



Great Lent Giveaway 2017 Life!

Youth Group Session 4 – Loving All Life - from Beginning to End Session by Fr. Robert Holet and Kira Senedak

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Imagine you are going on a trip to your favorite vacation spot, or maybe a place that you wish you could go. Use the space below to describe or sketch your destination. It could be a specific location like Wiakiki Beach in Hawaii or any beach. What makes it a place you would go on your dream vacation?

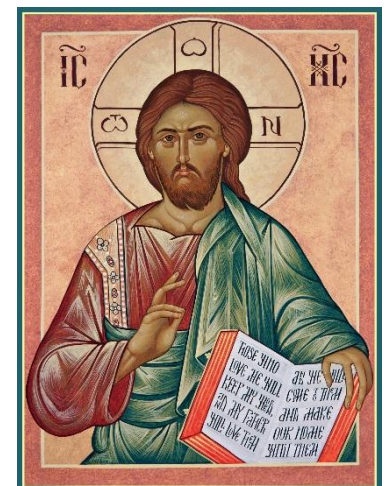
Our lives are a journey to heaven-a destination more amazing than any of the places we imagined earlier.

We don't know exactly what heaven will look like, but what we do know is that being in heaven means being with God for eternity and that He chose all of us to join Him there. Every life- whether it lasts a minute, a year, or 100 years- is created by God in His image and no one is left out or excluded from the opportunity to join Him in heaven. Look at the images you posted in the room. Is there anyone pictured who was not made in the image and likeness of Christ? Look around the room at the people sitting next to you and ask the same question.

Are children Important to God? Read Mark 10:15 –

“Let the little children come to Me, and do not hinder them! For the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” And He took the children in His arms, placed His hands on them, and blessed them.”

If you ever are tempted to think that you are not important, or valued by God, regardless of your age, or gender, or what you’ve done, remember this passage.



God has also given us free will. There is no person who will be unwelcome in God's Kingdom if they have lived a life following His Will and His commandments. The gift of free will also means that we can choose not to follow Him, knowing that our choice means that instead of joining Him in heaven, we will be somewhere away from God for eternity. But God wants us to return to Him so much that He even gives us a way to make things right when we knowingly or accidentally make a mistake. If we are truly sorry and repent through Holy Confession, there is no sin that will be unforgiven.

Even as He was hanging from the cross, Jesus lets us know that this is true. We read in Luke 23: 39-43 *Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, "If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us." But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong." Then he said to Jesus, "Lord remember me when You come into Your kingdom." And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in paradise."*

Which of the two thieves did Jesus love? Which of the two was given the opportunity to join Him in heaven? God loves every person, regardless of age, gender, race, whether we're healthy or near death (like the thief), or even like the criminal in that what we have done has offended Him.

So if God has created everyone, and loves everyone, then it is for us to first respect everyone, and by His grace, love them as part of the human family loved by God.

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