

CONFIRMATION PREPARATION



Team Script & Materials
Retreat

April 2016

TEAM MATERIALS

Part 1

- Pencils
- Journals
- post-it note pads
- Bible

Part 2

- Blindfolds
- Ball of leather twine and beads
- Scissors

SMALL GROUPS (Part 1) (about 10 min)

1) Models of Faith

Ask candidates to share a little bit about the sponsors and/or saint they chose and why they chose them.

- How does your sponsor show they are a faithful follower of God?
- Why did you choose that Saint? What did that saint do in their lives that made them worthy of Sainthood?
- How can you take what they see and learn from your sponsors and the saints and practice it in their own lives?

2) Ignatian Contemplation: The call of the first Disciples (Matt 4:18-22) (about 25 min)

Faith and Discipleship Quotations

Jimmy Carter (PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, 1976-1980)

I have one life and one chance to make it count for something . . . I'm free to choose what that something is, and the something I've chosen is my faith. Now, my faith goes beyond theology and religion and requires considerable work and effort. My faith demands—this is not optional—my faith demands that I do whatever I can, wherever I am, whenever I can, for as long as I can with whatever I have to try to make a difference.

Marian Wright Edelman (FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT OF THE CHILDREN'S DEFENSE FUND)

We must not, in trying to think about how we can make a big difference, ignore the small daily differences we can make which, over time, add up to big differences that we often cannot foresee.

Mary McLeod Bethune (PRESIDENT OF BETHUNE-COOKMAN COLLEGE, 1923-42)

Without faith, nothing is possible. With it, nothing is impossible.

Hebrews 11:1

Faith is the realization of what is hoped for and evidence of things not seen.

St. Thomas Aquinas (Doctor of the Church, 1225-1274)

To one who has faith, no explanation is necessary. To one without faith, no explanation is possible.

Dorothy Day (Co-founder of Catholic Worker Movement, 1897-1980)

The greatest challenge of the day is: how to bring about a revolution of the heart.

St. Augustine of Hippo (Doctor of the Church, 354-430 AD)

Faith is to believe what you do not see; the reward of this faith is to see what you believe.

Anonymous

Faith will move mountains.

Anonymous

Living without faith is like driving in a fog.

Helen Keller (Deafblind author, activist, and lecturer, 1880-1968)

Faith is the strength by which a shattered world shall emerge into the light.

Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta (1910-1997)

I know God will not give me anything I can't handle. I just wish He didn't trust me so much.

Martin Luther King, Jr. (American Baptist Minister and Civil Rights Leader, 1929-1968)

Faith is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase.

Martin Luther King, Jr. (American Baptist Minister and Civil Rights Leader, 1929-1968)

Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'

Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta (Founder of Missionaries of Charity and recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979, 1910-1997)

Unless a life is lived for others, it is not worthwhile.

Pope Francis (Closing Mass at World Youth Day, Rio de Janeiro July 2013)

Where does Jesus send us? There are no borders, no limits; he sends us to everyone. The Gospel is for everyone, not just some. It is not only for those who seem closer to us, more receptive, more welcoming. It is for everyone. Do not be afraid to go and to bring Christ into every area of life, to the fringes of society, even to those who seem farthest away, most indifferent. The Lord seeks all, he wants everyone to feel the warmth of his mercy and love.

Evaluations

Reminders...

- Service hours reflection and log due May 1 (Turn in service hour log with verification & 1 page reflection)
- Youth Mass May 15 (a chance to see friends from your Confirmation group!)
- Interviews (parents have signed them up)- To prepare for the interview, we ask that they reflect on the journey over the past year and how they want to continue to share their gifts and talents after Confirmation.
- Confirmation Overview May 1 for ALL Confirmation candidates (will be from 10:15-11:15)- We will go over music and the Rite of Confirmation; what the symbols and words mean.

3) Discipleship (see back page for more quotes on discipleship) (about 15 min)

A) Ask the following questions:

- How did you learn about Jesus/God?
- How do you know God loves you?
- When you have questions about God who do you talk to? Parents friends, teachers, sponsors, other adults?
- We've spent some time talking about discipleship at the beginning of the year, so what do you think it means to be a disciple?

B) Ask the candidates to think of Jesus standing in front of them and to imagine themselves as the first disciples. Jesus is about to send them out on their own for the first times to spread his message. On a piece of newsprint make a list of the do's and don'ts that Jesus might give the disciples about their mission.

- What kinds of things would Jesus want you to say and do?
- What kinds of things would Jesus want you to avoid saying or doing?
- What kind of advice might he give you about handling rejection?

C) Read Luke 9:1-6 Then ask the following questions:

- Did anything from this passage stick out to you?
- Which instruction from Jesus would be the most difficult for you to imagine doing? Why?
- Do most Christians you know think of themselves as following Jesus in this way?
- Do they ever think of themselves as disciples? Do you ever think of yourself as a disciple? Why or why not?
- What do you think is the hardest thing about being a follower (a disciple) of Jesus?
- Who are the people today who are in need of "healing?"

Explain: Although life today is different from that in Jesus' time, the essence of his mission remains the same. So what was Jesus' mission? The people in Jesus' time saw healings and exorcisms as signs of God's presence. His central mission was to help people recognize God's loving presence in their midst. As Jesus' disciples, he calls us to do the same.

Earlier in the year we talked about discipleship and our calling/obligation to serve others. We've also looked at our obligation to spread the Good News. But if you think about it, as disciples is it possible to do one without the other?

Can you talk about God's love and help people to understand it without showing them what it looks like, or what it feels like?

The reality is, as disciples of Christ, you need to do both. Just how Jesus' mission was to show God's loving presence, our mission is to talk about it, AND to show it too. So that others can not only hear about God's love but feel it too!

3) Discipleship (see back page for more quotes on discipleship) (about 15 min)

A) Ask the following questions:

- How did you learn about Jesus/God?
- How do you know God loves you?
- When you have questions about God who do you talk to? Parents friends, teachers, sponsors, other adults?
- We've spent some time talking about discipleship at the beginning of the year, so what do you think it means to be a disciple?

B) Ask the candidates to think of Jesus standing in front of them and to imagine themselves as the first disciples. Jesus is about to send them out on their own for the first times to spread his message. On a piece of newsprint make a list of the do's and don'ts that Jesus might give the disciples about their mission.

- What kinds of things would Jesus want you to say and do?
- What kinds of things would Jesus want you to avoid saying or doing?
- What kind of advice might he give you about handling rejection?

C) Read Luke 9:1-6 Then ask the following questions:

- Did anything from this passage stick out to you?
- Which instruction from Jesus would be the most difficult for you to imagine doing? Why?
- Do most Christians you know think of themselves as following Jesus in this way?
- Do they ever think of themselves as disciples? Do you ever think of yourself as a disciple? Why or why not?
- What do you think is the hardest thing about being a follower (a disciple) of Jesus?
- Who are the people today who are in need of "healing?"

Explain: Although life today is different from that in Jesus' time, the essence of his mission remains the same. So what was Jesus' mission? The people in Jesus' time saw healings and exorcisms as signs of God's presence. His central mission was to help people recognize God's loving presence in their midst. As Jesus' disciples, he calls us to do the same.

Earlier in the year we talked about discipleship and our calling/obligation to serve others. We've also looked at our obligation to spread the Good News. But if you think about it, as disciples is it possible to do one without the other?

Can you talk about God's love and help people to understand it without showing them what it looks like, or what it feels like?

The reality is, as disciples of Christ, you need to do both. Just how Jesus' mission was to show God's loving presence, our mission is to talk about it, AND to show it too. So that others can not only hear about God's love but feel it too!

Affirmations

Gather into a circle. The first person to go will throw their leather twine to a person across from them and give an affirmation to that person. They will then hold onto a piece of it and throw the rest to another person and give the new person an affirmation... and so on and so on. At the end cut the leather in to strips so that they become bracelets.

There are red beads that they can add to their bracelets (3 beads per candidate— represents the Trinity)

SMALL GROUPS (Part 3)

Palanca

Confirmation is a significant moment in your lives, and we want you to know that you have a lot of support in a very tangible way. When we return to our small group room each of you will have Palanca. The word Palanca is a Spanish word that means "lever". Just as a lever enables a person to move something which is beyond normal strength, Palanca, as used on the Confirmation retreat, empowers the accomplishment of things which would not be possible without the grace of God. Each of you will receive letters from loved ones expressing their love and support for you during this process. The contents of the letters — prayers, words of encouragement and support— are the Palanca.

Give the candidates 10-15 minutes of quiet time to read the letters.

Things to be aware of...

- This can be emotional for some of the candidates. Please be aware of this and give them the space they need.
- Some of the candidates may not have as many letters in their bags.
- If some of the candidates do not finish reading the letters in the allotted time, reassure them there will be time to read them in the chapel BEFORE Mass begins or on the bus ride home.
- For those who finish early, let them know that they can reflect in their journals.

Reflection Questions

- What was this experience like?
- Anything that struck you when you were reading the letters?

Points to make...

The people who wrote the letters took the time to write them letters and share their love for you. Be sure to express your gratitude to the people who wrote.

Closing:

After we receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, it does not mean a veil will be lifted off our eyes and everything will be clear. Yes there will be times when what is right and what is wrong will be apparent. Other times the path may not always be clear.

You are not alone on the path. Your family, friends, sponsors, and parish are here to support you and guide you even after Confirmation, just as in the trust walk, your team leader was guiding you along the way, making sure you would be safe and not fall.

In celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation you are saying YES! I want to be a disciple of Christ – meaning, with all my heart I will try to follow the examples you gave me, make the right choices, and continue developing my faith.

It might not always be easy to do what is right and it might not always be clear which choice is right. It may be challenging, but the challenge is part of the journey.

Footprints in the Sand

One night I had a dream...

I dreamed I was walking along the beach with the Lord, and
Across the sky flashed scenes from my life.

For each scene I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand;

One belonged to me, and the other to the Lord.

When the last scene of my life flashed before us,

I looked back at the footprints in the sand.

I noticed that many times along the path of my life,

There was only one set of footprints.

I also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times in my life

This really bothered me, and I questioned the Lord about it.

"Lord, you said that once I decided to follow you,

You would walk with me all the way;

But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life,

There is only one set of footprints.

I don't understand why in times when I
needed you the most, you should leave me.

The Lord replied, "My precious, precious

child. I love you, and I would never,

never leave you during your times of
trial and suffering.

When you saw only one set of footprints,

It was then that I carried you."

4) Mass preparation (about 10 min)

Discuss the meaning of Mass and remind them of our Eucharist activities from past session

1) Ask if anyone wants to be a lector or sing.

2) Create intercession for Mass. Select 1 person to read it during the Mass.

For _____, that they may _____. **We pray to the Lord.**

Red: Universal Church / **Orange:** World Leaders **Gold:** Those in need (i.e. homeless, hungry, victims of disaster) / **Green:** Nation / **Blue:** City, School, or Parish / **Bronze:** Youth Concerns / **Gray:** the sick & the deceased

SMALL GROUPS (part 2)

1) Trust Walk

A) Activity

- Find a space outside (away from other groups.) Have the candidates line up.
- Blindfold all of the candidates.
- A team leader will be at the front of the line. Have the candidates place their hands on the shoulders of the person in front (including the shoulder of the team leader at the front).
- For 2-3 minutes the group using verbal cues. ("Step over the rock")
- You can start walking in a straight line, but as time progresses try to change your path (i.e. zig-zag).
- Lead your group to another place where you can lead the discussion questions.

B) Reflection questions

- Describe how you felt when you were blindfolded?
- Was it easy to follow the person leading you?
- What does trust mean? How is trust different with a parent and with a friend? How is it the same?
- Has there been time that you have found it difficult to trust in God? How did you get through it?
- Have there been times in your life where you may have felt unsure your path?
- Have you found God in unexpected ways?