

Morning Prayer



Before you begin

- Create a space for prayer.
- Cut out a paper starfish attached to this pack. There should be enough for each participant.
- If you have the space and resources, create a beach display using blue and yellow materials, or even draw one on a big piece of paper (be as creative as you like).
- Take some time to settle the group and still the space.
- Light a candle (if in your own home ask permission).
- You will need pens for the group.



Ready to start

We take a moment before we begin to settle ourselves. After our experience last night, we pause, and we reflect. For those who feel comfortable we begin:



In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.



Story

It was the night after a huge storm and an older woman was walking along the beach as the sun was beginning to rise. With the tide out and because of the power of the storm, she found the beach littered with starfish as far as the eye could see, stretching in every direction.

In the distance, the old woman noticed a young man approaching. As the young man walked, he paused every so often, and as he grew closer, the woman could see that he was occasionally bending down to pick up an object and throw it into the sea. The young man came closer still and the woman called out: "Good morning. May I ask what it is that you are doing?"

The young man paused, looked up, and replied: "Throwing starfish back into the ocean. The tide has washed them up onto the beach and they cannot return to the sea by themselves. As the day gets warmer, they will die, unless I throw them back into the water."

The old woman replied: "But there must be tens of thousands of starfish on this beach. I am afraid you will not really be able to make much of a difference." The young man bent down, picked up yet another starfish and threw it as far as he could into the ocean. Then he turned, smiled, and said: "I made a difference to that one!"

(Adapted from The Star Thrower, by Loren Eiseley 1907-1977)





Story Debrief

Often the problems in our world can seem big, but little by little we can make a significant difference to those around us. Frederic Ozanam, the founder of the SVP, said that it is our calling from God to set people's hearts ablaze, to do what the Son of God did, who came to light a fire on Earth, to set it ablaze with His love.

Last night through your act of sacrifice and your decision to stand in solidarity with all those who find themselves in need of help and support, you picked up another starfish and threw it back in the sea.



Scripture:

In the book of Timothy we hear

You are young, but do not let anyone treat you as if you were not important.

Be an example to show the believers how they should live.

Show them with your words, with the way you live, with your love, with your faith."

1 Timothy 4:12



Action:

For just a few moments let us turn to the people next to us and share a little about how it was to sleep [out/over/without] last night. How did you sleep? How do you think it would be if you were doing that every night? What would you be worried about?

(After a few minutes of chatting, bring the room back together).

Last night your simple action and fundraising means that the SVP can support more people who need help. You threw one more starfish into the sea.

Over the coming weeks when you speak with people, and when you share your experience from last night, you will be helping other people to understand the causes of homelessness and the support available for those who need it. Each time you will be throwing a starfish into the sea.

Every small act we make can have an important impact on our world.



A few at a time as the music plays, you are invited to come down to the front and to take a starfish from the beach.

Using the pens, write on the back of a starfish one small action you will take this week to continue to transform the world. You will pay attention to the person in the room who is struggling? You might look to take extra responsibility at home to help? You might want to explore ways to support those who do not have a home? You might just want to try and stay calm and kind this week no matter what you are faced with?



Once you have written on your star fish, place it in the sea.

(Play music while the action is happening, and once the action is complete, continue)



Closing Prayer:

Loving God

Open our eyes to see the needs of the world around us.
Open our ears to hear the truth and the needs of the most vulnerable.
Open our hearts that you would transform the world around us through our simple actions inspired by you.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.