

Healthy Food Discussion & Service Activity

Daniel chose not to eat foods offered by the king, but to eat vegetables and drink water. Foods correspond to spiritual ideas we take in or “eat”. King Nebuchadnezzar represents selfishness that twists and destroys true ideas from the Word so his food represents false ideas from selfishness, (e.g. I’m more important



than everyone else). These ideas feel good while we’re under their selfish spell, but when seen in the light of truth they appear for what they are. Daniel’s rejection of the king’s “food” shows how conscience, even when “captive” to selfishness, can alert us to false ideas that appear as “delicacies”. They look good but are actually poisonous. Discuss the sources of ideas and the need for conscience to “filter” our thoughts and consequently actions. Finish by preparing vegetable and water snacks to share with the group or with your congregation.

1. What are your favorite foods? What makes them tasty?
2. Foods correspond to ideas that we take into our minds. Just as healthy foods keep the body fit, so true ideas strengthen healthy perspectives and inspire healthy or “good” actions.
3. Explore “good” and “bad” actions and their sources through reading and *Healthy “Food”* (p. 2). Encourage students to discuss the boxes they checked and why.
4. Conclude by preparing healthy snacks. Involve the students in preparing the vegetables, serving and cleaning up.

Materials Needed copy of *Healthy “Food”* p. 2 for each student; pens or pen-cils; easy-to-prepare seasonal vegetables, such as carrots, broccoli, peas, peppers, mushrooms, cauliflower, cherry tomatoes; serving plates; cups; napkins; preparation and serving tools, such as sharp knives, boards, spoons; pitcher for water
optional: dip for vegetables

Prepare in Advance

Purchase vegetables and dip (if desired), napkins, plates, cups. Gather serving plates, preparation and serving tools, and a pitcher for water.

New Church Concept Food

Food means things which nourish a person’s soul when bodily life is ended. Spiritual food consists in everything that has a useful purpose and everything leading to this such as knowing what goodness and truth are; and that which has such a purpose is the desire to realize these in actions. These are the things with which angels are nourished and which are therefore called spiritual and celestial foods. See *Arcana Coelestia* 5293

Healthy “Food”

The thoughts in our minds come from spirits associated with us.

At least two evil spirits and two angels are present with every person. Through the evil spirits a person is in communication with hell, and through the angels with heaven. Without the communication with heaven and hell a person could not go on living for even a moment. See *Arcana Coelestia* 697, 5849

People are linked to [the spirits with them] in such a way that they cannot think anything, or will it, unless they do so together with them, so that interiorly they are in communication with the spiritual world. *Arcana Coelestia* 5861

We are not responsible for the thoughts that enter our minds, but we are responsible for entertaining or dwelling on those thoughts and for acting on them. Conscience is the network of true ideas in our minds that filter thoughts, and help us to decide if actions are selfless or selfish, from heaven or hell.

Look at the following actions and decide whether they are selfless, selfish, or you are not sure. Some actions might appear to be selfless, but might not be really! Check as many boxes as you think are true. It is impossible to judge whether other people’s actions are selfish or selfless because we cannot know their motives. For this reason, some actions could be selfless or selfish depending on what the person doing them wants to happen.

Selfless	Selfish	Not sure	Action
			Standing up against a crowd for what’s right.
			Helping someone because it’s the right thing to do.
			Playing games by the rules.
			Giving another person something you really love or want.
			Going to church and hearing the Word.
			Seeing a person in need and deciding what you’re doing is more important than helping them.
			Telling a friend they are making a bad choice.
			Sharing something about a person that was told to you in secret, but could alert others to a problem.
			Keeping only rules that make sense to you.
			Telling a white lie to protect a friend.
			Cheating, if there’s no chance anyone will find out.
			Seeing someone in need and stopping to help immediately.
			Making sure another person does their job right.
			Interrupting while someone is speaking.
			Getting up and leaving a boring conversation.
			Holding a door open for a famous person.
			Praying you’ll win a game.
			Believing you are better than others.