

Dying to Live – Reflection and Discussion Questions

This reflection will help youth consider the question of how death can lead to new life.

We avoid death, right? But have you ever considered that death is a part of everyday life?

- We see the leaves on the trees die every fall. This enables new growth in the spring.
- Did you know that new stars form from the dust of exploding old stars?
- Have you ever seen new plants emerging from a rotting tree?

Can you come up with any other examples?

Read the gospel reading.

[John 12:20-33](#) (The Grain of Wheat) – the Gospel Reading for the [5th Sunday of Lent – Year B](#)

Some Greeks who had come to worship at the Passover Feast came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, “Sir, we would like to see Jesus.” Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus.

Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit.

Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life.

Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be.

The Father will honor whoever serves me.

“I am troubled now. Yet what should I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? But it was for this purpose that I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name.”

Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it and will glorify it again.”

The crowd there heard it and said it was thunder; but others said, “An angel has spoken to him.”

Jesus answered and said, “This voice did not come for my sake but for yours. Now is the time of judgment on this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself.”

He said this indicating the kind of death he would die.

[John 12:20-33](#)

Jesus tells us that unless a grain of wheat dies and falls to the ground, it will remain just a grain. But if it stops clinging to its stalk, lets go, and falls, then it will eventually grow into something bigger.

We should note that we must not hasten our natural death. Our lives and deaths are according to God's plan and in God's time. A grain of wheat which falls before it is mature will never develop into a new plant. The cycle of death and rebirth is about letting go and trusting in God. When we try to be in control, we deny God's place as the author of life.

Now we could just be talking about the death at the end of our earthly lives. But just like in nature, we have deaths every day if we just know how to look.

Consider this. You really want to join the choir. But you are already busy with your schoolwork, basketball, youth group, and yearbook. You don't have time for another activity. One of those things is going to have to "die" in order for you to grow in your vocal abilities. Or perhaps your dream of being in the choir will be the thing you have to let go of. If you cling to everything, then your activities will not thrive. You will not thrive.

For something more challenging, think about your habits. Is there a bad habit in your life which needs to die? For example, maybe you have gotten in the habit of sleeping in on Sundays and skipping mass. If you let that habit "die" and make the extra effort to get up and get dressed, you can go to mass and encounter Jesus there.

- Why is it difficult to let something which is a part of our daily life die?
- Can you think of any past examples of dying to something but then having something better emerge?
- What are some things which are clinging on to life now which you might need to let fall and die?

This week, pick one thing you want to die to. Make it something which is possible, but a little challenging. If nothing else, fast from something. At the end of one week, evaluate if you saw anything new grow in the space that used to occupy. And don't forget to pray each day to ask God to grow something new for you.