

WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE

YEAR 1, 4th Sunday of Lent

Explain that the facilitators are going to stay out of the conversation and let the participants be honest and upfront with each other about their answers. Give the group the first scenario illustrated with two opposing pictures (one illustrating “life-giving” activities and the other illustrating life-taking or “brackish” activities. (See the ready-made visuals and scenarios below.) Do not reveal which activity belongs to which category and keep the categories as hidden information for now. Then ask the group “Which option do you seek, picture A or picture B?” in the scenario. It may be more effective to have the group raise their hands as each option is called. Invite the participants to then explain why they are in favor of their chosen options (3 minutes for each scenario). Repeat until all the scenarios have been discussed and then show them the final page where all the “life-giving” options are illustrated on the top row as option A and all the life-taking “brackish” options are illustrated on the bottom row as option B. First ask the group, “What are the major differences between these two groups?” Read James 3:11-18

“Does a spring gush forth from the same opening both pure and brackish water? Can a fig tree, my brothers, produce olives, or a grapevine figs? Neither can salt water yield fresh. Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show his works by a good life in the humility that comes from wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. Wisdom of this kind does not come down from above but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every foul practice. But the wisdom from above is first of all pure, then peaceable, gentle, compliant, full of mercy and good fruits, without inconstancy or insincerity. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for those who cultivate peace.”

Then proceed to *rhetorically* ask, “Which would you choose?” Explain to the group that James warns that salt water may appear life-giving because it looks like good drinking water but in actuality it will slowly kill. Ask, “How are the activities in option B like salt or brackish water and option A like fresh water? How do we know option A is from God and option B is from this world?” (Qualify that the activities from option B are not of themselves life-taking but the way that we use them in “jealousy and selfish ambition” is most definitely life-taking.)

Explain that there is “love” and “freedom” everywhere, in this world, but that its fruits (sin/separation from God) will never give us a satisfying drop to drink. Explain how James references Christ’s own depictions: “Jesus answered and said to her (the Samaritan woman at the well), ‘Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again; but whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst; the water I shall give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.’” (John 4:13-14) and “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.” (John 15:5)

Share with the group that it takes the time and effort to find fresh clean water to drink in this world but that all the effort will save your life:

- Learn to be still with the Lord/Pray
- Learn to be alone (not lonely!)
- Don’t be afraid to try radical new things
- Live counter-culturally (confident in God’s love, following God’s lead)
- Give to others what the Lord has given to you
- Forgive and renew relationships (love your neighbor as yourself, no matter what!)

<u>Scenario</u>	<u>Picture A / Picture B</u>
1. You are tired , which option do you seek?	(A) Resting in nature / (B) Sleeping the day away
2. You want to unite your friends , which option do you seek?	(A) After school excitement / (B) Lunch talk
3. You have so much to do , which option do you seek?	(A) Pray the rosary / (B) Get it done now
4. You want some attention , which option do you seek?	(A) Gathering / (B) Party
5. You are feeling overwhelmed , which option do you seek?	(A) Watching TV / (B) Go to Mass