



**Materials:** Donuts (of course!), Bibles, copies of student page for each student

## Intro

- Yes, there is a National Donut Day. It's the first Friday in June, which is June 2 this year. And yes, there is a theology behind it, or at least a spiritual history that we can use theologically.

National Donut Day didn't start as a quirky day of recognition (such as National Flip a Coin Day) but rather as a fundraiser for Chicago's Salvation Army in 1938 to help the needy during the Great Depression. The Donut Day theme was selected to honor the "donut ministry" of the Salvation Army in World War I.

## Open

- After your group has gathered, open by asking these questions:

**What are some quirky holidays you've run across?**

*You're looking for things like: National Flip a Coin Day, Fruitcake Toss Day, National Spaghetti Day. Feel free to Google "weird holidays."*

**Did you know there is a National Donut Day? In fact, it is June 2.**

*Share the info from the Quick Backdrop about the history of National Donut Day.*

Then share the following in your own words:

**As an outreach to U.S. Servicemen in France during World War I, the Salvation Army sent volunteers near the front lines to provide baked goods and other home-life comforts. To better facilitate the challenges of baking in primitive conditions, two Salvation Army volunteers simplified the process by providing donuts. It was a hit, of course. Everybody likes donuts! And as you might expect with the Salvation Army, the servicemen were getting more than donuts and coffee, but also spiritual aid and emotional comfort.**

## Digging In

- Share with your students that the Salvation Army folks probably didn't create the donut idea out of thin air. There is a good chance they were taking a cue from someone who'd done something similar: Jesus.

Ask your students to read the passages below from their Bibles (the verse references are printed on their student pages). Ask them to look for the following as they read.

**1. What does Jesus do in these passages?**

**2. What happens to the people involved in what Jesus did? And how did they react?**

John 2:7-11 | John 6:1-15 | Matthew 9:1-8



● **Taking It Inward**

● Internalize these passages by discussing these questions:

**How was the Salvation Army’s donut ministry in WWI like Jesus’ pattern in these passages?**  
*Their volunteers met a physical and emotional need and delivered spiritual sustenance.*

**What are some ministries that have adopted this model?**  
*Examples: Habitat for Humanity, area crisis pregnancy centers, Third World well-drilling ministries.*

● **Putting Into Practice**

● Depending on when you’re doing this exercise, you may be able to take advantage of National Donut Day, June 2, 2017 and schedule your ideas from the exercise below around June 2. If that date has passed, you can certainly take advantage of the spirit of National Donut Day.

Set your donuts in the middle of your group and ask the question below. Offer to your students that they can grab a donut after they suggest a viable idea.

**What is something, or several things, we could do as a group to imitate Jesus’ model of ministry: meet a spiritual need and provide spiritual encouragement?**  
*Let this be freewheeling, but if you need to prime the pump, here are two sets of ideas:*

**Meet a physical need/provide spiritual encouragement:**

1. Provide and serve water for any 5K-ish fund raiser in your area or volunteer to help in other ways.
2. Take donuts/cookies to your hospital’s ER waiting room. Check with hospital administration first (call the chaplain’s office).
3. Do your own donut fundraiser. Work with a local donut shop to raise funds for a need in your area, i.e. a family recently displaced by fire, a family needing help with medical bills, your local Salvation Army.
4. Provide a funeral home with a supply of large umbrellas or mobilize an umbrella brigade to help at your local hospital on rainy days.

**Honor those who protect/serve:**

1. Take donuts to fire departments and police stations.
2. Go to <https://www.uso.org/locations> to see if a USO center is near you. If so, contact the center to inquire about volunteer opportunities.
3. Be a part of an Honor Flight return reception at your local airport (and take donuts). Go to <https://www.honorflight.org/> for information.



### ● Digging In

1. What does Jesus do in these passages?
2. What happens to the people involved in what Jesus did? And how did they react?

John 2:7-11 | John 6:1-15 | Matthew 9:1-8

### ● Putting Into Practice

What is something, or several things, we could do as a group to imitate Jesus' model of ministry: meet a spiritual need and provide spiritual encouragement?