



Tuesday of Respect Life Week

Life is a Gift

Grades 4-6

Theme: Do Unto Others/Putting the Needs of Others First

Goal: It is natural to want the very best things for ourselves. The Gospel, however, asks each of us to put the needs of others before our own. Students will explore the gift of life learning that generosity and selflessness are integral to living a Christian life.

Materials: Bible
Make-A-Wish Granted ([video link](#))
Best Commercial Ever ([video link](#))
Kindness Boomerang ([video link](#))

Scripture: Story of the Crucifixion (John 19:17-37)

The greatest example of self-sacrificing love and selflessness in the history of the world is the death of Jesus on the cross in reparation for the sins of each person in the entire world.

Take a few minutes to talk about the crucifixion story. Point to the crucifix in your classroom and read the story, from the Gospel of John, aloud. Ask students to reflect for a few minutes on what it must have been like for the creator of the entire universe to allow himself to be killed in such a barbaric way by people he could have so easily stopped.

Questions for Discussion

Why did Jesus choose to die as he did?

Why didn't he stop his aggressors or show his might rather than succumb in humility?

What did Jesus gain for us through his death?

How grateful are we that Jesus died for us?

How do we show it?

What does it mean in our daily lives?

What does self-sacrificing love mean? Have you ever seen any other examples of it?

Must it always include giving your life? Or can it include giving parts of yourself?

Videos: These video clips have been chosen because they illustrate self-sacrificing love for others in ways that are much smaller than Jesus' death on the cross, but they still illustrate the amazing good that comes when we put the needs of others before our own. As students watch the videos, talk about how difficult it can be to put the needs of others first, but there are amazing rewards to them and us when we do.

Make-A-Wish Granted ([video link](#))

Questions for Discussion

Who is the girl who asks for a wish?

Why is she being granted a wish?
What does she ask for?
What difference does it make to the people she serves?
What difference does it make to her?

Best Commercial Ever ([video link](#))
Kindness Boomerang ([video link](#))

Questions for Discussion

Why is doing good contagious?
Why do some people need a push in order to choose to be selfless while others seem to do it naturally?
Do small acts of kindness really have a great effect on the world? Why or why not?
Are there other people you can think of who have practiced small acts of kindness and have created massive changes?

Activity: Have each student make a fingerprint. Discuss how every single person has a unique fingerprint. Have them compare fingerprints with other classmates. Ask: *“If God took the time to design the invisible lines of our fingers to be totally unique, how much more unique and special are our hearts?”* Discuss how each of us has a unique love to give the world. The world needs our love and no one can give love in the way we can. Your love - just like your fingerprint- is unrepeatable and unique. Have the students write on the page around their fingerprints special ways only they can love.

Prayer:

*Bless my soul, O God, and grace it with kindness.
Deliver me from harsh judgment and careless speech.*

*Fill my heart with love for you and for my neighbor,
that all my words and actions shine with joy and comfort,
care, and understanding.*

Make kindness the backdrop of my life.

Amen.

Lesson adapted from the plans on the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Office of Life, Justice and Peace website.