



Materials

- scrap paper
- pens
- reflective music
- world map* (optional)

* Environment Idea: If you have a world map, display it upside down in a prominent place in the room prior to the start of the session

Opening Prayer

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship,
to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders
and signs performed by the apostles.

All the believers were together and had everything in common.

They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.

Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts.

They broke bread in their homes and ate together
with glad and sincere hearts,

praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people.

And the Lord added to their number daily
those who were being saved.

The Word of God

- Acts 2:42-47

Accountability Partner Check-In

Invite students to check-in with their accountability partner

Dreaming Upside Down Article & Reflection

Pass out the handout: "Dreaming Upside Down" to everyone and invite them to individually read the article and answer the questions at the end of the article.

Once they've had an adequate enough time to read and reflect, ask them to find a partner to discuss their answers.

Article Reflection Questions

- How does the article make you feel?
- What would you do if the world was that way?
- How does it challenge your understanding of the world and human dignity?
- How does this call you to live from day to day acknowledging that you are a global and national citizen as well as a friend, family and community member?

Individual Reflection

- We have formed accountability partners but other than that how can we continue to build community, within our group, our campus, our city?
- What can we commit to as a group?
Examples: Bible studies, dinners, themed discussions, book club, doing service together, social justice themed movie nights, shared prayer.

Group Discussion & Action Plan

As a large group, discuss their responses and decide on an action to do as a group. On a large paper, develop an action plan to help make their ideas a reality. Once it's completed, have the group members sign it.

Closing Prayer: Laudato Si'

Invite two members of the group to read aloud the two following quotes:

"Disregard for the duty to cultivate and maintain a proper relationship with my neighbor, for whose care and custody I am responsible, ruins my relationship with my own self, with others, with God and with the earth."

- *Laudato Si'* #70

"We need to strengthen the conviction that we are one single human family. There are no frontiers or barriers, political or social, behind which we can hide, still less is there room for the globalization of indifference."

- *Laudato Si'* #52

After a period of silence, invite the group to share aloud any prayer intentions, then close with a spontaneous prayer from the heart or the Our Father.

DREAMING UPSIDE DOWN



by Tom Peterson

I dreamed the other night that all the maps in the world had been turned upside down. Library atlases, roadmaps of Cincinnati, wall-sized maps in the war rooms of the great nations, even antique maps with such inscriptions as "Here be Dragons" were flipped over. What had been north was now south, east was west. Like a glob of melting vanilla ice cream, Antarctica now capped schoolroom globes.

In my dream, a cloud of anxieties closed around me. The United States was now at the bottom. Would we have to stand upside-down, causing the blood to rush to our heads? Would we need suction-cup shoes to stay on the planet, and would autumn leaves fall up? No, I remembered, an apple once bopped Newton on the head - no need to worry about these things.

Other things troubled me more. Now that we're at the bottom, would our resources and labor be exploited by the new top? Would African, Asian, and Latin American nations structure world trade to their advantage?

Would my neighbors and I have two-dollars-a-day seasonal jobs on peach and strawberry plantations? Would the women and children work from dusk to dawn to scratch survival from the earth of California and Virginia? Would the fruit we picked be shipped from New Orleans and New York for children in Thailand and Ethiopia to hurriedly eat with their cereal so they wouldn't miss the school bus? Would our children, then, spend the morning, not in school, but fetching water two miles away and the afternoon gathering wood for heating and cooking? Would a small ruling class in this country send their daughters and sons to universities in Cairo and Buenos Aires?

Would our economy be dependent upon the goodwill and whims of, say, Brazil? Would Brazil send war planes and guns to Washington, D.C. to assure our willingness to pick apples and tobacco for export while our children went hungry? Would Brazil and Vietnam fight their wars with our sons in our country? Would we consider revolution?

If we did revolt, would the Philippine government plot to put their favorite U.S. general in power, and then uphold him with military aid?

Would we work in sweatshops manufacturing radios for the Chinese? Would our oil be shipped in tankers to Southeast Asia to run their cars, air-conditioning and microwave ovens while most of our towns didn't even have electricity?

Would "top of the world" religious leaders call us stubborn pagans upon whom God's judgment had fallen, causing our misery? Would they proclaim from opulent pulpits that if we simply turned to God, our needs would be met?

In my dream, I saw a child crying in Calcutta. Her parents wouldn't buy her any more video games until her birthday. I saw her mother drive to the supermarket and load her cart with frozen and junk food, vegetables, cheese, meat, and women's magazines.

I also saw a mother in Houston baking bread in an earthen oven. She had been crying because there were no more beans for her family. One of her children listlessly watched her. He was a blond boy, about six years old. He slowly turned his empty, haunting gaze toward me.

At that point I awoke with a gasp. I saw I was in my own bed, in my own house. It was just a bad dream. I drifted back to sleep, thinking, "It's all right, I'm still on top."

Thank God!

Reflection Questions

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Closing Prayer: Laudato Si' Quote #1

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Closing Prayer: Laudato Si' Quote #2

"We need to strengthen the conviction that we are one single human family. There are no frontiers or barriers, political or social, behind which we can hide, still less is there room for the globalization of indifference."

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