

## OPENING PRAYER:

God, our Creator and Father, we thank you for your many blessings to us. You call us to LOVE BIG, to generously respond to your abundant love for us, especially shown in Jesus. Be with us now as we think about how we can share BIG LOVE, especially at this troubling time. Amen.

READING: *The Greatest Commandment*

One of the scribes asked him, "Which is the first of all the commandments?" Jesus replied, "The first is this: 'Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is Lord alone! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." The scribe said to him, "Well said, teacher. You are right in saying, 'He is One and there is no other than he.' And 'to love him with all your heart, with all your understanding, with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself' is worth more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices." And when Jesus saw that he answered with understanding, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God."

Mark 12: 28 -34

## QUESTIONS to ask one another and reflect on:

How do I show my love for God?

- how can I love God with my whole heart; what would that look like?
- how can I love God with all my soul; how would that feel?
- how can I love God with all my mind; what does that mean for what I think about and what I focus on and how I make decisions?
- how can I love God with all my strength; what does that mean about how I act, how devoted I am to prayer, to praising God and expressing my thankfulness to God?

How do I show BIG LOVE to God?

How do I show that I love my neighbor as myself?

- how do I love myself; what does that look like in how I care for myself - spiritually, physically, socially, educationally, financially – how do I meet my own needs?

How do I show BIG LOVE to myself?

How do I love my neighbor as myself?

- who is my neighbor?
- what are some of the needs of my neighbor?
- how can I be observant and pay attention to the needs of my neighbor?
- how can I love my neighbor by helping them to meet one of their needs?

How can I show BIG LOVE to my neighbor?

## CLOSING PRAYER:

God, you are so caring and loving to us. You give us so much love every moment of our lives. Thank you, we are so grateful. We want to love like you. We want to LOVE BIG just like you do. We want to LOVE BIG just as we are commanded to do. Be with us today as we try to love you with all our heart, all our soul, all our mind and all our strength. Be with us today as we make decisions to take care of ourselves with the same tenderness and patience you give to us. Be with us today as we pay attention to our neighbor with the same generosity, kindness and acceptance that we show ourselves and that you give to us. Help us to LOVE BIG today - always in the name of Jesus and always grateful for your BIG LOVE. AMEN.

**Daily Examen for Families:** The Daily Examen is prayerful reflection on the events of the day to become aware of God's presence and how to follow him more closely. The Examen is an ancient practice in the Church that can help us see God's hand at work in our whole experience.

First few minutes:

Invite everyone to settle in a comfortable position; dim the lights, turn off the phones, tv, etc.,

Invite them to slow down their breathing (**PAUSE**); to breathe deeply to calm themselves; to put aside their thoughts and anything that would distract them ...

Pray for the Holy Spirit – invite the Holy Spirit to be with them (1-2 minutes)

*Be still, and know I AM God. Psalm 46: 10*

- Invite them to think back on their day (**REVIEW**); ask the Holy Spirit to help them look through the events, actions and words of the day and be thankful for God's blessings:
  - what blessed you today?
  - what brought you joy/happiness?
  - where did you see goodness and kindness or beauty?
  - what made you laugh?
  - what made you feel safe or loved? (2 minutes)
- Invite them to think back (**REMEMBER**) and find those moments when they did things that brought them closer to God:
  - when were you loving?
  - when were you kind?
  - when were you helpful? (1-2 minutes)

And when were the times that took you away from God?

- when were you thoughtless?
- when were you mean or impatient?
- when did you act selfishly and not share?
- when could you have done better? (1-2 minutes)

Invite them to thank God for the times they were aware of his presence and to ask forgiveness for the time when they not as loving as they could have been.

- Now invite the Holy Spirit to help look forward to the next day (or the rest of this day) and ask for help (**GRACE**) in being the person God wants them to be.
- Invite them to share any part of their thoughts or feelings from doing this Examen. There is no right or wrong here, just their thoughts and feelings.
- Conclude by prayer the Our Father together and extending a sign of peace and love to one another.