• **Cleaning my Temple**

  Department of Religious Education (DRE)
  • [https://www.goarch.org/](https://www.goarch.org/)

**Objective**

For young people to realize that their body is a temple where Christ lives. They need to continually clean it, so God can shine through them in all they do.

**Age**

JOY (3rd to 6th grade)

**Opening Prayer**

Christ, my Lord, the Giver of light and wisdom, who opened the eyes of the blind man and transformed the fishermen into teachers of the gospel through the coming of the Holy Spirit, shine also in my mind the light of the grace of the Holy Spirit. Help us to understand your lessons and make them a part of our lives for to You I give honor and glory. Amen.

**Activity – Building a House for Jesus**

- Break children into groups of 5 (pay close attention to personalities and compatibility when splitting them). Have an adult with each group.
- Give them a grocery bag filled with a variety of materials (straws, popsicle sticks, play dough, masking tape, stickers, ribbon…)
- Tell them you want them to build a beautiful house for Jesus using only the materials in the bag. To do this, they must remain seated in a circle and not move around. Tell them you will be judging the most beautiful house so when they are done they will present their house to the group and tell us why it is a good house for Jesus to live in.
- Give the children about 30 minutes to work on their houses (adults guide and provide support in their groups).
- When they are done, have them present their houses to the whole group.

**Discussion**

- Tell them, “All these houses are beautiful but not quite beautiful enough for Jesus. But I see one that is perfect for him.” Pick one of the children out of
the group and state, “I think Johnny is perfect for Jesus to live in…oh and there is another one Molly…Maria…Jimmy” name all of the children.

- Christ lives in all of you. Do you know why he wants to live there? *(accept all answers and reflect back)*
  - Because He made you.

- Read: Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s –1 Corinthians 6:19-20

- What does this mean? *(accept all answers and reflect back)*
  - God built you. He paid a price for you by dying on the Cross for our sins. He is a part of us always even those who don’t want him.

- If you had visitors, wouldn’t you want to clean your house?
- Would you want to eat at someone’s house if it was dirty?
  - State: God lives in us even if we are dirty.

- How would you feel if I took an icon and rubbed dirt on it?
  - Since Christ lives in us, we are walking icons. When we sin, it is the same as rubbing dirt on an icon. Remember…we all sin…every one of us!

**Tell story**

*(best if told not read and if you can get a copy of Da Vinci’s Last Supper for a visual)*

Leonardo Da Vinci, the famous artist, was asked to paint the Last Supper, a picture of Jesus and His Twelve Apostles during the Last Supper. Now, since it is a painting and not an icon, Da Vinci used people to pose for the different people in the picture. After 4 years, Da Vinci was asked if he had finished the picture. “No, I didn’t even start,” he said. “I can’t find a model to paint Christ’s Face.”

“Go through all Italy,” said the Pope’s representative, “and take anyone you think is fit for the model of Christ’s face.” Going from place to place, the artist found in a little village and interesting man. His face, his humility, his kindness impressed Da Vinci. He asked him to pose. In a few weeks, he painted Christ’s Face and then the eleven Apostles.

After another four years, the artist was asked again if the picture was ready. “No,” said he, “because this time I am having difficulty in finding a model to make Judas’ face.” “Take this open letter,” said the Pope’s representative. “It is a
command to all to let you pick any one you would like for a model.” The artist went through all the jails. He also went to the prisons of Venice where he saw all types of criminals. One of them, the wildest and meanest, drew his attention. “Come,” Da Vinci told him. “You will be freed. You will have a good salary. All you have to do is sit in from of me for a few weeks.”

Gladly the ugly criminal accepted the offer. The artist started his work. One day, however, the criminal said: “Mr. Da Vinci, you can’t do anything without me. Even when you wanted to paint Christ, you took me as a model, and now that you wish to paint Judas, again you took me as a model.” (taken from Lovely Little Stories for People of All Ages – Polizoidos)

Discussion

- What are things that make our temple dirty? (accept all answers and reflect back)
- What are things that clean our temple? (accept all answers and reflect back)
- When you clean a house do you just do it once and then your done?
- State: Just as we have to keep cleaning our house to make it clean fur us to live in we need to keep cleaning ourselves so that we can be clean for Christ to live in.

Closing Prayer

(if you know the tune teach children to sing it)

Create in me a clean heart O Lord and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence my Lord and keep your Holy Spirit with me. Create in me a clean heart O Lord and renew a right spirit within me.