

Sneak Peek

Next week we will look at the role of family in the life of a young person and discuss the importance of family in helping to break the cycle of poverty. To help prepare for the discussion, watch the scene from the Scenes and Songs disc entitled, "Sometimes We Cry Together."



Closing Meditation

Play the song "Soldiers of Peace" from the Scenes and Songs disc. Music and lyrics by Barclay Martin, from the CD *Zamboanga: Poverty, War, Music* (Copyright © 2009 CFCA).

This war keeps on raging but I'm not
ashamed
To sing out

One day I'll see my words turn to rain
That waters the ground

So I will sing as loud
As loud as I can sing

'til you and I intertwine to become
everything

And we will sing like the soldiers of
peace
And we will sing like the soldiers of
peace

We are not poverty
We are not captivity
We are not the fear that binds us in the
night

We are freedom

We are beauty
We are soldiers of peace reaching for the
light

And we will sing like the soldiers of
peace
And we will sing like the soldiers of
peace

My sword is my song
And my song is a message of love to you

You know we've got to stick together to
rise above
All that we do

So I will sing as loud, as loud as I can sing
'til you and I intertwine to become
everything

And we will sing like the soldiers of
peace
And we will sing like the soldiers of
peace

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'NOTHING WILL BE LOST'

SESSION

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Introduction

Throughout human history, religion has been a source of both liberation and oppression. It has contributed to some of humanity's greatest periods of prosperity and enlightenment as well as times of deprivation and ignorance. Today people of goodwill seek ways to overcome religious differences and reconcile the hurts of the past inflicted in the name of faith so as to make the world a more peaceful place.

RISE AND DREAM
EXPLORING THE DREAM

Opening Reflection *(shared by leader)*

Digging Deeper

Read the following aloud within the group.

Like the primal force it is, religion has the potential to be either life-giving or death-dealing, depending on whether it is used as an instrument for illumination or as a weapon for control. Every major religion has, at different times, had followers who have trod both those paths.

Ainee, one of the young people featured in *Rise and Dream*, states in the film that the teachings of all religions are for good. This is an important insight on Ainee's part. The core teachings of each of the world's major religions do attempt to provide a moral framework for living in just relationship with God and others.

While individual adherents can misuse religious teachings for their own purposes, that does not diminish the virtue of the teachings themselves nor the values held in common by the various faith traditions. It is noteworthy, for instance, that the precept to love one's neighbor as oneself is found in Christianity and, in one form or another, in every major world religion.

In the city of Zamboanga in the southern Philippines, where *Rise and Dream* was filmed, religious differences are a part of life. At times these differences, exploited by outside agitators, spill over into violence, but that is not the whole story.

In Zamboanga, as in communities the world over, most of the people want to live together in peace. That, too, is part of the story of *Rise and Dream* and we believe it should be told.

What CFCA believes

CFCA was founded by lay Catholics and works with people of all faiths. To learn more about the faith perspective of CFCA, go to www.hopeforafamily.org and click on "Who we are" under the "ABOUT US" button.



A Closer Look

Watch the scene from the *Scenes and Songs* disc entitled "They Were So Others."

Questions for Group Discussion

1. Bernardo is a Muslim married to Leticia, a Catholic. He says he does not mind when Leticia expresses her faith by displaying crucifixes and figures of saints in their home because, as he puts it, "Nothing will be lost from me." What do you think Bernardo means by that? What could potentially be "lost" from either Bernardo or Leticia or from their family? What could be gained?
2. Ryan talks about how he and his friends of different faiths get along because of their common interests, such as sports and music. In your own experience how does working and socializing with people of different backgrounds help to break down barriers? What insights have you gained about others from such interaction?
3. In relating to people of different religions, there are two common extremes. The first is to denigrate all that the other religion holds to be true, and the second is to uncritically accept the premise that all religions are essentially the same. What is a healthy alternative stance to these two extremes? How can people of different faiths engage in constructive dialogue with one another while maintaining the integrity of their own beliefs?

Call to Action

Choose one or more of the following, or develop other ideas within the group.

1. Each group member could attend a worship service of a religious tradition other than their own. Pay particular attention to what is similar and what is different about the service from that with which you are familiar. Were there things that seemed strange or confusing? After this experience, is there anything about your own faith tradition that you appreciate more? Share these insights within the group.
2. Visit with a member of the clergy of your own or another religious tradition. Ask about how the teachings of that tradition reconcile what they hold to be revealed truth with tolerance of the beliefs of others. What is the essential belief of the religious tradition about the nature and dignity of the human person?
3. Visit the websites of various nonprofit organizations, including CFCA. What do they say about their religious backgrounds, values or current policies regarding religion? What do you think about these? Discuss within the group.