



CALLED TO BE SAINTS

SUGGESTED SETTING: A table with pictures of various saints and pictures of “saints” in each person’s life. Encourage participants to bring pictures to the gathering to place on and around the table.

LEADER: We all need super heroes in our life. People/images that encourage us to go beyond: to be daring for the sake of good, to be fearless in taking a positive stand on issues, to sacrifice until it hurts to help meet the needs of the poor, to believe in our own strengths and talents even when we feel weak,and the list could go on. We need heroes as examples of the kind of life to strive for, as common ideals around which a community coheres. Trygve Johnson from Hope College in Holland, Michigan spoke one time about the “heroes of faith” passage in Hebrews. That passage ends with the stirring call, ‘Therefore since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders.....and run with perseverance the race marked out for us.’ (Heb 12:1)

Trygve recalled a troubled time in his own life when he sat in the college chapel early one morning and struggled to pray. As the dawn broke a panorama of stained glass began to glow around him – heroes of faith from Elijah to Mary, from Jesus to Paul to Augustine to Francis to John Wesley. This literally glowing crowd of witnesses buoyed his faith and spurred him on to take the needed slogging steps to his own journey.

PAUSE BRIEFLY: Look and reflect on the pictures of saints and heroes displayed before you. If you are meeting by phone possible you can just call out the name of saint(s)/name of your hero(s).

SONG: Be Exalted (YouTube)

I will give thanks to Thee, O Lord among the people
I will sing praises to Thee among the nations
For Thy steadfast love is great as the heavens
And Thy faithfulness, Thy faithfulness to the clouds.

Be exalted, O God, above the heavens
Let Thy glory be over all the earth
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READER 1:

The saints and heroes in our life are people who have listened to and answered God's call. They model for that the most important part of life is showing in all that we do how much we love God, others and ourselves. Saints follow the call of the Lord and inspire us in way to follow our own call.

SCRIPTURE READING – Isaiah 61:1-2

The Lord has filled me with his Spirit. He has chosen me and sent me....to bring good news to the poor, to heal the broken hearted, to announce release to captives and freedom to those in prison. He has sent me to proclaim that the time has come when the Lord will save his people.

PAUSE to reflect:

What do the words; "He has chosen me and sent me" mean to you personally.

LET US PRAY: ALL

God of all that is good, we ask the help of those men and women who have struggled and stood firm, who loved one another, who worked for justice and peace, who healed the sick and fed the hungry and who followed your word. May we be open to the inspiration and examples they give to us. Make us worthy to be called your saints.

READER 2:

SCRIPTURE READING - Colossians 3: 12-16

You are the people of God. You are God's saints; He loved you and chose you as His own. So then, clothe yourself in compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Be tolerant with one another and forgive one another whenever any of you have a complaint against someone else. You must forgive one another just as the Lord has forgiven you. And to all these qualities add love which binds all things in perfect unity. The peace that Christ gives is to guide you in the decisions you make; for it is to this peace that God has called you together in the one body. And be thankful. Christ's message in all its richness must live in your hearts.

PAUSE to reflect:

What can I learn from the saints and heroes?

Do I know anything about my own patron saint?

Who inspires me toward being a saint?

TIME FOR SHARING TOGETHER

LEADER:

Lord may our lives give glory to you in all that we say and do.
We ask the saints in heaven to pray to God for us and all people.

Take turns reading petitions. ALL respond with: Pray for us.

Saint Ann, example of motherhood....

Holy Mary, mother of God....

Saint Joseph, obedient to God's will....

Saint Elizabeth, patient in waiting....

Saint John the Baptist, forerunner of Jesus....

Saint Francis, lover of nature and animals....

Saint Clare, friend of Francis and model of God's presence in the world....

Saint Augustine, writer and theologian.....

Saint Isadore, lover of the land and farming....

Blessed Mother Teresa of Kolkata, compassionate presence to sick and dying....

Add your own saints and heroes.....

Let us now prayer the words that Jesus taught us....**OUR FATHER...**

OFFER each other the SIGN OF PEACE!

SONG: Now Thank We All Our God – by: Martin Rinkart (YouTube)

Now thank we all our God with heart and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things have done, in whom the world rejoices;
Who from our mother's arms has blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.

Oh, may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,
With ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us;
And keep us in His grace, and guide us when perplexed;

And guide us through all ills in this world, till the next.

All praise and thanks to God the Father now be given,
The Son and Him who reigns with them in highest heaven
The one eternal God, whom earth and heav'n adore;
For thus it was, is now, and shall be evermore.