



## INTRODUCTION

Talk an experience of failure to do a promise or something agreed upon with someone:

What happened ...

- When a student does not complete an assignment
- Or when a worker does not turn up for work
- Or when a business man does not pay back money borrowed from the bank.

Promises or agreements made between two persons. They are meant to be done for the good of those involved. We obey what has been agreed to make ourselves more responsible and thus make our life easier.

God uses our human way of dealing with us. God has a big promise to us. He makes covenant with us. He wants us to live happily with him forever. We call this God's Covenant. We said Yes but we struggle to keep our *yeses* working. We need someone to help us. Our Gospel today tells us how Christ keeps his YES or Covenant with God.



## OPENING PRAYER

Any appropriate song for Lent



## PHASE ONE REMEMBER THE STORY OF JESUS

### 1.1 Proclamation of the Gospel Story

John 12: 20-33

*(Enthroned the Bible on a table with lighted candle)*

#### A moment of prayerful silence

*We will not be able to understand the Word of God unless God himself opens our hearts. Let us now welcome Jesus as he speaks to us through his Word*

#### Gospel Acclamation:

*Kon in tawo magataman ha akon, nasing ang Gonoo, kinahanglan nga sumunod hiya ha akon. Kan hain ako aadto man liwat an akon surugoon.*

*(Whoever serves me must follow me, says the Lord; and where I am, there also will my servant be)*

### A reading from the holy Gospel according to John



20 Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. 21 They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." 22 Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. 23 Jesus answered them, "*The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.*

24 *Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.* 25 *Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life.* 26 *Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.*

Jesus Speaks about His Death

27 *"Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—'Father, save me from this hour? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour.* 28 *Father, glorify your name."*

Then a voice came from heaven,

*"I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again."*

29 The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder.

Others said, "An angel has spoken to him."

30 Jesus answered, "*This voice has come for your sake, not for mine.* 31 *Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out.* 32 *And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.*" 33 He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord

All reply: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

### 1.2 Brief Guided silent Meditation / Personal Prayer

Which line struck you most?

How did he feel at this particular story? Why?

### 1.3 Text in Context

The Gospel story tells us the last days of Jesus before his passion and death. At this time many people visit Jerusalem to commemorate the departure Israel from Egypt. This is called the Passover festival when lambs are sacrificed and whose blood symbolizes God's saving power to the Israelites.

Greeks come also to Jerusalem for the feast. Some of them are also attracted to Judaism and more so with Jesus' teachings.

#### 1. Who came to Philip? What did they ask him?

Two men who were Greeks asked Philip if they could see Jesus?

2. **What did Philip do?** Philip told Andrew about the two men and both of them asked Jesus about their wanting to see him?

#### 3. What was Jesus' reply to their request? What does it mean?

Jesus did not answer *Yes* or *No* but replied; *The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.*

The time for Jesus to suffer and die on the cross has come to bring healing and salvation to all.

#### 5. What did Jesus say to explain about his death and rising from the dead?

*Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit*

6. **In what sense is Jesus like the grain that falls and dies on the ground and bearing much fruit?** the falling and dying of the grain refers to his death; the bearing of much fruit refers to his resurrection.

**7. What words did Jesus choose not to pray?**

Father, save me from this hour. **Why?** This hour is the purpose for which he came.

**8. What prayer does Jesus make instead?** Father, glorify your name.

**PHASE II REFLECT the Story of the Church (Teachings of the Church)**



John tells us the story of Jesus in a way that makes the readers go beyond what was written. In this text, Jesus words are full of meaning Let us now enter into the feelings of Jesus and what he means to say as he faces his coming death.

Jesus knows what it is like to be crucified. He must have seen how criminals are brutally punished by the Roman Law through crucifixion. And now he is about to surrender himself to the hands of the Jewish and Roman leaders who would put him to trial. He has to struggle against his fears of impending death. Jesus prayed:

*“Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say— Father, save me from this hour? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.” (v.27)*

This line depicts Jesus’ agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. His heart cries out to God in pain. Jesus could have escaped going to Jerusalem where yearly Passover is celebrated and where his opponents are waiting to kill him. But he is determined to have stayed there because it is the hour, the appropriate time to glorify God.

How will he give glory to God at such hour? *Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered; and when he was made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.*

After much agony, Jesus’ heart struggles but obeys the Father. His heart is confused, yet he is able to go beyond to the highest (or perfect) act of love - obedience to the Father. That is dying on the cross to be the source of life to many.

Jesus uses this image to explain his death. *I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.*

What are my fears now? Which one frightens me most?  
What is Jesus telling me about my greatest fear?  
What are those things within me that need to die so that I can bear much fruit?

In Jesus’ heart the **NEW COVENANT** is offered to us. In Jesus, we find a new expression of the covenant.

Jesus does not break the covenant with his Father: his mission of saving us from sinfulness. Jesus’ entire life on earth shows us how to die to oneself in order to give life to others. His full YES to the Father culminates on the Cross. This shows a relationship that is ready to sacrifice oneself for love.

We have seen in the story of Israel how they broke their covenant with God. In spite of their sinfulness. God

remained faithful to them. God never forgot his promise. To Prophet Jeremiah, the Lord said; *“This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel ... “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their heart. I will be their God, and they will be my people. (Jer 31:33)*

God’s covenant with us is no longer written in stone, nor in scroll, but in the heart of men and women who follow Christ. In Christ’s dying and rising, a covenant of loving is marked in our hearts. Christ is alive within us through the Holy Spirit. Christ has made himself available to all. He offers us a friendship that leads to eternal happiness.

Am I thankful for having known Christ, who obeys the Father to the point of dying for the love of me?  
Can I imagine myself without Christ?  
How will I make a difference in my life with Christ?

**PHASE THREE RESPOND – with/ in my personal faith /community faith story**

As we come to the end of Lent, God tells reminds us of his Covenant: *I am your God, and you are my dear child.* Reflect these words for a while. Then write your response to him in form of a short letter.

Start with *Dear God.....*  
End with *Love, (your name)*



**CLOSING PRAYER**

Your letter/s to God can serve as Closing Prayer with any Thanksgiving Song

**BACKGROUND FOR THE CATECHISTS**

**YOUCAT 8**

How does God reveal himself in the Old Testament? God shows himself on the Old Testament as God, who creates the world out of love and remains faithful to men even when they have fallen away from him into sin. God makes it possible to experience him in history: with Noah he establishes a covenant to save all living things. He calls Abraham so as to make him “the father of a multitude of nations” and to bless “all families of the earth” in him. The people of Israel, sprung from Abraham, becomes his special possession... [Then] God frees Israel from slavery in Egypt, establishes a covenant with them on Sinai, and through, Moses gives them the Law. Again and again, God sends prophets to his people to call them to conversion and to the renewal of the covenant. The prophets proclaim that God will establish a new and everlasting covenant which will bring about a radical renewal of definitive redemption. This covenant will be open to all human beings.

**CCC 1965** The New Law or the Law of the Gospel is the perfection here on earth of the divine law, natural and revealed. It is the work of Christ and is expressed particularly in the Sermon on the Mount. It is also the work of the Holy Spirit and through him it becomes the interior law of charity: "I will establish a New Covenant with the house of Israel. . . . I will put my laws into their hands, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

