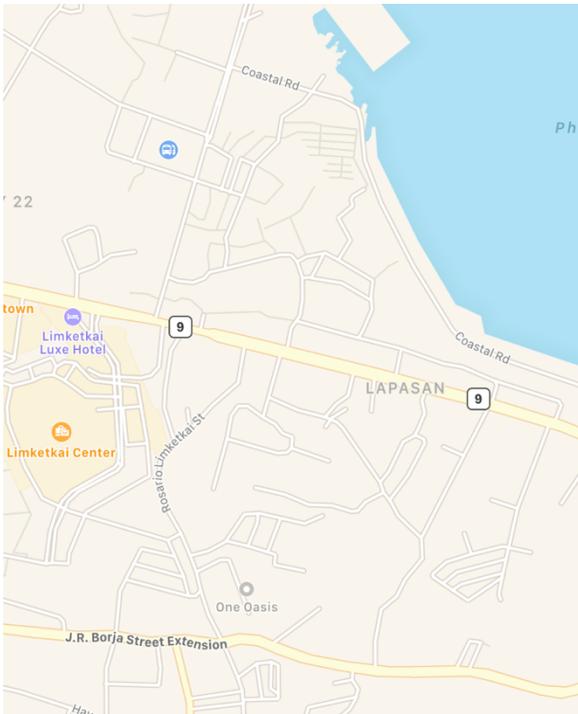
We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand,
We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand,
And together we’ll spread the news that God is in our land,

We will work with each other, we will work side by side,
We will work with each other, we will work side by side,
And we’ll guard each man’s dignity and save each man’s pride,

All praise to the Father, from whom all things come,
And all praise to Christ Jesus, His only Son,
And all praise to the Spirit, who makes us one,

+Opening Prayer (All)

Loving God, your angels appeared to women who are faithful believers in Jesus, bringing them news more wonderful and awe-inspiring than they could imagine – Christ is Risen! Surely your angels can interrupt our lives, too, breaking into our losses and sorrows and offering a message of tremendous joy to change our lives! Come this Easter morning, we pray and fill us with the joy as that of the women disciples, the first witnesses to your resurrection, that our lives may also be



renewed in hope and glory. Let us roll back the stone of the grave and pick up the stones of Alleluia once again! In Christ, we pray, Amen.

Getting Ready

Complete the statement, “UCCP is known for its _____.” (example, “UCCP is known for its strong prophetic calling for justice and peace.”)

Allow 5 students to complete the statement and ask, “Why do you think so?”

Learning Time

Discovering the Biblical Truth

Let the whole class read aloud the text *Matthew 28:1-10* . Group the class into 4 and let them discuss and answer the following questions:

1. What is the story all about?
2. Compare this resurrection account from the

other gospels’ resurrection story. What are the differences and similarities?

3. What were the three statements being uttered by the angel to Mary? (“Do not be afraid”, “Come and See”, and “Go and tell”) How important these were before and what do these statements convey to us today?

4. What does resurrection mean to the early Christians? What does it mean to us today especially in our life work as a church?

Lessons Learned

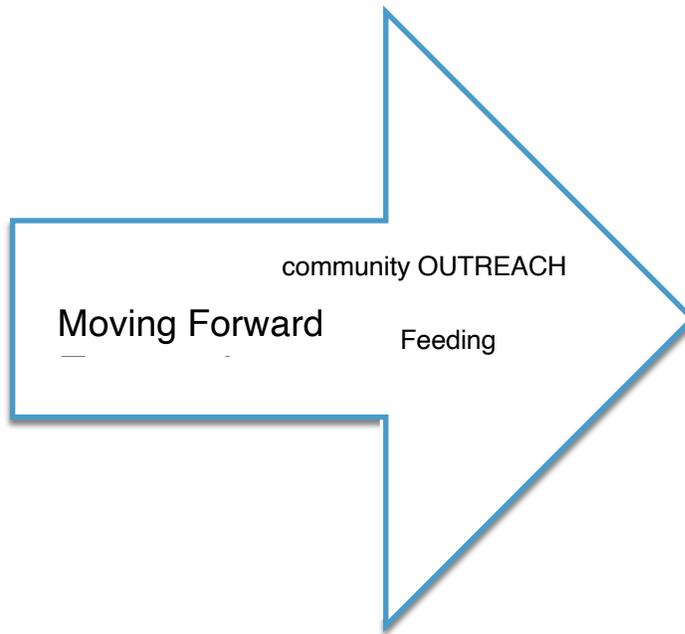
Local Church Map Making: Group the Class into 3 Groups and assign them as follow:

Group 1: Using your Google Map, make a Map in one Cartolina Paper and identify local landmarks like school, hotel, institutions, and big establishments. Draw your Church and the community where your church is located.

Group 2: Identify the source of living of the people in your community.

Group 3: Identify the problems, needs, and situations of the people that need to be addressed.

Applying the Lessons Learned



Enumerate church ministries that your local church can offer to meet the needs of your community.

Example: Outreach for the Out of School Youth Computer Literacy and Cyber Ethics.

Write your proposed programs or activities that respond to your community's needs in the Moving Forward Drawing.

Closing Worship

Memory Verse: "Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me." Matthew 28:10

Offertory

We are witnesses to the power of the Holy Spirit and the glory of God, and now we turn in thanksgiving to share the good news of forgiveness and grace to all the world. Let these our gifts be a living testimony to those who most need the healing grace of Christ this morning; a cornerstone of faith and joy for the entire world.

Giving of our Offerings

+Response

“You Shall Go Out With Joy” by André Kempen

You shall go out with joy And be led forth with peace, And the mountains and
the hills

Will break forth before you. There'll be shouts of joy And the trees of the fields
Will clap, will clap their hands.

And the trees of the fields will clap their hands,

And the trees of the fields will clap their hands,

And the trees of the fields will clap their hands, While you go out with joy.

Youth At Work. Monthly projects that involve the young people of the church.

The month of April:

A. Lenten Month Project.

1. Volunteer to assist your Local Pastor in preparing for the Holy Week
Celebration.

2. Samaritan Goods. Collect weekly goods (Canned Food, Clothing, etc) as
stock goods ready for emergency purposes.

3. Monthly Birthday Post. Make a bulletin board section of the monthly
Birthday Celebrators.

B. Develop and Maintain an FB Page for your Local Church CYF.

C. Create a CYF Prayer Messenger. Post your prayer requests and encourage
every member to pray for such requests.

D. Make a 2 Minute CYF Lenten Inspirational Video.

E. #CYFSSlessoninlife. Post in your Twitter account the lessons you've learned
from the session.

Lesson 45: What is the local church's role in the community?

Second Sunday of Easter

April 19, 2020

General Concept: As part of the community, the church plays a shepherding and prophetic role.

Biblical References: Acts 2: 24-28, John 10

Age-Level Concepts

- The local church serves as a shepherd that guides people as part of the community.
- The local church plays the role of a prophet that speaks for truth, justice, and uprightness.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

- Elaborate what “shepherds” and “prophets” can do in the community
- Cite experiences where the local church acts as a prophet or as a shepherd in the community
- Recognize other possible roles that the local church may take in the community
- Resolve to help the local church take part in the life and work of the community

Materials: The Holy Bible (preferably the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV]), song chart, offering plate or basket, Used Calendar for Sunday's Phrase and Memory Verse, TV or Laptop -Internet Ready for Video Presentation, cut-out drawing for the games, and pen or marker.

Biblical Background

In Chapter 2 of the Book of Acts, we read about the coming of the Holy Spirit empowering the Early Christians to courageously proclaim the life, death, resurrection, and coming again of Jesus Christ our Lord. Then, Apostle Peter stood up and delivered a message accusing the powers-that-be in Jerusalem as the ones responsible for Jesus' death, but God raised him from the dead. Then, in Chapters 3 and 4, we read a story about Apostles Peter and John. As they entered the Temple to pray, they saw a lame man begging for money. The existence of beggars in a particular society, as we know, is a sign of desperation and hopelessness. But in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, the two apostles healed the lame man. And those who witnessed the event were greatly amazed.

Peter and John took the opportunity to proclaim the message of Jesus' life and death. But they were still speaking when the Temple guards arrived and arrested these two apostles and imprisoned them. However, many of those who heard the good news believed - about five thousand men according to the Scriptures.

Then, Peter and John were questioned before the Jewish Council, even as they courageously testified for Christ. The leaders of Jerusalem were greatly surprised to witness the courage of these two apostles, knowing that they were not highly educated; they were just ordinary men. Perhaps, you are even more educated than them. Nevertheless, the leaders of Jerusalem warned Peter and John to stop speaking in Jesus' name.

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, these two apostles, however, responded to them saying: *"You yourselves judge which is right in God's sight – to obey you or to obey God; for we cannot stop speaking of what we have seen and heard"* (vs.19-20).

The Jewish authorities would like to punish Peter and John, but they could not do it because of the people. The people might rise in protest. And so, the authorities could not do otherwise but to release them.

This Biblical story would show us what it means to play a prophetic as well as a pastoral role as a church of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

First of all, the story tells us that to play a prophetic as well as a pastoral role as a church is to speak out for the truth. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, Peter and John spoke courageously about the truth of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. Without fear and favor, they pointed to the powers-that-be in Jerusalem as the ones responsible for the mistrial, execution, and death

of the man Jesus of Nazareth, whom God raised from the dead. Consequently, Peter and John were arrested; they were imprisoned; they were harassed and questioned before the Jewish Council.

Truly, an encounter with truth is oftentimes an encounter with suffering. Wicked spiritual forces cannot withstand the truth. Truth is so naked that it must be covered with falsehood. Truth is so eloquent that it must be put to silence. This organized crime against the truth defiles our true humanity; it mocks the tears of people, and it defies the power of God's love.

The truth is so bright and clear. But those who are blinded by the authority and power in their hands could not see it. At least, the leaders in Jerusalem themselves saw it. For the truth that the lame man was healed and restored into wholeness was right there in front of them. They could not help seeing it, because the man was standing right beside Peter and John.

This is something we should always remind ourselves: that we cannot quarrel against the truth. The bearers of truth may be arrested and imprisoned, like Peter and John, but the truth will always come out. This is our hope. This is our courage to be. For us, God is a God of truth.

Moreover, the story also tells us that to play a prophetic as well as a pastoral role as a church is to take people seriously. People are the basic force for the building up of new Christian communities. This is the reason why the disciples directed their proclamations of the truth of Christ to the people themselves. And thousands of them believed the Good News. And because of people's power, the Jewish authorities were not able to punish Peter and John.

People have the truth. Of course, people commit mistakes. They have committed mistakes many times before. Perhaps, we remember the story of the Golden Calf in the Old Testament. In the absence of Moses, the people persuaded their acting leader, Aaron, to make a Golden Calf serve as their god (Ex. 32).

People can be manipulated by certain power groups for certain vested interests. This was the case of the crowd who welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem shouting hosannas but demanded his death shortly afterward simply because of the manipulation of Jewish authorities. We must not make idols of people. People are not gods. We must remember this always in our theology of people.

However, there are situations wherein people have the truth. These are situations wherein people are condemned to poverty, exploitation, and hopelessness, or even death. This is where God seeks to exercise the power of hope. This is where we could most likely encounter our Living God. This is where we could discover the imperatives of our faith. God takes up the cause of the suffering people as His own and calls us to be His partners in this missionary task. It is in being with people and learning from them that we discover, my friends, what God is telling us to do in our present time.

Then finally, the story also tells us that to play a prophetic as well as a pastoral role as a church is to obey God rather than men. Peter and John were commanded by the Jewish authorities to stop all preaching in the name of Jesus. However, they answered full of courage and faith that if and when they were required to choose between the will of God and the decree of men, they have no other choice but to obey God.

Oftentimes, obedience to God rather than men would make us live a very dangerous life kind of life. But then, it is also such kind of life that brings hope amid hopelessness, and life amid death.

Hence, the call of the hour is a call for us to proclaim in words and deeds Jesus Christ our Lord as the only hope amid hopelessness, amid a world that seems to be dominated by the wicked spiritual forces of this present age. This means to offer ourselves for the cause of fulfilling God's saving act in the world: to become bearers of God's truth in a society dominated by lies and deceit; to become instruments of God's love and forgiveness in a community wherein to deny

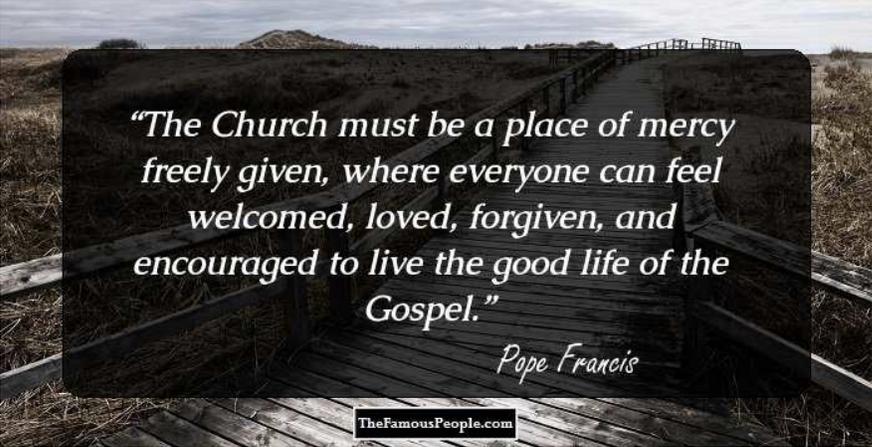
one's self, one's pride, and one's hatred is the hardest thing to do. (Dr. Luna Dingayan)

Our world today needs men and women who are willing to manifest the love of God.

Suggested Lesson Outline

Greeting Time

Post A Phrase that invites the class to center oneself to Sunday's lesson.



"The Church must be a place of mercy freely given, where everyone can feel welcomed, loved, forgiven, and encouraged to live the good life of the Gospel."

Pope Francis

TheFamousPeople.com

Welcome each student with your best smile. After gathering around, say this statement "Whoever you are and whatever you are on life's journey, all are welcome here. We are here for a purpose."

Songs of Gathering

"WHOSE SIDE ARE YOU LEANING ON?"

Whose side are you leaning on?

I'm leaning on the Lord side (2x)

I lean, I lean, I lean, I lean

Leaning on the Lord side (2x)

"BE BOLD, BE STRONG"

(Be bold, be strong

For the Lord our God is with us)2x

*Be not afraid...na na na na na
May not dismay...na na na na na
Walk with faith and victory...come on!
Walk with faith and victory,
For the Lord, our God is with us.*

+Opening Prayer

One: Holy God, You have transformed absurd impossibility into reality:
Your resurrection! You have coaxed us to sing springtime alleluias where
once there was gray dawn. You have called us out of the tombs we
inhabit into an undreamed-of tomorrow, we praise you for this
day! Come, Risen Christ, in newness and hope on this
Eastertide day. **Amen.**

Getting Ready

MEMORY GAME - TWENTY PICTURES. Put 20 pictures on a table and give
students a minute to memorize them. Cover the pictures with a cloth and
ask the students to write down as many as they can remember. You might
choose to use objects related to Shepherds and Prophets like Shepherd
Staff, Sheep, fences, grass, water, etc.

ASK: What do all the pictures tell us? Clue: 2 Types of profession found in the
Bible.

Learning Time

Discovering the Biblical Truth. Let the whole class read aloud Acts 2: 24-28. Group the
class into 2. Encourage them to discuss and answer the following questions:

1. What does the passage say about Christ Jesus and his disciples?
2. How did Peter present Jesus' life, death, and resurrection?
3. What made the early Christian disciples very courageous in their life and
witness to Christ Jesus? What moved them to do the mission of God despite
the arrests, imprisonment, harassment, and persecution by the empires
and the Jewish officials?
4. As Christ's Church, what is the role of our Local Church in our community
where our church is situated?

Assign a person to report your discussion to the whole class.

Lessons Learned

"The passage tells us that we have a prophetic as well as pastoral role in our
community. As for our prophetic role, we have to choose and obey God no matter what
the cost will be. We may be persecuted, we may be harassed, or put to death but still,
we need to speak and live out the truth of Jesus Christ no matter what. As for our
pastoral role, we need to know, care and love everyone in our community including our

environment. We need to understand that we are not just God's bearers of the truth but we are also the bearer of God's presence. To shepherd the lost, least, and last is to be compassionate as Christ was, is and is to come to all of God's creation."

With such learning, explore more on what it is to be a shepherd and a prophet to the community we are located. Watch the film assigned and identify traits of being that will help you understand your role as a shepherd or as a prophet.

Group 1- Good Shepherd in a nutshell: "I Am" The Good Shepherd-John 10
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ar732X9uO3I>).

Group 2- Prophets in a nutshell: God's Story: Prophets
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sumaXbjP2Kq>)

Cite experiences where the local church acts as a prophet or as a shepherd in the community.

Applying the Lessons Learned





Let the learners identify what the pictures are all about and let them classify if it is a shepherding or prophetic function of the church.

By groups, make a proposed program of activities that manifest their local church's prophetic and shepherding role to their community. Share the group work with the whole class.

Closing Worship

Memory Verse. "You have made known to me the ways of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence." Acts 2:28

Offertory

Easter teaches us that hope and love are at the heart of God's work. Joyfully we can give knowing that our gifts will help others to see the blessed miracle of God's creative work. Let us give generously for we first received God's blessings overflowing.

Giving of our Offerings

+Offering Response

"Doxology"

+Thanksgiving Prayer (All)

Loving God, can a joyful prayer be lifted to you this Eastertide? Can these gifts, given with love, be further transformed like echoes of Your grace that bring joyful delight to all who will receive these blessings? May it be so, through the power of your Holy Spirit, and may our lives speak of a wonderful God, full of Easter surprises. **Amen.**

+Closing Song *"You Are the Seed"* New Century Hymnal, 528

You are the seed that will grow a new sprout;
You're the star that will shine through the day;
You are the yeast and a small grain of salt, a beacon to glow in the night.

Refrain:

*Go, my friends, go to the world, proclaiming love to all,
Messengers of my forgiving peace, eternal love,
Be my friends a loyal witness from the dead I arose.
Lo I'll be with you forever till the end of the world.*

You are the dawn that will bring a new day; You're the wheat that will bear golden grain;
You are a sting and a soft, gentle touch, my witnesses where'er you go.

You are the flame that will brighten the way, Sending sparkles of hope, faith and love
You are the shepherds to lead the whole world Through valleys and pastures of peace

You are the friends that I chose for myself the word that I want to proclaim
You are the city that's built on a rock where justice and truth always reign

You are the life that will nurture the plant you're the waves in a turbulent sea
Yesterday's yeast is beginning to rise a new loaf of bread it will yield there is no place for
a city to hide nor a mountain can cover its might

May your good deeds show a world in despair a path that will lead all to God

+Prayer of Dedication

Follow now the new path Christ has opened up for us. Just around the corner of your life is a spiritual surprise! Easter! Christ is Risen! May you dance an alleluia dance, and sing a resurrection song. Rejoice with God and let joy reside in your hearts always. **Amen**

+Response *"You Shall Go Out With Joy"* by: André Kempen

You shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace,
And the mountains and the hills will break forth before you.
There'll be shouts of joy and the trees of the fields
Will clap, will clap their hands.

And the trees of the fields will clap their hands,

And the trees of the fields will clap their hands,
And the trees of the fields will clap their hands,
While you go out with joy.

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D. Make a 2 Minute CYF Lenten Inspirational Video.

E. #CYFSSlessoninlife. Post in your Twitter account the lessons you've learned from the session.

Lesson 46: What does it mean to enrich the life-work of communities?

Third Sunday of Easter
April 26, 2020

General Concept: To enrich the life-work of communities means to participate in the endeavors of the community towards the attainment of improved quality of life.

Biblical References: 1 Peter 1:22-23, Luke 24:13-35

Age-Level Concepts

- The local church participates in the life of the community.
- The local church involves in the endeavors of the community to improve its quality of life.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

- Identify concrete efforts and endeavors of the community in which the local church actively participates
- Describe the kind of relationship the local church has established with the community
- Affirm that the local church as part of the community should be active in its life and work to improve the quality of life of the people

Materials: The Holy Bible (preferably the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV]), song chart, offering plate or basket, Used Calendar for Sunday's Phrase and Memory Verse,

papers, tape, Manila Paper, Cut Shaped Hand Colored Papers, Glue, and pen or marker.

Biblical Background

The story of the disciples on the road to Emmaus (Lk. 24:13-35) is a much loved and familiar one, but it remains only a delightful story if we don't ask how it also speaks the word of God to us today. There are at least five ways in which this text can help us as we try to be the faithful church.

First of all, the text reminds us that Scripture helps us understand and gives us the big picture of the Christ Event. That's what Jesus did when he interpreted the events of his suffering, death, and resurrection in light of the larger story of Scripture. He didn't share secret mysteries from the 3 days spent in the tomb; he didn't speak of heavenly visions. Jesus went back to Israel's Scriptures. The reports that Jesus was alive were curious but meaningless claims until they were located within Israel's larger story.

This text invites us to put the story of Jesus and the individual pieces of our own stories into the larger story of how God has always worked with and for God's people to bring them salvation. Christians are storied people, and the Bible is our memory book. It reminds us of who we are and from where we've come. As our Statement of Faith says, the Bible "is a faithful and inspired witness to God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ and history to illumine, guide, correct and edify believers in their faith and witness." Just as the Emmaus road disciples could not see Jesus until they understood him in the larger context of the Scriptures, so also we will not see Jesus clearly nor can we understand what it means to be his disciples without returning again and again to the larger story in our Scriptures and of our people.

We know it's not always easy to seriously study the Scriptures. We interpret texts differently; we disagree about the implications of what we read. We come to the text with different expectations, lenses, and life experiences. The answer, however, is not to throw up our hands in despair. The only way forward is to go back to Scripture again and again and again.

Although we don't physically have Jesus walking beside us to make everything clear, we do have the Holy Spirit to guide us and teach us. We also have each other, the body of Christ, to help us see things more clearly. All this requires patient listening and persistent questioning. It requires a radical openness to hearing something unexpected and new. It means not jumping quickly to proof texts to shore up our own beliefs but diligently considering the whole witness of Scripture. This text from Luke 24 invites us, urges us, to soak ourselves in the Word of God and to place ourselves and all the confusing individual perceptions into the grand story of what God is doing with and for the salvation of the world.

Moreover, the story also tells us that fellowship in community and shared practice leads us to new insight. Listening to Jesus interpret the Scriptures was crucial for the disciples to come to understanding, but it wasn't enough. Their eyes were opened only when Jesus sat at the table and broke bread with them. We do not gain a grasp of Scripture's significance solely through

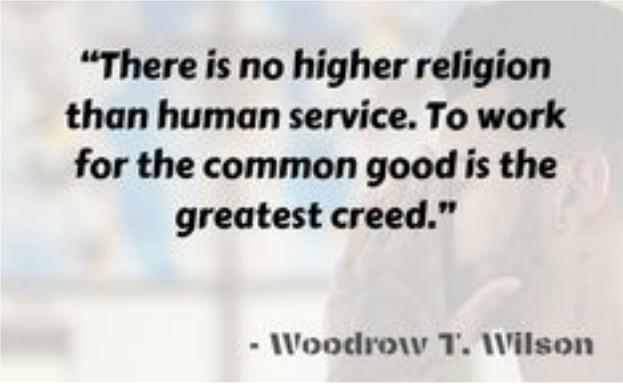
lectures on the text; *we come to understand it as we participate in the shared life of the community*, enacted in meals shared at the table. To say that our eyes can't be open to the truth of scripture unless we are practicing it in the community is a profound claim. We see and understand Jesus not only in libraries and lecture halls, in pulpits and pews, but in the community that re-embodies his practices; we see as we participate in the story together with each other. The task of interpreting and studying Luke 24 will not be complete until we talk about it over lunch together, practice hospitality, invite the stranger to join us, pray together, share communion.

Seeing Jesus and following him faithfully requires developing habits and practices that embody and remember who Jesus was. As the church practices forgiving others as God in Christ has forgiven us, as we generously share our wealth and possessions with others as Jesus gave himself to us, as we share bread with people whom society has forgotten or ignored, we re-enact the practices we have learned from Jesus. We remember in our bodies who Jesus was and we see him more clearly. When those two disciples sat at a table with Jesus, seeing and doing what they had done with him before, their eyes were opened. So, may our eyes be opened when we, too, participate in the shared life of the body of Christ.

Furthermore, the story also tells us that revelation is a gift. In a society, which puts such high value on critical thinking and the individual mind, it's tempting to think that the disciples finally caught on because they put all the facts together and came up with a logical solution. But that is not what's going on in this text. The disciples were blind, and the Anointed One, who was sent to proclaim recovery of sight to the blind, opened their eyes to see, just as he had done numerous times throughout his earthly ministry. Certainly, interpretation of Scripture and shared practice was part of their coming to see, but ultimately insight and understanding are always a gift from God. The cure for the disciples' blindness was not information but revelation.

Sometimes we're tempted to think that if we just follow all the right steps and work hard enough, we'll figure things out. We'll get the biblical scholars to do some sound exegesis, have round table discussions, send out questionnaires, write up our findings and come up with a neatly packaged solution. These are important, but our text is reminding us that there is something more involved. There is a wildness to God's ways that cannot always be predicted. Clarity of vision is sometimes obscured by mystery, and light breaks in when we least expect it. Two plus two sometimes equals five when God is in charge. All this is to say that our desire to see Jesus more clearly and to understand his will more fully need to be tempered with humility and an extravagant openness to being surprised. We need to do all the work we can but, in the end, we rely on God, through the Holy Spirit, to illumine our minds and transform our hearts.

Moreover, the story also reminds us that the resurrection of Jesus makes discipleship possible. We would not do justice to this text if we did not acknowledge the most important point of all, namely, the good news of Jesus' resurrection. The story is as much about the transformation of the disciples as about Jesus. And yet, there would be no discipleship if it were not for the fact that God raised Jesus from the dead. When that shocking, glorious truth finally sank in, it turned the disciples inside out and upside down. The resurrection of Jesus is ultimately what changed



“There is no higher religion than human service. To work for the common good is the greatest creed.”

- Woodrow T. Wilson

them from fearful, wimpy followers into bold joyful witnesses. As disciples of Jesus today we stand on the other side of the resurrection. To see and to know Jesus as the resurrected Lord is to confess that sin and evil and death are not the end of the story, are not the last word, neither for Jesus nor for his disciples nor the church today. And that makes all the difference in the world. One cannot walk the long, sometimes difficult and confusing road of

discipleship without the resurrection.

Discipleship faith is resurrection faith. It is one thing to pick up the cross and follow a suffering Messiah who stays dead; it is quite another matter to follow a Messiah whom God raised from the dead. Because of Jesus’ resurrection, we can live in hope even when life seems dark. Because of Jesus’ resurrection, we know that God can make the unexpected happen. Because of Jesus’ resurrection, we can experience a new life now, even when the old creation still groans in travails waiting for the final redemption. Because of Jesus’ resurrection, we too will one day be raised to eternal life. Because of Jesus’ resurrection we need no longer be afraid – really if God is stronger than the power of evil and death itself, what is there to be afraid of. Disciples are people transformed by the power of the resurrection of Jesus.

Finally, the story also tells us that the disciples are witnesses who share the good news. Our story ends with Cleopas and his companion rushing back to tell the others about their encounter with the risen Jesus. They cannot keep the good news to themselves. While they are talking, Jesus appears among them and commissions his disciples to proclaim repentance and forgiveness of sins in his name to all nations. He says, “You are witnesses of these things.” The witness is not just something they are to do but is who they are. We see this coming to fruition in the Book of Acts, where the once fearful disciples bear testimony boldly before governors and kings. When Peter and John stand before the authorities in Acts 4, they refuse to be silenced and announce, “We cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:21).

The church today is also called to bear witness about what we have seen and heard. As Christians, we are called to bear witness – in our places of work, over lunch with a friend, at our kids’ playground, in the public square. We are called to testify – not to grow the church or make ourselves look religious or any such thing -- but for only one purpose: to tell the truth about what we have seen and heard. Like Cleopas and his companion, the church today is called to bear witness in word and deed to the good news of the risen Christ.

Suggested Lesson Outline

Greeting Time

Post A Phrase that invites the class to center oneself to Sunday’s lesson.

Welcome each student with a smile and a hug. After gathering around, say this statement “Whoever you are and whatever you are on life’s journey, all are welcome here. We are here for a purpose.”

Songs of Gathering “Magagawa Natin”

Magagawa natin ang lahat ng bagay Ang lahat ng bagay sa mundo
May isang bagay na di magagawa Na di magagawang nag- iisa

Malulutas natin ang mga problema Kung tayo ay magkakaisa
Ang suliranin dagling mapaparam At may bagong buhay

“It’s Us that Builds Community”

(It’s me 3x that builds community) 3x It’s me that builds community
Roll over the ocean, roll over the sea Roll over the ocean in the deep blue sea 2x

It’s you It’s us ...

+Opening Prayer (Unison)

Loving God, we welcome your living presence in our midst. Share our joy and our thanks for the life you give us. Sing with us! Dance among us! Pray with us! Shower us with your love! Amen!

Getting Ready

Pinoy Henyo: Group your class into 2 and ask for 2 volunteers to start the game. One group at a time. The first volunteer will guess the word or phrase, where the other volunteer will just answer, “Yes”, “No”, and “Pwede”.Strictly no coaching from the group.

Use words or phrase the will introduce the lesson of today.

Example: Road to Emmaus, Disciples,Communion,Resurrection, Jesus

Learning Time

Discovering the Biblical Truth

Let the whole class read aloud the text in Luke 24:13-35. Group the class into 2 and let them discuss and answer the following questions.

1. What were the two disciples talking about?
2. What was the reaction of Jesus about their conversation?
3. How did Jesus explain to these disciples about God’s intended plans that had take place?
4. How did these disciples able to recognize Jesus?
5. What do you think is the importance of this story to the whole Christian community?

6. As witnesses to Christ Jesus, how do we share His Gospel to the community where we are located?
7. What expressions or ways can we share the Gospel to achieve a life abundant and meaningful to the whole community?

Lessons Learned

Seeing Jesus and following him faithfully requires developing habits and practices that embody and remember who Jesus was. As the church practices forgiving others as God in Christ has forgiven us, as we generously share our wealth and possessions with others as Jesus gave himself to us, as we share bread with people whom society has forgotten or ignored, we re-enact the practices we have learned from Jesus. We remember in our bodies who Jesus was and we see him more clearly. When those two disciples sat at a table with Jesus, seeing and doing what they had done with him before, their eyes were opened. So, may our eyes be opened when we, too, participate in the shared life of the body of Christ.

The church today is also called to bear witness about what we have seen and heard. As Christians, we are called to bear witness – in our places of work, over lunch with a friend, at our kids’ playground, in the public square. We are called to testify – not to grow the church or make ourselves look religious or any such thing -- but for only one purpose: to tell the truth about what we have seen and heard. Like Cleopas and his companion, the church today is called to bear witness in word and deed to the good news of the risen Christ.

Enumerate programs and activities of the community in which the local church actively participates. Describe how your local church relate itself to the local community and other organization. Write your answer on a Manila Paper and present it to the whole class.

Programs	Community Effort	Local Church Participation	Impact
Waste Management	Segregation of garbage per neighborhood	Church initiative of educating the members about waste management especially proper garbage disposal	Our Local Church is known to be an active and avid supporter both in the Provincial and City Community Programs and project implementation
Environment Preservation	Tree Planting	Offering Areas to plant, volunteers to provide the seedlings, and volunteer to care for the plants for 6 months	
Filipino Family	Seminar on Marriage	Provide volunteers to become a lecturer of the Pre-Marriage Seminar for the couples by the City Government	

Community Peace and Order	Security in the Malls and Public Places	Interfaith Rally for Peace, Harmony, and Solidarity among the Christians, Muslims, and Lumads	
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Applying the Lessons Learned

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT.

“As our local church is part of the community, we should be active in our community’s life and work to improve the quality of life of the people. Thus, we as Christ’s Church will help our community by_____.” (Name way/s in which your local church can join the community’s efforts to achieve an improved quality, peaceful life and well being of our environment).

Put your answer on a cut-shape colorful hand and place it on a class board.

Closing Worship

Memory Verse: “Through him, you have come to trust in God, who raised him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are set on God.” 1 Peter 1:21

Offertory

Reader: *The author of 1 Peter implores us to love one another deeply from the heart, and assures us that we have been born anew through the living and enduring word of God. In our giving today, let us give, not out of obligation, but from the heart. Let our gifts be seeds of the living and enduring word of God, that will sprout in abundance of justice and hope all that is necessary for life, for sisters and brothers here at hand, and around the world.*

Giving of our Offerings

+Offering Response “We Give You But Your Own” Hymnal of Faith Journey, 93
We give you but your own, whatever the gift may be,
All that we have is yours alone, we give it gratefully.

+Thanksgiving Prayer

All: Jesus, God has made you both Sovereign and Christ. Therefore we pray for your blessing upon these gifts, upon us, and those whose lives will benefit from them. May your victory over death empower all whom you call to trust in God. In faith and hope, we pray. Amen.

+Closing Song

“The Kingdom of God is Where God Is”
Hymnal of Faith Journey, 380

The Kingdom of God is where God reigns; a place of love, joy, and peace
The kingdom of God is where God reigns, a place of love, joy, and peace.

+Prayer of Dedication

All: Friends, rejoice in the mothering and fathering love of God! Rejoice in the victorious life of our Risen Savior! Rejoice in the power of the Spirit! Go, living in the love of Christ! Go, serving in the name of Christ! Let your love of God embrace your children, your family, your enemies, those who are far off, those who are strangers met on the road. May your lives praise the Lord! Amen.

+Response “You Shall Go Out With Joy” by André Kempen
You shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace,
And the mountains and the hills will break forth before you.
There'll be shouts of joy and the trees of the fields
Will clap, will clap their hands.

And the trees of the fields will clap their hands,
And the trees of the fields will clap their hands,
And the trees of the fields will clap their hands,
While you go out with joy.

Youth At Work. Monthly projects that involve the young people of the church.

The month of April:

A. Lenten Month Project.

1. Volunteer to assist your Local Pastor in preparing for the Holy Week celebration.
2. Samaritan Goods. Collect weekly goods (canned food, clothing, etc) as stock goods ready for emergency purposes.
3. Monthly Birthday Post. Make a bulletin board section of the monthly Birthday Celebrators.

B. Develop and maintain an FB Page for your local church CYF.

C. Create a CYF Prayer Messenger. Post your prayer requests and encourage every member to pray for such requests.

D. Make a 2 -minute CYF Lenten inspirational video.

E. #CYFSSlessoninlife. Post in your Twitter account the lessons you've learned from the session.

Lesson 47: How can a local church enrich the life-work of communities?

Fourth Sunday of Easter
May 3, 2020

General Concept: The local church must partake in the life-work of the communities through organizing, leading, and mobilizing the people.

Biblical Reference: John 10:1-10

Age-Level Concepts

- The local church must involve in the life-work of the communities by uniting and organizing the people.
- The local church must help lead the people in making the right decisions.
- The local church must help mobilize the people to work together to find solutions to their problems.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

- Read about models of community leadership in the Bible
- Express appreciation that their local church is involved in the life-work of the communities
- Thank God for the blessing of partaking in the life-work of God's people

Materials: The Holy Bible (preferably the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV]), song chart, offering plate or basket, Used Calendar for Sunday's Phrase and Memory Verse, Manila Paper, and pen or marker.

Biblical Background

Jesus Christ our Lord said, "I have come that you might have life and have it more abundantly (John 10:10). Abundant life is more than just economic. In John's Gospel, a life that is satisfying, abundant, and lived to the fullest is a life that is lived in Christ. To have abundant life is not just having a new house, a new car, new clothes, having the latest electronic gadgets, or what have you. While these things could perhaps make life more comfortable for us, abundant life is more than just material. To have abundant life is to have life in Christ, or to put it in another way, to live the life of Christ.

Life in Christ is a life that does not steal, kill, and destroy. A life that steals, kills, and destroys is the life of thieves, as Jesus Christ our Lord clearly stated. Such is a selfish or self-centered, greedy kind of life. Jesus called the Temple in Jerusalem a "hideout of thieves!" (Lk.19:46). For many of those who were serving in the Temple at that time were using religious laws to exact temple revenues from the common people for their selfish gain.

Moreover, abundant life or life in Christ is also a life that is willing to be given up for others in obedience to God. It is not enough for us to realize that our life in Christ is indeed abundant. It is also necessary for us to seriously ask ourselves, abundant for whom?

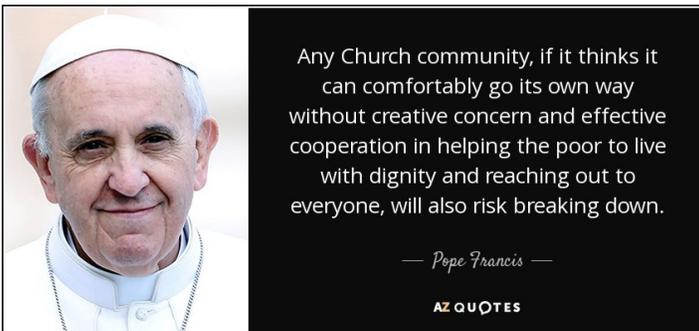
If our life is abundant only for our selves, then such is not the kind of life that Christ lived. Such is the life of the Rich Fool who tried to accumulate as much wealth as he could for himself (Lk. 12:16-21). The life of Christ was abundantly given for others to live more abundantly, especially for those who had less in life. Thus, Jesus Christ, our Lord said, "I am willing to give up my life, so that I may receive it back again. This is what my Father commanded me to do" (Jn.10:17-18).

Jesus Christ our Lord lived at the time when Palestine was a colony of the Roman Empire. The life he lived was a threat to the powers-that-be. It was the high priest, Caiaphas, who advised the Jewish authorities that one man should die for all the people (Jn. 18:14).

But to those who were driven to the periphery of society – the sick, the sinners and outcasts – who were recipients of his ministry, Jesus’ life was a source of hope and salvation. To those considered non-existent, it was a source of life. Indeed, abundant life is motivated by a genuine love for people, even for those who are unlovable. Jesus lifted the poor and placed them at the very center of God’s Kingdom. “Blessed are you poor,” he said, “For yours is the Kingdom of God” (Lk. 6:20).

Jesus used the Parable of the Shepherd to illustrate what it means to be a servant of God. In ancient Israel, shepherds are hired to look after sheep not their own. Shepherds are among the poorest of the poor in society. Many of them are only after the money they would get in looking after the sheep. That’s why they would run away if wild animals would come. They would not protect the sheep. They would not dare to look for those that are lost. They would not guide the sheep in greener pastures beside still waters, so to speak. Indeed, these kinds of shepherds are only hired, men.

However, some would go beyond being merely hired, men. They would come to know the sheep and would consider them their own. They would protect them from danger. They would feed the sheep and would care for them when they are sick. They would guide them and look for them when they are lost. They are even willing to give their lives for the sake of the sheep. They are good shepherds.



Suggested Lesson Outline

Greeting Time

Post A Phrase that invites the class to center oneself to Sunday’s lesson.

Welcome each student with a smile and a hug. After gathering around, say this statement “ Whoever you are and whatever you are on life’s journey, all are welcome here. We are here for a purpose.”

Songs of Gathering

“Ginawaak Manema”

Ginawaak manema ines inged, ines inged 2x
Tinged kini igabagayden andas anak den.
Kended en pamentuaan sa kanden (Clap)
Dirig 3x kataren (Clap) Taman sa taman 4x

Gihigugma man sa Dyos ang kaibotan gayud 2x
Busa iyang bugtong nga anak gihatag Nya
Nga kinsay motuo Kaniya, Dili 3x mawala
Sa kahangturan 4x

“Salidumay Praise”

Ay, ay Salidumay, Let us give praise to God

Ay, ay salidumay, let us give thanks to God

Ay, ay salidumay, let us all dance to God

Ay, ay salidumay, let us be one in Christ

+Opening Prayer

All: Incarnate God, You are the one who comes to us in Jesus Christ. Holy One, You are the one who comes to us in the Holy Spirit. Sovereign of Earth and Heaven, You are the one who calls us to recognize you today and every day. Gather our hearts and minds this day. Make us aware of Your presence and worship you in awe and wonder! In Jesus' Name, we pray. Amen.

Getting Ready

Instruct all learners to draw one image that will picture out what Jesus said about “meaningful and abundant life for all.” Learners can take turn in drawing an image that complements the other symbols being drawn by other learners. They have to observe silence and mindful of the works of others.

After everyone took part in the activity, ask the class, “Does your work capture what Jesus’ said about “a meaningful and abundant life for all?” Why do you think so?

Learning Time

Discovering the Biblical Truth. Let the whole class read aloud the text John 10:1-10. Divide the class into 2 groups and let the learners discuss and answer the following questions.

Questions to Reflect On

1. What does a good Shepherd do according to Jesus?
2. Differentiate a shepherd from a thief and a good shepherd from a hired one.
3. Describe who Jesus is according to this text?
4. How does this text help us understand Christ’s purpose and mission?
5. What does it mean to have abundant and meaningful life for all?
6. Aside from Jesus, identify models of community leadership in the Bible that able to lead God’s people to experience an abundant and meaningful life.
(eg. Moses, Joshua, Joseph, Deborah, Mary)
7. As a church, how can we live out our role as shepherds to the community?

Choose one reporter from each group to make a summary report to the whole class.

Lessons Learned:

Jesus did not only immerse himself in the life of the community where he was part of, he also made the people realize of God’s intention and purpose - for people to live a new kind of life. It is a life in abundance which is not only for few but for all. Jesus saw himself as a shepherd and part of the community at the same time. Therefore, he commits himself to leading the people to a life that God intends the community to experience.

The church as part of the community should emulate Jesus’ shepherding role in the community. It needs to immerse itself to the life and work of the community where it is located. we partake in the struggles, decision making and even in finding solutions to the challenges the community is facing. The local church may extend meaningful and fruitful partnership with the communities’ stakeholders in bringing quality life and development.

What are the programs/ activities in the community in which your local church and as individual members of the community has participated in, organized to do or helped in planning?

Example:

Community Issues and Concerns	Community Response	Church Participation	Your Participation
1. Environmental Pollution	Clean up drive- School and Barangay Level	Coastal Clean-Up- CYF	Brought Sack & Broom for the cleanup
2. Rampant Cyber Addiction	Organize Sport events	Join Basketball lega	Becoming a basketball player
3. Gangsters/ Tribes			
4. Out of School Youth			

Applying the Lessons Learned

Collective response. Invite the whole class to formulate and organize 3 activities that will help the Barangay address an Environmental Issue. Example: Coastal Clean Up Drive, Church Garbage Management Disposal, and Tree Growing.

Activity	When/ What Time	Things to prepare/ Responsible Persons	Output	Impact
1				
2				

After planning, offer this plan and each learner is requested to say a sentence prayer thanking God for the blessing of partaking in the life-work of God's people.

Closing Worship

Memory Verse:

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly." John 10:10

Offertory

Reader: Good Shepherd, you have opened the door of us towards a new life through your dedication and sacrifice. May we reflect your love by opening the door of our hearts in this act of giving our tithes and offerings. In Christ's Name, we pray, Amen!

Giving of our Offerings

+Offering Response "O God Receive This Offering"
 O God receive this offering that we are bringing to you
 This is the sign of our gratitude for your great love for us all.

+Thanksgiving Prayer

All: Thank you, Risen Christ, for moving the hearts of the people to give of themselves. May our offerings of service and financial support give voice to your work for justice and peace in this world. May we grow more responsive to other people's need through our giving and our living. Amen.

+Closing Song "Work in Your Kingdom" Hymnal of Faith Journey, 302

Work in your kingdom advances and continues,
 Even through hard times, all odds and tribulations,
 Despite our human infirmities and weakness,
 Use us, O Savior till the task is done.

There is no service impossible to render,
 If we but trust in your strength and in your power,
 Make us, O God, to be diligent and zealous
 Until your full will here on earth be done.

Lord, all our time we now offer in your service,
 All the resources to us you have entrusted;
 Use all our knowledge, our intellect and wisdom,

Our enthusiasm, strength and might, O God.

All our talents which are your gifts from heaven,
We would be careful to use these as intended,
So that your kingdom be built up and exalted,
O God our Parent, source of love and light.

+Prayer of Dedication

Teacher: You are called for a purpose: for the sake of knowing and drawing
close towards God a person living in sorrows.

All: We are not here by chance.

Teacher: You are chosen and precious in the sight of God, your lives are
being built up to lead people into a life where the justice, mercy
and peace of the Risen Christ may dwell.

All: We are not here by chance.

Teacher: Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they
follow me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never
perish; and no one will snatch them out of my hand.

All: Jesus, we are the sheep of your pasture. You have called us. We
respond to you. We are not here by chance. Amen

+Response

"Mambo Sawa, Sawa"

Mambo sawa-sawa)^{2x}

I esu Aki a izini (mambo sawa-sawa)^{3x}

(Things are getting better)^{2x}

If you have Jesus in your hearts (Things are getting better)^{3x}

Youth At Work. Monthly projects that involve the young people of the church.

For May:

- A. Pastor's Appreciation Project. (Most Church Workers will be transferred to their new assignment)
 1. Make an appreciation video for your Church Minister/s.
 2. Volunteer to lend a helping hand in packing your Pastor's things.
 3. Fund Raising for Summer Camp 2020
 4. Samaritan Goods. Collect weekly goods (canned food, clothing, etc) as stock goods ready for emergency purposes.
 5. Monthly Birthday Post. Make a Bulletin Board section for the Monthly Birthday Celebrators.
- B. Develop and maintain an FB Page for your local church CYF.
- C. Create a CYF Prayer Messenger. Post your prayer requests and encourage every member to pray for such requests.

- D. Make a 2 -minute CYF promotional video for Summer Youth Activities
- E.#CYFSSlessoninlife. Post in your Twitter account the lessons you've learned from the session.

Lesson 48: What is a collective response?

Fifth Sunday of Easter
May 10, 2020

General Concept: A collective response is a shared and united action to an expressed need.

Biblical References: 1 Peter 2:9-10, John 14:12-14

Age-Level Concepts

- When others need help, we respond in mutual concern as a community.
- We are united in our response to the needs of others.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

- List down the advantages and disadvantages of people working together to respond to people's needs
- Discuss the impact of giving a united response
- Reflect on the kind of life when alone and working on your own

Materials: The Holy Bible (preferably the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV]), song chart, offering plate or basket, Used Calendar for Sunday's Phrase and Memory Verse, TV or Laptop - Internet Ready for Video Presentation, meta cards with masking tape, and pen or marker.

Biblical Background

It was James, the brother of Jesus who said that followers of Jesus are to be "doers" of the word. "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says" (James 1:22, NIV). A person's faith is to be evident in practical good works. A faith that does not do so is no faith at all – for faith without works is dead (James 2:17). Jesus himself said that his followers would be doers of the works that he did. John 14:12-14 answers the question, "What are Jesus' followers to do in the interim period between his first coming and his coming again?"

First of all, Jesus' followers will do the works that Jesus did while he was on earth. "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also" (John 14:12a). What works did Jesus do? He healed people. He touched people. He included people who were on the outside. He loved all people, even those who were despised – Samaritans and tax collectors. He demonstrated compassion and mercy. He taught people the truth about God. He fed people. He prayed for people. He encouraged people. He challenged people to live as God's children.

Sometimes he even rebuked hypocrisy. He spoke out against the exploitation of the poor, the

fatherless, the widows and the distressed. He did all of these works and more and he did so as one of us. He became like us. He fully incarnated himself; he fully took upon himself the clothing of humanity.

As Jesus' followers, are we doing the works that Jesus did? Are we living out the life of Christ in our daily lives? What keeps us from being Christ's body on earth? The problem is, we want to go to heaven! Maybe not quite yet, but we want to be somewhere other than where we are now. We want to enter the pure life of the spirit to be with Jesus. We want to be caught up from the earth, far out of sight, far from pain, far from the hum of the ordinary and the drudgery of today. And yet Jesus has us here, right now, earthbound to take up space on the earth, to do the works that he did.

What changes could occur if we took Jesus' words seriously? How many sick and bedraggled people could find comfort? How many stomachs could be filled? How many troubled minds could find peace? How many poor could be clothed? How many prisoners of all kinds (emotional, those in sin's bondage) could be set free? How many hopeless could find hope? How many outcasts could know that somebody cares for them? It's non-negotiable – Jesus' followers will do the works that He did while He was on the earth.

But moreover, followers of Jesus will also do even greater works than Jesus did. "Greater works than these he will do, because I go to my Father" (14:12b). How could this be? First, Jesus did not mean that his followers would do greater works in the sense of quality. Only God can do what God can do. Nevertheless, Jesus while on earth was self-limited and his works were confined to a very small geographical area of the world. Jesus was looking forward to the day when he would be with the Father, "because I go to my Father." At that time the Holy Spirit, the very presence of God, would indwell the disciples. Then, they would go out across the world doing the works of Jesus. In that sense, Jesus' followers do "greater works" in quantity than he did.

Right now, the Holy Spirit is empowering believers to carry out his works around the world! Today, across the world believers, Jesus' followers are doing the works of Jesus. They are living out the presence of Christ in our world. Followers of Jesus will do the works that he did while on earth and they will do even "greater works" than Jesus.

Furthermore, Jesus' followers will pray and receive direction and power for doing the works of Jesus. Why does Jesus mention prayer in this setting (Jn. 14:13-14)? Through prayer, we gain the mind of Christ. Through prayer, God opens up our hearts to the possibilities before us. Through prayer, God awakens us to the seriousness of our task. Through prayer, we find the motivation to do what he has called us to do.

Jesus says, "Whatever you ask in my name, that I will do." It seems as if this is an unqualified promise that we can ask God for anything and we will receive it from God. Name it and claim it. Is that what God is saying?

(1) First, our asking is to be done in his name. “And whatever you ask in my name...” (14:13). “If you ask anything in my name...” (14:14). The test of whether or not our prayers are right is this: “Am I asking this prayer in Jesus’ name?” There are conditions to our asking. We simply cannot ask for anything selfishly and expect God to give it to us as if God existed to serve us from heaven’s divine goodie machine. Instead of selfish praying, prayers prayed in the name of Jesus are prayers for God’s kingdom purposes to be fulfilled in us and his world.

(2) Second, God is pleased to answer our prayers that glorify him. “And whatever you ask in my name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son” (14:13). We can have confidence in our praying when we are asking God to empower us to do the works of Jesus. God is always pleased to answer prayers that involve us doing the works of Jesus because “the father is glorified in the Son.” Prayer unlocks the potential of doing greater works for God

God is often at work in the ordinary events of life. God is not just interested in us doing church work. There is a great need for people to lead in worship, teach the Bible, and a hundred other things that happen at church. These are vital; however, don’t limit God’s working to the life of the church. God is at work in our neighbor’s life. God’s Holy Spirit operates without limits. He’s speaking to people. Our job as Christians is to be there and help guide them in their search.

Having emphasized the fact that God’s work is not limited to the church, we also say that our church needs our involvement. What builds fellowship in a church is not food. Biblical fellowship (koinonia) occurs when believers partner together in the cause of Christ. Our church is a great place to serve because we have the vision to reach out to our community and world with the good news of Christ. Aside from that, God wants us to be an active participant in a church body where we can fulfill his purpose for your life.

Suggested Lesson Outline

Greeting Time

Post A Phrase that invites the class to center oneself to Sunday’s lesson.

Welcome each student with your great smile and a tight hug. After gathering around, say this statement “ Whoever you are and whatever you are on life’s journey, all are welcome here. We are here for a purpose.”



Songs of Gathering “The More
We Get Together”
The more we get together, together, together
The more we get together, the happier we'll
be.
'Cause your friends are my friends, And my
friends are your friends
The more we get together, the happier we'll
be.

“As We Gather”

As we gather may your spirit work within us,
As we gather may we glorify your name,
Knowing well that as our heart begin to worship,
We'll be blessed because we came,
We'll be blessed because we came.

Chorus

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases,
His mercies never come to an end
They are new every morning, new every morning,
great is the faithfulness O Lord,
Great is your faithfulness.

+Opening Prayer

All: Ever-gracious and merciful God, we celebrate the gifts of your Spirit which have made us strong and faithful servants of Christ. You call us to take up the mantle of justice and to follow wherever faith leads us. You fill us with strength and hope, and invite us to share in the cost and joys of discipleship. You promise us splendor and beauty in this life and in the world to come. Meet us here, we pray, so that your word will be fulfilled in our hearing and learning. **Amen.**

Getting Ready

Team Building Activity. 9# Simple Knot Team-building activity for solving problems (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=moP9wWcnC_A). Invite all the learners to form one big circle. See to it that they are shoulder to shoulder distance from another. Instruct them to cross their hands and take both hands beside them. Without releasing their hand, let them solve how to make their hands uncross forming the same circle and still facing each other.

What have you learned from the game?

Why is there a need to have a collective response to solve a problem?

What did the game teach you about making a collective response?

Learning Time

Discovering the Biblical Truth.

Let the whole class read aloud the text, [John 14:1-14](#). Group the class into a triad and assign each group to discuss and answer the following questions.

Questions to Reflect On

1. What is the text all about?
2. Describe the context of the text?
3. What promises did Jesus mention to his disciples?
4. How do these promises able to assure Jesus' disciples?

5. In verse 12-14, can you say that you have done greater things than what Jesus did in his life and ministry while he was on earth? Why do you say so? Why not?
6. How do we as Christians able to be united in our life work in doing God’s mission in these changing times?
7. Share experiences wherein your local church was working together to respond to the people’s needs.

Lessons Learned:

We work together, pooling our material and human resources, driven by our faith in a loving and caring God, we respond to an expressed need in society. When we are working together, we can be a driving force for change and development. Disunity among the body of Christ brings shame to Christ and the whole family of God.

Share your local church life work where all members are working together to respond to people’s needs.

EVENT	UNITED ACTION	IMPACT
Sendong (CDOC Flood)	UCCP CDOC open its doors to be an evacuation Center during the flood	City Government especially the DSWD recognized our church as a partner
Taal Volcano Eruption		
Drug War		
HIV/AIDS		
COVID 19 Pandemic		

Applying the Lessons Learned

Gather the learners and give each learner a meta card to write one’s contribution and commitment to unify the body of Christ in responding to the needs and concerns of the community.

Let them read what they wrote for the class to hear and paste it on the board forming a big circle or cross.

Closing Worship

Memory Verse: “Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and will do greater works than these because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.”

Offertory

Reader: We have tasted the Lord's goodness and the sweetness is still on our lips.
Now we permit ourselves to be living vessels of God's sweet, sweet Spirit,
offering ourselves, our lives and our gifts to those who are most in need
of Christ's healing mercy.

Giving of our Offerings

+Offering Response "All That We Have in Our Lives" Hymnal of Faith Journey,92
All that we have in our lives come from you gracious God,
We offer all these back to you to glorify your name.

Bless these our gifts to you for you are the source of life,
O, use us in building up your kingdom here on earth.

+Thanksgiving Prayer

All: God, bless these tithes and offerings, that they may heal and make whole the
lives of all your children. And bless those who give and those who long to give,
that we may become living stones of mercy, grace, and justice in the house of
your creation. Amen.

+Closing Song

"Yesterday's Dream"

*We are the children of yesterday's dream
We are the promise of the future we bring
Waving the banner of love to all
To every nation the rich and the poor
We are the world of the restless and young
And we need a hand to guide us
Helping each other build each other
As long as we're together you and me
For together we stand divided we fall*

Chorus

*Together we climb to the top of the world
We can be what we want for the world to see
That we are the children of yesterday's dream*

*We have the yearning to do what is best
Be someone special from all of the rest
Nation and brothers in unity
Building tomorrow for you and for me
We are the world of the restless and young*

*And we need a hand to guide us
Helping each other build each other
As long as we're together you and me
(Chorus)*

+Prayer of Dedication

All: Once you were not a people, but now you are a people bound together in God's mercy and united in Christ's service. Depart from this place in peace and confidence, to love and serve in the name of Jesus the Christ, the living representation of God – our way, our truth, our life. **Amen.**

+Response

“Mambo Sawa, Sawa”

Mambo sawa-sawa)^{2x}

I esu Aki a izini (mambo sawa-sawa)^{3x}

(Things are getting better ^{2x})

If you have Jesus in your hearts (Things are getting better)^{3x}

Youth At Work. Monthly projects that involve the young people of the church.

For May:

A. Pastor's Appreciation Project. (Most Church Workers will be transferred to their new assignment)

1. Make an appreciation video for your Church Minister/s.
2. Volunteer to lend a helping hand in packing your Pastor's things.
3. Fund Raising for Summer Camp 2020
4. Samaritan Goods. Collect weekly goods (canned food, clothing, etc) as stock goods ready for emergency purposes.
5. Monthly Birthday Post. Make a Bulletin Board section for the Monthly Birthday Celebrators.

B. Develop and maintain an FB Page for your local church CYF.

C. Create a CYF Prayer Messenger. Post your prayer requests and encourage every member to pray for such requests.

D. Make a 2 -minute CYF promotional video for Summer Youth Activities

E.#CYFSSlessoninlife. Post in your Twitter account the lessons you've learned from the session.

Lesson 49: How do we deepen the impact of our collective response to societal issues and concerns?

Sixth Sunday of Easter
May 17, 2020

General Concept: We deepen the impact of our collective response when we appropriately address the needs and concerns in society.

Biblical References: Acts 17:22-31, John 14:15-21

Age-Level Concept/s

- When we appropriately respond to the needs and concerns in society, the impact is significant.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

- Cite needs and concerns of a society that the Church has responded to
- Evaluate the significance of our response to these urgent concerns
- Suggest other effective and appropriate ways to respond
- Commit to actively involve in the efforts of the Church to respond to societal concerns and issues

Materials: The Holy Bible (preferably the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV]), song chart, offering plate or basket, Used Calendar for Sunday's Phrase and Memory Verse, Strings for String puzzle activity, whiteboard/ Blackboard, and pen or marker.

Biblical Background

The setting of our text from the Gospel of John (14:15-21) was the night before Jesus Christ our Lord would die when the darkness of the world was closing in. Jesus had gathered his closest friends to share a final meal. Rising from the table, he took a towel, wrapped it around him, and washed his disciples' feet. Then, after telling his disciples that one of them would betray him, he says, "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.... By this everyone will know you are my disciples if you have a love for one another."

We have in this section of John, in a nutshell, Jesus' definition of what it means to be his disciple. In our Gospel lesson we hear Jesus say, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." We need to remember what Jesus said earlier that evening about his commandments: "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.... This I command you, that you love one another." We need to remember that, in the gospel of John, Jesus only gives his disciples one commandment: "Love one another. Love one another as I have loved you."

And so, that's the commandment Jesus is talking about. Love one another. All of Jesus' other teachings about how to live are a fleshing out of this commandment, and showing his disciples then and now how the commandment to love is worked out in our day to day living.

John wrote his gospel long after Jesus was gone. The gospel is written looking backward, amid a community for whom Jesus was only a memory. Most of the people in John's community had never met Jesus. Most—if not all—of the disciples were dead. The Temple in Jerusalem had been destroyed—which a lot of folks thought was a sign that the end-time would come soon.

But the end-time didn't come. Life went on, and that was, in some ways, the hardest part of all. Even when all the signs seemed right, Jesus hadn't come back. This community of believers felt pushed to the very edge of despair and defeat.

So, John pulled together many of the things Jesus said into this one section of the Gospel we know now as "The Farewell Discourse." Here at the table, we hear Jesus say some of the same things over and over, in different ways, to make sure the disciples get it. The central word is love. "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." "Whoever does not love me does not keep my words." "I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another." The word used here for love—agape—describes the kind of love that Jesus showed us: self-giving love that seeks the good of the other, generous, sacrificial love.

The disciples must have wondered, "But how can we do that?" They knew they had a hard time loving each other even while Jesus was with them. Jesus has been telling them that he is going to leave them. How could they love in the way Jesus loves-- if he's gone.

That night, the disciples haven't yet seen the depths of Jesus' love for them—a love that would lead to the cross and the tomb, that would tear him away from them. That night, they couldn't have guessed that they would lose him twice: that after his death, he would return in the glory of the resurrection, and then be taken from their sight in the ascension. That night, they were still basking in his physical presence as he began the long farewell talk that we hear continued in text.

Knowing that they have come to depend on his presence, Jesus wants to reassure his disciples. Before he goes away, he tells them, "I will not leave you orphaned." That seems an odd phrase to use with these adults, consider that the word John's gospel uses for "orphan" means "torn away from."

Of course, they would have each other. Jesus had told them to love each other—but we wonder just how comforting that was. Each of the disciples must have known in his heart how hard it is to love the way Jesus loves. If we could just love God and love one another as Jesus loves, there wouldn't be any need for any other commandments or laws or rules. But that commandment to love is a tall order.

Given the realities of our lives and the realities of the people we live and work with—how do we find it possible to obey this commandment to love? In this world we live in, given all the people we encounter who are different from us, and who don't value the same things we do, how do we love as Jesus loves?

God knows—it isn't easy. The truth that Jesus wants us to live by—the truth of love—is a love that the rest of the world can't understand or make sense of. It's a love that makes us different.

We don't always live up to this truth. We sometimes fall short of the kind of love that Jesus wants us to show in our lives. Throughout history, we see examples of how Christians have failed to live up to the love to which Jesus calls us.

Love is at the heart of what Jesus commands us to do. That's what the Holy Spirit works to make possible in each of our lives. Love not just for our families, not just for our friends, not just for people that we like. No, love even for our enemies. That's the kind of love that God is calling us toward.

This kind of love to which Jesus calls us is hard. We can't do it alone. It's humanly impossible. But Jesus promises that we won't be alone. "I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

The Greek word translated as "advocate" — "paraclete", or Paraclete — means "one called alongside, to help." An advocate is someone who is looking out for you; someone who is on your side; someone who encourages you and supports you; someone who speaks up for you and is willing to hang in there with you through thick and thin. It's hard to love one another, in the way Jesus loves. It's hard to be generous and brave and compassionate--especially when you're afraid or you feel like nobody hears you or you feel alone or abandoned or left out.

But the good news is that God is with us and has come to us in Christ to show us what God wants for us: health and healing, love and belonging and community, justice and peace, and a life of abundance. God came in Christ to show us how far God is willing to go to show us how much God loves us. God raised Jesus from the dead to show us that goodness is stronger than evil and love is stronger than death.

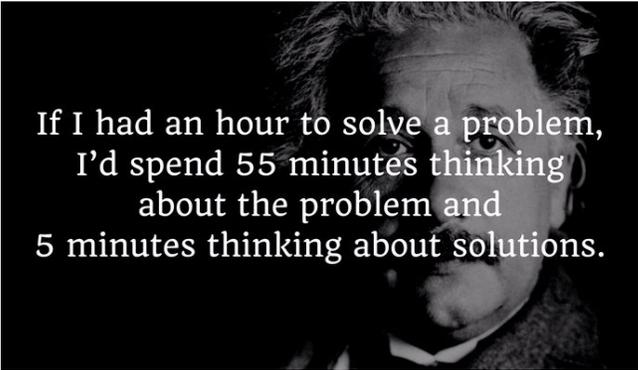
God keeps coming to us in the Holy Spirit to encourage us and guide us and care for us and walk with us, to be our Advocate. Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit will come to us with truth, with gifts, and the power to be faithful disciples. The Spirit will be with us, helping us, giving us the power to love.

Suggested Lesson Outline

Greeting Time

Post A Phrase that invites the class to center oneself to Sunday's lesson.

Welcome each student with your great smile and tight hug. After gathering around, say this statement "Whoever you are and whatever you are on life's journey, all are welcome here. We are here for a purpose."



If I had an hour to solve a problem,
I'd spend 55 minutes thinking
about the problem and
5 minutes thinking about solutions.

Songs of Gathering

MOVING PRAISE

I'm gonna raise my hands unto our God (2x)
I'm gonna raise my hands as I sing God's praise,
I'm gonna raise my hands unto our God.

...shoulders... hands...hips.. legs.. knees.. body...

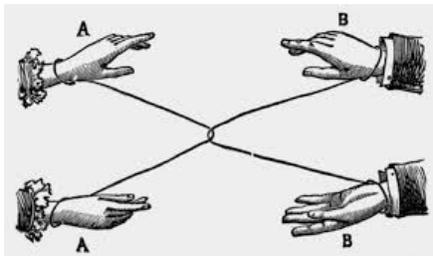
DUBIDAHDAH PRAISE

We gonna um! Ahh! (dubidadidahdah 2x)
Let's praise our God 2x

This is the day that the Lord has made,
we will rejoice and be glad
Together let us join our hearts in prayer
as we dance and praise God's name.

+Opening Prayer

Our God that listens, we have come here today for many reasons, each with our own story. May these reasons and stories be immersed in your Sacred Story, finding ourselves caught up in the drama and beauty of Jesus' teachings, life, and ministry. Through your Holy Spirit enable us to move boldly into the future and to fulfill the hope of love that Jesus taught, even as we pray the prayer he taught us saying, In Jesus' Name we pray, Amen!



Getting Ready

String Puzzle. Start with two people. Tie each person's hands together with a long string as shown, and have the strings cross each other so that the two people are linked together. Tie the string around the wrists somewhat loosely. Try to free oneself without untying the knot. Let them try to solve the puzzle within 5 minutes.

What have you learned from the game?

What did you feel while playing the game?

How were you able to solve the puzzle?

Learning Time

Discovering the Biblical Truth

Let the whole class read aloud the text John 14:15-21. Group the class into Dyad and let them discuss and answer the following questions.

1. How do we show our love to Jesus?
2. How do we keep His commandments?

3. What is an Advocate and how does it help us in our life -work as followers of Christ?
4. What does it mean to abide in Christ Jesus?
5. How do we let Christ's love reign and experienced by God's people today?
6. What impact does your church make in responding to your community needs and concerns?
7. How do you deepen the impact of your Church's life work and faith in Jesus Christ in your community?

Lessons Learned

A PARABLE. "The Parable of the River"

There is an oft-told parable – popularized in the 1930s by a social reformer and community organizer Saul Alinsky - about a group of campers on a riverbank who are just settling down for the evening when one of them sees a baby in the water. He immediately dives in, braving the fierce current, and rescues the infant. But as he climbs ashore, one of the other campers spots another baby in the river in need of help. Then another. And another. Overwhelmed by the sheer number of babies, the campers grab any passer-by they can to help them.

Before long, the river is filled with desperate babies, and more and more rescuers are required to assist the campers. Unfortunately, not all babies can be saved. And, tragically, some of the brave rescuers drown. But they manage to mold themselves into an efficient life-saving organization and, over time, an entire infrastructure is developed to support their efforts like hospitals, schools, foster care, social services, trauma and victim support services, life-saving trainers, swimming schools, etc.

At this point, one of the rescuers starts walking upstream.

'Where are you going?' the others ask, disconcerted, 'We need you here! Look how busy we are!' The rescuer replied, 'You carry on here. I'm going upstream to find the cause who keeps chucking all these babies in the river.'

This is a great little story to tell when you're trying to explain the problem-solving process. To do it right, you have to attack in two waves; the first is a response that shows that you're doing something. It's rescuing the babies. In policing, this would be something like swamping an area with cops to reduce incidences of a crime. But, of course, this isn't sustainable as those cops will be needed elsewhere eventually. And, sure as eggs are eggs, once the extra cops are gone, the problem pops right up again. That's where the second wave comes in.

While the first wave is doing its thing, the second wave is busy researching and analyzing, and working out what the underlying causes of the problem are. Then, the second wave starts putting things in place to undermine the problem so that, when the first wave is removed, the problem cannot return.

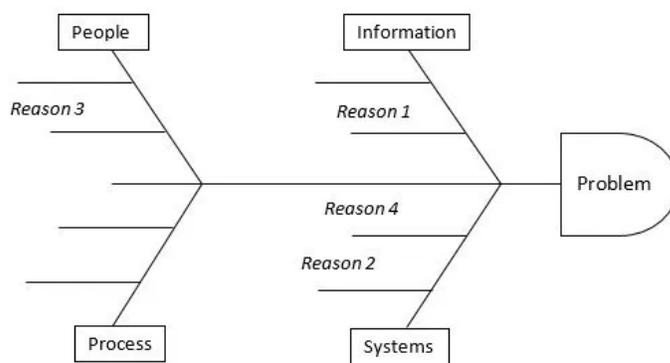
The second wave means finding the baby chucker and making sure he/she chucks no more.

Questions:

1. Does our local church address the root cause of our community's problem?
2. Identify 3 problems in your community and discuss what might be the root causes of each problem/issue.

Applying the Lessons Learned

FISHBONE DIAGRAM. You can use this analysis when identifying possible causes for a problem when a team's thinking tends to fall into rust.



Materials needed: marking pens and flip chart or whiteboard.

Agree on a problem statement of your community. Example: Out of School Youth, Drug Addiction, Gangster, Teenage Pregnancy, etc. Write it at the center-right of the flip chart or whiteboard. Draw a box around it and draw a horizontal arrow running to it.

Brainstorm the major categories of causes of the problem. If this is difficult to use generic headings:

- | | | |
|------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| -Methods | -Machines (equipment) | -People (manpower) |
| -Materials | -Measurement | -Environment |

Write the categories of causes as branches from the main arrow.

Brainstorm all the possible causes of the problem. Ask "Why does this happen?" As each idea is given, the facilitator writes it as a branch from the appropriate category. Causes can be written in several places if they relate to several categories. Again ask "Why does this happen?" about each cause. Write sub-causes branching off the causes. Continue to ask "Why?" and generate deeper levels of causes. Layers of branches indicate causal relationships.

When the group runs out of ideas, focus attention to places on the chart where ideas are few. Out of your discussions, what recommendations can you make or how can your local church make a deeper impact on your community especially in responding to issues and concerns.

Closing Worship

Memory Verse: "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." John 14:15

Offertory

One: Today we call upon you like children of God to share in the love and work of Jesus. We, as the gathered community, the Body of Christ, continue to witness and work on behalf of our Lord as we offer back our gifts, tithes, and offerings.

Giving of our Offerings

+Offering Response "Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow"

Hymnal of Faith Journey, 94

Praise God the Source of life and birth;
Praise God the Son who came to earth;
Praise God the Spirit Holy Flame;
All glory, honor to God's name.

+Thanksgiving Prayer

All: May these gifts, O God, become action and intention, fulfilling Christ's commandment to love. Amen.

+Closing Song "God's Call for Today" Hymnal of Faith Journey, 362

From many nations, we have come,
with burning hearts and minds,
To share to all what we have seen and heard,
As God's call in our lands and seas.

Refrain

We have seen the struggles of the poor,
We have seen our bond of unity,
We have heard God calling us today:
Pray for peace, work for justice and restore creation's dignity.

We've heard the lessons of the past,
How greed destroyed humanity,
The nations rise and fall in flames of war,
And the people live in misery.(Refrain)

Creation groans now in travail in need of care and dignity,
Come people of the world, let's share our lives,
For to live is to care for the earth. (Refrain)

+Prayer of Dedication

One: Now go back into the world from which you have come and let love be true and freely given. And may you be encouraged and blessed by the Advocate whose love warms and surrounds you like the sun, believing that God is with us always, as close as our beating hearts. Amen.

+Response

“Mambo Sawa, Sawa”

Mambo sawa-sawa)^{2x}

I esu Aki a izini (mambo sawa-sawa)^{3x}

(Things are getting better)^{2x}

If you have Jesus in your hearts (Things are getting better)^{3x}

Youth At Work. Monthly projects that involve the young people of the church.
For May:

- A. Pastor's Appreciation Project. (Most Church Workers will be transferred to their new assignment)
 1. Make an appreciation video for your Church Minister/s.
 2. Volunteer to lend a helping hand in packing your Pastor's things.
 3. Fund Raising for Summer Camp 2020
 4. Samaritan Goods. Collect weekly goods (canned food, clothing, etc) as stock goods ready for emergency purposes.
 5. Monthly Birthday Post. Make a Bulletin Board section for the Monthly Birthday Celebrators.
- B. Develop and maintain an FB Page for your local church CYF.
- C. Create a CYF Prayer Messenger. Post your prayer requests and encourage every member to pray for such requests.
- D. Make a 2 -minute CYF promotional video for Summer Youth Activities
- E. #CYFSSlessoninlife. Post in your Twitter account the lessons you've learned from the session.

Lesson 50:How can we, as a Church, achieve our goals?

Ascension Sunday
Seventh Sunday of Easter
May 24, 2020

General Concept: The Church can achieve its goals through concerted efforts, strong faith in God, and deep commitment to the work.

Biblical Reference: 1 Peter 5:6-11

Age-Level Concepts

- The Church can achieve its goals through the combined efforts of everyone.
- We have strong faith in God to be with the Church in achieving its goals.
- We can reach our goals through perseverance in doing the work of the Church.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

- Suggest ways on how to achieve the Church's goals
- Give the significance of having faith in God's guidance in the efforts to accomplish the Church's goals
- Affirm that God is with the Church in achieving its goals
- Challenge each other to help in the work of achieving the Church's goals

Materials: The Holy Bible (preferably the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV]), song chart, offering plate or basket, Used Calendar for Sunday's Phrase and Memory Verse, TV or Laptop - Internet Ready for Video Presentation, Cartolina for Scribbling, and pen or marker.

Biblical Background

As Christian believers, we are called upon to be witnesses for Christ. This is what we are meant to be; it is our reason for being. But what does it mean to be witnesses? The number one characteristic of a witness is to be able to speak the truth at first hand. If we are witnesses in a court of law, for instance, we are allowed to say only that which we have personally seen and heard. Similarly, if we are witnesses for Christ, then we should know Christ at first hand. If we are to spread the Gospel, then we have to know ourselves what the Gospel is all about.

For us to have first-hand knowledge of the Gospel, there are at least two things that we should do. First, we should appropriate Christ for ourselves. We should always ask ourselves, "What does Christ mean for me, and what must I do about him?" We should believe in Christ, not only because someone else told us to believe in him, but rather because we have thought about him.

Onetime, Jesus asked his disciples a fundamental question. He wanted to know what people knew about him. And so, he asked his disciples, "What do people say about me?" And they told him that some were saying that he was John the Baptist, while others were also saying that he was Elijah or a prophet who had come to life. But then Jesus asked his disciples, "How about you? Who do you say I am?" (Mt.16:13-15).

It is not enough to tell what others think about Jesus. We have to think it out ourselves if we are to be genuine witnesses for Christ. But more important than the need to think about Jesus is the need to know and meet Jesus ourselves. Perhaps, one of our greatest mistakes is when we think of Jesus as a mere figure in a book, or as someone who lived and died and gone, and whose story we love to tell. But Jesus is alive, and we can meet him in the same manner that we can achieve

a friend. And it is only when we know Jesus in this sense that we can be absolutely and utterly sure of him.

But then we may ask, why do we not meet him more often than we do? Most likely, the reason is that we do not give ourselves a chance to meet him, or better still, we do not give him a chance to meet us. There should be a time we set aside each day to think and to speak to Jesus and to wait for his presence in Prayer. It doesn't need to be extended. It can be any time of the day and anywhere. When we do that, we will meet Christ. And then we can be genuine witnesses for him because we can say beyond all shadow of a doubt that we know him.

Now, we may ask, where can we be witnesses for Christ? Jesus commanded his disciples to be witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all of Judea, and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). This means that they would take Jerusalem as a center, and then draw a series of ever widening concentric circles until the widest circle of all take in the whole wide world.

First of all, they have to start in Jerusalem. This means they have to start at home. They say that charity begins at home. Certainly, our Christian witness should begin at home. Onetime, Jesus cured a person who was violently mad. When the person was cured, naturally his heart overflowed with gratitude to Jesus. And he asked Jesus to let him come with him and to follow Jesus all the time. But Jesus answered, "Go back home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you and how kind he has been to you?" (Mk.5:19).

There is no better place for us to practice being a Christian than at home. Sometimes, we misuse our homes altogether. We sometimes think of our homes as a place where we can be ourselves. And this means that we have the right to be as bad-tempered and irritable and selfish as we like in our homes. And that we can treat our loved ones with discourtesy and lack of consideration that we would never dream of showing to strangers or to people we do not know very well.

We can and must and ought to begin to demonstrate Christianity in our own homes. In our homes, we can find all the chances to be as unselfish and kind, to be as compassionate and forgiving, as thoughtful and considerate as a Christian ought to be.

Moreover, Jesus also told his disciples to go on to Judea; that is to say, they have to be witnesses for Christ in their own country. Sometimes, we always tend to praise other countries, except our own. We still tend to point out how much better other countries are when compared to our own. There might be some truth in it. Nevertheless, it is our primary responsibility to make our country a truly Christian country.

But how can we do that? Well, we can do it by taking our Christianity with us into every aspect of life. Perhaps, one of the gravest mistakes we can make is to divide life into sacred and secular, and think that we serve God only in Church and that we can forget and leave God behind us when we go out into the world. Every moment of life is lived in God's presence, and therefore every moment of life should be an act of worship. When we go out to work, we can go a long way in making our country a truly Christian country if we insist on taking our Christian principles with us

into every aspect of life, keeping in mind always that our living God sees every moment of our life.

Furthermore, Jesus also commanded his disciples to go on to Samaria. This is really surprising because the Jews were bitter enemies of the Samaritans, and the Samaritans in turn hated the Jews. The “Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans” (Jn.4:9). But the Gospel of Christ must be brought even to people who are regarded as enemies.

Of course, the truth is that a real Christian should not regard any person as an enemy. Perhaps, one of the greatest “ifs” of history is the question of what might have happened if the Western people had sent abroad missionaries of the Gospel instead of armies of war. To make it more contemporary, what might have happened if the Americans have sent missionaries, who care for people in Afghanistan or Iraq, rather than abusive armies? What might have happened, if our government had sent courageous preachers of Christ’s Gospel of love to Mindanao, rather than soldiers who are trained to kill?

There is only one real way to destroy our enemies, and that is, to make them our friends. And we can only do that when we persuade them to accept also the same Gospel of Christ which alone can make us one.

Finally, Jesus also commanded his disciples to go out to the ends of the earth. He commanded them to be witnesses throughout the whole world. Apostle Paul had dreamed of that day when “at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, and every tongue confesses that Jesus Christ is Lord” (Phil.2:10-11). It is God’s purpose that everyone should know and love Christ, as well as, know and love those whom Christ loved. And so, there is laid upon us the duty of going out to the ends of the earth to tell the story of Jesus and his love.

Indeed, we should never be contented until the last person in the world knows the story of Jesus and his love. And so, by the life we live, we must do all we can to participate in God’s work “to make each person a new being in Christ and the whole world as God’s Kingdom” – a kingdom of caring, joy, and love. To be genuine witnesses for Christ is never easy, but it’s the only way we

can make our nation a genuinely Christian country in Southeast Asia.



Suggested Lesson Outline

Greeting Time

Post A Phrase that invites the class to centre oneself to Sunday’s lesson.

Welcome each student with your welcoming smile and a big tight hug. After gathering around, say this

statement “ Whoever you are and whatever you are on

life's journey, all are welcome here. We are here for a purpose."

Songs of Gathering

"WE ARE FAMILY"

We are family, we are one joint together in God's grace
We are family, we are partners in sharing love to the world.
... joy... hope... peace...

"God Will Never Let Go of My Hand"

God will never let go my hand 2x
Though the storms may come,
and the wind may blow,
God will never let go my hand.

+Opening Prayer

One: God Most High, we gather to honour and glorify you. Receive our invitation to dwell with us. Enfold us in your presence and fill us again with holy awe and mystery. We are yours, and we claim you as our God. In Christ's Name, Amen.

Getting Ready

Show this Youtube Short Film: CGI Animated Short Film: "Ian" by Fundacion Ian | CGMeetup (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KsjVUJMWzks>).

Share your thoughts about the film. What is the message of the film? How does it relate to life's struggle of the youth today?

Learning Time

Discovering the Biblical Truth. Let the whole class read aloud the text in 1 Peter 5:6-11. Group the learners into 2 and let them discuss and answer the following questions.

Questions to Reflect On

1. What is the text saying about Christians pursuing the life and work of Christ in today's context?
2. How do Christians remain to be steadfast in doing God's mission?
3. How does humility before God brings us to a consciousness that we cannot do anything apart from God?
4. What should we do in staying alert and faithful to God's command?
5. How does Christ restore, support, strengthen, and empower the Church in doing God's mission to the world?

Lessons Learned

We are called by God to be witnesses for Christ Jesus. To witness means:

- a. We need to personally and collectively believe in Christ, whom we witnessed.

- b. We need to be convinced of His life-work and ministries will bring forth God's kingdom that will be experienced both now and things to come, both here and beyond.
- c. We need to act with the urgency that the mission of God is the only cure and hope for the dying world.
- d. We need to be assured that we are not on this journey alone; we are not doing it on our own. We have God, through God's Spirit, we are strong and inspired to move on. We have the assurance that in Christ, we are victorious. And we have each other to join hand in doing the work of Christ.

Knowing these, how do we as a church able to accomplish God's goal that all will experience an abundant and meaningful life? How can we pursue God's intention for God's creatures? Suggest ways how to encourage each other to be persistent in living out their faith in Christ Jesus.

Applying the Lessons Learned

Write your suggestions on ways to encourage each other by making a word scribble art.



Closing Worship

Memory Verse: "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you." 1 Peter 5:6-7

Offertory

All: The author of 1 Peter 5:6 encourages us to humble ourselves before God so that God may exalt us on "the appointed day." Let us bring our offering with humble spirits and generous hearts. In Christ's Name, we pray, Amen.

Giving of our Offerings

+Offering Response “Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow”

Hymnal of Faith Journey,94

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all creatures here below,
Praise Holy Spirit, Comforter,
One God, Triune, whom we adore.

+Thanksgiving Prayer

All: For the bounty we received, we thank you, O God. May our gifts become a blessing to Your people, especially those who are in the darkest time of their lives. Amen.

+Closing Song

“FAMILY OF GOD”

We come together as one; we’re family in the household of God
Praising God to whom we belong, the Source of ev’ry one’s life

Chorus

In the love that we give, in the faith that we live,
Bringing us to a place we called home,
In the care that we show, every joy we bestow,
Joining us in the family of God.

We live together as one, Sisters-brothers in the household of God
Knowing God the head of our home, We live in community. (Cho.)

We serve together as one We’re partners in the household of God
Bringing love, justice and peace We serve with humility (Cho.)

We hope together as one We are heirs in the household of God
Seeing vision of newness of life We hope for new reality (Cho.)

+Prayer of Dedication

One: Continue to be faithful, remain committed, be witnesses for Christ. For the God of all grace has called you to eternal glory through Jesus Christ, and will fulfill, restore, strengthen, and establish you through suffering and struggle. Go forth from this place, empowered by Christ’s love, with Christ’s name on your lips, the wisdom of the Holy Spirit in your mind, God’s love in your hearts, God’s beloved ones always in your sight, and God’s still speaking voice in your ear. Amen.

+Response

“Mambo Sawa, Sawa”

Mambo sawa-sawa)^{2x}
I esu Aki a izini (mambo sawa-sawa)^{3x}
(Things are getting better ^{2x})

If you have Jesus in your hearts (Things are getting better ^{3x})

Youth At Work. Monthly projects that involve the young people of the church.
For May:

- A. Pastor's Appreciation Project. (Most Church Workers will be transferred to their new assignment)
 1. Make an appreciation video for your Church Minister/s.
 2. Volunteer to lend a helping hand in packing your Pastor's things.
 3. Fund Raising for Summer Camp 2020
 4. Samaritan Goods. Collect weekly goods (canned food, clothing, etc) as stock goods ready for emergency purposes.
 5. Monthly Birthday Post. Make a Bulletin Board section for the Monthly Birthday Celebrators.
- B. Develop and maintain an FB Page for your local church CYF.
- C. Create a CYF Prayer Messenger. Post your prayer requests and encourage every member to pray for such requests.
- D. Make a 2 -minute CYF promotional video for Summer Youth Activities
- E. #CYFSSlessoninlife. Post in your Twitter account the lessons you've learned from the session.

Lesson 51: How can the Church strongly uphold its Vision, Mission and Goals?

Day of Pentecost
May 31, 2020

General Concept: The Church united affirms and celebrates the living out and fulfilment of the Vision, Mission and Goals.

Biblical Reference/s: Acts 2:1-21

Age-Level Concepts

- The Church united acclaims and celebrates the realization of its Vision.
- We acclaim and celebrate the carrying out of Christ's mission.
- We acclaim and celebrate the living out and fulfillment of our Goals.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

- Express their feelings when the Church has fulfilled and lived out its Vision, Mission and Goals.
- Show creatively how we can acclaim and celebrate the fulfillment of our Vision, Mission and Goals

Materials: The Holy Bible (preferably the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV]), song chart, offering plate or basket, Used Calendar for Sunday's Phrase and Memory Verse, TV or Laptop - Internet Ready for Video Presentation, and pen or marker.

Biblical Background

The story of the Pentecost event as recorded in the Book of Acts (Acts 2) was about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon God's people in a way and with a power that was never seen before. Christ promised the disciples before his ascension that they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit. But like many of what Christ told them, the disciples did not fully understand what he meant.

Now, ten days after Christ's ascension the disciples gathered together for the Festival of Weeks, called Pentecost in Greek, which celebrated the harvest. At about 9:00 o'clock that morning, there was a sudden whooshing sound like a great wind that filled the house where they were sitting. Next, there appeared to them what Luke, the writer of the Book of Acts, would call "like tongues of fire, distributed and resting on them" (Acts 2:3).

And then, the people began to speak in tongues in a unique way. In the New Testament, speaking in tongues means speaking in unknown "languages" just as it does today. But at Pentecost, these "tongues" are real languages from all over the known world at that time, so that people from every corner of the world can hear the mighty works of God being proclaimed in their own language.

Now, in what way the coming of the Holy Spirit would empower us? First and foremost, the coming of the Holy Spirit upon us would make us experience unity. This does not mean we would suddenly all think alike or do everything the same way. Rather, it means that we would love one another and accept these differences rather than letting them divide us.

If we were totally immersed in the Holy Spirit, we would no longer be divided by issues of language or theology, of economics or politics. If we were united in the Holy Spirit, it would be impossible anymore to speak of rich or poor in the Christian community as well as in the larger society. There would simply be Christian communities filled with people blind to differences in language, in theology, in income or social status.

Secondly, the coming of the Holy Spirit upon us would also make us experience power. Apostle Peter, infamous for his threefold denial of Christ, boldly proclaimed the Gospel of Jesus Christ, no longer afraid of the consequences. The result was the power to convert 3,000 people with one sermon and the faith to spread the Gospel throughout the world. For it is actually the Holy Spirit, not us, that really converts and transforms people's lives.

A third result of the coming of the Holy Spirit upon us is the fulfillment of a vision. Quoting from Prophet Joel, who prophesied of the day in which God's Spirit would come upon the people,

Apostle Peter said that the day has come when the sons and daughters would prophesy, the young would see visions and the old would dream dreams (Acts 2:17). The fulfillment of a vision is perhaps the most remarkable result of the coming of the Holy Spirit.

The Day of Pentecost was so great. But within days or weeks after, we already hear stories of confusion, conflict and strife. Ananias and Sapphira, for instance, sold some land and claimed to have given all of it to the Christian community in order to gain prestige in the eyes of their fellow believers (cf. Acts 5). However, in reality they held some of the money back, which was their right, anyway. Their sin however was in lying. They lied against the Holy Spirit.

Then, we also read that a dispute arose between the Christians who spoke Greek and those who spoke Hebrew (Aramaic). The Greek-speaking Christians felt that favoritism was shown to the widows of the Hebrew-speaking Christians in the daily distribution of food (cf. Acts 6). Thus, there came division and strife over ethnic and language differences.

We can go on cataloguing these disputes in the Early Christian Community, for there were lots of them. This is not however necessary for the point is simply that the Early Christians seem to have failed to live up to the great possibilities revealed to us at Pentecost.

However, it would be wrong to suggest that nothing substantial happened at Pentecost. The Holy Spirit came upon the Christian community with power and in a manner that was never seen before. True, there was division between Gentile and Jewish Christians, like many Christians today. But only the Spirit of God could lead these two kinds of people to worship together in spite of differences.

There were and there are conflicts and divisions in the Church as well as in society, but only the Holy Spirit could open our eyes to see this reality as sinful. The Christian community often fails to have a vision that transcends the mundane self-centeredness of this world, but only the Holy Spirit could have kept the Church from surrendering to the world and from disappearing many years ago.

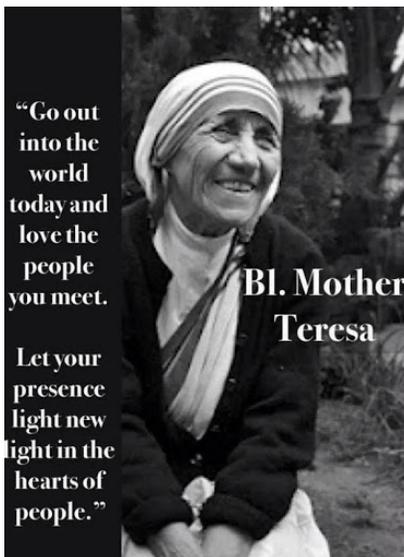
We should not let our disappointments blind us to the many signs of God's presence in the Christian community and in the world around us. We are the Church, and we are justified by grace and not by works of the law. What happened at Pentecost is a sign of what God has done, is doing and will do in and through us to bring about unity, power, and Vision in our hopelessly alienated and fragmented world. It is the Pentecost experience that provides us a sense of direction that would help us overcome every crossroad in our common journey to genuine peace and freedom.

Now, there is still one part of the story that we left out when we were re-telling the story of the Pentecost. While it is true that 3,000 people from every known part of the world joined the Christian community on that day, it is also true that some made a mockery of the faith, claiming that the disciples were drunk on cheap wine.

Sometimes, it is easy to make a mockery and to misunderstand the Church's claim to be empowered by the Holy Spirit. Many would dismiss the Church as nothing but a bunch of hypocrites. It is easy to dismiss a vision as an illusion.

Some would tell us, for instance, that part of the reason why mainline Protestant churches today are declining in membership is that we have been too active in social issues affecting people's lives. They would say that for our own institutional survival and growth, we should do away with our Vision of God's Reign and not to challenge the way things are.

However, if we were to be a true and genuine church of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we cannot give up our Vision of God's Reign. We cannot give up our struggle to help bring about a society that is just, peaceful, humane and free. Thus, it is our hope and Prayer that God's Holy Spirit will continue to descend upon us so that we may be empowered to be more effective instruments of our country's unity and transformation amid today's alienation and fragmentation.



Suggested Lesson Outline

Greeting Time

Post A Phrase that invites the class to centre oneself to Sunday's lesson.

Welcome each student with your great smile and welcoming hug. After gathering around, say this statement "Whoever you are and whatever you are on life's journey, all are welcome here. We are here for a purpose."

Songs of Gathering Celebrate Song

Oh, Jesus, celebrate Jesus. Sing it with an open and a joyful heart.

Oh, Jesus, celebrate Jesus Sing it with an open heart.

Chuga Praise

Hi! You bro/sis ___ Com' on down, don't be ashamed to praise our Lord. We know that you have a lot of this and little of that so com'on let us praise our Lord.

Chuga up! Chugachuga, chuga up!

...down, left., right...

+Opening Prayer

God of the heart, God of the blood and fire and smoke, you have warmed our gathering here this morning with your great gift of the Holy Spirit. May this service of worship and praise be worthy of your presence. May we turn the Spirit's wonder reign in our hearts to fire our lives. May we glow with power and love. May we live out our faith for all who have eyes to see! Amen

Getting Ready

Human Tic Tac Toe, refer to (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-hwDNL0pQ8o>)

1. What have you learned from the game?
2. Describe your feeling upon winning the game or losing the game?
3. Which is essential to you: playing the game or to win the game?

Learning Time

Discovering the Biblical Truth. Let the whole class read aloud the text in Acts 2:1-21. Group the class into two and let them discuss and answer the following questions.

Questions to Reflect On

1. Describe the day of Pentecost? What happened that day?
2. What is so special about this event?
3. What do you think the reason why a large number of people became believers after that event?
4. What lessons can our Church learn and hold on to from the story of the Pentecost?
5. How do we recognize and celebrate God's Spirit's leading and empowerment our Church today?

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Lessons Learned

Assign each group to present a "Sayaw Awit" on the hymn "Christian Unity" highlighting the Holy Spirit's work in uniting the Church and the community where it is located.

"Christian Unity" Hymnal of Faith Journey, 272
Jesus Christ our Lord, we pray, that our life shall be,
Living channels of faith and love, Christian unity,

Chorus:

Bless, O Christ, we humbly pray, this our Christian unity;
So our faith and love shall be following your way.

When the way may seem so hard, and our faith is tried,
May we help each other, Lord, carry each one's load.

Body Movements



May we help each other grow in our faith in you;
May you help us to forgive, and your grace to show.

As we seek, Lord, to reclaim living faith of old,
May the lessons of the past guide us in the tasks.

Our commitment be renewed to your mission, Lord;
Make us channels of unity, following your way.

Presentation by Group

Applying the Lessons Learned

Mirroring Movement. Gather the class in one circle and let them face each other. Allow each learner to make a gesture of commitment (prayer gesture, making a round gesture, heart, etc.) and say one's commitment to be a partner in doing God's mission and be in solidarity with God's people. As the learner do one's action, the whole class will mirror one's action.

Closing Worship

Memory Verse: "All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues[a] as the Spirit enabled them." Acts 2:4

Offertory

The red of our worldly lives, we give to you today
The red tithe of our increase. We give away to God because we love God, as God loved us. We bless, you *O God* Here is our gratitude in treasure. Here is our treasure in gratitude. Bless our gifts with Spirit and with power.

Giving of our Offerings

+Offering Response *"Give of Your Best to the Master"*
 Hymnal of Faith Journey 282

Refrain

*Give of your best to the Master; Give of the strength of your youth.
Clad in salvation's full armor, Join in the battle for truth.*

+Thanksgiving Prayer

With these our earthly treasures, We bless the Great God of Red. We sing praises to your name, O Spirit. O Holy Fire of Love and Glory, You who touch the mountains and

they smoke, We honor you all the days of our lives. *O God*, as you have given yourself away to make us holy, We are blessed by giving ourselves away to you. Amen.

+Closing Song “SEVERAL SPRINGS ONE STREAM”
Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer of Creation,
One Body, one Spirit, united in Your Name,
Looking back the heritage of faithfulness,
Coming together in Your prayer of unity.

One Body, one Spirit in unity of mission,
One calling, one being, proclaiming Christ on earth,
Called to work for love, justice and peace,
Coming together in the prayer of unity.

Chorus

Several springs one stream one God called us together
Sharing the Word, living the Word of God for the world to know
In Christ we're all united bonded by His prayer
Coming together in perfect harmony.

One vision, one mission commissioned to the nation,
One witness of service empowering God's word,
Moving on to our calling and commitment,
Coming together in God's joyous community.

(Chorus 2x)

coda

Called us together in unity of prayer.

+Prayer of Dedication

One: Take our gifts, *O God*, and make them yours.

All: We love you, O God. Our gifts are yours.

One: As you have loved us, Jesus, we take your yoke upon us to learn of you.

All: We love you, Jesus. Teach us your way, your truth and your life.

One: Send us out on fire for you, O Holy Spirit; make us burn with prophecy!

All: We love you, Holy Spirit of red tongues of flame and mighty winds. We will prophesy.

One: And finally, brothers and sisters, may we be one, as Jesus and *the Father* are One.

**All: We love you, O God. We love one another. Make us one, Lord.
Make us yours, Lord. Make us ONE.**

+Response

“Mambo Sawa, Sawa”

Mambo sawa-sawa)^{2x}

I esu Aki a izini (mambo sawa-sawa)^{3x}

(Things are getting better)^{2x}

If you have Jesus in your hearts (Things are getting better)^{3x}

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