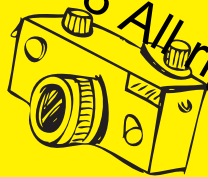
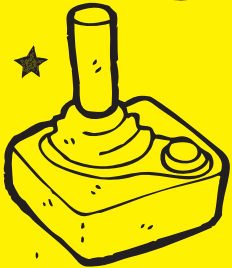




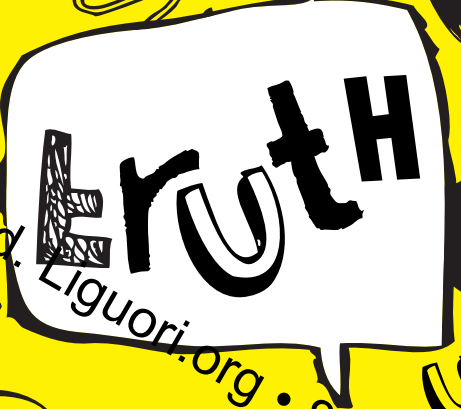
FRIEND FUTURE



HAPPINESS

love

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Danny Curtin 800-325-9557

US

HAPPINESS



GOOD love

OUR JOURNEY



At the beginning of our journey towards confirmation, we are going to think about our identity – what makes us the people we are? And about our dreams... what hopes do you have for the future? What sort of person do you want to be? What do you think God wants for you?

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WE BEGIN

© 2018 WITH A PRAYER

Lord God,

As we begin this journey of faith together, we ask you to guide us along the way, and be patient with us as we follow. Support us, Lord, as we begin to ask questions, as we discuss issues and as we grow in our faith. We pray that you inspire us, Lord, to be open to your leadership in our lives.

Amen.

QUOTE

"Love is from God and everyone who loves is a child of God and knows God."

From the first letter of St John

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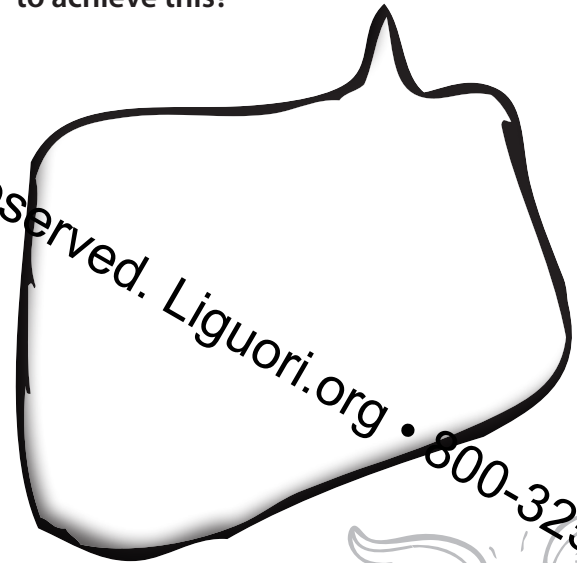
SEE

What makes you happy?

What are the things in our lives that give us happiness? Do our friends make us happy? Does our family make us happy? How about our pets, school holidays, games consoles, the weather?

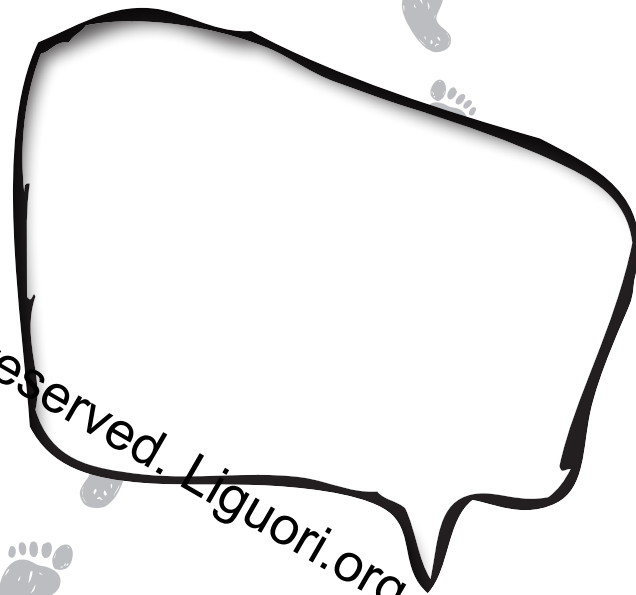
What did you have to do to achieve this?

Think of something you have achieved, which you are pleased with.



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Think of something that happened that
made you happy.

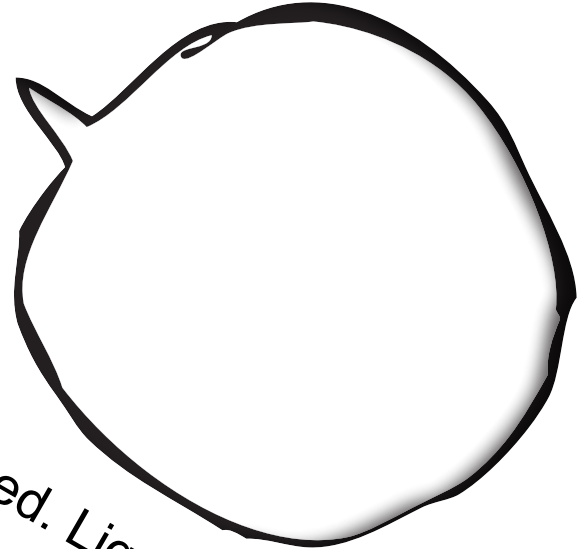


Why did it make
you happy?

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Think of something that happened which made you unhappy, or really wound you up.

Why did it make you unhappy?



QUOTE

"The glory of God is a human being fully alive." *St Irenaeus*

DISCUSS

- Why did these issues make you happy/unhappy?
- What happened?
- Who was involved?
- Whom did it affect?
- How did they feel?

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If you could write your own life story, where would you be in five years' time, ten years' time, and when you are 65 years old?

Five Years' Time:

Ten Years' Time:

When I'm 65 years old:

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JUDGE

Glossary

"Parable"

A story Jesus told which had a deeper meaning.

A: Here is a parable Jesus told his disciples.

It is called "The Lost Sheep" (Luke chapter 15, verses 1-6).

"The tax collectors and the sinners were all seeking the company of Jesus to hear what he had to say, and the Pharisees and the scribes complained. 'This man,' they said, 'welcomes sinners and eats with them.'

So he spoke this parable to them:

'What man among you with a hundred sheep, losing one, would not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the missing one till he found it? And when he found it, would he not joyfully take it on his shoulders and then, when he got home, call together his friends and neighbours
'Rejoice with me,' he would say, 'I have found my sheep that was lost.'"

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HAPPINESS

DISCUSS

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- Who is in this story?
- What happened?
- What was said?
- How might the people present have reacted? Why?
- What does this story say about how God views each one of us?
- What meaning does this story have for our lives?

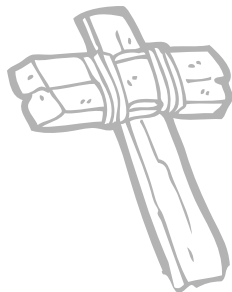


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B: What does our faith say?

Think about the people you love, and the people who love you.
Remember that YOU are very special to God. God loves you deeply.
He will always stay with you, even if you get lost along life's journey.

QUOTE • "I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full." *From the Gospel of St John*



We are so special in God's eyes. We are told at the beginning of the Bible that we are made in "God's own image". This is the message of the story of the lost sheep too – we are worth so much to God that he will search us out and care for us.

Because God loves us, God wants us all to be LOVING towards each other and to do GOOD to one another. When we're little, we're often told by adults to be "good". When they say this they're really asking us to behave ourselves and be nice. As we grow up we learn that being GOOD and being NICE can be two different things. What do you think the difference is? Talk about it with your friends.

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Love

This is how God wants us to be happy:

- To strive for **Goodness**
- To always **Love**.

What does this mean? Is this realistic?

Good

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C: God's life story for you

Look back at the answers you gave on page 7 about how you want your life to be in the future. How many of your answers agree with the values that you have discussed?

If you had to try and write your story, like God would write it, what do you think God would want for you, in five, ten years' time, or when you're 65? Use this space to write down your thoughts.

Five Years' Time:

Ten Years' Time:

When I'm 65 years old:

D: A sacramental sign

When you are confirmed you will be anointed with the oil of chrism. This oil is a sign of your life in God. Anointing, in biblical times, is rich in meaning: oil is a sign of abundance and joy, and marks someone as special – like kings and prophets, and guests to your house. It is a sweet smelling oil, and originally would have been very expensive. It is a sign that you are special in God's eyes, and worth more than money, or power, or anything else the world can provide.

Glossary

"Sacrament"

A sacrament is an outward sign that God is at work within us.

Anointing is God's way of communicating to us, that we are worth more than riches, and will have a fullness of life in God.

- In what ways are you shown that you are valued by other people?
- In what other ways do you know that you are valued by God?



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Meet... Mwende

My name is Mwende. I came from Kenya two years ago. I'm still new to the country and I'm still learning new things. I enjoy being a Christian because it's something I like doing.

I serve in the church as an altar server, and it's something I do because I feel like I'm relaxed here. It's good for me because back home you don't have the opportunity to serve in the church, so being an altar server is a good honour for me.

I would like to be a nutritionist, and to help people know what's good for them and what's bad for them, and what they need to have in life to grow and prosper. An alternative to that: seeing young people happy makes me happy, so that encourages me to be a care worker, or someone who takes care of children.

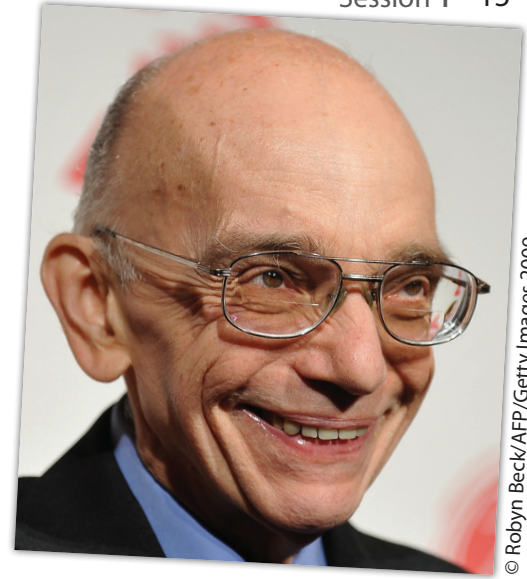


José Antonio Abreu

A Professor of Economics who is also a government minister doesn't really sound like the kind of person to start a youth movement. But that is what José Antonio Abreu has done. He turned his Catholic faith into action. After a distinguished academic career and time spent as the culture minister for the government in his native Venezuela, José Antonio Abreu founded an organisation called El Sistema (The System). It brought classical music lessons to children in the slums. These children were often not in school and many were involved in crime. The capital city, Caracas, is one of the most violent places in the world. Many people thought his scheme would have no effect. They were wrong.

Today more than 400,000 people are involved in El Sistema. Giving children in slums music lessons doesn't just give them the chance to play music, it widens their horizons, gives them a sense of achievement and teaches them skills. All around the world Venezuelan slum kids are getting jobs with top orchestras. One of these is Edicson Ruiz. When he was eleven he was given lessons on the double bass. He said having music in his life saved him: "When I woke up in the morning I didn't know if I would have any food to eat but I knew I could play music and feed my soul."

Today he plays with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, one of the best orchestras in the world.



© Robyn Beck/AFP/Getty Images 2009.

QUOTE

"Let us reveal to our children the beauty of music and music shall reveal to our children the beauty of life." José Antonio Abreu

Deciding on your action

So far we have looked at hopes and aspirations in life, and what causes sadness and happiness. We have thought about what our faith has to tell us about this. When we look at how our real lives and faith combine, it leads to action. Once we have thought through God's perspective on our lives, we are ready to decide on an action.

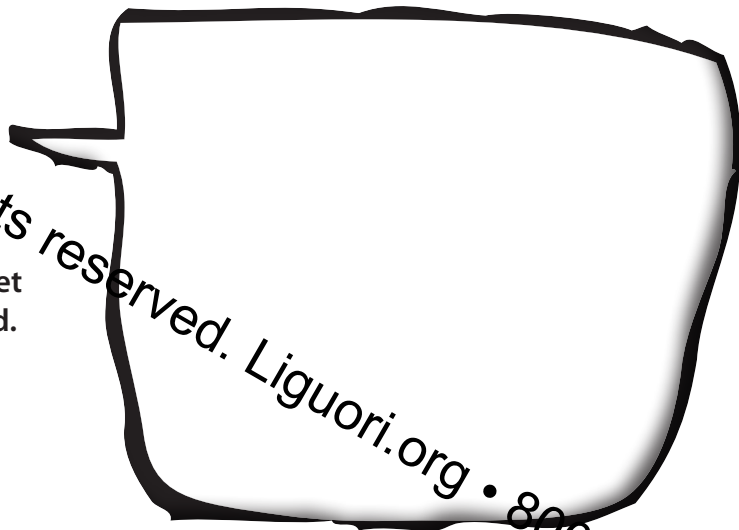
This week I am going to help bring
God's goodness and love to

If you prefer, you can write this bit in when you get home, or keep it as a secret between you and God.

Next week we will hold each other to account for our actions, so if you want to you can share your experiences with the group then.

QUOTE

**"This is my commandment: love one another,
as I have loved you."** *From the Gospel of St John*



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PRAYER

You don't need to be in church to pray. You can pray anywhere, anytime. Here are some prayers and Bible readings which can help you:

Psalm 139

Lord, you examine me and know me,
You know when I sit, when I rise,
You understand my thoughts from afar
You watch when I walk or lie down,
You know every detail of my conduct.

A word is not yet on my tongue
Before you, Lord, know all about it.
You fence me in, behind and in front,
You have laid your hand upon me.
Such amazing knowledge is beyond me,
A height to which I cannot attain.

You created my inmost self,
Knit me together in my mother's womb.
For so many marvels I thank you;
A wonder am I, and all your works are wonders.

A prayer

Thank you, Lord,
for loving us into existence.
Thank you for helping us to understand
the world around us
and for inspiring us to change it for the better.
Protect us, Lord, as we follow you through this
week.
Strengthen us in our quest for happiness for
ourselves
and for all our friends.
Amen.

Our Father

Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us,
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

A simple prayer

You, Lord, are goodness itself,
and the source of all goodness in the world.
Show me, Lord, how I can tap into that energy
and carry your goodness to the situations
that I am faced with in life.
Amen.

Why not try writing a prayer of your own in the space below? Use the prayer to talk to God about your identity – the person you are and the person you want to become. Talk to God about being a **GOOD** and **LOVING** person.



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More Bible readings about love...

Matthew 22: 37-39

Jesus said to him "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second resembles it: You must love your neighbour as yourself."

1 John 4:16

We have recognised for ourselves, and put our faith in, the love God has for us. God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him.

1 Corinthians 13:4-13

Love is always patient and kind; love is never jealous; love is not boastful or conceited, it is never rude and never seeks its own advantage, it does not take offence or store up grievances. Love does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but finds its joy in the truth. It is always ready to make allowances, to trust, to hope and to endure whatever comes.

Love never comes to an end. But if there are prophecies, they will be done away with; if tongues, they will fall silent; and if knowledge, it will be done away with. For we know only imperfectly, and we prophesy imperfectly; but once perfection comes, all imperfect things will be done away with.

When I was a child, I used to talk like a child, and see things as a child does, and think like a child; but now that I have become an adult, I have finished with all childish ways. Now we see only reflections in a mirror, mere riddles, but then we shall be seeing face to face. Now I can know only imperfectly; but then I shall know just as fully as I am myself known.

As it is, these remain: faith, hope and love, the three of them; and the greatest of them is love.