



Virtues

Family Devotion Guide

Share An Opportunity Philippines, Inc.

July 2021

CONTENTS

HOW TO USE	4
VIRTUES	
Patience	6
Courage	8
Thankfulness	10
Assertiveness	12
Generosity	14
Helpfulness	16
Creativity	18
Orderliness	20
Cleanliness	22
Confidence	24
Service	26
Responsibility	28
Reliability	30
Peacefulness	32
Justice	35
Idealism	37
Enthusiasm	39
Humility	41
Forgiveness	43
Obedience	46
Loyalty	48
Moderation	50
Gentleness	52
Unity	55
Tact	57
Joyfulness	59

Compassion.....	61
Flexibility.....	63
Consideration.....	65
Excellence.....	67
Purposefulness.....	69
Determination.....	71
Detachment.....	73
Respect.....	75
Mercy.....	77
Reverence.....	79
Trust.....	81
Kindness.....	83
Courtesy.....	85
Love.....	87
Honor.....	89
Faithfulness.....	91
Prayerfulness.....	93
Friendliness.....	95
Self-Discipline.....	97
Honesty.....	99
Modesty.....	101
Hope.....	103
Faith.....	105
Tolerance.....	108
Humor.....	110
Simplicity.....	112
SOURCES.....	114

HOW TO USE

The flow of the family devotion time follows a rhythm- **R.E.A.P** (Ready, Examine& Engage, Affirm & Act, Put together & Pray). We wish that as your family gets into a regular time of focused conversation and sow seeds of God's words and affirmation, you will **reap** life-giving fruits that will nourish and sustain your family as you desire to be a blessing to many.

Ready

This is the starting posture. Members are invited to be present (literally and figuratively) and to be prepared to give and receive. The leader's role is to help members to transition from their usual or daily chores to this special family time.

Before the Meeting: Go through the session guide ahead of time. Familiarize yourself with the activity flow and content. Study further if some concepts or terms are unfamiliar to you. Seek help from others if needed. Pray for the family time that it will be a venue for encouragement and that God will especially meet you where you are.

During the Meeting: Open each session with a prayer (your own or use the suggested prayer. Use the questions (if any) to help members connect. Ask for volunteers or go in a round to keep the discussion going. Be creative and sensitive. Feel free to modify the activity or questions to adapt to the relevant needs/situations of your family members.

Examine & Engage

Each week, one virtue will be the focus of reflection and discussion. This section introduces the topic and contains the main input or teaching content.

The leader facilitates the activity or the discussion through the given questions, giving space for each family member to participate and interact with each other. The leader may also request or designate other members to co-lead or co-facilitate with him/her.

The key in this section is to ensure that the members understood what that virtue means and how it can be practiced. The facilitator may expand or re-iterate important principles and may also add relevant details when needed.

Affirm & Act

This portion helps members to think of relevant actions (behavioral changes) they need to do if they are to nurture the virtues. The facilitator should encourage the members to share practical, and down-to-earth applications of the principles learned. The family members will also affirm their potential and intent to grow as they make positive declarations of who they are becoming by the grace of God.

Put Together & Pray

In this section, the members are given space to:

Name or identify the key takeaways – This part helps members capture and articulate the most significant lesson, insight, feelings, or thoughts they have. It also provides an avenue for a deeper understanding of others through listening. The facilitator gives the members the space to express their thoughts candidly. Members are encouraged to actively listen and receive what is being shared with respect.

Speak blessing or wish for each family member- Each member will be given time to declare a blessing or a wish to each member of the household. This is a tangible/audible declaration of what one wishes to be received, to grow, or to be experienced by each family member.

The wish or spoken blessing can be about a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to the topic discussed. Starting from the youngest of the family, each will take a turn in saying their wish or blessing. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest in the family has been blessed.

When everyone has given and received the spoken blessing, a parent will close the session in prayer by reading aloud the prayer written on the guide.

*As the rain and the snow
come down from heaven,
and do not return to it
without watering the earth
and making it bud and flourish,
so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater,
¹¹ so is my word that goes out from my mouth:
It will not return to me empty,
but will accomplish what I desire
and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.*

Isaiah 55:10-11 (NIV)

PATIENCE

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our loving Father, thank you for your patience though we often fail you. Teach us to learn from you and to be patient with each other. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Read the following Bible verse:

“Be patient... See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains.” (James 5:7)

Patience means waiting. The farmer waits for the seeds to grow, he waits for the rains to come, he waits for the right time to harvest the crops. He waits for a long time. After planting the seeds, many days will pass before sprouts come out of the ground. Even though there are days that seem like nothing is happening, he patiently waits, trusting that something is happening, and in the end, the time for harvest will come.

Patience is quiet hope and expectation based on trust that, in the end, everything will be alright. It means accepting that you have no control over some things or over someone else. Patience is persevering — sticking with something for as long as it takes to finish it.

Being patient with others or with yourself means accepting mistakes or being gentle because we are all works in progress. God is not finished with us yet. We patiently wait for His good work to be completed in us. *“And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion on the day of Jesus Christ.” (Philippians 1:6)*

What does it mean for you to be patient in your daily life?

How do you show patience to others or to yourself?

Act and Affirm

Recall times when your family members exhibited patience. Affirm each other using the sample sentences below.

- I appreciate you for being patient when _____.
- Thank you for being patient with me when I am _____.

Affirm this truth together:

“We are patient. We are gentle with others and ourselves when mistakes are made. We wait and trust God that all will be well.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What is one thing (lesson, truth, or thought) you will carry with you in the coming week?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *"I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude)."*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

"We thank you Lord for each member of this household. Please continue to bless and keep us. Help us to grow in patience and in love each day. Enable us to choose to walk in your ways. Amen."

COURAGE

Ready

Ask: What has encouraged or discouraged them this week?

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Father, we thank you for your deep care for us. Thank you that we can come together as a family. Open our hearts and minds to you and to one another. Teach us your ways. Amen.”

Engage and Examine

Ask: What do you consider the most courageous thing or decision you have ever done? (Let each member share briefly.)

From our sharing, how do you understand what courage is? (We will hear some responses.)

To learn more about this virtue, let us hear a story of a young man from Mindanao. (Read or ask someone to read aloud).

One doesn't have to be a health worker to do their part in saving lives during a pandemic. **Abdul Rauf Lumabao**, 20, volunteers with his friends to man the checkpoint in their barangay (village) in Cotabato City. Their mission: to meticulously check the quarantine passes of everyone passing through their barangay. “This is my way of helping the government... But I’m extremely careful. My neighbours’ well-being is crucial for the overall health of the barangay,” he said.

Rauf has always been a leader in his community. At a young age, he has dedicated himself to becoming a force for change in the region. Even when he's at home, Rauf helps young people in his community. To encourage discussions on COVID-19 and fight fake news, he uses U-Report, a youth engagement tool of UNICEF where young people can get and share information on relevant issues.

“Young people have to take this situation seriously. We should instead use the power of social media to challenge stigma, share positivity and make sure that messages about health tips get through. We need to inspire and drive action among the youth while in home quarantine,” he said.

How is courage displayed in Abdul’s story?

What do you like or not like about his actions?

Key points:

- Courage is personal bravery in the face of fear. It is doing what needs to be done even when it is hard or scary. Courage is going ahead even when you feel like giving up or quitting. Sometimes, courage is recognizing a danger and standing firm. It doesn’t mean taking unnecessary chances just to look brave.

- Courage is needed in trying new things, in facing difficult situations, and in picking yourself up after a mistake and trying again. It is doing what you know is right, even if people laugh or call you names.
- Courage is a quality of the heart. Courage comes from what you feel in your heart rather than what you think. It comes from knowing yourself and knowing deep down that you can and should do something.

Affirm and Act

Courage is not the absence of fear. Fear is not necessarily a bad emotion though. Fear that cripples you from doing what is right and just is what is not good and healthy. Courage comes from knowing that God is there to help and that you can count on God always.

Is there a situation or aspect in your life or our family life where you/we need courage right now?

How can we practice courage in this situation or aspect of our family life? (Example: You did something you are sorry for, like failing to do something your mother asked you to. How can you show courage in this situation?) We will hear each one share.

The Bible has important truths to say about courage and fear. Let us take this verse to heart:

Read this verse in unison.

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.” Joshua 1:9 (NIV)

Put together & Pray

Ask: What is one thing (lesson, truth, thought) you will carry with you in the coming week?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: “*I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).*”

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Our loving God, we praise you for what you have taught us today. Lord, we pray for your strength and grace to enable us to face challenges in our life with great courage and faith. Amen.”

THANKFULNESS

Ready

Ask: How was your week? Share some highlights of your past week.

What are you most thankful for right now?

Engage and Examine

Ask: Recall an experience you had when you helped someone or gave him/her a gift and he/she did not even say “Thank you”. How did you feel?

Next, recall an experience when someone helped you or gave you a gift. How did you feel?

Read the following descriptions about thankfulness or gratitude. Which one do you like best? Why?

- Thankfulness is about recognizing the many gifts we receive every day.
- Thankfulness is being grateful for what we already have.
- To be thankful is to have a sense of wonder about the beauty of this world and to welcome all of life as a gift.
- Gratitude is a loving and thankful response toward God for his presence with us and within this world.

Affirm and Act

Let us exercise thankfulness. Choose at least two suggested actions from the list below:

1. Give 5 things that you have that you are thankful for.
2. Name 5 persons in your life that you are thankful for.
3. Recall 5 events in your life that you are thankful for.
4. Give 5 ordinary little things that you usually overlook or disregard that you are thankful for.
5. Name 5 things that you are thankful to God for.

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What is one word or phrase that expresses how you feel now?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: “I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).”

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Thank you our loving God for your goodness and grace. Lord, help us to overflow with thankfulness for all the blessings you generously give. May we see what we have more than what we lack. Amen.”

ASSERTIVENESS

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our loving Father, thank you for keeping us as a family and for your faithfulness to us.
Teach us to love each other more as you love us. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Read the three definitions below and ask each family member which of the three describes them most.

1. Passive: not standing up for yourself or expressing wants or needs
2. Aggressive: hurting others’ bodies or feelings to express yourself or get what you want or need
3. Assertive: standing up for yourself or expressing yourself without hurting others’ bodies or feelings

What is assertiveness?

Being assertive means being positive and confident. It begins by being aware that you are created and valued by God. It is knowing that you deserve respect.

Without assertiveness, we would be passive, allowing others to bully us or lead us into trouble. We would have a hard time saying no. We would be afraid to tell if someone is hurting us. Without assertiveness, we might be too aggressive, bullying, fighting or trying to control others. When we are assertive, others respect us and we respect others. We stand up for what is right.

When you are assertive, you are your own leader. You stand up and speak out. You don’t accept unfair or hurtful treatment. You set boundaries about what you will and will not do, and get help when you need it. You share your true feelings – tactfully. You express your one-of-a-kind ideas, opinions and talents. You make a difference in the world in your own special way.

Affirm and Act

Let us practice assertiveness. Ask each family member to choose **ONE** from the suggested actions below.

- Freely express your thoughts and feelings about your family while being respectful. (Example: “I think we need to be more orderly in our house.”)
- Respectfully express what you don’t like other members of the family do to you. (Example: “I don’t like it when you’re being bossy to me.”)
- Ask for what you want or need while being respectful. (Example: “I want to go out with my friends this weekend but only if you will allow me.”)

Assertiveness begins by being aware that you are created and valued by God. Let us read Psalm 139:13-16 in unison and affirm this truth.

*For you created my inmost being;
you knit me together in my mother's womb.
I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
your works are wonderful, I know that full well.
My frame was not hidden from you
when I was made in the secret place,
when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.
Your eyes saw my unformed body;
all the days ordained for me were written in your book
before one of them came to be.*

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What is one thing (lesson, truth, thought) you will carry with you in the coming weeks?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *"I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude)."*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

"We thank you Lord that we are valuable to you. Help us to be confident and wise. Give us grace to know how to assert ourselves in a loving and truthful way. Amen."

GENEROSITY

Ready

Name three ‘blessings’ you have received this week.

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our loving Father, thank you for your generous love and for the grace you freely give us each day. Teach us your ways and help us walk in your truth. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Is generosity for everyone or only for those who have money? (Let some members share.)

Jesus, in the gospel of Luke, has something important to say on this.

Read: Luke 21:1-4 (ESV)

Jesus looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the offering box, and he saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins. And he said, “Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them. For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on.”

What do you think is Jesus’ answer to our question earlier whether generosity is for everyone or only for a selected few? What does this tell us about giving?

Generosity is a quality of the spirit. It is not about the amount or the frequency of giving. Generosity is an overflow, an affirmation that you are a recipient of grace, of sustenance, of life.

Generosity is a choice we all can make. We can be generous with our time, our homes, our talents, and other resources. It is not about how much you have or don’t have. Generosity starts with what you have in your hands.

Generosity is not merely about giving. Jesus affirmed the sacrificial giving of the widow. The manner or attitude by which we give matters a lot.

Generosity is giving and sharing. It is giving freely because you want to, not with the idea of receiving attention, a reward, or a gift in return.

Affirm and Act

How have you seen generosity at work in our family? in our community?

Name ONE act of generosity you will do this coming week.

Say this together:

“By the grace of God, we are generous. We look for opportunities to give and to share. We give freely, fully, and joyfully.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask each one to complete the statement:

Generosity is _____.

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *"I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude)."*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

"Our gracious Father, we praise you for your generous love for us. Thank you for all the people who are instruments of your blessing. We pray that you bless and preserve them. We also ask that you open our hearts and hands to freely give to others. Amen"

HELPFULNESS

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our gracious Lord, you are our ever-present help in times of trouble. Thank you for the many ways that you show your love to us. May we be more aware of your loving presence around us today. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Agree or Disagree? Read the statements below. Discuss as a group why you agree or disagree with each statement.

1. Helpfulness is being of service to someone.
2. Helpfulness is doing what other people want.
3. Helpfulness is doing something that others cannot do for themselves.
4. When you notice someone who needs your help, wait for them to ask you.
5. When someone doesn't want your help, insist on helping him or her.
6. When you need help, wait for others to notice your need before asking for help.
7. Help others first before you help yourself.

Take turns in reading the paragraphs below.

Helpfulness is being of service to someone. When you are being helpful, you do useful things that make a difference. Helpfulness can be doing something that others cannot do for themselves, things they don't have the time to do or just little things that make life easier.

Helpfulness is not always doing what other people want. This is just pleasing people. What people want may not be useful or good for them. Helpfulness is giving people what they need, not always what they want. When people ask for your help, it's important to decide for yourself if what they ask is really good for them.

You practice helpfulness by noticing what people need. Look for opportunities to do a service for others. You don't wait for people to ask for help. You notice what they need and you just do it.

There are times when you feel helpless. That is a good time to ask for help from others. It is important to ask others for help when you need it. And remember, you can always ask God.

People (including you) need all kinds of things. Sometimes they need physical help, such as carrying heavy things, or setting the table, or cleaning the house. They also need hugs, understanding, and appreciation. Sometimes the best help in the world is a listening ear.

Affirm and Act

Affirm each other by completing this sentence:

“I affirm you for being helpful to me (or to others) in _____.”

Ask each other: “How can I help you?” Then answer it by completing this sentence:

“I need help in _____.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What has become clear to you today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: “*I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).*”

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Almighty God, without you we are helpless. Thank you for sustaining us in your love and power. Teach us to help each other with the love that comes from you. Amen.”

CREATIVITY

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our gracious Lord, thank you for your love and mercy to our family. Teach us to honor you in our home today. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Creativity Game: Get a common object in your house (e.g. a pencil) and tell everyone to think of an alternative use for that object (e.g. “This can be used as a barbecue stick.”). Pass around the object while each family member gives his/her answer.

Discuss:

Creativity is the power of imagination. It is discovering your own special talents. Dare to see things in new ways to solve problems. With your creativity, you can bring something new into the world.

You are practicing creativity when you:

- Discover your gifts
- Use knowledge and training to develop these gifts
- Think of new ways to make things work better
- Use your imagination
- Take time for dreaming
- Do things in your own creative way

Affirm and Act

How have you seen creativity at work in our family? Name a particular time or example.

Each of us is unique. We have different gifts. We need each other. Ask help from each other by completing this sentence: “I need help in being creative in _____.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What did you like most in our family discussion today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: “*I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).*”

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Almighty God, this world is filled with your creative wisdom and love. May we reflect your creativity in our lives and bring glory to your name. Amen.”

ORDERLINESS

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our loving Father, thank you for this day and this time you’ve given us to learn from each other. May you grant us a spirit of unity and love. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Ask each family member the questions below.

- Do you collect things that have little or no use?
- Do you have a place for everything you own?
- Do you put things away after using them?
- Do your clothes and appearance let people know you respect the way God made you?
- Do you feel that your life is in a mess?

Points to consider:

- Orderliness is being neat and living with a sense of harmony. It is having a place for the things you use and keeping them there so that you can use them whenever you need to.
- Orderliness means being organized. It is planning something so that it works, staying on track, and doing something step by step instead of going in circles.
- Orderliness makes our life more effective.
- Orderliness is more than organizing our stuff. Every area of our life can be in order: our relationships, our priorities, our possessions, time, and responsibilities.
- God is a God of order. When you appreciate the order of God’s creation, you can see the beauty and harmony of all living things.

Affirm and Act

Commit to each other by completing these sentences:

“I commit to practicing orderliness by _____.”

“We commit to practicing orderliness by _____.”

Make this declaration:

“We live this day with order. We do things step by step. We create beauty and harmony in our home.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What did you appreciate most in our family discussion today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: “*I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).*”

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Almighty God, you created this world with order and beauty. Teach us to reflect your character by practicing orderliness in our lives. Please continue to order our steps and strengthen us each day. Amen.”

CLEANLINESS

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our gracious Lord, we thank you for this time that we can spend together as a family. Teach us to honor you in our home today. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Ask: How do you rate yourself in the different aspects of cleanliness as described below? Use any of the following descriptions: Excellent; Very Good; Good; Fair; Needs Improvement

Cleanliness means...

- washing often, keeping your body clean and wearing clean clothes
- doing your share to help your family keep your home and surroundings clean
- keeping your thoughts on things which are good for you
- avoiding putting anything in your body which could harm you
- using clean language

Affirm and Act

Name areas in your life that you want to continue ‘to make clean’.

Make a simple plan or to-do list of how you will practice cleanliness in the weeks to come.

Share this briefly.

Say this together:

“I keep my body and my heart clean. I put my things and my life in order. I ask God to help me clean up any mistake.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What struck you the most today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic.

Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *“I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).”*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.”

CONFIDENCE

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our gracious Lord, thank you for this day that we can meet as a family. Teach us to be open and honest to each other and to listen with love. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Answer the questions below with:

(i) not confident, (ii) somewhat confident, (iii) confident, or (iv) very confident.

1. How confident are you in learning a new skill?
2. How confident are you in making new friends?
3. How confident are you in facing problems or difficulties?
4. How confident are you that your family loves you and cares for you?
5. How confident are you that God loves you and cares for you?

Discuss:

Confidence is being certain and a feeling of assurance. It comes from knowing and trusting someone.

When you are confident in others, you rely on them and trust them. Confidence in God is a sense of trust that your Creator loves you and watches over you as you go through life.

Self-confidence means you trust yourself. You can do things without doubts holding you back. You know your strengths and weaknesses.

You are practicing confidence when you:

- Know you are worthwhile and feel sure of yourself
- Don't let fear, doubt, or worry stop you
- Discover your talents and try new things
- Learn from your mistakes
- Believe and trust in your family's love for you
- Believe and trust in God's unconditional love for you

In what ways are you practicing confidence?

What area of your life (or our family life) which you think you need to develop confidence in?

Affirm and Act

Affirm a family member who you think have shown confidence or choose one person whom you want to encourage to be confident by completing each statement:

I affirm you for being confident in _____.

I pray that you will have more confidence in _____.

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What did you like best about our discussion today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: "*I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).*"

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

"Almighty God, thank you for your unconditional love for us. May we grow more in our confidence in you that we may show your love to others too. Amen."

SERVICE

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our loving Father, thank you for the gift of family. Teach us to love and serve each other as you have loved us. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Read the following Bible verses:

“So during the meal, Jesus got up, removed his outer garment, and wrapped a towel around his waist. He put some water into a large bowl. Then he began washing his disciples’ feet and drying them with the towel he was wearing.” (John 13:4-5)

During his last supper before his crucifixion, Jesus did a very humble act of service by washing his disciples’ feet. In their time, it was the servant’s job to wash the feet of guests. But Jesus himself performs the menial task of foot washing, setting an example of humility and service. He did this not in spite of the fact that he is God in human flesh. He did this precisely because God is a God of self-giving love. We are called to follow the example of Jesus, to show God’s love to others through serving, to do even the most menial tasks with love.

What acts of service or menial tasks do you do for your family?

How would you describe your attitude in serving others?

Affirm and Act

Affirm each other by completing this sentence:

“I affirm you for your acts of service to our family through _____.”

Commit to each other by completing this sentence:

“I commit to serve our family through _____.”

Put Together and Pray

Read the quote below:

“The value of all service lies in the spirit in which you serve and not in the importance or magnitude of the service. Even the lowliest task or deed is made holy, joyous, and prosperous when it is filled with love.” (Charles Fillmore)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken

their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: “*I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).*”

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Jesus, thank you for your example of servanthood and humility. Lord, we pray that you also give us a humble and servant heart that we may seek to serve others too. Amen”

RESPONSIBILITY

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our loving Father, thank you for the strength you give us this day that we may love you and love others as you have loved us. May you be glorified in our time together as a family.
Amen”

Engage and Examine

Ask each family member: What would you do in the following situations?

- You are given a job to do at home and you’d rather read or watch TV.
- You are given a lot of homework at school.
- You just broke something in your home.
- You promised your friend you’d meet her right after school, but then remember your mother asked you to get home early.

Discuss:

Being responsible means others can trust you to do things with excellence. You accept accountability for your actions. When you make a mistake, you offer amends instead of excuses. Responsibility is the ability to respond ably and to make smart choices.

You are practicing responsibility when you:

- Take your agreements seriously
- Respond ably by doing things to the best of your ability
- Are willing to do your part
- Admit mistakes without making excuses
- Are ready and willing to clear up misunderstandings
- Give your best to whatever you do

In what ways are you practicing responsibility?

Affirm and Act

Affirm each other by completing this sentence:

“I affirm you for your being responsible in _____.”

In what areas do you need to improve on being more responsible? Allow each family member to answer this question and allow others to also give feedback on what they think that family member needs to improve on being more responsible. Then support each other by completing this sentence:

“Please support me, I want to be more responsible in _____.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What struck you most in our discussion today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *"I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude)."*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

"Almighty God, thank you because you are able to do more than we can ask or imagine. May our lives be pleasing to you as we strive to be responsible in all the things that you have entrusted to us. Amen."

RELIABILITY

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our gracious Lord, thank you for your faithfulness and love. May you be honored in our time together today. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Ask each family member: What would you do in the following situations?

- You promised to come home by a certain time and a friend invites you to do something fun.
- It is your turn to wash the dishes and you're not in the mood.
- Your part of a group report is due tomorrow and you feel too sleepy to finish it.

Discuss:

Reliability means that others can depend on you. You keep your commitments and give your best to every job. You don't forget and you don't need to be reminded. Other people can relax, knowing things are in your reliable hands.

How do you show you are reliable?

You are practicing reliability when you:

- Make promises you can keep
- Really care about doing what you promise
- Return things you borrow
- Plan ahead
- Do your best and finish on time
- Find another way if obstacles occur

In what ways are you practicing reliability?

Sometimes, we or other people fail and break commitments. Remember, we are still in the process of becoming. The Bible talks about God as a reliable God. He is consistent. He keeps his word. We can turn to him for help.

How have you relied on God?

Affirm and Act

Affirm each other by completing this sentence:

“I affirm you for your being reliable in _____.”

In what areas do you need to improve on being more reliable? Allow each family member to answer this question and allow others to also give feedback on what they think that family

member needs to improve on being more reliable. Then support each other by completing this sentence:

“Please support me, I want to be more reliable in _____.”

In what ways do you or our family need to rely on God more?

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What important insight or truth do you want to carry with you this coming week?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: “*I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).*”

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Dear God, thank you because we can always rely on you. You are faithful to your promises. Grant us grace and strength so that we can be your reliable children. Amen.”

PEACEFULNESS

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our loving Father, thank you for this time that we can learn from each other as a family. Teach us to live in peace with each other and with all our friends and neighbors. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Agree or Disagree? Read the statements below. Discuss as a group why you agree or disagree with each statement.

1. Peace is the absence of war.
2. World peace is achievable.
3. Peace begins at home.
4. When someone does you wrong, just overlook it to “keep the peace”.
5. There is always a peaceful solution to any conflict.

Discuss: (Take turns in reading the paragraphs below.)

Peacefulness is an inner sense of calm. It comes especially in quiet moments of reflection or gratitude. It is getting very quiet and looking at things so you can understand them.

Peacefulness is a way of approaching conflict with others so that no one is made wrong. It is being fair to others and yourself. Peace is giving up the love of power for the power of love. With peacefulness, everyone wins.

Practicing peacefulness helps to create a calm mind free from worry. When you are peaceful, you respect others and their differences. People around you feel calm and safe. Without peace, no one is safe.

People get hurt. Fighting doesn't solve problems, and no one ever really wins a war. With peacefulness, any problem can be solved. Peace in the world begins with peace in your heart.

To find inner peace, become very still, and think peaceful thoughts. Observe and think about your feelings, like anger, instead of acting with anger.

To be a peacemaker, use peaceful language instead of name-calling, yelling, or gossiping. Avoid aggressive or violent actions. Talk things out and listen to the other person too. Then look for a peaceful solution.

Peacemakers find there are lots of creative ways to solve any problem. Violence never solves anything.

You are practicing peacefulness when you...

- Create inner peace with a regular time to pray, meditate or reflect.

- Use peaceful language even when you are angry.
- Speak gently and respectfully.
- Avoid harming anyone.
- Appreciate differences.
- Find peaceful solutions to every problem.

Affirm and Act

Think of one person or an area of your personal or family life that you need to be at peace with. Share about it by completing the statement: I want to be at peace with _____ (e.g. a friend I had conflict with).

Make this declaration together:

“We are peacemakers. We use peaceful language and find peaceful solutions to any problem that arises. We receive God’s peace in our hearts and let it carry us through the day.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What is your favorite part of our discussion today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: “*I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).*”

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:

where there is hatred, let me sow love;

where there is injury, pardon;

where there is doubt, faith;

where there is despair, hope;

where there is darkness, light;

where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek

to be consoled as to console,

to be understood as to understand,

to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,

it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,

and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Amen. (Prayer of St. Francis)

JUSTICE

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our gracious Lord, thank you for your love and mercy toward us. Be with us today as we continue to learn how to love you and love others. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Read the Bible verses below:

Jeremiah 22:3 “Thus says the Lord: Bring about justice and righteousness. Rescue the disadvantaged, and don’t tolerate oppression or violence against the immigrant, the orphan, and the widow.”

Psalms 146:7-9 “The Lord God upholds justice for the oppressed and gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets the prisoners free. He loves the righteous... But he thwarts the way of the wicked.”

While justice can be used to talk about retributive justice in which a person is punished for their wrongdoings, most of the time the Bible uses the word justice to refer to restorative justice, in which those who are unrightfully hurt or wronged are restored and given back what was taken from them. Taken this way, the combination of righteousness and justice that God dictates means a selfless way of life in which people do everything they can to ensure that others are treated well and injustices are fixed.

When God's people were shown injustice, such as when the Israelites were under Egyptian oppression, God stepped in and showed them restorative justice just like He commanded them to show to others. Of course, the sad irony is that the Israelites would later go on to oppress others even after being oppressed themselves, ignoring these very important concepts of righteousness and justice that God decreed that they should live by. Today, we as human beings continue to demonstrate injustice, benefiting from the oppression of those around us and making ourselves guilty in the eyes of God.

Thankfully, God had a solution to the injustice of humanity. By sending Christ, who was deemed to be fully righteous and just, to take the punishment for the sins of the guilty, God has made it so that all people can stand righteous before Him. Having been given this gift, it is now our commission to go out into the world and give this same gift to others by showing them the righteousness and justice that God has shown us all.

Discuss:

1. Do you think that all people are born with a yearning for justice or does it have to be taught?

2. What is your response to God’s act of justice: providing a way for us to be made right with Him by sending Christ?

Affirm and Act

Justice is not simply fairness. It has an element of restoration; of putting things to right.

Name some ways you see justice displayed in our family or community.

Identify an injustice you see or experience that troubles you. What emotion first made you aware of it? Then talk about one action you can take to bring about justice.

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What one thing has become clear for you now?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: “*I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).*”

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Almighty God, we are surrounded by the darkness of injustices in our world today. May you surround us and lead us to be your light by upholding justice especially for those who are disadvantaged and oppressed. May you be the inspiration and guide of our family. Amen”

IDEALISM

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our loving Father, thank you because in you we live and move and have our being. Thank you for each breath that you give us. May we be mindful of your abiding presence with us today. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Ask each family member: *What is an ideal world or society like for you?*

After everyone has given their answer, ask: *What small things can you do in our world today to make it closer to the ideal world that you described?*

Discuss:

When you have “high ideals”, you really care about what is right and meaningful in life. You follow your beliefs. You don’t just accept things the way they are. You make a difference.

Idealists dare to have big dreams and then act as if they are possible. They can imagine something and then do it.

Idealism does not mean that you are an idle dreamer. Idle dreamers just wish that things were better. Idealists do something to make things better.

You are practicing idealism when you:

- Really care about what you value in life
- Dare to have big dreams
- Have a vision of what is possible
- Have a plan to make your ideals real
- Take action to make your dreams come true
- Do something to make a difference in the world

Affirm and Act

What ideals do you have for yourself? For our family? For our community?

What are small steps you can take to realize these ideals or dreams?

Commit this to God and together make this declaration:

“We are practicing our ideals. Our actions match our words. We believe in our dreams and have faith that with God’s help, anything is possible.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What is one thought that you want to remember most in our discussion today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *“I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).”*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Almighty God, thank you that we can dream of a better world because of our hope in Jesus Christ. Teach us to live out your kingdom here on earth as it is in heaven. Help us to know and experience the power that comes from You that enables us to make a difference where we are. Amen.”

ENTHUSIASM

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our gracious Lord, thank you for this day and the gift of life that you give us. Teach us to love you more and be more aware of your gifts to us. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Ask each family member: *What excites you? Why do you find this exciting?*

Discuss:

Enthusiasm is being cheerful and happy. Enthusiasm is doing something wholeheartedly, with zeal and eagerness. It is giving a hundred percent to what you do, holding nothing back. Being enthusiastic is being excited about something, looking forward to it.

Enthusiasm is being filled with a positive spirit. It is not something you do but the way you go about doing it. You can be enthusiastic about going to school, taking out the garbage, or going fishing.

Enthusiasm is when you bring cheerfulness to whatever you do and give it your best. Enthusiasm makes even the dullest job fun.

You are practicing enthusiasm when you:

- Smile, laugh, and enjoy what you do
- Look forward to something eagerly
- Have a positive attitude
- Do things wholeheartedly
- Look on the bright side
- Are inspired by the wonders of life

Affirm and Act

Affirm each other by completing the statement:

(Name of family member), I affirm you for being enthusiastic in _____.

Share an area or aspect of life that you want to develop more enthusiasm in. Complete the statement: *I want to be more enthusiastic in _____.*

Read this declaration together:

“We are full of enthusiasm, We give a hundred percent to whatever we do. We use our imagination. We are open to the wonders in store for us today.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What did you like best in our discussion today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *“I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).”*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Almighty God, thank you because you are the source of our joy and happiness. We can smile, laugh, and enjoy things because of you. May our lives be a channel of joy and happiness to our neighbors and our loved ones. Amen.”

HUMILITY

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Father, we praise you for your loving kindness to our family. Open our hearts to your truth and your grace. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Let the members take this short quiz orally:

True or False

1. Humility is weak because it doesn't insist on opinions, beliefs, and perceptions, so the arrogant person wins.
2. Humility is a form of fear so it chooses to make peace.
3. Humility is looking at yourself as
 - better than others
 - less than others
 - same as others
 - God's image and likeness

How do you understand humility? When can a person be considered humble (or not humble)?

Read Apostle Paul's exhortation about being humble in his letter to the Philippians:

³ Don't do anything from selfish ambition or from a cheap desire to boast, but be humble toward one another, always considering others better than yourselves. ⁴ And look out for one another's interests, not just for your own. (Philippians 2:3-4, GNT)

The believers Paul was writing to are facing external (false teachers) and internal (division in the community) threats. In these verses, in particular, Paul was addressing the conflicts and divisions that were happening within the community.

What was Paul's antidote or solution to the difficulties the believers were having?

Do you think it is wise and effective counsel? Why so? Is Paul's advice relevant to us as well? How?

When you are humble you do not consider yourself more important or better than other people. It is doing your best without attracting too much attention to yourself. Humility keeps one from prejudice and from judging others. It also means knowing your gifts and not denying them but using these gifts not to flaunt or boast but to help and to bless.

Humility is being comfortable with who you are in the Lord and therefore putting others first. The picture of humility in the Bible is one of a strong person who loves others, not someone who is a weakling or coward.

Humility enables one to: defuse arguments; handle unfair treatment peacefully, ask for forgiveness, respond to criticisms without being defensive, speak courageously and lovingly regardless of the situation, and be free from putting a false front.

The Bible is filled with the admonition to choose humility. Jesus himself taught it to his disciples. He demonstrated this through his life and his death. (See Philippians 2:6-11 for further study)

Affirm and Act

In what ways are you being called to practice humility (as a child, as a parent, as a friend, as a family)? Each one will share.

What do you think can help us develop a posture of humility as a family? Brainstorm ideas or suggestions on how we can keep ourselves grounded.

In faith, make this declaration together:

“We do nothing out of selfish ambition but in humility consider others better than ourselves.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What encouraged you in our discussion today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *“I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).”*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Our loving God, we pray that you will keep us rooted in your love and grace. Help us to be humble and to seek the good of others above ourselves. We put our trust in you. Amen.”

FORGIVENESS

Ready

Pray this together:

Our Father in heaven: May your holy name be honored; May your Kingdom come; may your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today the food we need.

Forgive us the wrongs we have done as we forgive the wrongs that others have done to us.

Do not bring us to hard testing, but keep us safe from the Evil One.' Amen.

Engage and Examine

Read to the group the story: The Parable of the Lost Son

“There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.

“Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country, and there squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

“When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.’ So he got up and went to his father.

Ask: *Do you think his father should forgive the son after he spent all his money on wild living? If you were the father, what would you do?*

Let us see how the story ends:

“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him, and kissed him.

“The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

“But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate. (Luke 15:11-24)

Discuss:

How do you think the son felt when his father responded this way?

Did his father have to go to this extent (party, gold ring, fine robes) to forgive his son?

What does this story tell us about Forgiveness? How does this truly show the character quality of Forgiveness?

Have you come to a point in your life that you felt you desperately need to be forgiven? How does the story of the forgiving father encourage you?

Points to emphasize:

- Being forgiving is looking beyond the mistakes others make and loving them as much as before. Forgiving does not mean that all of a sudden you do not feel hurt or that the wrong choice someone made was right. It means that you find it in your heart to give the person another chance.
- It means that in spite of how wrong they were or how much they hurt you, you can look past what they did and not hold it against them. Forgiveness means you don't push people for what they have done even if they deserve it.
- Forgiving yourself means to stop punishing yourself or feeling hopeless because you did something wrong. It is moving ahead, ready to do things differently, with compassion for yourself and faith that you can change.

Affirm and Act

Forgiveness is possible because of who God is and what He has done. Share truths about God and the forgiveness you know or have experienced.

What is one action you can take in response to our devotion today?

Make this declaration together:

“I know I can freely come to God for forgiveness. I am forgiving of myself and others. I learn from my mistake. I have the power to keep changing for the better.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What truth or idea stood out for you today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic.

Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the

oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: “*I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).*”

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Lord, you are so good, so ready to forgive, so full of unfailing love for all who ask for your help. We thank you for your forgiveness. Enable us to forgive as much as you have forgiven us. Help us to know how deep and wide is your love for us. May we walk in the path of your grace. Amen.”

OBEDIENCE

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our loving Father, thank you for this time that we can meet again as a family. Teach us to honor you as we seek to grow more in our obedience to you and to those who have authority over us. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Ask: Imagine a city where everyone is obedient to government laws, traffic rules, office or school rules and obedient to their parents and God. Now imagine a city exactly opposite, where everyone is not obedient. How would you compare these two cities?

Discuss:

Being obedient keeps you safe and happy. When people don't care about obedience, they do just what they want even when it hurts themselves or other people. If everyone drove as fast as they wanted, many more people would be hurt or killed. If you rode your bicycle on the wrong side of the road, you could easily have an accident. There are many dangers in the world. Without obedience, it is easy to get hurt or lost.

When you obey people who care for and want to protect you, it brings freedom and safety. If you know where it is safe to play, you can be free of worry about unnecessary dangers. The same is true for laws created to protect the community. When everyone obeys the law, we can trust each other.

When people in a family abide by the family rules and keep their agreements, such as who does the dishes Thursday night, who cares for the pets, it keeps things running smoothly. When you obey your inner guidance, your life gains order and discipline. You can trust yourself.

Affirm and Act

In what ways did practicing obedience brought about your well-being? In what ways did it bring good to your family?

Make this declaration:

“We are obedient. We are quick to obey our parents. We have a deep desire to obey God. We have a positive attitude toward authority figures.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What did you like best in our family devotion today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: “*I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).*”

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Our Lord Jesus, thank you for setting an example for us in your complete obedience to the Father. Please transform our hearts that we will find joy in practicing obedience. Give us strength and grace to do your will. Amen.”

LOYALTY

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Dear God, we thank you that we can come together as a family. We open ourselves to you and to your work in and through us. Amen”

Ask: What character do you value most in a friend? Why is that so? How would you describe yourself as a friend?

Engage and Examine

Loyalty is one virtue we desire to see in our family and in our friends.

In the book of Proverbs, we read:

“There are “friends” who destroy each other, but a real friend sticks closer than a brother.”
(Prov. 18:24, NLT).

What do you think does this mean? What for you are signs or indications of loyalty?

Loyalty is standing up for something you believe in, having unwavering faith. It is standing by a person, country, or cause when the going gets tough as well as when things are good.

Loyalty is being faithful to your family, country, friends, or ideals. When you are a loyal friend, even if someone disappoints or hurts you, you still hang in there with them.

But loyalty is not blind allegiance or commitment. It is not just sticking it out with people or principles regardless of truth and reason. Loyalty is founded both in love and in righteousness.

When you practice loyalty, you don't change from day to day. You stay true to someone or something unless you have a reason to believe that your loyalty has been betrayed. Loyalty is based on commitments—ones you make and plan to keep forever.

When you practice loyalty, people know what you stand for. Your friends and family know that you will support them no matter what happens. When you are loyal to your commitment to others, they know that nothing can come between you.

Affirm and Act

How are you showing your loyalty to God, your family, your country?

What are some hindrances or factors that keep you from being loyal?

Name one action you will do in response to what you learned today.

In faith, make this declaration together:

“We don’t waver in our commitment when difficulties come. We are loyal to people we care about. We stand for what we believe is true and right.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What struck you most in our discussion today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *“I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).”*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Lord, you are faithful and true. You have never abandoned or left us. Thank you for your steadfast love. Help us to be loyal and committed to you and to one another. Give us wisdom and courage to stay true and to stand for what is right. Amen.

MODERATION

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Almighty God, you are the source of life and all good gifts. Thank you for the gift of family and for giving us each other. May we learn to love each other more as you love us. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Ask each family member to choose a sentence below to complete.

Before, I used to spend too much time (or too little time) _____, but now I _____.

Before, I used to eat too much (or too little) _____, but now I _____.

Discuss:

Moderation is creating balance in your life between work and play, rest and exercise. It is having or doing enough of something—not too much, not too little, but what’s just right for you. If you work, study, or play all the time it is not being moderate. Moderation is being in charge of your time and using self-discipline to keep from doing too much or too little.

Moderation helps us to stay balanced so that we are not controlled by our desires. Without moderation, we can overdo things like talking or eating. We can start to get addicted to things and want even more when it can hurt us, like eating too much chocolate or drinking too much alcohol. When we practice moderation we make a choice to be the way we want to be.

You practice moderation by knowing your own limits and what you need to function at your best. People are different. For some eight hours of sleep is enough, for others, it is too little. Watch yourself to make sure you stay balanced and don’t let something begin to rule your life, such as social media, TV, computer games, food, or a person. When you practice moderation, you are content to have just what you need.

Affirm and Act

In what ways did practicing moderation brought about your well-being? In what ways did it help your family?

What aspects of your present life do you need to practice moderation? Choose one and discuss how your family can help you practice moderation in that aspect.

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What was most helpful to you in our discussion today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: “*I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).*”

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Our Father, thank you for giving us wisdom and strength to follow you. Teach us to be content to have just what we need and to live a balanced life. Enable us to enjoy earthly blessings in moderation and remain grateful even in seasons of lack recognizing that you are the sovereign in all things. Amen.”

GENTLENESS

Ready

Share: What has been the best part of your week so far?

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

Dear God, thank you that you are our gentle Shepherd who leads, guides, provides for and protects us. Please continue to teach us your ways.

Engage and Examine

Read: John 8:1-11 (NLT)

One day, as Jesus was teaching in a crowd, the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in the act of adultery. They put her in front of the crowd.

“Teacher,” they said to Jesus, “this woman was caught in the act of adultery. The law of Moses says to stone her. What do you say?”

They were trying to trap him into saying something they could use against him, but Jesus stooped down and wrote in the dust with his finger. They kept demanding an answer, so he stood up again and said, “All right, but let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone!” Then he stooped down again and wrote in the dust.

When the accusers heard this, they slipped away one by one, beginning with the oldest, until only Jesus was left in the middle of the crowd with the woman. Then Jesus stood up again and said to the woman, “Where are your accusers? Didn’t even one of them condemn you?”

“No, Lord,” she said.

And Jesus said, “Neither do I. Go and sin no more.”

Discuss:

Compare and contrast the attitude of the teachers of the law and that of Jesus toward the woman.

What do you think about Jesus’ response? Would you do the same? What does this show us about gentleness?

Gentleness is acting and speaking in a way that is considerate and kind to others. It is using self-control in order not to hurt or offend anyone. To be gentle means to be very careful. You can be gentle with people and animals in the way you touch them and the way you speak to them. Being gentle with things means being careful so that they will not break or hurt them in any way.

Gentleness is not passivity or weakness. It is not hiding or denying the truth so as not to cause trouble. But gentleness is moving wisely, touching softly, holding carefully, speaking quietly, and thinking kindly.

Gentleness is showing care and respect to others both in our words and in our actions.

Affirm and Act

Share about a recent conflict you may have had with a friend or family member. Assess whether you handled it with gentleness.

Discuss together what actions or attitudes can make the conflict worst. Together, draft a list of gentleness guidelines that could help to avoid shattering family relationships. Jot them down and maybe post them where they can be easily seen by each one.

Make this declaration in faith:

“I choose gentleness. Nothing is won by force. I choose to be gentle. If I raise our voice, may it be only in praise. If I clench my fist, may it be only in prayer. If I make demands, may it be only of myself. I choose gentleness.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What is one thing you want to bring with you in the coming week?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *“I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).”*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Thank you for being our gentle Father and Master. Lord, we recognize that we are not always gentle in our responses towards others. When we are impatient, in a hurry, frustrated, and are not

feeling well, we withhold gentleness. We are sorry. Give us your grace and strength to choose gentleness and care for others. Amen”

UNITY

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our loving Father, thank you for the love and bond we share in our family. Thank you that even though we are not perfect, you give us your grace and mercy that we may learn to live in your love. May you guide us today in our family devotion. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Agree or Disagree? Read the statements below. Discuss why you agree or disagree with each statement.

1. Unity means everyone thinks and acts alike.
2. Unity is feeling how you and others are connected.
3. Unity is impossible to achieve.
4. Unity brings harmony and peace.
5. Unity means one for all and all for one.

Discuss:

Unity in the family is feeling how you and others are connected. The joy of one is the joy of all. The hurt of one is the hurt of all. The honor of one is the honor of all.

Unity brings harmony, like the music made by different instruments in an orchestra. Unity doesn't mean to be the same. A flute would never try to sound like a drum. When they are playing together, they make beautiful music.

When unity exists in one family, they help each other, listen to each other, and enjoy their different ways of being. Others feel warm and safe being around them. When you practice unity, you value what each part brings to the whole. With unity, you can strive for harmony with your family at home and your human family around the world.

Unity within a family doesn't mean to think, act, or feel the same. When problems come up, you come together and listen to each other. You find a solution together. You avoid blame. Blame is never a useful starting point for dialogue. You share your feelings and ideas without holding on to them.

Affirm and Act

In what ways are you contributing to the unity of your family?

In what ways can you contribute more to the unity of your family?

Make this affirmation together:

“I practice unity with my family. The joy of one is the joy of all. The hurt of one is the hurt of all. The honor of one is the honor of all.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What do you like best in our discussion today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *“I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).”*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Almighty God, thank you for the contribution of each one to the unity of our family. May you grant us, your grace and love, as we strive to grow more in our unity as a family. May we grow more in our love and understanding for each other that we may glorify you in our unity. Amen.”

TACT

Ready

Share: How were you kind this week?

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“May the words of our mouth and the meditation of our heart, be pleasing to you, O Lord, our rock and our redeemer.” (Psalm 19:14)

Engage and Examine

The book of Proverbs has a lot to say about the tongue. Take turns in reading the verses below.

“The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit” Proverbs 18:21

“The words of the reckless pierce like swords, but the tongue of the wise brings healing. Proverbs 12:18 (NIV)

Discuss:

In what ways is the tongue powerful?

When can it be an instrument of light/life? When is it a weapon of destruction?

Relate a particular experience when you have witnessed the power of the tongue or of words.

When we use our tongue in ways that are life-giving, we exercise the virtue of tact. Tact is telling the truth in a way that does not disturb or offend people. It is knowing what to say and what is better left unsaid. Being tactful is sharing your thoughts, feelings, and opinions with others in a way that makes it easier for them to accept them.

Tact is thinking before you speak. Being tactful means knowing when to stay silent.

Often you know things that you could say, but saying them may hurt someone. Rather than telling a lie, being tactful means that you look for a way to share the truth so that it helps rather than hurts the other person. This is especially important when you feel angry or upset.

When you are tactful, you don't point out people's differences to embarrass them. You are careful about others' feelings, as you would like them to be of yours.

Affirm and Act

Choose one situation and share how you will respond with tact.

- Your friend asks you if you like her strange haircut.
- You get upset in school when your teacher does something you think is unfair.
- You feel really mad at your brother about something.
- You are scolded by your parents for something you did not do/or you are totally innocent about.

Say this together:

“I act with tact. I think before I speak. I am considerate of other people’s feelings. “

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What is one thing you want to remember from our devotion?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *“I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).”*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

"Dear God, please help us to guard our tongue and learn to say the right thing at the right time, for the right reason, in the right way. Give us the wisdom to know when to speak and when to keep silent. May our family be a blessing to others through our words and actions. Amen."

JOYFULNESS

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our gracious Lord, thank you for the many blessings you give us each day. Teach us to be more aware of your love and mercy in our family that we may find our joy in you alone.
Amen”

Engage and Examine

Answer the questions below with:

(i) strongly disagree, (ii) disagree, (iii) agree, or (iv) strongly agree.

1. I take every opportunity to play, laugh, and have a good time.
2. I often feel jealous or envious of other people.
3. I get a lot of satisfaction from my work/study.
4. I sleep well and wake up feeling ready for a new day.
5. I get pleasure from lots of different things – art, nature, sport, friends ...

Discuss:

Joyfulness is being filled with happiness, peace, love, and a sense of well-being. Joy is inside us all. It comes from a sense of being loved. It comes from the appreciation for the gift of life. It comes when we are doing what we know is right. Joy is related to fun but is not exactly the same thing. Fun comes from what is happening outside—having a good time. Joy comes from what is happening inside.

If we are joyful, things still happen to us, some good and some bad. If we are joyful, down deep we stay calm and serene. We continue to feel loved and safe. When good things happen, we are glad and the happy feelings last longer. When we are hurt, we naturally feel sad. When we draw on the inner strength and joyfulness, sadness does not keep getting deeper and deeper. It just comes and goes.

Affirm and Act

Who do you consider the most joyful person in your family? Why?

What small acts can you do to make your family more joyful?

Make this declaration together:

“We are thankful for the joy we feel inside. We enjoy our work and our play. We appreciate the gifts this day holds for us.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What encouraged you in our discussion today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *“I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).”*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Almighty God, thank you for the joy you give us. Thank you that even though bad things happen to us, we can trust you to turn our sorrow into joy. Amen.”

COMPASSION

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Dear Heavenly Father, we praise and thank you for you are compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. We open our hearts to you today. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Read: Luke 10: 30-35 (The Message)

“There was once a man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho. On the way, he was attacked by robbers. They took his clothes, beat him up, and went off leaving him half-dead. Luckily, a priest was on his way down the same road, but when he saw him he angled across to the other side. Then a Levite religious man showed up; he also avoided the injured man.

“A Samaritan traveling the road came on him. When he saw the man’s condition, his heart went out to him. He gave him first aid, disinfecting and bandaging his wounds. Then he lifted him onto his donkey, led him to an inn, and made him comfortable. In the morning he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, ‘Take good care of him. If it costs any more, put it on my bill—I’ll pay you on my way back.’

Discuss:

Is this story familiar to you? Have you been in or have witnessed a similar situation? What did you do? Which of the characters can you identify the most?

What does this story reflect or tell us about compassion?

What might keep us from responding like the Samaritan? How can we act with compassion in our day-to-day life?

Compassion is having kind feelings toward someone who is hurt or troubled. It is caring deeply and wanting to help, even if you don’t know them.

It is deep care translated to a tangible expression of love for those who are suffering.

Compassion is more than knowing or acknowledging that the other person is suffering. It moves beyond a simple desire to reduce suffering. A compassionate person recognizes the suffering of others and then takes action to help.

Affirm and Act

Have each family member take a turn sitting in a chair in the middle of the room. As he sits there, have each of the other family members tell one way he could be more compassionate to the one in the chair. Explain that being compassionate means that we care about the problems of the one in the chair and want to help. We can always find something each of us could do to be more compassionate to members of our family.

Let each one share insights gained by describing compassion using his/her five senses.

Ask: What does compassion **look** like? How does it **sound** like? How does it **feel** or **taste** or **smell** like? (e.g, *compassion is like a sweet aroma of perfume because it is pleasing, etc.*)

Put Together and Pray

Ask: In what ways have you received compassion from others? from God himself? Thank God for these grace-filled moments.

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *"I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude)."*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

"Our Father, we can only give what we have. We can love because you have loved us first. Fill our hearts with compassion not just for each other but for those who are outside our family circle- those who may be suffering and needing kindness and care. Let the intent of our hearts move our hands and feet to go where we are needed. In the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen."

FLEXIBILITY

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our loving Father, thank you for the joy we have in being together. May this time be meaningful for each one of us. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Answer the statements below with:

(i) never, (ii) seldom, (iii) regularly, (iv) frequently, or (v) always.

1. I am open to the opinions of others.
2. I welcome surprises.
3. I get upset when unexpected things happen.
4. I try new ways of doing things.
5. I make the same mistakes over and over.

Discuss:

Flexibility is being open to change. It means not always having it your own way. It is being open to the opinions and feelings of others. With flexibility, you are willing to change your mind. If something doesn't work, you try a new way. Flexibility is making changes for the better.

Without flexibility, people keep doing things the same old way when new ways are needed. They become rigid. They get angry and upset when things don't go their way. They try to control other people. When you are flexible, you adjust and adapt. You bend like a tree in the wind. You keep making positive changes.

When you practice flexibility, you let go of bad habits and learn new ones. When you see a need for change, look inside and find the virtue you need. Then practice it little by little, day by day.

Try new, creative ways to get things done. Accept the things you cannot change. Go with the flow. When you are flexible, you enjoy surprises.

Affirm and Act

Identify something that your family has been doing for a long time that needs change or improvement. Ask each family member about creative new ways of doing it.

Say this together:

“We are flexible. We keep changing for the better. We look for new ways to do things. We welcome surprises.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What is one thought that you want to remember most in our discussion today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *"I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude)."*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

"Almighty God, it is only by the power of your love that we can change for the better. Teach us to trust in you alone and not in our own strength. Help us to be open to surprises and to welcome changes and challenges with grace. Amen."

CONSIDERATION

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Praise be to you our God for who you are and for all the work you have done. Teach us and lead us in our time together today. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Read each statement and let family members answer either I HAVE or NEVER to indicate whether they have done or have not tried doing the actions described.

1. Cut through a line in a grocery store.
2. Held a door open for someone I did not know.
3. Laugh out loud while in a public jeep or bus.
4. Returned misplaced grocery items on their proper shelf.

Discuss

How would you describe actions 2 & 4? How about actions 1 & 3? What does it mean to be considerate?

Consideration is having regard for other people and their feelings. It is thinking about how your actions affect them and caring about how they feel.

Consideration is giving the same importance to others' likes and dislikes as you do to your own. When you have different tastes, consideration means you don't try and convince other people that they are wrong and you are right. You respect their feelings. Consideration is giving thought to the needs of others.

Consideration begins by noticing how your actions are affecting other people. You find out what they like and don't like and then consider their feelings.

When you are considerate, you act as if others are just as important as you are. Consideration is asking yourself things like “Will this hurt or disturb someone else?” If the answer is yes, a considerate person thinks of creative ways to do what he wants and at the same time respects other people's rights.

Affirm and Act

Do you see yourself as a considerate person?

Name one action you will do as a response to what you have learned today.

Read this declaration aloud:

We are considerate. We don't look out only for our own interests, but take an interest in others, too."

Put Together and Pray

Ask: For you, what color best reflect/communicate being considerate? Share your answer with the group.

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: "*I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).*"

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

"Lord we acknowledge that we have not always acted kindly or have always put others first. Forgive us and give us the strength and grace to grow in your ways. Empower us to be considerate and thoughtful. May we know the blessing and reward of kindness and obedience. Amen"

EXCELLENCE

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our gracious Lord, thank you for this time that we can meet again as a family. May your love and grace be our inspiration in all we do and say. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Ask: What are the things that you do with all your heart? What’s your motivation for doing your best at it?

Discuss:

Excellence is being exceptionally good, a quality of being the very best at something. Human beings have an intrinsic desire to see excellence. In every people group across the world, excellence is prized and rewarded. To be made in God’s image means that He imparted some of His character qualities to us. We crave justice because He is just. We love because He is love. And we strive for excellence because He is excellent in everything He does.

When you practice excellence, you are not content to give less than your best—with big things and little things. You give careful attention to every job, and to the people, you care for. You learn from your mistakes, so you can do better next time. Day by day, you strive to improve. Discover your own talents and give them your best.

Striving for excellence should be a part of all we do: “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving” (Colossians 3:23–24).

Affirm and Act

Affirm each other by completing this sentence:

“I affirm you for your practicing excellence in _____.”

Commit to each other by completing these sentences:

“I commit to practice excellence in _____.”

“We commit to practice excellence in _____.”

Make this declaration:

“We give our best to the work we do. We give our best to others. We choose excellence in all things.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What new thing did you learn today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *"I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude)."*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

"Almighty God, you created us with a desire to see excellence around us. Help us to be excellent in what is good and be innocent of evil. Bless the work of our hands. Teach us to support each other in doing our best for the glory of your Name. Amen."

PURPOSEFULNESS

Ready

Ask each one to sit comfortably and give this instruction:

Close your eyes and breathe slowly and deeply. When you begin to relax, quietly whisper a short centering prayer (as you breathe in say, “Speak Lord” and as you breathe out say, “Your servant hears.” Maintain silence as you listen to a Bible passage read slowly and aloud.

Engage and Examine

1. Read the text slowly.

“God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can’t take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.” (Ephesians 2:9-10 NLT)

Ask: Is there a word or phrase that begins to stand out to you? What is that word or phrase? Listen and be open to how God wants to use his Word to speak into your heart. Stay with that word/phrase.

2. Read the text again and pause for a minute or two. Say: *As you reflect on the word/phrase that stood out for you, what is God telling you? How does that word or phrase relate to your life or circumstance now?*
3. Read the text for the last time. Say: *What do you wish to tell God in response to his word to you? Talk to God. Converse with him.*
4. Rest. For a few 3 minutes, just sit quietly before God.
5. Let the members share the word or phrase that stood out for them and what they feel God is saying to them.

Affirm and Act

We are a people of purpose. This is reflected in the short passage we meditated on. God has created us anew so that we can do the good things He has prepared for us to do. Notice that the good things that we are to do are not in any way for our salvation- For we are saved by grace. But because we are God’s workmanship, we are bearers of His image, we have a good purpose set before us.

How does this make you feel? What does it mean to live with a purpose?

Purposefulness is having a clear focus instead of being fuzzy or unsure what you're doing or why you're doing it. When you have a goal you are working toward, you are acting on a purpose. To be purposeful means concentrating on something. You concentrate your efforts so that something good will happen as a result. You are faithful to your purpose no matter what. Some people just let things happen. A purposeful person makes things happen. Without a sense of purpose, you wouldn't know the reasons why you are doing something, and when the going gets tough you would just give up.

As a family, what do you think is our purpose? Let us try to have a purpose statement by responding to these questions: (Discuss and agree as a family).

We believe God wants us to _____ this year, which we will intentionally do by concentrating on these areas:

With each other, we will _____.

With our neighbors and friends, we will _____.

With our extended family, we will _____.

With our church body, we will _____.

When people think of our family, how do we want them to finish this sentence: They are a family that _____.

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What struck you most in our discussion today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: "*I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).*"

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

"Lord, thank you for calling us to be your own. Thank you that you have saved us by your grace. Thank you that you have called us to a life of purpose. Have Your way in us, O God. Fulfill your good purpose in and through us. Amen."

DETERMINATION

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our loving Father, thank you for this day and all the blessings you give us. May you lead us in our family time today. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Ask: What accomplishment are you most proud of? What challenges did you overcome to accomplish it?

Discuss:

Determination is focusing your energy and efforts on a task then sticking with it until it is finished. Determination is using your willpower to do something when it isn't easy. You are determined to meet your goals. Even when it is really hard, or you are being tested, you still keep going.

Without determination, things don't get done. People give up easily and don't ask for help when they need it. With determination, even the hardest task becomes a challenge we are willing to accept. We do things that matter in the world. With determination, we can make our dreams come true.

When we are faced with challenges, we can ask God to give us determination. “So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” (Isaiah 41:10)

Affirm and Act

Affirm each other by completing this sentence:

“I affirm you for your determination in _____.”

Commit to each other by completing these sentences:

“I commit to practice determination in _____.”

“We commit to practice determination in _____.”

Make this declaration:

“We are determined. We set goals and keep going until we achieve them. We get things done. We stay on purpose. We trust God for his help in all that we do.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What is one thought that you want to remember most in our discussion today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: “*I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).*”

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Almighty God, you are our source of strength and inspiration. Teach us to trust in you in whatever hardships or challenges we may face. Give us the determination to endure and to overcome. Amen.”

DETACHMENT

Ready

Share a ‘funny or amusing’ experience you recently had.

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Thank you, Lord, for the gift of joy and laughter. Thank you for your sufficient grace and provision for our family. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Ask each one to complete this statement:

I could not leave the house without _____

I cannot imagine life without _____

The three things I will bring if I would be exiled in an island for a month are _____.

Discuss

Are there common threads or themes to the given answers? What does this tell us about what we consider important or indispensable?

We value things differently. For some, a mobile phone is indispensable; while for others, good sleep is non-negotiable. We get attached to things, people, or situations depending on the value we place on them. This is natural and not necessarily a bad thing. But with excessive attachment also comes an inordinate investment of strong emotions which may result in trouble: inability to respond appropriately or overreaction. That is why learning detachment is also a valuable trait.

Detachment is experiencing your feelings and thoughts without allowing your feelings or thoughts to control you. Detachment allows us to use a long lens, take in the big picture, and be more objective in our approach so that we respond instead of just react. With detachment, you are free to do only what you choose to do.

Detachment does not mean denial or dismissal of your thoughts and feelings. It is not pretending not to care or that you are hurt or affected. Detachment is using thinking and feeling together, so you can make smart choices.

Affirm and Act

Choose one situation, and share how you would respond in a way that reflects the value of detachment:

- Your cellphone got lost while you were on a trip.

- Your mother asks you do to some chores and you feel like playing video games instead?
- Your sister or brother takes your best sweater without asking and you feel really mad?
- You really want to join a team and it doesn't happen?
- You are really upset because your best friend/ child/parent disappointed you?

To summarize, take turns in reading the declaration aloud.

We practice detachment when we:

- Take time out before doing something you would be sorry for
- Look at your feelings before deciding how to act
- Use thinking and feeling together
- Act instead of reacting
- Reflect before taking action
- Choose to do what is right

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What new thing did you learn today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *"I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude)."*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

"Lord keep our hearts aligned with the things that are important to you. Help us to entrust both our present and our future to You, our Maker and Sustainer. Amen."

RESPECT

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our gracious Lord, thank you for this time that we can learn from each other. May we be loving and respectful to each other that we may glorify you in our family. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Ask: How do you want others to treat your belongings? How do you want others to speak to you? How do you want others to treat your body?

Discuss:

Respect is an attitude of caring about people and treating them with dignity. Respect is valuing ourselves and others. We show respect by speaking and acting with courtesy. When we are respectful we treat others as we want to be treated. Respect includes honoring the rules of our family or school, which makes life more orderly and peaceful. It is knowing that every man, woman, and child deserves respect, including you.

Being respectful includes self-respect. Self-respect is making sure no one hurts you or abuses you, even an elder. When you respect yourself, others respect you, too. Every woman, man, and child was created by God, and we all deserve respect.

Affirm and Act

How do your family members show respect to each other? Affirm each other by completing this sentence:

“Thank you for respecting me by _____.”

How do you want your family members to respect you? Complete this sentence:

“Please respect me by _____.”

Make this declaration together:

“We are respectful. We treat others and ourselves as we deserve to be treated. We show courtesy to everyone. We learn from the wisdom of our elders.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What important insight or truth do you want to carry with you this coming week?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken

their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: “*I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).*”

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Almighty God, thank you for creating each one of us in your image. Teach us to always show respect to others and to also practice self-respect. Please continue to make us grow in your grace and love. Make us a blessing to others. Amen.”

MERCY

Ready

How have you been kind this week?

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you for your loving kindness and great mercy toward us. Open our eyes to your truth and give us the strength to live it. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Joseph, Jacob’s son who was also called ‘the dreamer’ is quite familiar to us. What do you know or remember most about him?

Read: Genesis 50:15-21 (NLT)

“But now that their father was dead, Joseph’s brothers became fearful. “Now Joseph will show his anger and pay us back for all the wrong we did to him,” they said.

So they sent this message to Joseph: “Before your father died, he instructed us to say to you: ‘Please forgive your brothers for the great wrong they did to you—for their sin in treating you so cruelly.’ So we, the servants of the God of your father, beg you to forgive our sin.” When Joseph received the message, he broke down and wept. Then his brothers came and threw themselves down before Joseph. “Look, we are your slaves!” they said.

But Joseph replied, “Don’t be afraid of me. Am I God, that I can punish you? You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people. No, don’t be afraid. I will continue to take care of you and your children.” So he reassured them by speaking kindly to them.

Discuss:

We know the story- Joseph was sold as a slave by his brothers because they were jealous of him. But God has other plans for him. *Do you think his brothers have reasons to be afraid?*

What can you say about Joseph’s response? What gave Joseph the grace to extend forgiveness and mercy to his brothers?

Mercy is the kindness and compassion shown to one who offends. Grace is a gift undeserved while mercy is the removal of condemnation. Mercy can only come from a position of power. It comes from one who has the right to dish out punishment but chooses instead compassion. It is a gift given to someone who desperately needs it but deserves the exact opposite.

Joseph extended mercy to his brothers. He also went beyond that. He even committed to take care of them. Such display of mercy and grace!

How have you experienced mercy? How have you dispensed or shown mercy to others?

Why do you think we should practice mercy? What can be our motivation?

Affirm and Act

Think of one person to whom you need to extend mercy to. Ask God's help.

In faith, affirm this together:

"I show mercy to others. I put myself in their shoes and do what I can to be helpful. I give others another chance when they make a mistake. I listen to my heart."

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What important insight or truth do you want to carry with you this coming week?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *"I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude)."*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

"Have mercy on us, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out our transgressions. Wash away all our iniquity and cleanse us from our sin. We receive your mercy and forgiveness, Lord. We open our hearts to your transforming work in each of us. Amen"

REVERENCE

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our loving Father, thank you for your grace and mercy to us each day. May our time today as a family be pleasing in your sight. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Ask: Have you had an experience when you felt a deep sense of respect or honor or fear towards God? It could be when you were alone praying or reading the Bible, or when you were inside a church, or when you were watching a sunset. Describe how you felt.

Discuss:

Reverence is honor and respect that is felt intrinsically, deeply, and is outwardly demonstrated. It’s similar to encountering the ocean for the first time or standing in the middle of a hurricane, or witnessing a life-saving miracle happen before your very eyes. It’s the feeling of awe, fear, and wonder with respect. Because of the Lord God’s awesome power and majesty, He is deserving of the highest level of reverence.

To be reverent means living with the constant, conscious awareness that we are in the presence of an awesome, holy God. He is with us in all that we do. He sees the heaviness of our hearts. He knows the questions in your thoughts. He knows the number of hairs on your head at any given moment. Our mighty God loves us with an everlasting love, and He is always concerned about our welfare. All that we need, He provides through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. God should always be revered and adored. He should have our utmost respect.

Affirm and Act

What attributes of God discussed above do you find most appealing for you to always revere God? Why? Let each family member share.

Take turns in revering God by completing and saying aloud this sentence:

“I honor and respect God for He is _____.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What do you like best in our discussion today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken

their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: “*I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).*”

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Almighty God, we worship you for you alone deserve the highest honor and respect. Teach us to be aware of your loving presence in our lives and in our family that we may learn to revere you every day. Help us to walk closely with you. Amen.”

TRUST

Ready

Share one challenging/difficult experience you had this week.

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our gracious Father, we come to you in confidence not because we are good but because of who you are-- trustworthy and faithful. Thank you that we can have this time as a family. Teach us your ways, we pray. Amen.”

Engage and Examine

Read Proverbs 3:5-6:

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

Discuss

We have heard or maybe even memorized these verses. But, have we really thought about what it means to trust?

Trust is a firm belief and confidence in the integrity, reliability, strength of someone. For any relationship to flourish, trust should be present. Life would be unimaginable without trust. When we choose to ride in a car we depend on the ability of the driver to safely take us to our destination. When we choose to sit on a particular chair, we are confident that this chair has the strength to carry us. When we tell someone our deepest secret, we believe that they will not betray us.

Proverbs tells us that we are to put our full confidence in God and not on our own understanding. Trusting God is different from trusting people or things. Why? Because unlike people or things, God is unchanging, he does not waver, he is true to His character and his word. That is the basis of the admonition to put our trust in the Lord.

Trusting God means to believe that he is who he says he is and he will do what he says he will do. We take him at his word; we depend on his promises and surrender to his will and his ways. To place your faith and trust in God alone is not to free yourself from the need to act, be responsible, and work, but rather to position yourself to receive empowerment, guidance, and grace for every action, responsibility, and work. To place our faith and trust in God alone is to humble ourselves before God as our King, Shepherd, Helper, and Provider so that all we do is done through him.

Affirm and Act

Have you placed your trust in the Lord?

God's invitation for each of us is to trust Him. Can you name some reasons why we can trust Him? What in your experience would make you trust God more, or trust him less?

We also need to trust others and ourselves. We need to believe in man's capacity to be good and to be reliable. When we do this, we refuse to be always suspicious or judgmental. We are able to

Make a list of things/actions that nurture trust and another list of actions that hinder it to grow.

<i>Nurtures Trust</i>	<i>Hinders Trust</i>

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What new thing did you learn today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: "*I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).*"

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

"Lord, help us to trust you in every situation and in every season of our life, for you have promised to take all things, whether good or bad, and use them together not only for our good and the good of others but also so that Your name may be glorified through it. Lord, we put our trust in you for you are worthy and true. Amen."

KINDNESS

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our gracious Lord, we praise you for your love and kindness to us. Teach us to be loving and kind to each other. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Ask: What would you consider the greatest act of kindness you have ever received in your life? What would you consider the greatest act of kindness you have ever shown to another person?

Discuss:

Kindness is being concerned about the welfare of others. Kindness is showing you care about anyone or anything that crosses your path. You can be kind to people, to animals, and to the environment. Kindness means to care for others and the earth as much as or more than you care about yourself.

You practice kindness by noticing when someone or something needs care. You become sensitive to the world around you. Use your imagination to think of things that give others happiness—your parents, your friends, your teachers, your brothers and sisters, and even the people you don’t know very well. Find out what habits harm or help the environment and choose kinder ways.

When you are tempted to be cruel, to criticize, or tease, you decide not to do it (even with your own brothers and sisters!) You accept people who are different or handicapped instead of ignoring them or teasing them. When you are practicing kindness, you take really good care of your pets.

Affirm and Act

How do your family members show kindness to each other? Affirm each other by completing this sentence:

“Thank you for showing kindness to me by _____.”

Help each one to be more kind to each other. Let each one ask this question to the family:

“How can I be more kind to our family?”

Say this together:

“We are kind. We look for ways to help others. We show kindness to any person or animal we see. We do all we can to take care of the earth.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What inspired you in our discussion today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *"I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude)."*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

"Almighty God, you are our source of joy and strength. We can only show love and kindness to others because of the love and kindness we have received from you. May our lives be a blessing to others as you have blessed us. Amen"

COURTESY

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Heavenly Father, you are worthy of our adoration. Thank you for your rich mercy. Help us to know you more. Amen. “

Engage and Examine

Read the short poem aloud:

Magic Words

There are three little magic words
That will open any door with ease.
Two little words are "Thank you!"
And the other little word is "Please!"

In what ways do these ‘three little words’ have power? Do we often hear these words today?

Do you have a personal story that reflects what magic these words can do?

Discuss

Courtesy is to be polite and have good manners. It is to be considerate of others and to have gracious ways. It is a way of acting with people which makes them feel valued, cared for, and respected.

“Please,” “Thank you,” “Excuse me,” and “You’re welcome” are not just words. They are courteous expressions that let people know you appreciate them and care about their feelings. Being courteous by not interrupting someone while they are speaking tells them that what they are saying is just as important as what you have to say.

In the book of Galatians 5:22-23, we read: “God’s Spirit makes us loving, happy, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle, and self-controlled. There is no law against behaving in any of these ways.” To be polite is not a sign of weakness but a mark of strength. When we practice courtesy, we demonstrate the work of the Spirit in our life.

Many say that good manners have become rare. But this should not be the case in our homes and community. We can choose to be courteous and kind with the help of God’s Spirit at work in us.

Affirm and Act

Name at least three courteous actions you wish to see more in our family.

Agree on how we can nurture or reinforce these polite behaviors as a family. Let us come up with a simple game plan.

Say this aloud:

“I am courteous. I remember my manner and treat people with respect. I greet others politely. I show people that I care.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What did you like best in our devotion today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: “I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).”

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Lord, help us to do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than ourselves. Enable us to put the interests of others before our own. Teach us to be courteous and gracious in our ways. Amen.”

LOVE

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our loving Father, we worship you because you are faithful and just. Thank you for the many ways that you show your love to us. Teach us to love you with all our being and to love others as we love ourselves. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Ask: How would you describe someone whom you consider a very loving person? What makes her or him a very loving person?

Read the following Bible passage:

“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.” (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)

Love is described in this Bible passage using verbs or action words. Love is not primarily about feelings or emotions but about commitment in doing or not doing things that express love.

This passage also describes a very loving person. Try to read it again but replacing the words *love* and *it* with the name of Jesus.

“Jesus is patient, Jesus is kind. Jesus does not envy, Jesus does not boast, Jesus is not proud. Jesus does not dishonor others, Jesus is not self-seeking, Jesus is not easily angered, Jesus keeps no record of wrongs. Jesus does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. Jesus always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.”

Affirm and Act

Read the Bible passage again but this time replacing *love* and *it* with your name (do this for each family member).

“_____ is patient, _____ is kind. _____ does not envy, _____ does not boast, _____ is not proud. _____ does not dishonor others, _____ is not self-seeking, _____ is not easily angered, _____ keeps no record of wrongs. _____ does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. _____ always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.”

In what ways is this a true description of yourself?

What would it look like in reality if all of it is true about you? What specific things can you do or things that you need to change to make all of it true about you?

Say this affirmation together:

“We are loving. We show love with thoughtful acts, kind words, and affection. We treat others the way we want to be treated.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What is one thing (lesson, truth, or thought) you will carry with you in the coming week?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *“I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).”*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Almighty God, thank you for your marvelous love. Help us to feel, to understand, and experience how long, how wide, how deep, and how high Your love really is. Amen.”

HONOR

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

Almighty God, we honor you today. You deserve our praise. Thank you for allowing us to gather as a family. Help us learn from you and from one another. Amen

Engage and Examine

Read this short anecdote aloud:

One day when young Abraham Lincoln was working as a store clerk, he closed the store at the end of the day and tallied the day's earnings, and made a discovery. He had charged one customer six cents too much. Six cents is not a great deal of money, but it was money that rightfully belonged to the customer. So after work, Abe Lincoln walked the three miles to her home, returned the money, and then walked back in the moonlight. That night he could look at himself in the mirror and be confident he saw an honorable man.

Discuss

What can you say about Abraham's action? Have you had a similar experience?

What does it mean to be an honorable person? Why is this virtue important?

Honor means honesty, fairness, or integrity in one's beliefs; it is to hold in high respect, to esteem, or value. Being honorable means living with a sense of respect for what we know is right; it is living up to the virtues of our character and keeping our agreements with integrity.

In the book of Proverbs, it is said: "The wise inherit honor, but fools get only shame." (Prov. 3:35); and "Before a downfall the heart is haughty, but humility comes before honor." (Prov. 18:12). Honor is obtained when one walks in wisdom and humility when one fears God and walks in righteousness. Honor is more than the desire for a good reputation (external); it is having healthy self-respect (internal) knowing that you live up to what is right and true.

Affirm and Act

Name some benefits or rewards of living an honorable life?

How can you practice honor in the following situations:

- You find some money in the school hallway
- You promised to study for your exam while your parents were out
- You were given a reward or a recognition for something which you actually did not work for

Make this declaration together:

“I am honorable. I keep my agreements and treat others with respect. I care about doing the right thing.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What new thing did you learn today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *“I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).”*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Dear God, thank you for your care and protection. Help us pursue righteousness and love so that we may find life, prosperity, and honor. Amen.”

FAITHFULNESS

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our gracious Lord, thank you for this day that we can meet again as a family. Teach us to learn from you and from each other that we may glorify your name. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Read the following Bible verse:

“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.” (Lamentations 3:22-23)

Faithfulness is being true to someone or something. When you are faithful you can be counted on and trusted. You keep your commitments regardless of what you would rather do.

God is faithful even if events or circumstances are difficult and don’t always appear to work out as we think they should. God’s faithfulness means He will never violate His character, but He will bring to pass in our lives that which will work together for His glory and our good.

Being faithful means you keep your promises. You only make agreements you can keep. If you say you will do something for someone else, you do it even if you feel like doing something else instead.

Mark Hatfield tells of touring Calcutta, India with Mother Teresa and visiting the so-called “House of Dying,” where sick children are cared for in their last days, and the dispensary, where the poor line up by the hundreds to receive medical attention. Watching Mother Teresa minister to these people, feeding, and nursing those left by others to die, Hatfield was overwhelmed by the sheer magnitude of the suffering she and her co-workers face daily. “How can you bear the load without being crushed by it?” he asked. Mother Teresa replied, “My dear Senator, I am not called to be successful, I am called to be faithful.”

Affirm and Act

Affirm each other by completing this sentence:

“I affirm you for your faithfulness in _____.”

Help each one to be more faithful to each other. Let each one ask this question:

“How can I be more faithful to our family?”

Make this declaration together:

“God is faithful and we seek to be faithful to Him. We are faithful to our family and friends. We keep our promises.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What do you like best in our discussion today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *"I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude)."*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

"Almighty God, thank you because you are always faithful even though we are not. Please help us to be faithful to you and to each other that we may honor you in our lives. Amen"

PRAYERFULNESS

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Lord, thank you for the privilege of coming to you as our Father and friend. Teach us your way. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Complete each statement with the first thing that comes to your mind:

When I receive unexpected blessings, I _____

When I accomplished an important task, I _____

When I am deeply hurt, I _____

When I am in big trouble _____

When I am confused and don't know what to do, I _____

Discuss

Are there common answers given? What do you notice about the responses? Do you agree that one response to all the statements could be to **pray**?

The Scripture exhorts us to pray at all times and in all circumstances:

James 3:13-14 reads: “Are you hurting? Pray. Do you feel great? Sing. Are you sick? Call the church leaders together to pray and anoint you with oil in the name of the Master.” (The Message)

While the Apostle Paul in I Thessalonians 5:16-18 said: “Be cheerful no matter what; pray all the time; thank God no matter what happens. This is the way God wants you who belong to Christ Jesus to live.” (The Message)

Prayerfulness can be practiced in many ways. Prayer is talking with God. We can do this in silence or out loud. We can write, sing, or dance in prayer.

Prayerfulness is living in a way that shows that you are in the presence of your Creator. To pray all the time does not literally mean ‘mumbling words to God’ but rather as one author said: “*I think it means that there is a spirit of dependence that should permeate all we do. This is the very spirit and essence of prayer. So, even when we are not speaking consciously to God, there is a deep, abiding dependence on him that is woven into the heart of faith. In that sense, we "pray" or have the spirit of prayer continuously.*” (John Piper)

Prayer is a relationship more than an activity. When we pray, our spirit connects with God. Prayer is a gift from Him. Being prayerful is about having a relationship with Christ Jesus so that

you can not only cry out to him in times of joy and sorrow, but it also means taking time to listen to what God is saying to you. God

Affirm and Act

When a family takes time to pray, here's what they are saying:

- “Lord, we love You and want to be with You.”
- “Lord, we are totally dependent on You for everything.”
- “Lord, You are the Head of our home.”
- “Lord, bring us into harmony with you and each other.

Living and praying together under Christ's authority places us under His umbrella of safety and provides His power and grace. A safe home, satisfied with Jesus, brings God great glory and brings the people great blessing.

Spend some time now as a family to pray. Form a circle, hold each other's hands and talk with God as a Father and a friend.

Say this affirmation together:

“Thank you, God, for the gift of prayer. Help us to live in your presence and to be a family that always prays.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What was most helpful to you in our discussion today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *“I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).”*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Our Father, help us to find great delight and strength as we walk and talk with You. Make our lives to be like beautiful prayers that rise to your throne of grace. Amen.”

FRIENDLINESS

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our loving Father, we praise you for you are gracious and merciful. May this time with our family bring honor and glory to your name. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Ask: Have you ever experienced receiving a good deed (e.g. being cared for, being welcomed, etc.) by someone you don't know? How did you feel?

Discuss:

Friendliness is taking an interest in other people, being warm and courteous. When you are friendly, you happily share the things you have. You share your time, your ideas, and your feelings. You share yourself.

Friendliness is going out of your way to make others feel welcome or to make a stranger feel at home. Friendliness is sharing the good times and the bad times together.

Friendliness is caring without being asked to care. Friendliness is the best cure for loneliness.

You are practicing friendliness when you:

- Like yourself and know you have a lot to offer.
- Smile and greet people courteously.
- Get to know people and let them get to know you.
- Show care when a friend needs you.
- Are friendly to people who look and act differently.
- Make someone new feel welcome.

In what ways are you practicing friendliness?

Affirm and Act

Affirm each other by completing this sentence:

“I believe you have a lot to offer to others because you are _____.”

What specific ways can you practice friendliness? Complete this sentence:

“I will be friendly to _____ by _____.”

Say this affirmation together:

“We are friendly. We smile and greet people. We show interest in others. We like ourselves and know that our friendship is worth a lot.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What encouraged you in our discussion today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *“I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).”*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Almighty God, thank you because you have made each one of us special in your sight. Teach us to use our gifts to share your love and goodness with others. Amen.”

SELF-DISCIPLINE

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

Dear God, we welcome you in our midst. We open our hearts and hands to receive what you have in store for us today. Amen.

Engage and Examine

What is your favorite sport or who is your favorite athlete?

What do you think are the top three things needed to excel in such sports?

Discuss

An athlete needs to exercise mastery over his body during his training. If he is to win, it is mandatory on him that he limits his freedoms: abstain from junk foods for weight control and monitor his sleep to preserve his strength. Following such rigors requires self-discipline.

Likewise, this same self-control is required for anyone who wants to live a purposive life. Self-discipline means self-control. It is getting yourself to do what you really want to do, rather than being tossed around by your feelings and thoughts. It is choosing to do what you feel is right. Paul writes, “Every athlete exercises self-control in all things” (1 Cor. 9:25). Paul uses this analogy to show how self-discipline is needed to win the race before us and to live the life that pleases God. We live for a purpose, we have a goal and we want to please God. We need self-discipline if we are to achieve these.

What does it mean to practice self-discipline?

You practice self-discipline when you watch yourself and not allow your emotions to dictate all your actions; when you create routines or structures for yourself that facilitate growth and well-being (for example, having a reflection or prayer time each day, or exercising daily for 30 minutes, eating well, etc.)

It is important to remember that self-discipline or self-control is a fruit of the Spirit. It is not a direct result of our own effort alone. It is the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit that gives us the power and ability to exercise self-control. God’s Spirit gives us the grace to ‘rule over’ our desire, behavior, or cravings that are counterproductive or contrary to what is pleasing and good. We practice this fruit of the Spirit when we nurture our relationship with God.

As Paul said, “God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline” (2 Timothy 1:7). Indeed, by nature we are sinful but we are not to be controlled by sin, but by the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9), who helps us in our weakness, which makes us able to say “no” to sin. Self-discipline then becomes an overflow of God’s work in us.

Affirm and Act

What if you could practice self-discipline in everything you do? How would your life change? Think of these questions for a moment. Then name some areas your life might change if you practice self-discipline: (e.g. your financial health, time spent with family, etc.)

Name one action you will do as a response to what you learned today.

Make this affirmation aloud:

I have self-discipline. I use my time well and get things done. I choose my actions with detachment.

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What one thing has become clear for you now?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: "*I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).*"

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

"Father, we come to you today in need of self-discipline. Our hearts feel weak. We come in need of your grace and power. Holy Spirit, come fill us. Where there are temptations, help us to deliberately walk away from them. Where there are distractions, help us to stay focused and true to the things you have called us to. Where there are obstacles before us, may your light shine a way through. Lord, we ask that with your strength and love to guide us, we might live a simple and holy life. Amen."

HONESTY

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our gracious Lord, thank you for this world that you created and for our home that we can live together. May we honor you in our family time today. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Ask: Why do you think is it difficult to be honest at all times?

Discuss:

Being honest is being sincere, open, trustworthy, and truthful. When people are honest, they can be relied on not to lie, cheat, or steal.

Honesty is telling the truth no matter what. It is being truthful even when admitting the truth could make someone disappointed. Honesty means not exaggerating something just to impress others.

Sometimes people aren't honest with themselves. They try and pretend that something doesn't matter even when it really does—like hurting someone's feelings. When someone isn't honest with herself about something, she usually isn't honest with others.

When you are honest with yourself, you have a chance to correct your mistakes. When you are honest with others, they know they can believe you.

Tell the truth, no matter what. If you make a mistake, admit it. It's the best way to fix things. Be honest with yourself, and you will always be able to be honest with others.

You are practicing honesty when you:

- Say what you mean and mean what you say.
- Tell the truth tactfully.
- Admit your mistakes.
- Refuse to lie, cheat, or steal.
- Are true to yourself and do what you know is right.

In what ways are you practicing honesty?

Affirm and Act

Affirm each other by completing this sentence:

“I affirm you for your honesty in _____.”

What specific ways can you practice honesty? Complete this sentence:

“I will practice honesty by _____.”

Say this affirmation together:

“We are honest. We can be trusted to keep our word. We have no need to impress others. We accept ourselves. We tell the truth, kindly and tactfully.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What was most helpful to you in our discussion today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *“I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).”*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Almighty God, thank you because you know all our thoughts and our hearts’ desires. Thank you because we can be honest with you at all times. May you grant us grace and strength, to be honest with ourselves and with others at all times. May your truth be always on our lips and in our hearts. Help us find freedom in being true to others and ourselves. Amen.”

MODESTY

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our gracious Lord, we thank you for calling us to belong to you. Thank you that you are with us. Please continue to mold us to be the people you desire us to be. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Do: Read each statement and decide whether one should STOP (don't do it); GO (yes, that's the way), or WAIT (it depends). Share your answer and thoughts about it.

- You have just received monetary gifts and you want to treat your friends to a really nice meal on your birthday.
- If you have it, flaunt it! As long as you are comfortable, wear anything you like.
- You are thinking of putting up a large tarpaulin outside your house to announce that your children made it to the honor roll.
- You are on a vacation trip and you see to it that your friends know that you are having a grand time by posting photos and videos on your social media accounts.

Discuss

Each day, life offers us the opportunity to choose how we are to conduct ourselves or how we are to reflect our values and beliefs. Like in the scenarios above, we can show modesty or excess, propriety or insensitivity.

What is modesty?

Modesty is having a sense of self-respect. When you practice modesty you are not showy or boastful. Modesty comes when you have a sense of self-acceptance and quiet pride. Modesty is to value yourself and to have a sense of privacy about your body.

Modesty means having a sense of what is appropriate and inappropriate about showing your body as well as how you allow others to touch you. It is keeping private parts of your body to yourself and not allowing others to touch you in ways that abuse your privacy. People who practice modesty wear clothing that is both attractive and respectful. This applies both to women and men.

Modesty means to accept praise without getting conceited or puffed up with a feeling of superiority. You are grateful for your gifts, and you know that others have gifts too.

Modesty displays goodness in a balanced way: one of elegance rather than affluence, economy rather than extravagance, naturalness rather than flashiness or pretension. Modesty is the virtue that allows one to focus on what is good without being distracted by superficialities.

We read in I Samuel 16:7: “The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”

Modesty springs from the inside, showing its expression outwardly or externally. It is an attitude of the heart. You can be modest when you know your real worth is not defined by what others think or say.

Affirm and Act

How can modesty be displayed in the following situations? Choose one and share your response.

- You studied very well and got the highest grade in Math.
- You feel pressured to buy a flashy outfit because everyone else (in your circle) is wearing it.
- Someone starts to tease you and tickle you inappropriately.

Name one action that you will do to practice or nurture modesty.

Say this together:

“I am modest. I have no need to brag or attract attention. I am worthy of attention just as I am.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What was most helpful to you in our discussion today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *“I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).”*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Lord, thank you that you know us and value us. Give us the grace to speak and act in ways that are decent, modest, and true. Amen.”

HOPE

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our loving Father, thank you for this day and this time that we can meet again as a family. May we learn more of your ways and be a blessing to each other. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Ask: What are your hopes and dreams?

Discuss:

Hope is a belief in a positive outcome related to events and circumstances in one’s life. Hope is the expectation of something better tomorrow. Hope is a powerful light that helps us navigate through the dark night to the new dawn.

The Bible offers an ultimate hope that in the end, God will restore all things according to his purposes. This will happen in the future appearing of Jesus when he will perform the final judgment to end all evil and to put all things right. Those who belong to him will be resurrected, and creation will be renewed, and God will dwell with his people.

I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, “Look, God’s home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.” (Revelation 21:3-4)

This future hope of the fullness of life in God’s new creation has arrived in the present through the death and resurrection of Jesus. What God will do to his people and to the whole creation, God has done in raising Jesus from the dead.

Through the Holy Spirit, we can experience in the present this new life while waiting for it to be fully revealed on the future appearing of Jesus. We are also empowered by the Spirit to anticipate in the present our ultimate hope in Jesus by being agents of love and hope in this present world.

Affirm and Act

Is there a situation in your life or in your family where you need hope right now? How can you practice hope in this situation?

Read these Bible verses together:

“We put our hope in the Lord. He is our help and our shield. In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name. Let your unfailing love surround us, Lord, for our hope is in you alone.” (Psalm 33:20-22)

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What is one thought that you want to remember most in our discussion today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *"I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude)."*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

"Almighty God, thank you because we can put our hope in you. Thank you that in you we can have hope in the present because of our future hope that you will restore all things in Jesus. May this hope give meaning to our lives that we may serve and honor you all our days. Amen"

FAITH

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our Heavenly Father, open our ears that we may hear you today. Open our hearts that we may know you more. Amen.”

Engage and Examine

Read Luke 8:43-48 (Good News Translation):

Among them was a woman who had suffered from severe bleeding for twelve years; she had spent all she had on doctors,[a] but no one had been able to cure her. She came up in the crowd behind Jesus and touched the edge of his cloak, and her bleeding stopped at once. Jesus asked, “Who touched me?”

Everyone denied it, and Peter said, “Master, the people are all around you and crowding in on you.”

But Jesus said, “Someone touched me, for I knew it when power went out of me.” The woman saw that she had been found out, so she came trembling and threw herself at Jesus' feet. There in front of everybody, she told him why she had touched him and how she had been healed at once. Jesus said to her, “My daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace.”

Discuss and Reflect:

For a moment, imagine what it would be like to be the woman in this narrative. What do you think are her dominant thoughts and feelings? Why so?

Desperation, fear, pain, expectant hope, belief-- these may be some of the words that come to mind, as you try to put yourself in her shoes. She has been bleeding for 12 years. According to the Law of Moses, a woman was ceremonially unclean during her monthly period. Moreover, “anyone who touches her will (also) be unclean till evening” (Leviticus 15:19). That meant that this woman could not participate in the worship life of the temple. Her medical condition effectively excommunicated her from her community. The doctors couldn't help her, and seeking treatment had impoverished her; drained everything she had.

What struck you about the woman's action?

Putting all of her faith in Jesus, she had desperately groped for his garment as he passed by. Without reservation, she reached out to Jesus, believing what is not visible to her eyes.

What surprised you about Jesus' response?

Jesus knew that power had gone out from him. He is always in complete control of his divine nature and of his power. He made a point of telling his disciples and the crowd what had

happened so that they would see the importance of faith. Dozens or hundreds of people had touched his garment with no effect beyond what getting an autograph from a celebrity would bring today—a momentary thrill. But this woman had touched his garment trusting that he was the Messiah. In an instant, she was healed, and Jesus affirmed her faith.

What does this tell us about faith? Jesus declared that faith made the woman well.

Her healing didn't depend on her coming into contact with Jesus' robe. Her faith caused her to reach out to him. Jesus himself had inspired and planted that faith in her already. In the book of Mark, it is said that she came "when she heard about Jesus" (Mark 5:27). She was saved by means of her faith, just as you and I are saved from our sins by our faith (Ephesians 2:8). Her rescue was proven by the end of her flow of blood. She was healed. You and I have been healed from the guilt of our sins by the outpouring of Jesus' blood on the cross. She had an opportunity to confess her faith in front of everyone there, the whole crowd. When you have an opportunity, don't forget to tell people who it is you trust, and why.

Affirm and Act

Have you come to a point when you desperately came to God in your greatest need and placed your faith in Him? If you have not, how can the example of the woman help you?

Name one or two areas of your life where you need to exercise faith more.

Declare this truth aloud: (Hebrews 11:1-2 The Message)

"The fundamental fact of existence is that this trust in God, this faith, is the firm foundation under everything that makes life worth living. It's our handle on what we can't see. The act of faith is what distinguished our ancestors, set them above the crowd. By faith, we see the world called into existence by God's word, what we see created by what we don't see."

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What struck you most in our discussion today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: "*I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).*"

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

“Lord, thank you for the gift of faith. We acknowledge that at times our faith falters. Help our unbelief! Cause us to put our confidence in You and stand in your promises even though circumstances tell us to do otherwise. We put our faith in you, our Savior and King Amen.”

TOLERANCE

Ready

Pray in your own words or read this prayer aloud:

“Our gracious Lord, thank you for the air we breathe, for the ground we walk on, for the food we eat, for the love we share, all because of your love and grace. May we show your love in our family time today. Amen”

Engage and Examine

Ask each family member: What would you do in the following situations?

- Your sister/brother has a really annoying habit she/he can't seem to change.
- Your friend and you disagree on who is the best President.
- You meet someone with a strange accent.

Discuss:

Tolerance is being able to accept things that you wish were different. When you practice tolerance, you don't expect others to think, look, or act just like you. You accept differences. You have the patience and flexibility to live with things you don't like.

You forgive others instead of holding a grudge or wishing they would change. If you don't like something about a relationship, instead of trying to change the other person, you focus on changing yourself. You can agree to disagree with someone. You don't insist on the other person seeing things your way.

Tolerance does not mean being passive when someone is unjust or abusive. Behaviors that disrespect or hurt others, like being mean or bullying, or behaviors that break social rules, like lying or stealing, should not be tolerated. Tolerance is about accepting people for who they are — not about accepting bad behavior.

Affirm and Act

How have you seen your family members accept you for who you are even if you disagree on certain matters?

How would you like your family members to accept you for who you are even if you are different? Tell them respectfully by completing this sentence:

“I wish you would practice tolerance for me by _____.”

Make this declaration together:

“We practice tolerance. We accept people for who they are. We are open to differences. We accept the things we cannot change.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What new thing did you learn today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *"I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude)."*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

"God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference. Amen." (Reinhold Niebuhr)

HUMOR

Ready

You may request someone in your family to lead the opening prayer.

Engage and Examine

Read the following statements about humor. Which one do you like best?

- Nothing shows a man's character more than what he laughs at.
- Common sense and a sense of humor are the same, moving at different speeds. A sense of humor is just common sense, dancing.
- A good laugh is like manure to a farmer—it doesn't do any good until you spread it around.
- Humor is also a creation of God and a smile is one of the greatest blessings of life.
- True humor springs not more from the head than from the heart. It is not contempt; its essence is love. It issues not in laughter but in still smiles, which lie far deeper.

Discuss:

Humor is the ability to laugh at ourselves – to brighten any situation or conversation by finding the light, quirky dimensions. Humor helps us to forgive or to admit our own errors. It diffuses conflict. It makes hard times less heavy. When we cultivate humor, we are letting go of other emotions: bitterness, resentment, or anger.

Like nothing else can, humor allows us to see things in a new light: the foolishness of our preoccupations, our hypocrisies, and inconsistencies, our tendency to see ourselves as the center of the universe. Used wrongly humor can be cruel or distancing. But in the service of other virtues, humor brings us together and helps us grow.

For humor to be effective, it must not be hurtful or offensive to others. Laughing with ourselves and others, and not at others, is the key to using humor effectively. In other words, make fun of the situation, not the person. Humor can be used to “break the ice” in a tense or serious situation. Humorous situations can uplift the mood of individuals or groups.

Humor can also spread goodwill. Humor is a way of unifying a group – a shared humorous experience increases the bonds between families, friends, or co-workers – as it creates rapport with others. Ben Franklin said it well, “Joy is not in things; it is in us.”

You are practicing humor when:

- You laugh at yourself.
- You don't take yourself too seriously.
- You look at the funny side of things.
- You make fun of the situation, not the person.
- You bring laughter and smiles to others.

Affirm and Act

How does each of your family members bring laughter and smiles to others?

What is your favorite joke? Share it with your family.

What advice can you give to each family member so that she/he can cultivate a good sense of humor?

Make this affirmation together:

“We laugh at ourselves. We look at the funny side of things. We make fun of the situation, not the person. We bring laughter and smiles to others.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What do you like best in our discussion today?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *“I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).”*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

Grant me, O Lord, good digestion, and also something to digest.

Grant me a healthy body, and the necessary good humor to maintain it.

Grant me a simple soul that knows to treasure all that is good and that doesn't frighten easily at the sight of evil, but rather finds the means to put things back in their place.

Give me a soul that knows not boredom, grumblings, sighs, and laments, nor excess of stress, because of that obstructing thing called “I.”

Grant me, O Lord, a sense of good humor.

Allow me the grace to be able to take a joke to discover in life a bit of joy, and to be able to share it with others. (*St. Thomas More*)

SIMPLICITY

Ready

You may request someone in your family to lead the opening prayer.

Engage and Examine

Read the following statements about simplicity. Which one do you like best? Why?

- Simplicity is the virtue of removing unrelated things to reveal the essence.
- A simple person is honest, sincere, and straightforward. Simplicity is single-mindedness.
- Simplicity is not about a life of poverty, but a life of purpose.
- Live simply so that others may simply live.

Discuss:

By living simply you will come to know what really matters in your life and be less afraid of not having more and more things. When you live simply you don't look out for the next thing to buy or follow. Living simply gives you time to think of others, do good, and care for creation.

Practicing simplicity creates space to help us see what is truly important in life and opens up our capacity for wonder, to see the beauty of the simple things in life, and to think of others.

Reflecting on how to live more simply can, little by little, help us realize that we don't need that many things to live a happy life. Living simply helps us to let go of our control over things and other people and put more trust in God.

A good way to practice simplicity is to learn to have gratitude for the good things that happen each day. This will help us learn what is really important in life. We can practice simplicity by thinking of others first rather than ourselves, by trying to be fair in our decisions and actions, and by giving away things that we really do not need.

You are practicing simplicity when:

- You understand that simple things can make you happy.
- You are thankful for all you have.
- You can work, play, rest, and pray each day.
- You share your things with those who need your help.
- You do not waste food or resources.
- You only take what you need.

In what ways are you practicing simplicity?

Affirm and Act

Who among your family members would you describe as a very simple person or someone practicing simplicity? What can you learn from her or him?

Is your identity bound up with the things you possess or do not possess?

How can you live more simply so that you are happy with what you need – no more, no less?

Make this declaration together:

“We know what really matters in life. We can give time to think of others, do good, and care for creation. Living simply helps us put more trust in God.”

Put Together and Pray

Ask: What one thing has become clear for you now?

(After each one has shared, do the next task.)

Speak blessing: Declare a blessing or wish to each other. It can be a habit, attitude, or character that you want a member of the family to have. It can be related or not related to today's topic. Start from the youngest member to the oldest member of the family. After everyone has spoken their wish to the youngest member in one round, then move on to the next member until the oldest (e.g. Tatay or Lolo) in the family has been blessed. Each may begin by saying: *“I wish you _____ or I bless you with (character or attitude).”*

Closing prayer by the parent: (Read the prayer aloud)

Lord, grant us simplicity so that our lives may be welcoming, modest, and generous.

Lord, grant us simplicity so that our lives may be so transparent that your light can pass through them.

Lord grant us your simplicity to make our lives flourish with love and goodness. Amen
(Mario di Carlo)

SOURCES

“The Family Virtues Guide: Simple Ways to Bring Out the Best in Our Children and Ourselves” by Linda Kavelin Popov with Dan Popov, Ph.D. and John Kavelin (New York: Plume, 1997)

<https://www.unicef.org/philippines/stories/stories-frontline>

<https://bibleproject.com/learn/justice/>

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Bible-excellence.html>

<https://www.christianity.com/wiki/god/what-does-it-mean-to-have-reverence-for-god.html>

<https://drdanmerritt.com/2019/10/11/what-is-meant-by-the-faithfulness-of-god/>

<https://virtuefirst.info/virtues/faithfulness/>

<https://virtuefirst.info/virtues/hope/>

<https://virtuefirst.info/virtues/tolerance/>

<https://www.virtuestoliveby.org/spring-digital-resources>

<https://en.wikiversity.org/wiki/Virtues/Simplicity>

<https://ministryspark.com/blessings-for-children/>

<https://en.wikiversity.org/wiki/Virtues/Humor>

<https://virtuefirst.info/virtues/humor/>

<https://www.irishcentral.com/culture/an-old-irish-blessing-for-love-and-laughter>

https://www.gotoquiz.com/humility_quotient_test

https://www.living-prayers.com/petitions/prayer_for_self_control.html#ixzz6yflTeXzs