



## **8. A House Is Not a Home**

-ZAN GAUDIOSO

### **Handout-2**

Zan went to school the next day. It was a Monday. At the time of the fire, he was wearing the dress that he wore to the church on Sundays. He was not wearing his shoes. He had removed them and kicked them off when he sat to do his homework. They were burnt in the fire too. So, he borrowed tennis shoes from his aunt. He did not want to go to school. But his mother forced him to go. He was embarrassed because his clothes were unusual, he did not have his bag, books and homework. He thought that God wanted that he should live like a person who was different from others and did not fit well in the society. He was so upset that he wished to die.

He walked around the school like a dull, lifeless person. He felt insecure as all his belongings, his old school, old friends, pet cat and his house had been snatched from him.

On his way back, he walked through his burned house and was shocked to see the extent of damage that had been caused by the fire and the water that had extinguished it. The only things that were safe were the ones that his mother had rescued - the papers, photos and some personal items. He had lost his cat too.

He could not grieve the loss of his cat because they had to rebuild their life. They had to arrange a place to live in, clothes, etc.

They had to borrow money from his grandparents as they did not have their credit cards, cash or any identity proofs to withdraw money from the bank.

After some days, the workers were removing the remains of the burned house. They were living in a rented apartment nearby but he would visit his old house and see the workers. He wished to find his cat there. He had lost her but kept thinking of the poor soul. How it would wake up when he disturbed it and then followed him, climbed up his gown and would fall asleep while sitting in his pocket. He missed her.