

SCRIPTURE: JESUS AND NICODEMUS *John 3: 1-21 (back side)*

Nicodemus was a leader of the Jews. When he called Jesus 'rabbi' he accepted Jesus as a teacher. Since Jewish officials opposed Jesus, Nicodemus went to him under cover of the night in search of truth. Jesus explained faith to Nicodemus. Through the Spirit we are born from above. Only if we are born from above can we have eternal life in the kingdom of God. We must become like children again. Faith calls for a spiritual rebirth. Later Nicodemus appears in the gospels as someone who had seen the light. The chief priest & Pharisees tried to arrest Jesus while he was speaking in the Temple area during the Feast of Tabernacles. Nicodemus spoke out on his behalf, pointing out that Jesus should have a fair hearing before being condemned. Then, after the crucifixion, Nicodemus brought myrrh and aloes to anoint the body of Jesus.

- **Before reading** this scripture ask your child: How is Jesus light for us? If you had a private meeting with Jesus, what questions might you have for him? How can you speak to Jesus today and grow in faith?
- **After reading** this scripture ask your child: How does faith sometimes demand taking risks? When does the Holy Spirit work in us? How?

Memorization: COMPLETE PSALM 23

Finish reviewing Psalm 23 to make sure your child knows it well.

Vocabulary / Concepts: *Introduce the following words and their meaning by reading these over with your child and discussing their meaning. All of these terms have something to do with Catholic social teaching, the Church's moral understanding of our responsibility to the world around us.*

Catholic Social Doctrine: Also called Catholic social teaching, it is a body of wisdom that has emerged over the last couple of centuries which captures the main principles of justice by which we are to live our lives for the common good of all.

Dignity of the Human Person: The foundational principle for all Catholic moral teaching, including its social doctrine. Every human person's dignity must be protected, respected, and nurtured, not based on any criteria other than being human, no matter how limited.

Natural Moral Law: The "law written in every human heart" which knows the basis of right and wrong, no matter one's background or upbringing or faith. One does not have to be Christian or even a person of faith to know right and wrong and be responsible for one's actions. Those realities that all humans can come to understand as good or bad form the basis of natural law.

Preferential Option for the Poor: All resources ultimately are gifts of God, and therefore they must be used for the common good. Those who are the poorest and most marginal have the greatest claim on such resources.

Principle of the Common Good: It requires that actions and decisions respect the sum total of all conditions that make it possible for all citizens of the earth, individuals, families and wider communities, meet basic needs and achieve human fulfillment. It does not allow us to sacrifice the dignity of any individual for the sake of a larger good.

Solidarity: Solidarity is an attitude, a virtue and a prudential principle which never lets the differences between people and groups become so antagonistic or filled with conflict that one group needs to harm or destroy the other. It includes resistance to evil or corrupt authority but not violent rebellion.

Stewardship: The term refers to how the creation story in Genesis talks about God giving humanity dominion over the earth. Stewardship is a way of living that sees all we have as gifts of God to be used responsibly. Stewardship involves our time, energy, resources, and prayer.

Tithing: The biblical practice of setting aside a percent (10%) of our goods/income and offering them for the work of God through the Church or other charities. It is part of living a stewardship way of life. The idea behind tithing is that these are "first fruits" we set aside—not what we have left over once everything else is accounted for.

NICODEMUS AND JESUS

Based on John 3:1-21

The Pharisee Nicodemus was a leader of the Jewish people. One night he came to visit Jesus and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one can do the signs that you do if he were not from God." Jesus answered him by saying, "Truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after he or she is old? Can one enter a second time into the mother and be born again?" Jesus answered, "Truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said, "You must be born from above." The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." Nicodemus answered him and said, "How can these things be?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand? We speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen, yet you people do not accept our testimony. No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up. Whoever believes in him may have eternal life." Nicodemus responded, "Ah, yes. Through Moses' serpent of bronze, God healed the people bitten by snakes. You say God will give us eternal life?" Jesus replied, "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son. May everyone who believes in him not perish but have eternal life. The light has come into the world, but people loved darkness because their deeds were evil. All who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do good come to the light so that it may be seen that their deeds were done in God." Nicodemus said in reply, "I see you are a wise teacher. I'd like to know more."