

FAITH365 OCTOBER SESSION 2018
ZACCHAEUS: WHO and HOW WE ARE CALLED TO SEE

WELCOME:

Call to be in the moment, to be still, to leave the cares of life to the side, if for just a moment.

Take a moment and go around the table and introduce yourself. Who is the teacher you most remember; it could be a teacher from elementary school, high school or college. You can offer a brief explanation of why you remember that teacher.

SONG OF MEDITATION "For Forever" from Dear Evan Hansen

End of May or early June	Feels like we could go on for forever this way, this way
This picture-perfect afternoon we shared	All we see is light for forever
Drive the winding country road	'Cause the sun shines bright for forever
Grab a scoop at À La Mode	Like we'll be alright for forever this way
And then we're there	Two friends on a perfect day
An open field that's framed with trees	And there he goes
We pick a spot and shoot the breeze	Racing toward the tallest tree
Like buddies do	From far across the yellow field I hear
Quoting songs by our favorite bands	him calling, "follow me" there we go
Telling jokes no one understands	Wondering how the world might look
Except us two	from up so high
And we talk and take in the view	One foot after the other
All we see is sky for forever	One branch then to another
We let the world pass by for forever	I climb higher and higher
Feels like we could go on for forever this way	I climb 'til the entire
Two friends on a perfect day	Sun shines on my face
We walk a while and talk about	And I suddenly feel the branch give way
The things we'll do when we get out of school	I'm on the ground
Bike the Appalachian trail or	My arm goes numb
Write a book or learn to sail	I look around
Wouldn't that be cool?	And I see him come to get me
There's nothing that we can't discuss	He's come to get me
Like girls we wish would notice us but never do	And everything's okay
He looks around and says to me	All we see is sky for forever
"There's nowhere else I'd rather be"	We let the world pass by for forever
And I say, "me too"	Buddy, you and I for forever this way, this way
And we talk and take in the view	All we see is light
We just talk and take in the view	'Cause the sun burns bright
All we see is sky for forever	We could be alright for forever this way
We let the world pass by for forever	Two friends
	True friends
	On a perfect day

FOCUS

How do I see others, and what assumptions do I make about people? It seems in the times we live in today, we know “about people” or what we know is reduced to a sound bite or one experience.

For the follower of Jesus, the ongoing challenge is how we look at the world to find his presence; and where we might be surprised to find him. *Discipleship calls us to openness, realizing that people are much more than they seem. And often that call involves a risk to discover that in others and in ourselves.*

The song we heard is from a musical called “Dear Evan Hansen.” It tells the story of a high school senior with severe social anxiety, with an inability to connect with others. He tells a lie that he was a friend to a young man who died, and soon Evan Hansen becomes the accepted person he longs to be. The song we heard is a story he makes up; but it is his vision of the person he wishes he could be. We will also listen to the story of Zacchaeus, a man insecure because of his height and his job as tax collector. He climbs a tree to see Jesus, and discovers Jesus sees something in him that others don’t.

In an article about tree climbing, Harv Teitelbaum says *tree climbing opens up a new geography. It’s a whole new place of exploration and adventure. Instead of having to travel hundreds and hundreds of miles from where you live, you can just go up 50 feet and you’re having a brand new adventure. The view . . . can be life changing for some people.*

Reminders:

PARTICIPATE Everyone has some wisdom; while no one is forced to share, sometimes the comment you think is not profound actually is the one that many remember.

BE PRESENT Make every effort to leave problems and things you need to do at the door; please turn off or silence cell phones.

BE COMFORTABLE WITH SILENCE Don't be afraid if there is silence or feel the need to say something –unless you want to—just because no one is speaking.

BE GENTLE ABOUT DIFFERENCES We may see things differently, but we are on the path together.

OUR AGENDA IS PEACE NOT POLITICS Be cautious about injecting political agenda that is not central to the conversation. No bashing of individuals, but respect always for those with whom we do not agree.

We listen now to the reading:

From the Gospel of Luke 19:1-10

He came to Jericho and intended to pass through the town. Now a man there named Zacchaeus, who was a chief tax collector and also a wealthy man, was seeking to see who Jesus was; but he could not see him because of the crowd, for he was short in stature. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree in order to see Jesus, who was about to pass that way. When he reached the place, Jesus looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down quickly, for today I must stay at your house." And he came down quickly and received him with joy. When they all saw this, they began to grumble, saying, "He has gone to stay at the house of a sinner." But Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, "Behold, half of my possessions, Lord, I shall give to the poor, and if I have extorted anything from anyone I shall repay it four times over." And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house because this man too is a descendant of Abraham. For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save what was lost."

WHAT DID I HEAR?

WHAT DO I THINK IT MEANS?

WHAT CHALLENGE DOES IT OFFER?

FILM found on YouTube: A Tough Math Teacher's Tender Heart of Gold. The video was posted by CBS Sunday Morning

This is a news story from four years ago. It is the story about a math teacher –Jim Connor—who teaches at a Catholic boys high school in California. The experience the students have of Jim Connor in the class room is one thing –until one of the students has an experience that causes them to see Jim in a different light

FOR DISCUSSION

What word, image or phrase stood out for you in the video?

The reporter concluded, “sometimes you think you’re learning calculus, but the real lesson is life.” Have you ever had a teacher who taught you more than the information you needed for a test?

Reflect on the video as a story about calling—Jim’s calling from God. How do you think he discovered his call? Have you had an experience in which you realized God was calling you to something that would surprise others—or surprised yourself? Do you think Jim’s solitude was a catalyst for his calling?

Have you had an experience of a person that surprised you, when you realized there was more to him or her than you thought? Jim had a tough side and a soft side. Have you experience that in someone or in yourself.

“Love” did not come to mind when any of the students though about Jim Connor. Who comes to mind when you think of love?

As you look at your life, what is the most valuable lesson you have learned?

Who has taught you, the meaning of discipleship; what it means to live the Catholic faith?

If someone was to ask you, “how does Jesus look at us?” what would your answer be? What prevents you from seeing others as Jesus does; what is it that helps you.

What words would you use for the qualities of being a disciple? Jim Connor was described as tough and calming. Are those words you would use to talk about discipleship?

We live in a very polarized time. What prevents us from seeing people as more than a sound bite or one moment? What part does your faith play in the way you interact with or talk about people with whom you feel you have nothing in common?

PRAYER AND RESPONSE

Each time we meet, we will bring to our prayer the challenges we face and the blessings for which we are grateful. So we will spend a few moments now in quiet. And as you feel moved, share either a challenge or blessing you would like to bring to prayer (or both.)

THE LORD'S PRAYER

From the Gospel of Matthew 16: 13-20

When Jesus went into the region of Caesarea Philippi he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” They replied, “Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?— Simon Peter said in reply, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” Jesus said to him in reply, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood* has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father. And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” Then he strictly ordered his disciples to tell no one that he was the Messiah.

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