**Faith & Friendship – 10/14/18**

**Home Teach Assignment**

**Gospel Reading and Reflection**

Read today’s Gospel (Mark 10: 17-27) and share general reactions to this scripture.

Think of the possessions you have.

Discuss: *“If you were asked by Jesus to give them all to the poor, which possessions would be hardest for you to give away? Why?”*

Jesus tells his disciples how hard it is for the rich to enter the Kingdom of God – like a camel passing through a needle’s eye. But when the disciples ask, “Then who can be saved?” Jesus says that it is impossible for human beings to be saved, but that all things are possible for God.

Discuss: *“What do you think he means by that?”*

Jesus is reminding us that without God, we are nothing. If we refuse to surrender our lives over to God’s care, then there is no way for us to enter the kingdom of God. Everything that we are and everything that we have comes from God.

Discuss: *“Do you see power and wealth as important? If you have a wealth of time, how can you serve others?”*

**Activity 1: Friendship**

Think about a few people whom you consider to be friends and what it is about those people that makes them good friends. Make a list of qualities you think are important in a friend.

Imagine a long line, with *acquaintance* at the left end, and *intimate friend* at the other.

* What many people call friendship is actually a part of a continuum of relationships, starting with acquaintance, moving through friendship and great degrees of self-disclosure and closeness – to intimacy.
* Many people relate intimacy to romantic relationships. But it is more properly used to designate a deep, close relationship with someone of either gender.
* The word acquaintance designates a person we know casually. We do not know much about him or her, and we haven’t revealed much of ourselves to him or her.
* Although it is easy to define the differences between acquaintanceship and friendship, it is often more difficult to define the differences between friendship and intimacy.
* Friendship is a relationship characterized by the following qualities:
  + Firm loyalty
  + Mutual trust
  + Shared vision, experience or history
* Intimacy – or close friendship – builds on friendship. Thus, the first three characteristics are the same. What makes a relationship intimate or close are these two additional qualities:
  + A willingness on the part of both friends to share deep feelings, thoughts, hopes, or fears
  + A shared vulnerability, or acceptance of the risks that sharing the deepest part of oneself can bring
* All relationships do not have intimacy as their goal. Only a few friendships will move to intimate status. Close friendships may even move from intimacy back to simple friendship after a while, particularly as friends move on to other interests or move apart.
* The continuum also extends beyond the ends defined on this chart. To the left of our acquaintances is the world of strangers, that is, the whole human race. Our attitude toward this group is a measure of our character. How we treat people we do not know, no matter where they live, reflects our understanding of and commitment to God’s message.
* To the right of intimacy on the chart is one of the deepest forms of intimacy: solitude or intimacy with self. Many would say that people cannot sustain an intimate friendship without the ability to be intimate with themselves. Also, solitude is the place where one develops an intimacy with God.
* Our relationship with God is reflected in all of our relationships. Our belief that all people are made in the image and likeness of God demands that we treat others respectfully and honor their place in the universe. Our ability to be intimate with God allows us to be in deep relationship with others. It also calls us to a place of

solitude where we can be at one with God.

**Activity 2: Scripture Search**

Read each of the following passages to discover the guidelines they offer for building healthy relationships:

Sirach (Ben Sira) 6:5-17

Romans 12:9-21

1 Cor. 13:4-13

Col. 3:12-17

**Activity 3: Circles of Relationships (15 minutes)**

Complete and discuss the *Circles of Relationships* handout, including the three

questions at the bottom of the page.

**Activity 4: Scripture Connection**

*Read Luke 5:17-26*

Discuss: The man was paralyzed. He was literally unable to do anything to help himself. How have you seen someone else be unable to help themselves and need their friends? Or has this happened to you?

The four friends had so much faith in Jesus that they didn’t care what others thought about them in order to help their friend. How can our fears about what others think about us stop us from helping other people get to know Jesus?

The friends could have given up when they saw the crowd. But they didn’t. They were persistent. How easy would it have been to give up? How have you seen friends or family members who could have given up choose instead to be persistent?

What’s an example of a time you prayed for your friends, asking Jesus to help them? (If you haven't done this, start thinking about a friend you could be praying for this week.)

Sometimes, we have low expectations. We might not invite our friends to church because we expect them to say “No” or not to like it. What would be different if we had the same attitude about getting our friends to church as these friends did about getting their paralyzed friend to Jesus?

Not only did these four men help their friend, they helped the whole crowd see the power of God at work in Jesus!

When you look ahead to this school year, who are some people you know - friends or family members - who could really use your help?

It may not be that you have to knock a hole in someone’s roof to help them. But maybe you do some extra chores around the house without being asked or without expecting a reward just to help “carry” your parent or parents.

Maybe you take time to listen to a friend who is already having a rough year - and it just started! Then pray for them and send them a text letting know you did and that you are here when they need to talk again.

You probably have people in your school, neighborhood and/or family who don’t know Jesus. They probably have driven by a church. They might know some of his followers. But they don’t know Jesus. How can this school year be the year you are so creative in how you help them get to know Jesus, that the story of what you do rivals what these four friends did?

Or maybe, you are that friend! Maybe you didn’t even realize all of the praying and work your friends have been doing to get you to come here and learn about Jesus!

Is this the year that you say “yes” to following Jesus yourself?

Challenge

We can talk about what these friends did and even dream about what we might do. But that’s not the point. God gave us this true story in the Bible to motivate us to action! We need to imitate these four friends and help our family and friends get to Jesus! You have a few different options here:

* Option #1 - Pick one specific action you can do for a family member or friend this week that will really help them and “carry them” this week. Pray, and ask God to help you follow through on it. And if they ask why you did it, tell them you are trying to be more like Jesus. Maybe even tell them about the four friends.
* Option #2 - Pick a friend or family member you can invite to church this week. Then actually invite them! If they say “No,” pray for them and be open to asking again in the future. If they say “Yes,” then make sure you get them to church and thank God for using you with your friend or family member like He used those four friends of the paralyzed man.
* Option #3 - Have the courage to know when to ask for help. Maybe you are like that paralyzed man. You need help and don’t know what to do. Talk to your parents, your small group leader, your priest or your closest friends. Whatever you do, don’t put it off. Talk to someone this week and be able to ask for the help that they would love to give you!

**Confirmation Candidates: Please complete and return the following page to document your participation.**

(Email it to [TColville@ChurchRedeemer.org](mailto:TColville@ChurchRedeemer.org) or bring it to the next session.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**FAITH & FRIENDSHIP – 10/14/18**

**From Activity 1: Friendship**

What qualities are important in a friend?

**From Activity 2: Scripture Search**

What advice on friendship do these passages offer you?

**From Activity 4: Scripture Connection**

When has a friendship had a positive influence on your faith?

What has a friendship had a negative influence on your faith?

When has your faith had a positive influence on a friendship?