

BEC REFLECTION PAPER FOR DECEMBER 2017

MAIN THEME: BE DISCIPLES OF HOPE

Sub-theme: Christ Our Hope

OPENING HYMN: Make me a Channel of Peace

Opening prayer: invite a member of the BEC to say the opening prayer

DIALOGUE

When the world is in chaos

The world is in chaos. There were at least 622 terrorist attacks from January to June 2017 on this planet earth. And this isn't a new development. The brutality of past world wars, the history of constant conflict in the middle-east, the imperialism of European powers, waves of persecution and ethnic cleansing – all these issues date back hundreds and even thousands of years.

We would like to believe that we've been enlightened, that we've evolved past our violent ways, but we are stuck. We are human. We are broken. We are always in conflict, always at war, always in chaos.

Is there hope?

Nearly two thousand years ago, people were asking that same question. You see, Jesus understands that it isn't been only the terrorists who have been lost and broken in sin. It's all of us. We've all gone astray. We've all succumbed to pride, to lust, to anger. We've all lied and used deception to gain advantage over others. We've all failed. We've all blown it.

Jesus did not fix the world's greatest problems with an all-out military blitz, but he did it with a cross and an empty tomb. Then he rose again and commissioned the Church to carry out his special orders – to go out to the whole world and tell every single person and group the Good News!

However, along with everyone, we are trapped in every kind of deception -- moral, religious, political, or otherwise – we need to discover personal peace and hope through a personal relationship with Jesus. He does invite us and welcome us home to hope.

And Pope Francis leads us to reflect on hope in his Advent message of 2016. He says, "When we speak of hope, we often refer to what is not within our power to realize. In fact, what we hope for goes beyond our human strength and our perception."

Yes we have hope

Our hope is found in Jesus words, "In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world," (John 16:33).

Yes we have hope. We, with Jesus can overcome the world!

Questions for sharing

- Where is chaos, confusion, sufferings or disasters both financial and natural in our communities or nation?
- How can we bring hope in such situations?

DISCERNMENT - Rom 8 : 22-25

We are well aware that the whole creation, until this time, has been groaning in labour pains.

And not only that: we too, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we are groaning inside ourselves, waiting with eagerness for our bodies to be set free.

In hope, we already have salvation; in hope, not visibly present, or we should not be hoping -- nobody goes on hoping for something which is already visible.

But having this hope for what we cannot yet see, we are able to wait for it with persevering confidence.

Reflection

1. We read the text three times
2. We take three minutes of silence to listen to the word that the Lord wants to speak to us in our hearts.
3. Anyone who wishes may share on the word/phrase that touched him/her
4. Choose a 'word of life' from the scripture text for our group.

DEED

In our BEC of during this month of December let us bring HOPE to those who in the midst of chaos, thus celebrating Christ our HOPE in our community.

Concluding Prayer: Invite another member of the BEC to say the closing prayer.

Closing hymn: