

CONFIRMATION PREPARATION



"You are Mine"

Mini retreat

Objectives:

- To recognize God's love for each of us.
- To learn about the 7 Gifts of the Holy Spirit and recognize how we can use them in our lives.

1. Parable of the Talents Discussion

Handout: Parable of the Talents

Directions: Allow young people to reflect on handout for 5 minutes

Discussion Questions:

What would you say to the master when he returns? What do you think Jesus was trying to say?

Do you use your talents to get attention? Do you ever show them off? Do you ever use them to do God's work? How could you use them to do God's work?

Points to Highlight:

This parable teaches us that it is important to use the talent that God has given you. The first two took the money, and with their God given talents they were able to make a profit. But the third one was too afraid to use his talents. Now all of you have some talents that each of you can do really well. I bet all of you have some hidden talents that you don't even know you are good at yet. And that is what part of preparing for Confirmation is about; using the gifts that God has given you to do God's good work.

(handout)

Parable of the Talents

Matthew 25:14-20

Who does the Master represent?

Who do the servants represent?

Why was the master angry with the 3rd servant?

What would you say to the master when he returned?

Name two talents God has given you.

A man was packing his bags, about to leave home on a trip.
He called to his servants to put them in charge of his property.
He gave to his servants according to each one's ability.
To one, he gave five thousand dollars;
to another, two thousand dollars;
and to the other, one thousand dollars.
Then he left on his trip.

The servant who had received five thousand dollars wasted no time
and began scattering seed on his master's land.
In due time, plentiful crops grew and grew on the land.
When the crops were ready, the servant gathered them into the barn,
sold them at the market,
and earned another five thousand dollars.

The servant who had received two thousand dollars
did not know how to farm,
but he knew how to juggle
and how to play the flute.
So he took his master's money and invested it in a circus.
He juggled,
walked the tightrope,
and thrilled the crowds with his acrobatics.
The crowds enjoyed the show so much
that he earned another two thousand dollars.

But the servant who had received one thousand dollars was frightened
and guarded his master's money very carefully
for fear someone would steal it.
He dug a hole and buried the money in the ground.

After a long time, the master came back and called to his servants.

The first servant came in and said:

"Sir, you gave me five thousand dollars.
I planted seed on your land and harvested crops.
Here is the other five thousand dollars I have earned."

The master said:

"Well done, good and faithful servant.
I will put you in charge of all my land.
Come, share my happiness."

The second servant came in and said:

"Sir, you gave me two thousand dollars.
I opened a circus, and by juggling and doing somersaults,
I have earned a second two thousand dollars."

The master said:

"Well done, good and faithful servant.
I will put you in charge of many circuses.
Come, share my happiness."

The third servant came in and said:

"Sir, you reap harvests where you do not plant,
gather crops where you do not scatter seed.
I was afraid of losing your money,
so I took the thousand dollars and buried it in the ground.
Here is what belongs to you."

"You bad and lazy servant," said the master.

"You should have at least put my money in the bank,
where it could have gained interest while I was gone.
Take the money from him and give it to those who have done well!"

For to everyone who has, even more will be given.

But to the one who has nothing, even the little he has will be taken away.

Parable of Talents

2. Seven gifts of the Holy Spirit

Explain the following points:

The Gifts of the HS are first given to us in Baptism. Confirmation increases these Gifts, which help us to grow in our relationship with Jesus. They give us the help to lead an active Christian life in the world. They also help us know God's will. Just as material gifts need to be opened and used to be appreciated and effective, so also the Gifts of the Holy Spirit are needed to be opened and used over and over again.

Handout: Scenarios (pg. 7)

Directions: Pass out strips of paper with a scenario on it. Describe each gift. Ask young people to raise his or her hand if that gift could help their scenario. Ask them to read scenario and have them state why they think that gift would be helpful.

Handout: Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Directions: Allow young people to reflect for 5 minutes

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Which gift of the Holy Spirit sounds like the best gift to you?
- 2) Which gift(s) do you need the most right now? Why?
- 3) Which gift(s) does our world seem to need most? Where? Why?
- 4) Are there spiritual gifts other than the seven mentioned at the beginning of session that you would like to have? Can you name them? Why do you need them?
- 5) How will you share your gifts with others?

If there is extra time... **Handout: Sealed with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit (break into groups of 2 or 3)**

Gifts of Holy Spirit

Wisdom is the gift of knowing the right choices to live a holy life. It helps one avoid the things that could lead you away from God.

Understanding is the gift of comprehension, the ability to grasp the teachings of our religion. It is the gift that helps one be tolerant and sympathetic of others. It helps one sense when someone is hurting or in need of compassion.

Knowledge is the gift of knowing and enlightenment. It enables one to choose the right path that will lead to God and it encourages one to avoid obstacles that will keep someone from him.

Right Judgment (Counsel) is the gift of prudence. This gift helps one make choices as a follower of Jesus.

Courage is the gift that helps one stand up and overcome any obstacles that would keep you from practicing your faith.

Reverence (Piety) is the gift of reverence for and confidence in God that inspires one to joyfully want to serve God and others.

Wonder and awe (Fear of the Lord) is the gift of wonder and respect that encourages one to be in awe of God.

S O R I A S

Sometimes it feels like nothing is going right in my life. My mom keeps nagging me about my grades, the coach is threatening to sideline me for the rest of the season if I don't improve, and some of my friends are pressuring me to do things I know aren't right. Everything is piling up and I can't see the light at the end of the tunnel and I don't even care anymore. ***What gift of the Holy Spirit might you use to overcome these obstacles in your life?***

On Saturday night, my best friend had a party. I wanted to stay all night, but I had to leave early because I was going to help serve at SOME on Sunday morning. My friend told me that he/she was mad that I wasn't staying. After all, he/she added, it's not his/her fault that those poor people can't get a job. If I was a true friend, he/she said, I'd stay. ***What gift of the Holy Spirit might you use to explain your choice to your friend?***

Lately, there's been some tension in my group of friends. People seem to be going different directions. I'm really involved in my academics, some others are getting into athletics, others are really into theater, and a couple others have been spending lots of time on the yearbook and school paper. I really want us to stick together, but I don't know how to solve this problem. ***What gift of the Holy Spirit might you use to talk through this problem with your friends?***

My parents recently told me that I could decide which high school I go to next year. Some friends tell me one thing, other friends tell me another thing, my siblings have their own opinions, and my parents are urging me in another direction. There's so much information coming from so many different angles and now I'm not sure what to choose. ***What gift of the Holy Spirit might you use to help you discern which high school to go to?***

After practice, we were all in the locker room talking about our upcoming party with the new players on the team. Some of the guys/girls started talking about hazing and brainstorming ways that we could 'initiate' the newbies. Some of the suggestions seemed kind of harsh, especially the ones that involved alcohol. I want to do the right thing, but I don't want to spoil everyone's fun. ***What gift of the Holy Spirit might you use to talk to your teammates about the party?***

With everything that's going on in my life right now, it's hard to find time to stop and pray. It's hard to sit still and be quiet and reflective when I know that I have so much to: homework, practice, walking the dog, chores, the list goes on and on. ***What gift of the Holy Spirit might you use to help you remember the importance of quiet time with God?***

Sometimes when it feels like everything is falling apart, the littlest thing—a perfectly symmetrical leaf, a child's laughter, a rainbow—can turn my day around. On one such occasion, a friend of mine caught me staring into a puddle and quietly chuckling to myself. ***What gift of the Holy Spirit might you use to explain to your friend why you were feeling so contented in that moment?***

Recently, my social studies teacher assigned a group project. Of course, I ended up in a group with people who I barely even know and who I have nothing in common with. We all met at my house to work on the project last weekend, but we hardly got anything done because we couldn't agree on a single thing. ***What gift of the Holy Spirit might you use to help you work more effectively with the group to accomplish the shared goal?***

This year, my parents decided that we'd all wake up early on Thanksgiving morning to help distribute food at a nearby soup kitchen. My sister threw a fit and said that she couldn't go because she already promised that she'd go to a friend's party all night on Wednesday. ***What gift of the Holy Spirit might you use to explain the importance of service to your sister?***

3. Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit Skit Instructions

Directions: Have participants create a skit that exemplifies a scenario in which a Gift of the Holy Spirit could be used. Encourage participants to role-play a situation that portrays the use of the gift of the Holy Spirit assigned to their group.

No longer 1 min 30 sec

4. Adapted Examen

Introduction: St. Ignatius, the founder of the Jesuits, believed that we can find God in all things, at every moment, and even in the most ordinary times. In order to do this we must take time to reflect on our experience. He encouraged us to pray the Awareness Examen to look over our day, which is a way we prayed in the last session. Through this prayer, we recognize what brings us closer to God and what may draw us away from God. The Examen can be done anywhere: when you are in the car, in a park, in the library, before you go to bed... And it can be as long as you like or as short as 5 minutes.

I invite you to get in a comfortable position to close your eyes. (PAUSE 1...2...3...4...5....)

Keep in mind that you are in the presence of God, and that God is in you, and around you, and surrounding you with love. Reflect on one thing from today you are grateful for (PAUSE 1...2...3...4...5....)

Recall the events from today (PAUSE 1...2...3...4...5....) when you arrived and met your group and leader (PAUSE 1...2...3...4...5....) saw the parable of the talents skit (PAUSE 1...2...3...4...5....) heard about Confirmation and the Holy Spirit (PAUSE 1...2...3...4...5....) and experience as you opened the Gifts of the Holy Spirits (PAUSE 1...2...3...4...5....) How did you feel? (PAUSE 1...2...3...4...5....)

As you watched everyone cleaned up the canal and cleaned it yourself (PAUSE 1...2...3...4...5....) How did you feel? (PAUSE 1...2...3...4...5....) Were you aware of God's presence? (PAUSE 1...2...3...4...5....) Do you see God's presence in that activity, people, and place now? (PAUSE 1...2...3...4...5....)

Take a moment to reflect on this Confirmation preparation journey... What are some areas in which you would like Jesus to help you with during this year? (PAUSE 1...2...3...4...5....)

What is something that you hope for during this year? (PAUSE 1...2...3...4...5....)

Take few moments to finish up your conversation with Jesus. (PAUSE 1...2...3...4...5....)

End with your favorite prayer... When you are finished open your eyes.

Letter to Jesus

Handout: Letter to Jesus and prompt

Directions: We want you to be comfortable talking with Jesus. So we're handing out paper so that you can write a letter to him. No one else will read it. Tell God how you're doing today, and what you're thinking about. Talk to God about how you're feeling at this moment. Answer the following questions on the sheet.

Ask for the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

What are your gifts? How can you use those gifts to serve others – especially during this year of your Confirmation preparation.

What are your hopes for the Confirmation preparation?

What are your fears about the Confirmation preparation?

Prayer Service

Remembering our Baptism and Crosses

Opening Prayer

Leader: Let us all begin as we were baptized.

All: In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Leader: God our loving father you are with us as we come together in prayer. Open our hearts to the Holy Spirit. We ask this through your son Jesus Christ.

All: Amen

1st Reading

Reader: A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and in the rivers you shall not drown; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. Isaiah 43:1-3

Reader: The Word of the Lord...

All: Thanks be to God.

Ritual

Leader: You will all be invited to come forward to the bowl of holy water. When you do, thank God for the gift of Baptism. Dip your right hand in to the water and make the sign of the cross.

("You are Mine" will be playing. As each person makes the sign of the cross AM will say, [_____], be blessed by this water and remember the gift of Baptism. PM will place the cross on their neck.)

Closing Prayer

Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
and where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Dismissal

Notes: