

ARCHDIOCESAN-WIDE RETREAT

CHRIST THE KING - CHRISTMAS



Participant Guide

Each week, these guides are meant to be used by individuals and groups to launch from the Sunday homilies during the archdiocesan retreat into prayerful reflection and dialogue. Take this guide to a holy hour, a dinner conversation with your children, or your regular small group as food for reflection and conversation, all based on the previous Sunday's homily.

WEEK 4: RESCUED

"For freedom, Christ has set us free." Galatians 5:1

"A thief comes to steal, slaughter, and destroy. I came that they might have life and have it more abundantly." John 10:10

The greatest news that has ever been uttered is that when we were lost in sin, God did not abandon us to our captivity. Rather, the entire story of salvation history, from Genesis through Revelation, is about God's unfolding plan to get his world back.

Why did God become man? Why is Jesus on the Cross? What is he trying to do?

We should see in the Incarnation the invasion of the kingdom of darkness by the kingdom of light. In the baby, lying in the manger, is the visible announcement of our rescuing from captivity. We should see there, in the Christ child, a hope that our lives are not futile and our captivity not inevitable. God has come to contend with those who would keep us in bondage...and to bring us home.

We should see in the Cross, not just a victim, but an image for how God has come to rescue his children. *"While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."* Romans 5:8

Read

Consider beginning your time of prayer or conversation with reading, prayer and discussion around the below passages from the Bible and the Catechism of the Catholic Church. With the Scripture, you can use the ancient method of *Lectio Divina*.

- » John 1:1-18
- » Isaiah 53:1-12
- » Hebrews 1:1-6
- » CCC 430-455



Reflect and Write

- » How does my understanding of the Cross and Resurrection of Jesus change when I think of this as what he has done to come rescue me? How does that word change how I relate to what Jesus came to do?
- » How does the Story of Jesus as a warrior coming to rescue you change how you see Him?
- » Understanding that Jesus didn't only do this for you, does the Biblical Story change how you see and treat others?

Discuss

- » What was your number one takeaway from the homily on "Rescued" this week? What question or wondering did you still have after the homily?
- » What impact is this archdiocesan-wide retreat beginning to have on your life?
- » When you hear about "the love of God," do you hear a cliché? Or do those words have a deeper meaning for you?
- » Do you genuinely believe that you're "worth the trouble?" Does the Cross change the way you perceive your value to God?

Pray

Jesus, I'm sorry for all the times I have believed the enemy's lies that you are not a good Father and that you don't love me. Please forgive me for all my sins. Thank you for sending Jesus to rescue me from sin, death, hell and Satan. I choose this day to place your Son, Jesus, at the center of my life.

And so, today, here and now, I surrender to you, Jesus, and desire your lordship over every area of my life. I ask you now to flood my soul with the gift of the Holy Spirit. Help me to know my true identity as a beloved son/daughter. Help me to know that I matter and that I am worth dying for. Recreate me to be the person you destined me to be. Please use me as an instrument in your merciful hands to rescue others and to help recreate this world that you so love. Amen.

Our Lady of Guadalupe, pray for us.

Go Deeper

- » Easter Proclamation - "Exsultet" - song (can be listened to online)
- » The Search - episode five - "Who is Jesus?" - Formed.org

