



Assembly Script

Slide 1

(Begin with a moment of quiet.)

Leader: Hello, everyone.

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Reader 1: This year's SVP Heart to Heart Lent campaign focuses on loneliness, something that affects people of all ages across our wider community. Even in busy schools, families, neighbourhoods, and parishes, many people can feel unseen or on their own. This campaign they are sharing with us invites each of us in this room to do something meaningful. To reach out and have a conversation.

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Leader: Before we go any further, I want you to imagine a table. Not a huge banquet table, not a formal dining table, just a simple table, like the one at the Last Supper.

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Jesus shared bread and wine with His friends around a table just like this. ordinary people, ordinary food, messy, human, but full of love. And if you look at this famous picture of the Last Supper, you'll notice something funny. Jesus seems to have booked a table for 24 so that they can all sit on one side. Half the table is empty. Accidental or invitational? Room for more? Always room for more.

Reflection: Why This Matters

Reader 2: Think for a moment about Jesus at the Last Supper. He had friends around Him, but He also knew that some would fail Him, and some would fall asleep when He needed them most.

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And yet, in the middle of the meal, He did something remarkable: He took a towel, knelt down, and washed their feet. He humbled Himself to serve the very people He loved, even knowing their weaknesses, their doubts, and the betrayals to come. This simple, ordinary act was full of extraordinary love, a love that gets its hands dirty, notices others, and puts their needs before your own.

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Later, in the Garden of Gethsemane, He went to pray alone.

He felt fear. He felt loneliness.

He wanted His friends to "stay awake" with Him, to notice, to be present.

Even in His humanity, in His vulnerability, He reached out to God though, trusting that the Father was always close and inviting us to do the same for one another: to stay present, to notice, and to serve with love.

(Pause)



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Reader 2:

More about the campaign

The SVP is made up of people of all ages around the world, inspired by St Vincent de Paul, who encouraged us to see the best in people and situations. Guided by this, members simply try to befriend and support anyone in need, near or far. Last year, over 300,000 people received a call or visit; mostly just to talk, sometimes to offer extra help, but always to be there. Loneliness is more common than we realise, and sometimes one person can change everything.

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Reader 3:

Lillian, is an example. She lives on her own and can't get out safely by herself anymore. For a long time, her world had shrunk to the four walls of her home. Days passed quietly, with hardly anyone to talk to.

Now, the SVP drop by, sit and chat, go for a coffee, or just sit outside together when the sun is out. It's simple, but it's life-changing. As Lillian said, "I feel I am somebody again, and that somebody cares." These visits aren't just something to look forward to they're often the only reason she gets out of the house. "It makes you feel that life is worth living again," she said.

Reader 4:

Sometimes, caring isn't about grand gestures. It's about showing up. Listening. Being present. And in those small, quiet moments, lives change.

So inspired by all this, this Lent we are introducing the SVP Talking Table

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Reader 5:

I'm the Talking Table.

I don't belong to anyone, and yet I belong to everyone.

I'm not fancy. No polished wood, no frills. Just a table.

But I've got space. I've got room. And there's always room for more.

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Come sit. Whenever you like. Pull up a chair. Make yourself at home.

I've heard quiet stories shared across my surface.

I've felt laughter bounce off my edges.

I've held hands, shoulders, and hearts.

People talk, people listen, people just...are. And somehow, that's enough.

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Sometimes conversations get messy.

Sometimes people don't know what to say.

That's okay.

The shared smiles, the quiet prayers, the courage of listening.

I'm a place of hope, because hope grows when someone is seen.

When someone is heard.

So come. Sit. Talk. Listen. Laugh. Pray.

Leave a little lighter, a little braver,

a little more connected than when you arrived.

There's always room at my table.





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Leader: And that's exactly what we want the *Talking Table* to be: a space with room for everyone, where we notice each other, share a conversation, and remember those who might be lonely or overlooked.

How it will work

- **Place Name Cards**

- On the table you'll see a stack of little cards.
- Write down the name of someone you'd like to invite in your prayers this Lent.
- It could be someone at school, at home, or in your community. It may even be someone who has died.
- Place the card on the table as a way of showing, even silently, that they matter and are remembered.

- **Conversation Questions**

- There will also be a small pile of questions on the table.
- Pick one at random and have a conversation with the people sitting with you – not just your natural friends but anyone at the table.
- If you notice someone sat at the table alone – go and join them for a few moments.

The table is there for you all to use and visit over Lent (if there is a specific way it will be introduced in a school setting it could be shared here)

So lets now pray together before we end our time.

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Sign of the Cross

As we journey through this season of Lent,
we pause and make space.

Loving God,
You show us how to love in small, ordinary moments—
by serving, by noticing, by being present.

Bless this table and all who sit here.
Hold in Your care the names we will place before You.
Guide our words to be gentle,
our listening to be open,
and our hearts to stay awake to one another.

Help us notice those who feel lonely or forgotten,
and teach us to love as You love.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

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HOLDING SCREEN

