

What Are You Afraid Of? – Discussion and Reflection Questions

This reflection encourages youth to consider how faith in Jesus brings peace during the storms of life.

Start by playing a game which involves a little fear. You will need some strange flavored jelly beans. [Bertie Botts Every Flavored Beans](#) are a good option. [Beanboozled](#) beans are much stronger and the gross ones are really gross.

To play, the player randomly chooses a jelly bean. It could be a delicious flavor or a disgusting one. (Don't show them the key. Blindfolding players is also a possibility.)

Once the player has the jelly bean, everyone can have some fun guessing what the flavor will be. Then the player eats the jelly bean. You will know by the look on his or her face if it was a nice flavor or a not so nice flavor.

Have some water on hand to let the players wash the flavor out of their mouths. 😊

Note: Do not force youth to eat a jelly bean. Nobody should have to participate unwillingly.

Fear is a part of life. We are trained to respond to fear. It gets our blood pumping and sometimes even gives us a little rush.

- What are some scary things people do for fun? (Amusement park rides, scary movie, eat a jelly bean that might be gross, etc.)
- Why are you willing to do these things?
- Have you ever done something scary for fun and it turned out to be too scary?

When we frighten ourselves for a thrill, it is something we do where we know we won't get hurt. And we know it is temporary. But sometimes, we have to deal with bigger fears in our lives.

Read the gospel:

[Mark 4:35-41](#) (Jesus calms the storm) – the Gospel Reading for the [12th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year B](#)

On that day, as evening drew on, Jesus said to his disciples: "Let us cross to the other side."

Leaving the crowd, they took Jesus with them in the boat just as he was. And other boats were with him. A violent squall came up and waves were breaking over the boat, so that it was already filling up.

Jesus was in the stern, asleep on a cushion. They woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?"

He woke up, rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Quiet! Be still!" The wind ceased and there was great calm.

Then he asked them, "Why are you terrified? Do you not yet have faith?"

They were filled with great awe and said to one another, "Who then is this whom even wind and sea obey?"

[Mark 4:35-41](#)

This must have been some storm. Remember that many of the apostles were fishermen. They were used to handling boats in bad weather. But here they are described as "terrified". They believe they are going to die.

So this is a different type of fear than the type we talked about earlier. This is a fear about something which could truly do harm. This is a big fear.

Pass out some note cards and pencils.

Write some of your biggest fears on the cards. Don't write your name. Because sometimes one of our fears is telling others what we are really thinking. Pass the cards in. I will read the fears so we can all share what we fear without knowing whose fear it is.

Read the fears.

You might be surprised that some of you fear the same things.

- Does it help to know that you are not the only one who is afraid?
- Are there any other fears you would like to name before the whole group?

We all face fear in our lives. Jesus never promised us a life without "storms". We know that sometimes things are not going to be pleasant. We are going to have to deal with very difficult situations.

But Jesus did promise to be with us. And to send the Holy Spirit to guide us. We have heard that in the gospel in the past few weeks.

- What might you do when you are facing an overwhelming fear?
- Do you think it might help to share your fear with a friend or adult you trust?
- How can your faith in Jesus help you when you are afraid?

One thing which can help is to learn to trust Jesus in your everyday fears. When you fear what will happen when you do poorly on a test or when you are worried about something somebody said to you, turn to Jesus. Ask him to be with you and bring you peace and calm. And trust that in the end, he will be with you and will care for you. If something doesn't go the way you hoped, ask Jesus to make a new opportunity out of it.

This week, when you feel fear welling up inside of you, pray the simple prayer of [St. Faustina](#): "Jesus, I trust in You."

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