

FAITH @ HOME

Week of May 17, 2020

Sixth Sunday of Easter

ADULT AND SMALL CHILD

READ: John 14:15-21

REFLECT: Holidays are some of the most fun times in the year. Friends and family gather from all over to celebrate and enjoy each other's company. There is usually lots of food, and time to relax. But as fun as those times are, they come to an end and we have to say goodbye. The people we have welcomed into our homes and hearts have to return to their homes and lives. We love them, even though they may not be with us until the next time we can see them again. As we read that Jesus is about to leave his followers, we can understand how they feel about him leaving. They loved him so much, they didn't want him to leave, although Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to them. We too may not understand how God works, but because we love God, we can trust God. We can show God our love in every area of our lives - with respect and obedience of our trusted adults, being helpful, and being kind to others.

RESPOND: With the help of a trusted adult, write a letter or email to someone you miss. Have the adult help you send the letter or email off.

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: QUANTRILLA ARD



Quantrilla (Quanny) Ard is a faith-based personal and spiritual development writer who lives in the DC Metro area with her husband Donny and three littles (Quentin, Dylan, and Logan). In addition to being a dedicated wife and mother, she is an entrepreneur, doctoral student, and curator of all things lovely. As a woman on her own quest of shining a light on the shadowy, hidden places in her life, she writes as the PhDMamma about things she knows to be true in hopes to encourage others to do the same. Her spiritual goals and her love for Christ propel her quest to share the spiritual journey with other women- to walk alongside them and encourage them with words, deeds, and wisdom. Quanny believes in the power in collective strength, community and fellowship. You will find her wherever people are sharing stories of triumph.

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ADULT AND ELEMENTARY

READ: Acts 17:22-31

REFLECT: There was a beautiful waterfall a two-mile hike from where I went to college. One year, I had the idea to go hike the trail early in the morning while it was still dark so I could watch the sunrise over the waterfall. My roommate agreed to go with me, and we headed off into the woods with our flashlights at 3:30 in the morning. The hike up to the falls was scarier than enjoyable. Every “SNAP” of a twig and rustle of a bush sparked a fear that bears were going to come eat us at any second. We prayed the whole hike, and about halfway through the Holy Spirit reminded me “I’m with you in the dark, too.” I started looking at the shadows cast by tree limbs differently. Instead of jumping in fear, I noticed the intricate shapes and designs they left on the forest floor. God was here in the dark, and I could choose to see God’s glory rather than be afraid.

RESPOND: Create an obstacle course in your yard or a large room in your home. Choose one family member to walk through the course with a blindfold on. The other family members should help guide them through the course. Take turns so everyone who wants to walk the course can. Remind each other as you walk that God is with us at all times, even when we’re unsure and even when it’s dark.

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: MEGAN WESTRA



Megan is on the pastoral staff team at Transformation City Church in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Her first book, *Born Again and Again*, releases in August with Herald Press. More of her work can be found at meganwestra.com or on Twitter at @mwestramke.

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ADULT AND YOUTH

READ: 1 Peter 3:13-22

REFLECT: In life we face difficulties, some harder than others. Maybe you've lost a loved one or experienced some personal hardship. In this passage, Peter is talking to believers who have experienced hardship in their journey as followers of Jesus. Peter is urging believers to walk in love in the face of difficulty and suffering. This is hard for many of us to do, but we do not gain anything from being rude or mean to people who are mistreating us. Our choice to treat others with dignity and respect allows us to have a distinct difference in our behavior. This is why it's important for us to learn about the life of Jesus and how he responded in the midst of hardship and persecution. Jesus was vindicated after he suffered greatly and Peter wants believers to have that same awareness and knowledge because vindication belongs to the Lord. We as believers can trust that God will fight our battles for us.

RESPOND: We all go through hardship and its important to realize that you aren't alone. With our foundation of faith in Christ and community of believers, we can share our burdens with one another. If you feel comfortable, answer these three questions with your family: What is a hardship you are facing right now? How can people support you in prayer? How can you support others in prayer? Each day this week, pray for every member of your family.

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: FAITTH BROOKS



Faith is the Communication and Programming Director for Legacy Collective. She engages in community organizing and activism. Her passion makes her a relentless spokesperson for racial reconciliation. She is a social media strategist and blogger who writes at Faithbrooks.com.

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ADULT AND ADULT

READ: John 14:15-21

REFLECT: *Love me. Remember me. See me. Know me.* Jesus uses these words to reassure the disciples that although he will be gone from them, he will remain with them. This is the language of being. We are not asked to imitate Jesus; we are instructed to participate in him wholly, with our whole being. John 14:23 reads, “Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.” (NRSV) Let this sink in a little. Jesus insists that the same relationship that he has with God and the Spirit also includes us! Jaime Clark-Soles, a New Testament Professor at the Perkins School of Theology, uses the word “quattrinity” to expand our understanding of the Trinity. The Trinity does not exist outside of us; if we love Christ we are part of the Trinity, a quattrinity that is, of Father, Son, Holy Spirit, and us. This changes everything. If God and Christ have made their home with us, then there is no distance between God and us. Any distance we feel is of our own making. We draw closer to God by participating wholly. “Love me. Remember me. See me. Know me.”

RESPOND: Read John 14 in its entirety. For context, remember that the setting is the Last Supper. Use a study Bible or concordance for additional context and clarity. Consider all the ways “love” is used throughout this chapter. Spend time reflecting on this question: in what ways did I or did I not love today? Resist judging yourself and use your answer as a time of honest self-assessment. End by offering this invocation: *“The Sacred Three / My fortress be / Encircling me / Come and be round / My hearth and my home.”* (Anam Cara and John O’Donohue)

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: JAN BERRY SCHROEDER



Jan is in private practice as a Spiritual Director working with individuals and groups on deepening their faith through contemplation and other spiritual practices. She teaches Education for Ministry (EfM) at her church and consults with churches to build or enrich family ministry programs. A new writer, she is looking forward to launching a blog this year. She lives beside an apple orchard with her husband and rescue dog.

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