

April: Homeless and Incarcerated Lives with a Purpose and Worthy of Forgiveness

Concept

Although some people have made bad choices, they are still to be valued, respected and forgiven.

Objectives

Kindergarten – 5th Grade

- To teach the students that although people are homeless or in prison, they are still valuable. Through our prayers, we can bring them new life just like Jesus gave to the thief crucified next to Him.

6th Grade and Older

We don't have a right to take the life of someone who is incarcerated through capital punishment. Only God can give life and only God can take away life.

Relevant Bible Verses:

“I was in prison and you visited me.” – Matt 25:36

“If you forgive others their transgressions, your heavenly Father will forgive you”. – Matt 6:14

Materials:

All Grades – Prayer Cards: a copy of blank card for each student or Spiritual Bouquet card for each student (attached)

Lesson Plan Opening Prayer: Dear Lord, we thank you for today and for our gift of life. Today I am asking you to bless over all those who are incarcerated and those that are homeless. May they experience Your grace, peace, and strength. We also pray for their families, especially their children. We ask that their guardian angels protect them and bring them closer to you. In Jesus' name, Amen

Discussion Prompts and Questions

Discussion Prompt about the Incarcerated:

- With our birth came free will. Each of us was born with the ability to make choices in life. All of us have made bad choices at some point in our life. Unfortunately, some people have made bad choices in life and are now in prison. Some of those who are incarcerated will spend the rest of their lives in prison. Although these people have made bad choices and are now in prison, they are still valuable children of God. Many of these people have no one to pray for them. God calls each one of us to not only pray for our family and friends, but also for those we do not know. This month I am asking each one of you to pray for the people in the prison. Yes, some of them are murderers, criminals and have done some really bad things, but we are not allowed to judge others. Because of God's Resurrection, the sins of

all, including the incarcerated, can be forgiven. If God can forgive, shouldn't we? Only God knows what is in their hearts and only He can make a judgement of them.

Discussion Questions about the Incarcerated

- How can we help those who are incarcerated and their families?
- Should they be treated differently?
- How do you think their families feel about them being in prison?
- What is something each one of us can do to help them?

Discussion Prompt about the Homeless

- Everything belongs to God. We need to share our gifts. There are many poor in the world. One of the many reasons that violence and criminal acts occur is because of poverty. People are homeless for many different reasons. We will never know all the reasons that people don't have homes. The most important thing we can do for them is to pray for them. Like the incarcerated, many of these people don't have anyone praying for them. Many of those that are homeless also see forgiveness.

Discussion Questions about the Homeless

- How can we help homeless people?
- Should they be treated differently?
- How do you think their families feel about them being homeless?
- What is something each one of us can do to help them?

Activities

All Grades: Prayer Cards and Bookmarks

- Have the students create prayer cards with inspirational quotes or images. A simple, yet powerful, statement to write is "You are Loved." Include a prayer and a small drawing on the card. OR, have the students complete a Spiritual Bouquet. Either of these can be given to the incarcerated or the homeless. Neither the incarcerated nor homeless people should ever be denied dignity.

Lesson Plan Closing Prayer

Glory Be

April Culture of Life Important Dates & Feast Days:

- April 24-30 – National Infertility Awareness Week
- April 30 – Feast of St. Gianna – Patroness of Mothers, Physicians & the Unborn
- Rachel's Vineyard Retreat – A healing retreat for post-abortive women

Spiritual Works of Mercy

Novena for April

Dear Jesus, sometimes people are without homes. Sometimes people are in prison because they have made choices that are not good. Please help me to always remember that even though someone does not have the good things that I have like a home, and that even though someone has made choices that are not good, they are still children created and loved by God. May my prayers help those who

need it to find a home where they are safe. May my prayers help those who have gone to prison to know God's love and to find a way to serve God in their situation. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Corporal Works of Mercy:

Blessings Bags: Homeless and/or Incarcerated

Contact for the Homeless:

- The Respect Life Office near your school or parish to see what needs they have
- A homeless shelter near your school or parish to see what needs the residence has

Contact for Incarcerated:

- The Respect Life Office near your school or parish to see what needs they have

April

Prayer Cards for the Incarcerated and/or Homeless

Spiritual Bouquet Card Templates

<p>Spiritual Bouquet <i>A Gift of Prayer</i> The following prayer has been offered up for you and your intentions.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Please know that you and your family are in our prayers.</p> <p>Blessings, _____</p>	<p>Spiritual Bouquet <i>A Gift of Prayer</i> The following prayer has been offered up for you and your intentions.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Please know that you and your family are in our prayers.</p> <p>Blessings, _____</p>
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Spiritual Bouquet

A Gift of Prayer

The following prayer has been offered
up for you and your intentions.

Please know that you and your family
are in our prayers.

Blessings, _____

Spiritual Bouquet

A Gift of Prayer

The following prayer has been offered
up for you and your intentions.

Please know that you and your family
are in our prayers.

Blessings, _____