

Persecution

O God, whose blessed Son made himself known to his disciples in the breaking of bread: Open the eyes of our faith, that we may behold him in all his redeeming work; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Look

Persecution can happen in a variety of ways. It might occur in small ways, like the co-worker who always has something negative to say to you or about you. Or, it might happen in big ways, like government and societal structures that oppress groups of people because of their race, religion, or sexual orientation.

1. Share a time when you felt persecuted. What did that feel like?
2. How did you handle the situation? Were you able to change it?

Book Acts 9:1-6, 7-20

Saul was actively persecuting followers of Jesus, or followers of The Way. He was present at and approved of the execution of Stephen, the first martyr. He was passionate about and dedicated to the eradication of this faith movement.

1. When Jesus appears to Saul, he says, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" Why is it significant that Jesus shares in the persecution of those who follow him?
2. What do you think is significant about Saul losing his sight and then regaining it again?

Took

Like it or not, we all participate in the persecution of others, by what we do and by what we leave undone.

1. What are some every day situations in which you might be inadvertently persecuting someone else – or a group of people?
2. How might your eyes be opened, like Paul's?
3. What can you do differently?