

SALVATION HAS COME TO THIS HOUSE!

Life changes produce joy and justice

Preparation: If the celebration cannot be done outside, in a garden, imagine creating a huge tree with branches. Prepare ‘leaves from the tree’ on which are written the topics of our meetings and the problems raised. Prepare some fruits also, (string or glue) to suspend these leaves from the tree; marker pens. Prepare as many chairs as participants and place them near the tree. The food and drinks brought for the sharing will be placed on a table on the other side of the room-garden, as the people arrive.

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Problem raised</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Problem raised</i>
Stay awake! Do not let your heart grow heavy!	Misleading speeches of sects Meeting N° 1	Jesus asks us to look after the starving!	Link between Communion and Justice Meeting n° 5
John the Baptist ties baptism to a demanding message	Christians in public office Meeting N° 2	Jesus allows a prostitute to touch him.	Sensuality, sex and affectivity Meeting n° 6
A pagan trusts in Jesus’ word.	Cooperation between religions Meeting N° 3	Friendship with God: the greatest of riches!	Obsessive love of money Meeting n° 7
God is patient so that our lives will be fruitful	Conversion has to come down to practice Meeting N° 4	Jesus came to save what appeared to be lost.	Life changes = joy and justice Closing celebration

1. Welcome

Leader: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. The grace and peace of God our Father be abundantly with each and every one of us! Dear friends arriving for the first time: be aware that for a year we have come together to find in the Gospel of Jesus the strength to create a finer and more just world. At the outset we could not have imagined that God was going to bless us so much! Let us now stand to give praise to him and express our joy in song and dance. **Song of praise** (it has to be very lively and have a very good rhythm!)

2. With Jesus our Master

Reader 1: In times of stress and difficult situations, we always reach out for a friendly hand, a word of wisdom, a true friend. In Jesus, we have all that and more!

Reader 2: We want to renew our trust in Jesus by praying the Our Father, as sons and daughters of this Father whose will we want to do far from the temptation of convenience. Let us pray for greater faith and slowly, recite the prayer which Jesus taught us, (join hands.)

Reader 1: We have all prayed the Our Father. It is a prayer that often comes to mind in times of difficulty. This means that the teaching of Jesus enlightens even our most secret thoughts, our fears, our desire to share and our problems in forgiving. We have spoken of this together without feeling shy during our meetings because we are brothers and sisters of one another. We belong to the family of God, to the Christian community.

3. Let us listen to Jesus' Word

Reader 2: Without the counsels and word of Jesus, we would not have changed anything in our lives and we would have left people in their suffering or to be the victims no one defends. Our 'conversions' are a source of joy for the world. Let us listen to the account of a life changed and the joy produced in living justly.

Sung Acclamation of the Word of God (refrain). Then the **Gospel Reading: Lk 19: 1-10**. The reading will be played as a sketch: Narrator, Jesus, and Zacchaeus, (if possible, someone short who can stand on a chair near the tree with its 'leaves' suspended; the crowd (5-6 people who screen Jesus from Zacchaeus). The text will be read once again, but without the sketch, and slowly.

4. Let us examine our journey together

Reader 1: Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus, but just out of curiosity. However, Christ looked on him with trust and respect and everything changed for Zacchaeus! Perhaps one or other of us would like to share telling us why he or she began to come to the meetings and if anything happened to him or her since then! (We let people speak freely.)

Reader 2: The Gospel read in community, as members of the Church compels us to make an examination of conscience. We may be, like the Jericho crowd, an obstacle to behavioural change in our community. In silence, let us make an examination of conscience to see how we have taken into consideration and applied the social implications of our faith here, in our town (silence).

Reader 1: Let us ask God's forgiveness for all that prevents us from accomplishing the mission Jesus has entrusted to us. **Penitential chant** (Kyrie or other).

5. Pray with the Bible for greater strength

Reader 2: We are now going to the tree to 'contemplate' a leaf: the one that brings me a message that seems relevant to my life or that corresponds to the meeting that impressed me most in the course of the year. Later, we can disclose the reason for our choice and/

or say a prayer for self, for the leaders of our countries, or victims of injustice, or Christians complicit in evil towards others, etc. After each intention, we will sing a refrain.

Reader 1: We find the Psalms in the Bible. They express the experience of men and women like us, praising God and seeking faithfulness on the way to God. We can pray **Psalm 1** in two groups:

Happy the man who never follows the advice of the wicked, or loiters on the way that sinners take, or sits about with scoffers, but finds his pleasure in the Law of Yahweh, and murmurs his law day and night.

He is like a tree that is planted by water streams, yielding its fruit in season, its leaves never fading;

It is nothing like this with the wicked, nothing like this! No, these are like chaff blown away by the wind.

The wicked will not stand firm when Judgement comes or sinners when the virtuous assemble.

For Yahweh takes care of the way the virtuous go, but the way of the wicked is doomed.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. *Amen.*

Reader 2: Praising God, singing and praying together is all very well. However Zacchaeus (the former swindler) gives us an example: we have to put it into practice! Each of us will pluck a 'paper fruit' and write what the study of the Word of God produced in him or her as a 'conversion to justice'. Those who wish may share before going 'to make the tree bear fruit' by sticking our 'fruits' on it (let the people speak freely or act in silence).

6. Sharing the joy

Reader 1: Let us together look at this fine tree laden with delicious fruits for everyone's benefit! This tree is a part of our Christian community; of our Church here in ... Seeing our joy in working for justice and living honestly, others will want to join us for greater integrity. Let us anticipate our joy in these 'children of Abraham' (Christians and Muslims), who are making the world a better place. May this sharing encourage us to put into practice the social message of the Gospel. Like Jesus, let us rejoice in anticipation of the coming of the Kingdom of God!

Hymn of praise for the message of Life borne by the Church ... followed by the celebration.

APPENDIX

The digital models below must be seen only as examples. You are not obliged to do it this way. It is about helping, not limiting your imagination! You can print them changing the colour or size, using leaves of different colours, from wrapping paper, etc.

