

CHANGE OF HEART

OUTLINE

Speaker: Mature teen or young adult

Time: Saturday after dinner

Length: 20 minutes

Scripture: Luke 15:11-24

Previous Reflection: Paschal Mystery

Following Reflection: Metanoia

Setting: The participants after having spent the day in a loving and caring environment are beginning to feel more comfortable with each other. The Growth and Ideals reflection invited them to examine their lives as they move forward. The Bible Enthronement offered a tangible sign of God's abiding presence and evoked a feeling of reverence. The Leader of the Weekend shared in their reflection the potential of a life of faith lived by a person willing to share the experience. They are beginning to form a longing for questions to be answered especially as it relates to where they are with God. God is no longer someone standing at the outer edge of their awareness. The presence of God has been brought sharply into focus through the Paschal Mystery reflection, the Wheat Letters, their reflection on incidents of Christ's passion and death and the Passion Presentation. Participants enter into a sacred space in which to encounter God personally and talk about it openly.

Progression: Transformation is beginning, and they can be still filled with doubt and apprehension. They may see others experiencing this Encounter faster or slower than themselves and will need a tangible witness from a fellow peer that can begin to bridge the gap of false piety or unbelief to confidence in seeing with their heart even if they don't fully understand with their mind. There can be a sense of struggle to "let go and let God", but ultimately the need to make a choice to action will be the founding moment of their relationship with God on a deeper and more profound level than they have previously experienced. Hopefully, this will be the moment that they see that they can make their faith their own.

Purpose: The Parable of the Prodigal Son is a primary scriptural example of the Father's unconditional forgiveness and love available to us. This reflection brings the Prodigal story to life for the teens through the personal reflection. The primary theme is that of "turning" away from sin and destruction back to the loving Father. The recognition of sin, or falling from the Father's love, and the "change of heart" which one experiences are equally important. The Father's attitude in the story mirrors God's attitude of complete acceptance in forgiving love and joy and welcome home.

Faith Awareness: The participants see they are not alone. They are beginning to witness unconditional love for God, and their hearts are willing to accept that God loves them, but most likely, they are struggling to wrap their heads around this. It is a very crucial time for them to make a choice to believe in something they cannot see, so as to form a faith that will be everlasting. The essence of this reflection is to help them make a choice to turn toward God.

Response: Make a choice to accept the unconditional love of God.

NOTE: Assistant Spiritual Directors will get the readers for the Scripture reading.

Introduction: Read Script of Prodigal Son (4 people: Speaker, Prayer Partner, etc.)

- I. **Definition:** A Change of Heart is the turning back towards the Father.
- II. Reflect on the story considering your own life experience
 - A. **Where** are you right now in light of the Scripture?
 - B. **Who** can you most identify with? (Pick one)
 1. The prodigal son?
 - a. Prideful
 - b. Selfish (all about me)
 - c. Immediate gratification
 - d. I want it now.
 2. The older son?
 - a. Anger
 - b. Jealousy
 - c. Rage
 - d. Hurtfulness
 - e. Rule follower (Obedient for a purpose)
 - f. Self-righteous
 - g. Stern
 3. Father?
 - a. Unconditional love
 - b. Someone who gives complete forgiveness with no strings attached
 - C. **Why** do you relate to the prodigal son, older son, or the Father?
 - D. **When** did you recognize the need for a change of heart (*Remember: The definition of Change of Heart is turning back towards the Father.*)
 - E. **What** did you do about this change of heart?
 - F. **How** did this change of heart feel?
- III. Conclusion

My story is still unfolding. But I know for certain God seeks out the strays. I am grateful that God doesn't give up His search for me and for you too.