



Week Leading up to 4.3.22: The Scapegoat

***{Start with reviewing the previous meeting's challenge or discuss prior to sharing this week's challenge.}**

Let's Begin: Think about how the challenge went for the last session. What went well? What was difficult?

Opening Prayer:

Begin with a brief moment of silence shaking off any and all distractions or difficulties of the day and remembering that God is always with us.

Read: **John 8:1-11**

After the Reading Conclude with this prayer:

Heavenly Father, in a time that is so busy and confusing, it is easy to be distracted and set off course. Help us to see and know our true enemy so that we might never be separated from You. Amen.

Reflection or Discussion Question:

1. What are some of your initial reactions to this reading? Is there something in particular that sticks out to you?
2. Do you think it's true that every time we gossip or slander another we are acting like the Pharisees and scribes in today's reading (killing/stoning another's character and good name)?

YouTube Video: Bishop Barron on Rene Girard (9:43 min) - <https://youtu.be/LSzF2OG2ejI>

Reflection or Discussion Questions:

3. Had you ever really considered the role of scapegoating in our cultural and religious mindset before this video?
4. Where do you see scapegoating on display in our modern cultural landscape?
5. Have you ever been part of a scapegoating discussion, either willingly or reluctantly, where others are blamed for some problem or ill?
6. Have you ever been on the receiving end of the scapegoating mechanism (i.e. in your family, at work, etc.)?
7. What are some practical things we can do to act like Jesus in today's reading and stand in the way of people scapegoating?
8. Through this video, Bishop Barron reminds us that Jesus' life, death, and resurrection EXPOSES scapegoating as an evil. Scapegoating is a byproduct of the Fall that sets up an unhealthy "us versus them" mindset. In effect, it's never us vs. them, it's always us vs. sin/the flesh/the devil. Jesus is always trying to point out our TRUE enemy because we keep mistaking our enemy. What do you think about this revelation?

Session Challenges: {Choose one or both}

- Go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation during this season of Lent.
- Invite another person to go with you to Confession (not in the same confessional at the same time of course. Lol)

Closing Prayer: (Leaders: We recommended offering time during the closing prayer for participants to offer personal intentions.)

Lord God, help us to see evil and how we cooperate with it. Holy Spirit, create in us a great desire to be truly accountable for our actions and turn away from sin. Jesus, we thank You for Your example and ask for Your divine guidance in every aspect of our lives. In Your Mighty Name, Amen.

{Optional additional Readings} Sunday Reading 1: **Is 43: 16-21**; Reading 2: **Phil 3:6-14**