**[ 6 ] WEEK SIX - THREAD: PEACEFUL CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

DA 36 Young person seeks to resolve conflict non-violently.

*44% of youth surveyed by Search Institute in the USA have this have this thread of* ***PEACEFUL CONFLICT RESOLUTION*** *in their lives. [JUNIOR COLLEGE WORDING: Children try to resolve conflicts nonviolently.]*

**JUNIOR COLLEGE KEY TEXT:**

**Luke 1 and 2 – the Story of the BIRTH OF JESUS**

This is the focus for the term for weeks six, seven and eight.

TEACHER FOCUS:

Using the Carols and Christmas Gospel Songs, young people learn that the purpose of Jesus’ birth is to bring peace on earth – peace between us and God, which in turn leads us to make peace amongst the people and nations.

In week six, the Junior College could choose to begin the Christmas focus with the message of the Angels to the Shepherds: “Peace on earth and goodness to all.” Why did God need to come to the earth in the first place? Weren’t the people of the earth doing a good job with peace any way?

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**THE REST OF THIS PAGE IS FOR MIDDLE AND SENIOR COLLEGE USE -**

**KEY TEXT:** Matthew 2:10-18 Slaughter of the innocents

**BIBLE TEXT:**

*10When the wise men saw the star, they were overjoyed. 11On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. 12And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.*

*13When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him." 14So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, 15where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Out of Egypt I called my son." 16When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. 17Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:*

*18"A voice is heard in Ramah,*

*weeping and great mourning,*

*Rachel weeping for her children*

*and refusing to be comforted,*

*because they are no more."*

**TEACHING FOR TEACHERS:**

What do we learn from this reading?

The Christmas story is usually focused on baby Jesus in the manger with images of soft light, shepherds and angels. In the Biblical narrative, we find the immediate response of human greed to the coming of the Saviour. Herod the King does not want to be a peace maker, but wants to rule his way without any interference. Herod seeks to kill the new born baby, and since he cannot find the manger where the wise men visited, he chooses the solution to kill every new born child. There is great joy at the birth of Jesus, but great pain as we must repent of our own contribution to brokenness and evil in the world. At Christmas we are called to see that conflict resolution begins with us – turning away from our own power games, to follow God’s way, to forgive as we have been forgiven.

**THREAD DISCUSS**

We need to think through the difference between peaceful, non-violent conflict resolution and other forms of conflict resolution. With so many contemporary films including themes of violent vengefulness, we have to consider what images young people have in their storehouse of members, of actual successful non-violent solutions. Most First-Person-Shooter computer games, require repeated violent actions to solve conflict situations.

Young people need strategies. To know how to positively confront people in difficult siuations includes skills that can be learned. Young people can learn how to use "I" statements, rather than agressive accusations. Young people can learn how to debrief conflict situations to consider what works and what doesn't work. Even basic polite language is a strategy that can be used to be peaceful in difficult situations.

In the midst of strategies, it is important to underscore the dramatic changes that the adolescent brain goes through. It takes a lot of energy, support and patience to adopt peaceful conflict resolution strategies, but the ultimate goal is win-win.

**BIBLE QUOTES to talk about ....**

"Then Peter came and said to Jesus, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy times seven." — Matthew 18:21-22

"So then, putting away falsehood, let all of us speak the truth to our neighbours, for we are members of one another. Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not make room for the devil. ... Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, and be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you. — Ephesians 4:25-32

**ACTIVITIES**

\* Devise a strategy to make "Peaceful Conflict Resolution" the "status quo" in your class room.

\* Role Play some conflict resolution strategies. Reflect on the emotions involved.

\* List the outcomes that your group's participants have had, of angry conflict.

\* Search for political heroes, who have been champions of non-violent conflict resolution. Learn about thei strategies and apply those strategies to local situations.

\* Teach the definitions of "passive," "aggressive," and "assertive."

\* List the elements of assertive behaviours.

\* Discuss the "comedians" in the school community and reflect on how comedy can be used to bring about peaceful conflict resolution.

\* Use school resources to show how day to day student conflicts are resolved peacefully.

\* What consequences should the courts hand out for violent behaviour?

**PRAYING:**

*These two weeks we could pray for:*

An end for international conflict;

Peaceful solutions to family issues;

A greater understanding between parties that strongly disagree with each other;

International commitment to ways of peace;

a willingness of people to find ways of peace;

A refusal amongst people to use revenge as a preferred solution to problems.

God's love at work amongst us.

*An example of a prayer for these two weeks:*

God, send your Spirit of peace into our world

that we would turn our swords into ploughshares,

and refuse to use violent solutions.

Leads in the way of peace, for sake of Jesus

who is the Prince of Peace-making.

AMEN