

THE DYNAMIC CATHOLIC PRAYER

Loving Father,

I INVITE YOU INTO MY LIFE **TODAY**

& MAKE MYSELF **AVAILABLE** TO YOU.

HELP ME TO BECOME

the Best-Version-of-Myself

BY SEEKING YOUR WILL & BECOMING A LIVING EXAMPLE

OF YOUR **LOVE** IN THE **WORLD**.

Open my Heart TO THE AREAS OF MY LIFE THAT **NEED** Change.

IN ORDER FOR ME TO CARRY OUT THE **MISSION**

& EXPERIENCE THE **JOY** YOU HAVE IMAGINED FOR MY LIFE.

INSPIRE ME TO LIVE THE *Catholic faith* IN WAYS THAT ARE

DYNAMIC & **ENGAGING**.

SHOW ME HOW TO **BEST** GET INVOLVED IN THE LIFE OF MY PARISH.

MAKE OUR COMMUNITY **HUNGRY** FOR BEST PRACTICES

AND *continuous* **LEARNING**

GIVE ME **COURAGE**

WHEN I AM

AFRAID,

hope

WHEN I AM

DISCOURAGED,

AND CLARITY IN TIMES OF **DECISION.**

Teach ME TO **ENJOY** UNCERTAINTY & LEAD YOUR CHURCH

TO BECOME *all you* **IMAGINED** IT WOULD BE

FOR THE **PEOPLE** OF OUR TIMES,

Amen.

NAME: _____

DATE: _____



DECISION point

8th Grade Adapted Confirmation Preparation Process.

For those 8th Grade students that did not attend Catholic Schools or our Parish Religious Education Program (PREP) in their 7th Grade year, this completed document along with enrollment into our 8th grade PREP program will fulfill all requirements for Confirmation in fall.

Verified by Parent: _____

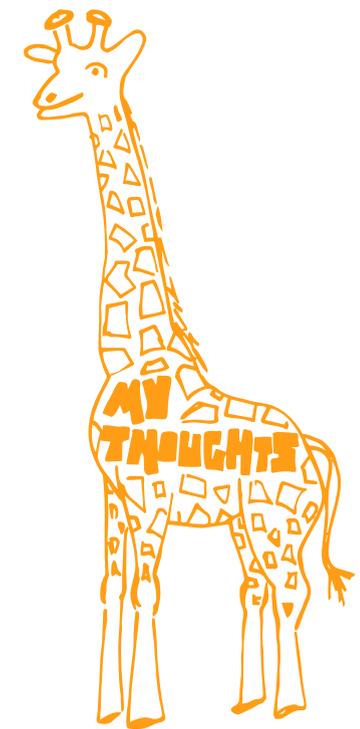
DISCUSSION

QUESTIONS

1. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT BEING CATHOLIC?

2. WHICH OF JESUS' TEACHINGS DO YOU FIND MOST DIFFICULT TO LIVE?

3. IF YOU HAD TO SPEND THE REST OF YOUR LIFE ON A DESERT ISLAND AND YOU COULD ONLY TAKE FIVE PEOPLE WITH YOU, WHOM WOULD YOU TAKE?



Discussion Questions

1. IS THERE A PERSON IN YOUR LIFE WHOSE PRESENCE JUST MAKES YOU FEEL CALM AND SAFE?

2. WHEN DID YOU FIRST LEARN ABOUT JESUS BEING PRESENT IN THE EUCHARIST?

3. HOW DO YOU THINK YOUR LIFE WOULD CHANGE IF YOU SPENT ONE HOUR EACH WEEK SITTING QUIETLY IN JESUS' PRESENCE?



“The holy Eucharist contains the whole spiritual treasure of the Church, that is, Christ himself. . . . He who is the living bread, whose flesh, vivified by the Holy Spirit and vivifying, gives life to men.”

—VATICAN II

“FROM THE EUCHARIST COMES STRENGTH TO LIVE THE CHRISTIAN LIFE AND ZEAL TO SHARE THAT LIFE WITH OTHERS.”

—POPE JOHN PAUL II



7.3 THE POWER OF THE EUCHARIST

When was the last time you did something that you knew wasn't good for you? Why did you do it? Think of reasons, come up with excuses, but at the end of the day it comes down to this: You have disordered desires that are very difficult to control.

Have you ever tried to quit a bad habit and failed? If you haven't already, the day will come when you will try to end a self-destructive habit and find yourself powerless over it. You will use all the willpower you can summon, but you will find yourself failing over and over again. These moments in life can be very humbling—and that's good, because they make us realize our need for God and his grace.

Grace is the assistance God gives us to do what is good, true, noble, and right. And there is no better way to receive God's grace than through the Eucharist.

There is a lot of talk these days about superfoods. Superfoods are high in nutrients and rich with antioxidants, and they keep your immune system strong to fight off disease. Some examples include pomegranate juice, salmon, alfalfa sprouts, sweet potatoes, kale, prunes, beets, apples, and beans.

The Eucharist is the ultimate superfood for the soul, loaded with grace to keep you spiritually healthy, give you the wisdom and strength to choose the right path, and fight off diseases like selfishness and other related vices and bad habits. And that is just a tiny fraction of the power the Eucharist holds.

When you go to Mass next Sunday, keep in mind, the Eucharist is not just a symbol. This is Jesus. The same Jesus who healed people with a touch. The same man who taught with more wisdom than any person who ever walked the earth. This is the guy who fed five thousand people with five loaves and two fishes. The same Jesus who rose from the dead.

We've all got problems. We all have struggles. But whatever you've got, he can handle. You need grace. You may not know it yet, but the sooner you realize it the better. And the Eucharist is the supreme source of the grace you need.

Isn't it time you allowed God to unleash the power of grace in your life?



discussion questions

1. WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU DID SOMETHING THAT YOU KNEW WASN'T GOOD FOR YOU? WHY DID YOU DO IT IF YOU KNEW IT WASN'T GOOD FOR YOU?

2. HAVE YOU EVER TRIED TO QUIT A BAD HABIT AND FAILED?

3. WHEN YOU'RE IN A SITUATION AND YOU WANT TO DO WHAT IS GOOD AND RIGHT BUT ARE ATTRACTED TO THE WRONG CHOICE, DO YOU CALL ON GOD AND ASK FOR HIS HELP?



 **discussion
questions** 

1. IF YOU COULD VISIT ONE OF THE BEAUTIFUL CHURCHES MENTIONED IN THIS SECTION, WHICH WOULD YOU CHOOSE?

2. AT THIS TIME IN YOUR LIFE, WHAT QUESTION WOULD YOU LIKE JESUS TO ANSWER FOR YOU? (YOUR QUESTION SHOULD BE ABOUT SOMETHING THAT APPLIES DIRECTLY TO YOU.)

3. WHAT QUIET PLACES HAVE YOU FOUND TO SPEND A FEW MINUTES IN EACH DAY?



7.5 DECISION point



Tem·per·ance

[tem-per-uh ns]

Controlling your thoughts, words, actions, and feelings.

Who do you know who exemplifies this virtue?

In what area of your life do you find it most difficult to practice temperance?

What is one way you can become more temperate this week?



What do you think Mary had planned for her life before the angel appeared to her?

Every Sunday morning you make a decision. It's the biggest decision of your week. To go or not to go, that is the question.

You might say that Mass is boring. I was bored at Mass for a long time, but then something happened. I started listening to what God was trying to say to me. I got myself a little journal and took it to Mass with me, and each week I wrote down the one thing that I felt God was saying to me. I have been doing this for fifteen years now. Each year I get a new journal. At home in my study, where I write, I have these fifteen journals on a shelf. When I get writer's block I pick one up and just start reading. Some days when I don't feel like praying I take one of these journals and just talk to God about some of the things he has said to me over the years. It is amazing the things God will say to us when we start listening.

I hope you go to Mass every Sunday for the rest of your lives so that God can nourish you with the Eucharist, but I also hope you will start to appreciate the bigger picture.

God has declared Sunday—the Sabbath day—as a day of rest. In Genesis 2:2 we read about God resting on the seventh day. Why? Why did God rest? Was he tired? No. God is a pure spirit and as such does not experience fatigue like we human beings do. So, why did he rest? He rested because he foresaw our need for rest. He wanted to show us how to live. He wanted to demonstrate that rest is a good thing, and something that we all need.

You have a legitimate need for rest. The Sabbath is God's response to your physical and spiritual need for rest and renewal. And nothing will renew you like receiving the Eucharist. It is literally food from Heaven.

On average you will live for another seventy years. That means you have 3,640 Sundays left. Don't waste a single one. It may seem like a lot, but you will be amazed at how quickly life passes. It feels like six months ago I was sitting where you are preparing for Confirmation . . . but that was twenty-five years ago.

You have a lot of decisions to make. Getting yourself to Mass on Sunday and receiving the Eucharist will help you make better decisions in every area of your life.

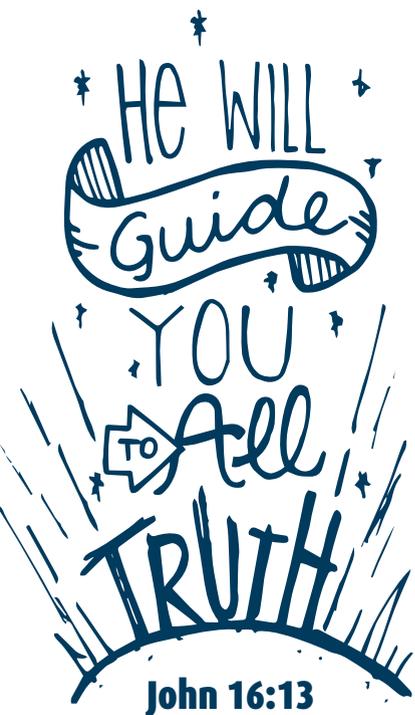


1. WHY DO YOU THINK OUR CULTURE HAS REJECTED THE SABBATH?

2. HOW CAN YOU HONOR THE SABBATH AS A DAY OF REST?

3. HOW WOULD THE WORLD BE DIFFERENT IF EVERYONE TOOK ONE DAY EACH WEEK TO REST AND TURN THEIR ATTENTION TOWARD GOD?





will find yourself miserable. The Holy Spirit wants to help you build a throne for truth in your heart.

The Spirit of God is within you. This is good news. It means that you have a power within you that you have not even begun to comprehend.

The Holy Spirit will give you the courage to face difficult situations.

The Holy Spirit means that you are never alone. He is always with you, ready to guide you, encourage you, comfort you, and challenge you.

The Holy Spirit is a true friend who always wants what is best for you.

The Holy Spirit gives you the wisdom to know what is right and what is wrong, and leads you in the path of what is good and right.

The Holy Spirit empowers you to do things you would not otherwise be able to do.

The Holy Spirit is transformational. Think about Peter, who denied Jesus three times before his death out of selfish fear. But after Pentecost he literally risked his life just to let people know about Jesus.

The Holy Spirit doesn't change us into someone else; he just brings the best and the most out of us.

The Holy Spirit will help you know and do God's will.

But here is my favorite: The Holy Spirit will allow you to maintain joy even in the midst of suffering. Suffering is an inevitable part of life. It is easy to be joyful when things are going well, but the Holy Spirit brings us joy in times of suffering, and that is a thing of beauty.

Saint Paul is a perfect example here. Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon are called the "prison" epistles because they were written during Paul's first imprisonment, mentioned in Acts 28. Throughout these writings he talks about his joy and all the things he rejoices about. When you think about the fact that he was in prison for being Christian and you consider the filthy conditions of prisons at the time, you have to ask yourself: What did he have to be joyful about?

He was joyful even in the midst of suffering because he was filled with the Holy Spirit.

All this is what the Holy Spirit wants to do for you.

I don't know how seriously you are taking this whole Confirmation thing, but trust me, it is worth taking a little more seriously. You will never regret it. But if you don't take it seriously, I can guarantee you there will come a time when you will regret that.

This is important stuff. I want to encourage you to take it seriously. You'll be glad you did.

"This is a prayer we need to pray every day, every day: Holy Spirit may my heart be open to the Word of God, may my heart be open to good, may my heart be open to the beauty of God, every day."

—Pope Francis

Discussion Questions

1. IN YOUR OWN WORDS, WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

2. DESCRIBE A TIME IN YOUR LIFE WHEN YOU FELT INSPIRED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.

3. WOULD YOU LIKE TO LEARN HOW TO EXPERIENCE JOY EVEN IN THE MIDST OF GREAT SUFFERING LIKE SAINT PAUL? WHAT DO YOU THINK HIS SECRET WAS?



Discussion QUESTIONS

1. HAVE YOU EVER GIVEN SOMEONE A GIFT AND HE OR SHE WAS UNGRATEFUL? HOW DID THAT MAKE YOU FEEL?

2. WHICH OF THE SEVEN GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT DO YOU FEEL MOST IN NEED OF AT THIS TIME IN YOUR LIFE?

3. HOW WOULD YOUR LIFE BE BETTER IF YOU REALLY OPENED YOURSELF UP TO THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. WHICH PERSON IN YOUR LIFE WOULD YOU LIKE TO FILL WITH JOY?

2. HOW WOULD A LACK OF SELF-CONTROL MAKE IT HARDER TO EXPERIENCE THE OTHER ELEVEN FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?

3. CAN YOU SEE HOW GOD'S WAYS ARE DESIGNED TO BRING ORDER TO OUR LIVES AND LIBERATE US FROM WORLDLY CHAOS?

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“LET’S ASK OURSELVES: ARE WE OPEN TO THE HOLY SPIRIT?”

—POPE FRANCIS

6. OTHERS: Lift up to God anyone you feel called to pray for today, asking God to bless and guide them.

Here the Holy Spirit reminds us of all those who need our love, support, and encouragement.

7. Pray the Our Father.

Allowing the gifts and fruit of the Holy Spirit to animate us is an everyday job. With every choice you either embrace or reject the Holy Spirit—and the fruits and gifts he wants to fill you with.

Take a few minutes out of each day to connect with God in prayer. This will strengthen your connection with him and allow you to hear the promptings of the Holy Spirit more clearly. Listen to those promptings and you will discover something I have learned over the years: Every regret in life comes from not listening to the voice of God in our lives. You will never regret following your conscience and the promptings of the Holy Spirit. All of life’s regrets come when we ignore our conscience and the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

What is PENTECOST?



Pentecost is the feast commemorating the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles of Jesus as described in Acts of the Apostles 2:1–31. For this reason Pentecost is referred to as the Birthday of the Church.



1. IF YOU WERE GOING TO GO ON A PILGRIMAGE AND WALK THE CAMINO, WHOM WOULD YOU TAKE WITH YOU? WHY?

2. WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU FELT THE HOLY SPIRIT PROMPTING YOU TO DO SOMETHING? OR NOT TO DO SOMETHING?

3. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF THE PRAYER PROCESS? WHY?



1 Corinthians 6:19

KNOW IT:
You are a temple
of the Holy Spirit.

THINK ABOUT IT:
Are you honoring your
body as a temple of
the Holy Spirit?

LIVE IT: What changes
do you need to make to
make your body a better
home for God?

8.5 DECISION point

You have another decision to make. Are you going to welcome the Holy Spirit into your life or ignore and reject him?

If you are going to welcome the Holy Spirit, then prepare yourself to receive him. If you had an important visitor coming to your home, you would tidy up and make special preparations.

In the previous session we talked about the beautiful churches all around the world and why we build such beautiful churches. The reason is because they are Jesus' home. But visit a great cathedral in any major city in the world and you will find two types of people. The first type is there to pray. The second is just there to look around. The first recognizes that Jesus is present. The second does not. Pilgrims and tourists. Don't be a tourist!

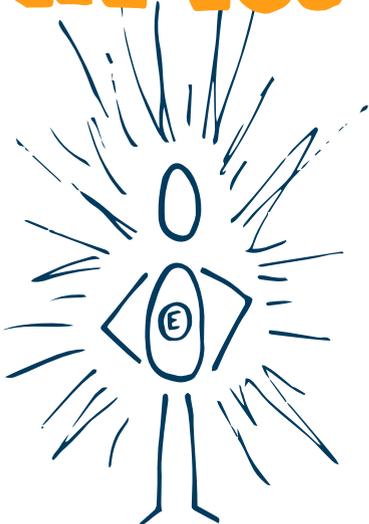
The Scriptures teach us that you are a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19). The Holy Spirit is always present within us. Embrace that. Celebrate that. The Holy Spirit is the ultimate adviser.

You are of course free to ignore or reject the Holy Spirit. But keep in mind that there are consequences if you do. The consequences of embracing the Holy Spirit are peace, joy, order, and purpose. The consequences of rejecting the Holy Spirit and his direction in your life are anxiety, chaos, and the despair of purposelessness.

If you do choose to welcome the Holy Spirit into your life, he will invite you to join in his work. The Holy Spirit is the great encourager. Life is not easy and everyone needs daily encouragement, because the world is full of discouragement and bullying.

I hope you will live an inspired life. I hope you will live in the Spirit. If you do, I know you too will become a great encourager.

JESUS I TRUST IN YOU



What do you think was the best conversation Mary ever had with the Holy Spirit?

JOURNAL

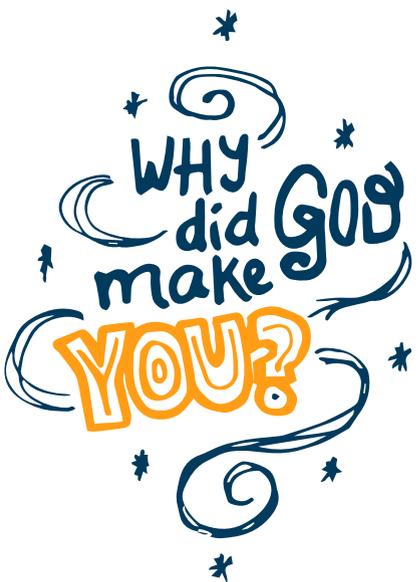
.....questions.....

1. ARE YOU GOING TO WELCOME THE HOLY SPIRIT INTO YOUR LIFE?

2. HOW WILL HAVING THE HOLY SPIRIT AS YOUR CONSTANT COMPANION MAKE LIFE BETTER?

3. WHOM DO YOU FEEL CALLED TO ENCOURAGE TODAY?





"GOD MADE ME TO KNOW HIM, TO LOVE HIM, AND TO SERVE HIM IN THIS WORLD, AND TO BE HAPPY WITH HIM FOREVER IN THE NEXT."

BALTIMORE CATECHISM, LESSON ONE, QUESTION 150.

is plenty of evidence that the harsh, impersonal, cold brutality of the pagan world is taking hold of modern society.

The rise of Christianity changed the world with agape love. When Christianity is truly lived it is warm, inviting, caring, deeply personal, and phenomenally attractive, and it sets self-interest aside. The world needs a new and massive wave of agape love. Are you willing to be part of that? We are at another decision point.

Agape loves was profound and revolutionary two thousand years ago and remains so today. How many of your peers are walking the halls lonely and depressed? How many don't feel loved? Where is their hope? What gets them through the day?

Agape love is not just a concept. It's a revolutionary invitation for you to reach out to others and share with them the love of God.



discussion questions

1. WHEN YOU THINK OF CHURCH, WHAT COMES TO MIND?

2. IF YOU COULD ASK A GROUP OF EARLY CHRISTIANS ONE QUESTION, WHAT WOULD YOU ASK?

3. WHY IS IT DIFFICULT TO PRACTICE AGAPE LOVE?



CATHOLICS HAVE BEEN MAKING INCREDIBLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE WORLD FOR 2,000 YEARS. WHAT WILL YOUR CONTRIBUTION BE?

Matthew 16: 16-19

KNOW IT: Peter was the first pope, and the papacy is the rock that Jesus chose to build his Church upon.

THINK ABOUT IT: We can trace our spiritual heritage back through 265 popes. That is a beautiful thing.

LIVE IT: Being pope is difficult. Pray for the pope today.

Sacraments and her teachings, and embraces the life Christ calls them to. We are all called to catholic unity as God's children, but not everyone responds to this call. The call is small c catholic; the response is big C Catholic.

The fourth and final mark of the Church is "apostolic." What does it mean that the Church is "apostolic"?

On the day of your Confirmation the bishop will extend his hands over you, pray that you receive the Holy Spirit, and anoint you with the sacred oil (chrism) and the Sign of the Cross.

Why? What gives him the right? Who gives him the authority to do that?

This is one of the great questions of Christian history. If you can develop a clear understanding of this, a lot of other things will fall into place. Let's turn to the Scriptures for some insight.

Jesus was walking down the road one day, talking with his disciples, answering questions, and asking questions. Toward the end of these discussions he asks the disciples who they think he is. Peter replies, "You are the Christ, the son of the living God." (Matthew 16:16) What seemed like a very spontaneous conversation then turned into something very formal when Jesus said, "You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church." Jesus goes on to say, "I will give you the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." (Matthew 16:18-19)

Jesus gave Peter the authority to lead the Church, and through Peter he gave the other apostles authority. As Catholics we can trace a direct line from your bishop back two thousand years to Peter. Pope Francis is the 265th successor of Peter.

This is what we mean when we say the Church is "apostolic." The apostles were the foundation that Jesus chose to build his Church upon. They were the witnesses whom Jesus chose to send out on a mission to the whole world. The Church celebrates and defends the teachings passed on by the apostles, continues to be guided by the apostles, and carries on the mission entrusted first to the apostles.

Your bishop is a successor to the apostles. That's profound and beautiful.

So at Mass next Sunday you will probably hear some people mindlessly mumbling the Creed. Don't be one of them. Say it loud and proud: "I believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. IF JESUS WANTED THE CHURCH TO BE ONE, WHY DO YOU THINK THERE ARE SO MANY DIFFERENT CHURCHES TODAY?

2. HOW MANY POPES HAVE THERE BEEN DURING YOUR LIFETIME? WHO WERE THEY? WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER ABOUT THEM?

3. WHAT DO YOU THINK WAS JESUS' MAIN MESSAGE?



D·I·S·C·U·S·S·I·O·N
QUESTIONS

1. WHAT MAKES YOU PROUDEST TO BE CATHOLIC?

2. IN WHAT WAYS HAS THE CHURCH DISAPPOINTED YOU?

3. WE ALL MAKE MISTAKES, AND WE ALL SIN AGAINST GOD. DO YOUR OWN FAILINGS HELP YOU TO UNDERSTAND WHY THERE HAVE BEEN SCANDALS AT DIFFERENT TIMES IN THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH?



Discussion Questions

1. WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE BEST REASON TO BE CATHOLIC?

2. WHAT DID YOU LEARN IN THIS SESSION THAT REALLY MADE YOU STOP AND THINK?

3. HOW DID THE TOP TEN REASONS TO BE CATHOLIC CHANGE THE WAY YOU VIEW CATHOLICISM?



9.5 DECISION point

There are a lot of people who turn their backs on Catholicism simply because it is old. Catholicism is old; I admit it. But let me ask you a question: If you found an ancient treasure map, would you throw it away just because it was old? No. I don't think you would. You would go looking for the treasure. The age of a map doesn't determine its value of the map. It doesn't matter how old the map is. What matters is whether or not the map leads to treasure.

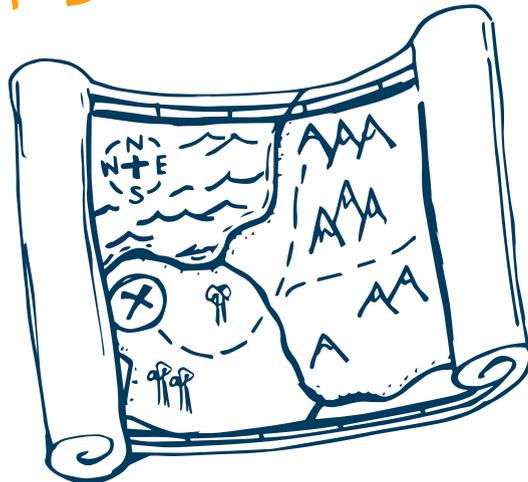
Catholicism is a treasure map. It may be old, but it still leads to treasure. I hope you have the courage and the wisdom to seek out the treasure that is Catholicism. And once you find it, I hope you spend the rest of your life marveling at its beauty and applying it to your life.

Do that and you will live an uncommon life filled with purpose and happiness.



If you could invite Mary to give a lecture at your school, what would you ask her to speak about?

YOU DON'T THROW AWAY A Treasure MAP JUST BECAUSE IT'S OLD.



JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. HOW DO YOU THINK YOUR LIFE MIGHT BE BETTER IF YOU FOLLOWED THE MAP THE CHURCH INVITES US TO FOLLOW?

2. IN WHAT WAYS IS GOD CALLING YOU TO BE COUNTERCULTURAL LIKE THE FIRST CHRISTIANS WERE?

3. HOW PURPOSEFULLY ARE YOU LIVING YOUR LIFE? GIVE YOURSELF A SCORE BETWEEN ONE AND TEN.



 discussion
questions 

1. DO YOU BELIEVE THAT GOD HAS GOOD PLANS FOR YOU?

2. WHAT CAN YOU DO TO FIND OUT THE PLANS GOD HAS FOR YOUR FUTURE?

3. HOW HAS YOUR IDEA OF CONFIRMATION CHANGED SINCE WE BEGAN OUR TIME TOGETHER?



What does it mean to be **anointed**?
To be anointed is to be set apart for God, to be chosen by God for a special mission.

Our lives change when our habits change. If you make daily prayer and regular Reconciliation habits in your life, I know you will grow in ways you never imagined, which in turn will open you up to opportunities you never dreamed about. Great spiritual habits connect you with the dreams God has for you, and God always has better dreams for us than we have for ourselves. I wonder what God is dreaming for you?

When I started working on this Confirmation program I made a commitment to pray every day for the people who will experience it. So I want you to know that I am praying for you.

Confirmation is getting close. Whether you are aware of it or not, the Holy Spirit is going to change you through Confirmation. But the more you prepare yourself and cooperate with God throughout this experience, the more powerful it will be. Allow the Holy Spirit to unleash his power in your life and you will be amazed by what happens.

What date were you **BAPTIZED**

What date did you receive

First Holy Communion

GOD CHOSE YOU FROM THE BEGINNING. JUST AS GOD CHOSE JEREMIAH AND JOSHUA, MOSES AND ABRAHAM, HE IS CHOOSING YOU AGAIN TODAY.



What advice do you think Mary would give you about preparing for Confirmation?



1. WHAT EVENT IN YOUR LIFE HAVE YOU PREPARED FOR MORE THAN ANY OTHER?

2. WHO HAVE BEEN YOUR SPIRITUAL COACHES AND MENTORS THROUGHOUT YOUR LIFE?

3. HOW HAS THE WAY YOU PRAY AND WHAT YOU PRAY FOR CHANGED OVER THE PAST FEW MONTHS?



Discussion QUESTIONS

1. IN WHAT PRACTICAL WAYS DO YOU THINK CONFIRMATION WILL CHANGE YOU?

2. WHICH OF THE SEVEN GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT COULD YOU MOST USE AT THIS TIME IN YOUR LIFE?

3. WHEN DID YOU LAST PRAY TO THE HOLY SPIRIT, ASKING FOR HELP TO MAKE A DECISION?



WHO WAS John the Baptist?

John the Baptist was an itinerant preacher and one of the great religious figures of all time. Jesus and John the Baptist were cousins, through their mothers, Mary and Elizabeth. John was the child who danced for joy in Elizabeth's womb when Mary visited, which we remember in the Second Joyful Mystery of the Rosary (Luke 1:39-56). John challenged people to repent, to turn away from their sinful and selfish ways and turn back to God (Matthew 3:1-17). John's mission was to prepare the way for Jesus. What's your mission? We celebrate John the Baptist with two feast days: June 24 (birth) and August 29 (death).

After a short prayer the bishop will invite you and your sponsor to come before him for the **Laying on of hands and Anointing with chrism**. Your sponsor will place his or her hand on your right shoulder, you or your sponsor will tell the bishop your Confirmation name, then the bishop will trace the sign of the cross on your forehead with the sacred oil chrism and say, "Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit." You respond, "Amen." Then the bishop will extend to you a sign of peace, saying, "Peace be with you." You respond, "And with your spirit."

After all the candidates have stood before the bishop, the Mass continues with the **General Intercessions**. This is that time in the Mass when we pray for all the needs of every member of the community, and for the whole world.

You will experience a special unity as we pray together the **Lord's Prayer**, offer each other a **Sign of Peace**, and receive **Holy Communion**.

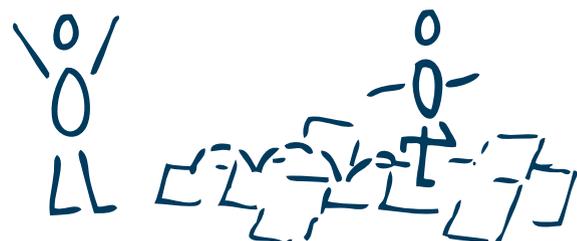
The bishop will then bring the Mass to a close with a **Solemn Blessing** and send you into the world to witness to God's love by living out the mission he has entrusted to you.



I want to encourage you in a special way to be mindful of that moment when the bishop lays his hands on you and anoints you with the chrism. That is going to be one of the most powerful moments of your life. Focus in that moment and ask God to open your heart, mind, and soul to every good thing he wants to bestow upon you.



How would you act differently if Mary was sitting next to you in class this week?



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. IF YOU COULD ASK THE BISHOP ONE QUESTION, WHAT WOULD YOU ASK?

2. ARE YOU NERVOUS ABOUT YOUR CONFIRMATION?

3. HOW ARE YOU PREPARING FOR CONFIRMATION?



1 Samuel 3:1-21

KNOW IT: God kept calling Samuel until he responded.

THINK ABOUT IT: What is God calling you to?

LIVE IT: From time to time, use some of your prayer time to ask God what he is calling you to now.

went to him and asked what he needed. But Eli said he had not called Samuel and sent him back to bed. This happened three times, and then Eli realized it was the voice of God that was calling Samuel. Eli instructed Samuel, "Go, lie down, and if he calls you again say, 'Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.'" (1 Samuel 3:1-21). The Lord called Samuel again and told him he was going to do great things through him. Samuel went on to become one of the great prophets, guiding the people of Israel with courage and wisdom.

If you listen carefully, I think you will discover that God is calling you to do something about the mess in the world. How will you respond? "Not now God, I'm busy"? or "Speak, Lord, your servant is listening."

The world is a mess in many ways, but the beautiful thing is, you and I can do something about it. Deep down you know the world is not as it should be. So let's get busy doing something about that.

Luceat
LUX
vestra

Let your
LIGHT
Shine



What did Mary teach us about letting our light shine?



Discussion Questions

1. IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU THINK THE WORLD IS A MESS?

2. HOW DO YOU SENSE GOD IS CALLING YOU TO MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE?

3. WHAT'S ONE THING YOU CAN DO TODAY THAT WILL MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE?



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. JESUS CALLS US TO LOVE OUR NEIGHBOR AS WE LOVE OURSELVES. WHOM DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE YOUR NEIGHBOR?

2. WHY DO YOU THINK SO MANY CHILDREN DIE FROM LACK OF FOOD?

3. ARE YOU WILLING TO MAKE SACRIFICES TO REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF SUFFERING IN THE WORLD?





Who was JOHN HENRY NEWMAN?

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN (1801–1890) was one of the central religious figures in England in the nineteenth century. A respected academic, he was originally a priest in the Church of England and a leader in the Oxford Movement. This was an influential group of Anglicans who wanted to return the Church of England to many Catholic beliefs and practices. In 1845 Newman left the Church of England and was received in the Roman Catholic Church, where he was eventually appointed as cardinal by Pope Leo XIII. Unlike most saints, his feast day is not the day of his death, but rather the day of his conversion to Catholicism, September 19.

desire. God wants us to get beyond our shallow desires, which are often selfish or pointless, and uncover the deepest desires of our hearts.

When I am the-best-version-of-myself, I say no to the doughnuts and I have a salad for lunch instead. To the world this is a simple choice between doughnuts and a salad. But as we grow spiritually, God shows us that there are many layers and dimensions to every decision.

On one level, yes, it's just a choice between doughnuts and a salad. On another level it's a choice between doughnuts and being healthy. That's a different perspective. On another level it's a choice between doughnuts and being alive and healthy enough to walk my daughter down the aisle when she gets married . . . to be alive to see her life unfold . . . and meet the person she will spend her life with . . . and meet my grandchildren. . . .

When we embrace God and his way of life, he reveals many dimensions of everyday life that we have never seen or thought about before. God is speaking to you through your deepest desires. Seek out your deepest desires for good things and have the courage to pursue them.

The most common preface to any sentence in the Bible is "God said . . ." God said to Adam, Noah, Moses, and Abraham. God spoke to everyone. It isn't that he has stopped speaking, but that humanity has stopped listening. God speaks to us in so many ways—through prayer, the Scriptures, the sacraments; through the life, teachings, and history of the Church; through other people, events, and circumstances.

You have been designed by God for a specific mission. This is what John Henry Newman wrote, "God has created me to do him some definite service. He has committed some work to me, which he has not committed to another. I have my mission." God has assigned a mission to you. If you don't fulfill your mission it will go undone. The world is a mess because too many people have abandoned their God-given mission.

Find your mission. It will change your life in the most wonderful ways . . . forever!



 How can Mary help you find and live out your mission?

1. WHO DO YOU KNOW WHO HAS FOUND AND FOLLOWED THEIR MISSION IN LIFE?

2. HAVE YOU EVER ASKED GOD WHAT MISSION HE HAS FOR YOU?

3. HOW DO YOU THINK WHAT YOU WANT FOR YOURSELF IS DIFFERENT FROM WHAT GOD WANTS FOR YOU?

What does
VOCATION
mean?

Vocation means "call." It's an invitation from God. There are many ways to live your life, but God has given you a unique blend of talents, abilities, and personality to carry out a mission that he has not assigned to anybody else. God may call you to the vocation of marriage, he may call you to live a single life, or he may call you to live as a priest or religious. Finding your vocation is like coming home after a long journey. It brings with it an indescribable joy.

The Spiritual Works of Mercy are:

- To instruct the ignorant
- To counsel the doubtful
- To correct sinners
- To bear wrongs patiently
- To forgive offenses willingly
- To comfort the afflicted
- To pray for the living and the dead

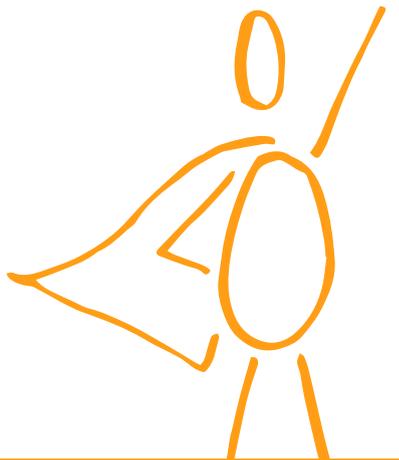
How would the world be different if everyone practiced just one work of mercy each day? How would the world be different if these works of mercy defined the way we live our lives? There is genius in Catholicism, but sadly it is little known and little practiced.

So here is my challenge for you. Each day for the next thirty days I want to encourage you to intentionally practice one of these works of mercy. You will be amazed how this thirty-day challenge can change you, the way you see the world, and your life.

You are so young and your lives are before you, so I want to beg you not to waste your single years waiting for life to happen. You will never have a better opportunity to serve than while you are young and single. Too many people spend their single years trying to wish them away. Singleness, like everything else, has a purpose. It is a time to discover who you are, what you are here for, what matters most, and what matters least. Nothing will help you develop this kind of personal clarity like service.

So, get outside yourself. Stop thinking that it is all about you. Find meaningful ways to serve. You will be so glad you did.

**FIND YOUR
MISSION**



Discussion Questions

1. WHO DO YOU KNOW WHO IS GREAT AT SERVING OTHER PEOPLE?

2. WHAT DOES THE STORY ABOUT THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS MAKE YOU THINK ABOUT?

3. DO YOU THINK YOU WILL BE HAPPIER IF YOU FIND AND FOLLOW YOUR MISSION?



DO small THINGS with GREAT Love

MOTHER TERESA

VIRTUE IN FOCUS

Gen·er·os·i·ty

[jen-uh-ros-i-tee]

Going beyond your own selfishness to give of your time, talent, and treasure to benefit others

Who is the most generous person you know?

Are generous people happier?

How can you be more generous?

11.5 DECISION point

I cannot tell you what you should do with your life. I wish I could. Your parents, teachers, and friends cannot tell you either. We can all advise you, but ultimately God has created a unique journey for you, and it is only by listening to his voice that you will discover the indescribable joy that comes to us when we finally discover our mission in life.

This joy I have experienced. It is not just an idea. There are two very concrete examples of it in my life. The first is with my work as an author and a speaker. There are many things I could be doing, but I know this is the thing that God wants me to be doing—that he created me for. How do I know? It's hard to describe. When you find your thing, you just know. There is a joy and a timelessness that you experience. You love doing it, even though it isn't always fun; you lose track of time when you are hard at work; and you have a deep peace within you, which comes from the sense that this is the thing for you to dedicate your life to. I want you to discover and experience that.

The other area of my life where I experience this joy is in my marriage. I have lived away from Australia for almost twenty years now. But every time I fly into Sydney, and see the Harbour Bridge and the Opera House, I still get the same feeling. It is the feeling of arriving home. I travel a lot for work, and there is something wonderful about coming home. When I met Meggie I had that feeling. When I married her I had that feeling, the feeling that I was finally home. Whatever vocation God calls you to, I want you to experience that same feeling of arriving home after a long journey.

I can't tell you what your mission in life is, but I can tell you two things that will flawlessly help you to discover it.

1) While you may not know the specifics of your mission, you do know your mission in a broad sense, because it is the same for us all. Your mission is to make the love of God known to the world. In your own place and time, in your own ways, you are here to bring the love of God to every person who crosses your path.

2) Do the next right thing. The surest way to discover your mission is to do what you know to be the right thing, right now. If you do the next right thing often enough for long enough, you will live your way into the incredible life that God has designed just for you.



JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF?

2. ONE DAY, WHEN YOU ARE DYING, WHAT DO YOU WANT TO SEE WHEN YOU LOOK BACK ON YOUR LIFE?

3. HOW AVAILABLE ARE YOU TO GOD?



The saints were not born saints, and they weren't perfect. They were men and women like you and me who realized that the world's vision for them was bankrupt, so they turned to God and his vision for their lives. They created one holy moment at a time, and over the course of their lives they strung together thousands of holy moments to create a holy life. You can do that too.

Holiness is possible, and once we come to that realization everything changes and possibilities we never considered before open up before us.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. WHO IS THE HOLIEST PERSON YOU KNOW? WHAT MAKES THAT PERSON HOLY?

2. WHO IS YOUR FAVORITE SAINT? WHY?

3. WHAT'S ONE THING YOU HAVE LEARNED THROUGHOUT THE DECISION POINT EXPERIENCE THAT SURPRISED YOU?

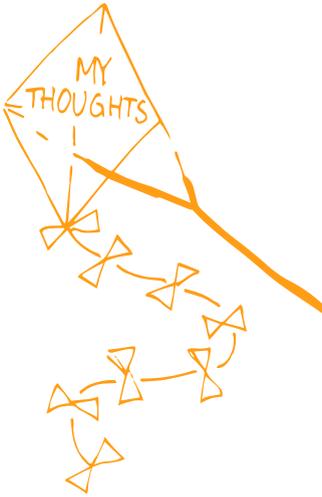


 **discussion
questions** 

1. WHO DO YOU KNOW WHO DOES LITTLE THINGS WITH GREAT LOVE?

2. WHAT LITTLE THINGS CAN YOU DO WITH GREAT LOVE TODAY?

3. WHAT DOES TODAY'S CULTURE THINK ABOUT DOING LITTLE THINGS WITH GREAT LOVE?





WHO WAS DAVID?

David was an ancestor of Jesus (c. 1040 BC–970 BC) and perhaps the most brilliant leader of ancient Israel. He had the mind and charisma to inspire a great nation. In other ways he was a very ordinary man who struggled with destructive passion and was motivated at times by political gain. Yet through it all he had a deep love of God. The Bible describes David as a man after God’s own heart (Acts 13:22).

When David was just a boy he was summoned to play music for King Saul in order to cure his melancholy. David also gained fame in his youth when he killed the Philistine Goliath with his slingshot. After Saul died, David rose to power and became King of Israel, uniting the twelve tribes.

the pledge. Read it slowly, pray about it, and sign it. Say yes to God and his Church, and say yes enthusiastically. Not just a whimpering, passive yes, but a wholehearted and enthusiastic YES.

Your Catholic faith will always be a part of you. You get to decide if it is going to be something powerful and positive, or something negative and misunderstood.

God has a plan. When we don’t play our part, the whole thing falls apart. It’s all connected. Imagine if Mary had said no. Her yes has touched every person who has lived for two thousand years. You see, every decision made by every person echoes down through history.

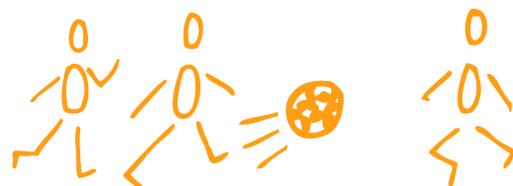
Sometimes I wonder if the reason we don’t have a cure for cancer, AIDS, and Alzheimer’s is because the people who were going to find those cures were among the fifty-five million children who have been aborted in the United States since *Roe v. Wade*. God had a plan for every one of those children, just as he has a plan for you. You have a part to play in God’s plan for the world.

You might be tempted to think, “Oh, I’m nobody special; God doesn’t have any special plans for me.” But that would be a mistake. Read Chapter 17 of the first book of Samuel for a great example. David’s father sent him to take food to his brothers, who were in the army. When he got there Goliath, the enormous and much feared Philistine, was daring the Israelites to fight him, but they were all too afraid. David said to king Saul, “I’ll fight him.” Saul told him he could not because David, who was little more than a child, was too young. David and Saul went back and forth and finally the king agreed. The rest is history. David slew Goliath, and in time God made this lowly shepherd boy the king of his people.

David made himself available.

God uses the most unlikely people to do his greatest work. As you read the Bible, you’ll discover that he almost never uses those in positions of power and authority; he doesn’t necessarily use the most educated, or the best looking, or even the most qualified. Whom does God use to do his most powerful work here on earth? He uses the people who make themselves available to him. How available are you to God? Ten percent, 50 percent, 95 percent? Or are you 100 percent available for whatever God calls you to today?

Want to see something truly incredible? Make yourself available to God.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. ARE YOU READY TO LET GOD COME AND FILL YOU UP IN ALL THE WAYS YOU NEED AND WANT TO BE FILLED?

2. WHAT HAVE YOU SAID YES TO IN THE PAST THAT YOU KNEW WAS NOT FOR YOU?

3. HOW AVAILABLE ARE YOU TO GOD TODAY?



D·I·S·C·U·S·S·I·O·N
QUESTIONS

1. WHAT NEW HABIT HAVE YOU DEVELOPED SINCE YOU STARTED THIS PROGRAM?

2. WHAT IS THE BEST IDEA YOU HEARD DURING THE ENTIRE EXPERIENCE?

3. WHAT IS ONE THING YOU CAN DO THIS WEEK TO BETTER PREPARE YOURSELF FOR CONFIRMATION?



JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. WHAT ARE YOUR DREAMS?

2. WHAT CROSS ARE YOU CARRYING AT THIS TIME IN YOUR LIFE?

3. WHAT DO YOU HOPE YOUR LIFE WILL BE LIKE FIVE YEARS FROM NOW?

