

Family Reconciliation Ritual



Center of Beauty

Piece of wood with a nail in it, hammer,
bag of nails

Gathering Prayer

Reconciling God, you call us to see the best in one another and to love even when someone has hurt us. Help us to be faithful witnesses of love. Be with us as we seek to be a family of healing, forgiving, and loving. Amen.

Listen

But I promise you that if you are angry with someone you will have to stand trial. If you call someone a fool, you will be taken to court. And if you say that someone is worthless, you will be in danger of the fires of hell. So if you are about to place your gift on the altar and remember that someone is angry with you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. Make peace with that person, then come back and offer your gift to God. Before you are dragged into court, make friends with the person who has accused you of doing wrong. If you don't, you will be handed over to the judge and then to the officer who will put you in jail. (Matthew 5:22-25)

Respond

Circulate the bag of nails, inviting everyone to take one and to hold it in their hand.

Nails can be both constructive and destructive. We use them to build, to construct homes, and decks, and sand

boxes. But we also use them to destroy: we use them as shrapnel in home made pipe bombs, we use them in spike belts to flatten tires, and we use them to build fences to keep others out.

So it is with our anger and the conflicts we find ourselves facing: there is within them the opportunity for growth, to learn anew about ourselves and those we are in relationship with. There is the opportunity with anger and conflict to learn new ways of meeting one another's needs.

And there is the opportunity for destruction. In our anger and conflict we sometimes use words and actions to inflict pain and harm to one another. We seek to destroy the other in our zest to be right and to have what we want.

This nail is a reminder for us today to examine conflict and anger through the lens of construction and potential for growth. To remind one another to seek the path of love and to work towards building a community in which conflict is seen as an opportunity to see things anew, to understand and examine things from different angles, and to live to love our neighbors as we love ourselves.

We pause to place our needs in God's hands, trusting that the Lord of love we answer our pleas. I invite your intentions.

Send Forth

Lord's Prayer