

Taken

Session 2 - Materials:

- Bible, if you don't have one check USCCB.org.
- Device to play a YouTube video
 - Possibly speakers
- Handouts: Scripture Reflection Notes, Chosen Litany
- CRS Lenten Eggs Handout
- CRS Rice Bowl

Greeting and Gathering

Be a welcoming host as guests return. If you don't know who they are be sure to introduce yourself to them. Point out things like the restroom or places to put coats, etc.

Welcome all participants and share how excited you are for this next stage in the journey.

Remind everyone about the Rice Bowl encouraging them to make donations and other offerings.

Reassure them that anything shared in the group will remain confidential, and that everyone is invited to share as much as they feel comfortable sharing.

Explain to them that tonight's session will be about beginning to unpack what it means to be taken, or chosen by God. You will begin with prayer and then open the group to share with one another.

Opening Prayer

Find readers for the reading from Mark and for the prayer.

Mark 1:9-11 (Baptism of Jesus)

Dear Friends,

Let us love one another, for love comes from God.

We are chosen by God; a God who is love.

A God who has loved us through his Son.

We are invited to live in this love.

In this way we are like Jesus.

We are chosen like Jesus.

God's voice speaks to us

You are my beloved, with you I am well pleased.

Let us embrace this love.

Weekly Questions

Present these questions to the group as a weekly check in with one another. Try and keep it to at most 20 minutes.

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Where was I taken today? This week?

Where was I blessed? broken?

Where was I given?

Video

*Following this play the end of the YouTube video from last week. Start it at 5:00. **Remind** everyone that this week's theme is Taken, accepting our chosenness from God.*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6dB4DsEOr4Q&feature=related>

*You might allow for some journaling time.
Invite some time for initial responses and impressions.*

Scripture Reflection

Jeremiah 1:4-8

***Before** beginning ask for two volunteers to read aloud.*

***Tell** participants that this is a time to listen to scripture.*

***Encourage** them to avoid thinking about what the text means and to rather focus on imagining themselves at the table with Jesus, they should focus on the words of the text.*

***Give** everyone the Handout "Scripture reflection notes" and have them answer the questions as they listen along*

***Read** the story twice. Tell the readers that they should pause for **about 2 minutes** between readings (this will feel like a very long time). Cue the second reader when it is time for him/her to start.*

***After** the readings are done allow for a silent reflection time 5 minutes or so.*

Break** the silence by inviting people to share from the scripture reflection or any other thoughts. Not everyone has to share. **Be comfortable with silence.

Discussion

This is different from sharing in that people are invited to respond to one another.

*Encourage everyone to be respectful and open. Keep an eye on time and be sure allow time for the closing prayer. **Read** this reflection to generate conversation:*

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You have a unique role to play in God's story. But this is hard for people to believe, because most people don't even think they're welcome in the world.

If you believe you are chosen, it DOESN'T mean that others aren't chosen.

If you believe you are chosen, God gives you the gift to recognize the chosenness of others. If you believe you are chosen, you can look at people and say, "Hey Brother, hey Sister-- you too are unique in God's eyes," and realize that acknowledging this doesn't take anything away from your own uniqueness. This invites us into a new way of seeing the world. Seeing the chosenness of others encourages us to view the world as God sees it. Understanding the world as God's beloved creation is the root of solidarity. This is an essential component of our Christian faith. Solidarity calls us to acknowledge and defend the rights of all those who are told they are unworthy.

If conversation needs prompting offer these questions:

What is solidarity?

How do you understand solidarity?

What informs how you look at your needs? The needs of others?

What are some social consequences of recognizing the chosenness of others?

As the discussion ends offer this quote from Oscar Romero:

You are prophets in the word.... You have to announce like the prophets – like a prophetic people anointed by the Spirit that anointed Christ – the wonders of God in the World, to encourage the good that is done in the world and also to energetically denounce evil. – *Oscar Romero*

Let everyone choose at least one egg from the CRS Lenten Egg handouts. Invite them to find some way to choose this person in a way that goes beyond pulling their name from a basket. **Remind** everyone to contribute to the CRS rice bowl if they can.

Closing Prayer

Select a leader for the closing prayer.

Handout: "Chosen" Litany

Thank everyone for coming. **Remind** everyone to contribute to the CRS rice bowl if they can. **Make** any announcements about next week, allow for others to make announcements about things they are involved with.

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Chosen Litany

Leader: Loving God, tonight we come together to pray that we may live in greater solidarity, as one chosen people of God, with our families, friends, and local and global communities. We pray that you will help us to be our brothers' and sisters' keepers, wherever they may be.

We will pray a litany together, to remind us that no matter where we are or what we have, we are one human family and need to care for each other. The response is: ***They are your chosen ones.***

All (R): ***They are your chosen ones***

Leader: We pray for those who are hungry, malnourished, and starving... **(R)**

We pray for those whose plates, cabinets, closets are full and overflowing... **(R)**

We pray for those who are thirsty, dehydrated, and poisoned by polluted water... **(R)**

We pray for those who have the freedom to buy bottled water, to take long showers, to flush toilets, wash cars, and water their plants and lawns with clean water... **(R)**

We pray for those who are homeless, living in tent cities, and cardboard boxes... **(R)**

We pray for those who own acres of land, beach houses, and winter getaways... **(R)**

We pray for those who struggle each day wearing worn, torn clothing, shoes made from old tires, and having worked their fingers to the bone in button factories and sweat shops... **(R)**

We pray for those who fill their bureaus and closets with more clothing than they will ever need, and are innocently drawn to a name brand or a label without even questioning where the item came from and who made it... **(R)**

We pray for those who are imprisoned because of unstable parenting, inadequate education, and a lack of after school programs, sports teams, and employment opportunities... imprisoned because of abuse, learning difficulties, teen pregnancy, drug and gang involvement, poverty, and violence... **(R)**

We pray for those who might seem to have it all: family dinners and vacations, private schools, year-round sports teams and camps, internships, management positions... and for those who struggle with anxiety and eating disorders, learning difficulties, academic and work place competition, peer pressure, addictions, and depression... **(R)**

We pray for those targeted, profiled, alienated, shunned, isolated, scapegoated, and tormented because of race, color, religion, sexual orientation, and migration status... **(R)**

We pray for those who are so afraid to open their hearts to a "stranger"... and for those who help others to belong... **(R)**

We pray for those who are sick and without health care, suffering unnecessary agony, dying before the age of 5, dying from minor curable diseases-- parents left grief-stricken, and children orphaned... **(R)**

We pray for those who are healthy because of modern medicine, adequate physician care, dental insurance, access to surgeons, and the newest developments in cancer and HIV treatments... **(R)**

Leader: We offer all these prayers together, in the words Jesus taught us. **All: Our Father...**

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Scripture Reflection notes

Passage:

Where is the setting?

Who are the Characters?

What is the plot?

What is the conflict?

What details strike you?

What do you not like about this passage? Why?

Where do you see yourself in the passage? Who are you in this passage?

How does this passage speak to your own life?

How does this passage speak to your relationship to God?