



**Diocese of Fargo**

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**Office of Evangelization and Catechesis**

# **Sacramental Preparation Retreats**

**Retreats in Preparation for the  
Reception of the Sacraments of  
Reconciliation, Confirmation  
and First Eucharist**



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Diocese of Fargo  
Office of Evangelization and Catechesis  
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# Sacramental Preparation Retreats



# Retreats

## Introduction

Retreats are invitations to us to come away and encounter Jesus. Children who are preparing to receive Jesus in the Sacraments also need this time to be “away” so that their hearts can be ready for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation and First Eucharist. Therefore a 3 to 5 hour retreat for the children is required in the Diocese of Fargo for each Sacrament.



### **Goals of a Retreat:**

1. *To come away from our daily activities and spend time with Jesus.*
2. *To receive insights about God's love for us and how He wants us to live.*

### **The Retreat Should:**

1. Prepare parents and children to receive God's life in the sacrament.
2. Provide a valuable length of time (3-5 hrs) to deepen understanding and conversion to the Church's teachings on the sacrament in language suited to the children's age level, as well as, to do hands-on creative activities to reinforce the learning.
3. Review the key teachings on the sacrament and answer any questions.
4. May include a rehearsal or practice for reception of the sacrament.

## Parent Participation

The parents are the first educators in their child's faith. Children are not only formed in the religious education programs but foremost in the homes by their families. This is why parents should play an active role in the retreat. It is a time of grace for both the children and the parents to journey together through this preparation period and through the continuing on of catechesis.

The following retreat format is a resource to help you facilitate the retreats for the children along with their parents. This retreat manual uses many creative ideas and settings to help foster a deeper relationship with Jesus. The following pages will give you some ideas on organization and specific layout for the retreats. However you decide to organize the retreats, always keep in mind that you are coordinating a retreat experience for the children not a summer camp or daycare. Just as adults desire to encounter our Lord and be immersed in prayer on a retreat, children should also have the same experience, albeit at an age appropriate level. This is why you need to take time for preparation by creating the right environment with attention to all the details. This will help foster the retreat experience.

# Preparations Before the Retreat

## The Retreat Team

Many hands make light work! Do not try to do it all on your own – delegate!

One volunteer per station is recommended (sometimes more). At the beginning of the new school year start recruiting for adults or teens to help with the retreats. Think of people with various gifts and talents who enjoy working with children. Keep in mind that parents attending the retreat are not asked to be part of the retreat team as they are supposed to be experiencing the retreat alongside their child. However, this is sometimes unavoidable in small parishes when the number of people available to help is limited.

When gathering volunteers you must explain what is expected of them, including time commitments. Describe the work necessary to oversee a single station – the specific one you have in mind for them. Remind them of the rewards of helping, specifically to help bring the children to deeper conversion and love for Christ and His Church.

The Retreat Team should include:

- Parish priest
- Coordinator of the retreat
- Volunteers made up of adults and teens to help with set up and stations

Be sure to thank the volunteers for helping. Acknowledge them at the end of the retreat and also send them a note of appreciation after the retreat. Volunteers frequently return if it is a good match for their gifts and talents and they know they are needed.

## Prayer

Ask other parishioners to adopt one of the children and their parents as they prepare to receive the sacraments. You can even make up a holy card with the child's picture and the date they will receive the sacraments.

## Retreat Team Prayer

Ask the team to pray this prayer or something similar as you begin to make preparations for the retreat.

Oh dear Jesus,  
I give to you my servant's heart today.  
Let me be your hands and feet  
as I prepare the tasks ahead of me  
to guide your children into  
your most Sacred Heart on this retreat.  
Jesus please teach me your way of holiness  
and instill in me an ardent love and desire  
to always come to you in the sacraments.  
Help me to be your instrument and  
to use the gifts you have given me  
to show your children  
how much you love and desire  
to be with them in  
the great gift of your sacraments.  
Amen.

## Supplies

This retreat handbook includes a checklist of supplies needed to make the retreat successful. There is also a resource page at the end of each section to help you locate the right supplies. This task could be delegated to one of the retreat team members.

## Library

In the resource section of this handbook there is a list of children's books that can be purchased and used during the retreat. One idea is to set up a book corner to encourage children and parents to read good Christian books.

## Parish Size

The size of a parish may determine how the retreat is organized.

### **Smaller Parishes (less than 12 children):**

Consider joining together with other neighboring parishes to offer a retreat. Parishes could rotate hosting the retreat.

### **Larger Parishes:**

Consider dividing up the children into groups of 10 to 12 and rotating the groups separately through the stations. You will need small group leaders who will lead the group from station to station (this could be one of the parents); they will need to know the order their group is doing the stations and where each station is located. Different colored name tags (or different colored markers) could be used for each group.

## **Creating the Retreat Environment**

The environment you create should help foster prayer and be a visual reminder of the sacredness of the sacrament for which the children are preparing. This means changing things around that are usually in the space to make it more pleasant to the eye. For example, if you are using a classroom for one of the stations, move the desks out and cover other large items with fabric so it does not seem like a classroom anymore. Each station should have a sacred space somewhere in the room. The sacred space should be in an area where it catches the eye as you walk in the door. See below for sacred space ideas.

You will need to use a social hall for gathering, meals/snacks. You will need a craft room, which can also be set up in the social hall. You will also need two smaller rooms that can accommodate up to 12 children and their parents. These rooms should be big enough for children to act out skits while parents have enough room to sit and watch.

One idea you could employ is to gather a committee of high school students from your parish for the decorating committee. You would just need to supply the materials and let them create the perfect space.

### **Things to include in the environment:**

1. Candles
2. Large pieces of material covering things that are not being used.
3. Framed sacred artwork
4. Sacred space
5. Children's book corner
6. Decorated tables if you are serving a meal
7. Soft background music
8. Station signs by each room being used.

### **A Sacred Space:**

1. Wherever you teach, whenever you teach, set up a sacred space in your room.
2. Keep it simple, but sacred.
3. A crucifix, candle, and liturgical cloth would be just fine, or some sacred objects relating to the subject you are teaching.
4. You might also include a Bible, holy water, a rosary or an image of some sort (e.g. print, holy card, statue, etc).



5. Encourage children to set up a sacred space in their rooms at home.
6. Introduce the children and parents to the sacred space and explain the sacred objects you chose for the space.

### **Catechesis in Art**

Each retreat will include a print of a famous painting to provide a visual for the parents and children to reflect on as they keep the image in their mind throughout the retreat. As you talk about the event from scripture, the children will be able to visualize the event which will help them to better understand what happened. The artwork prints may be purchased online at various vendors. A resource page at the end of each retreat has been provided for you in this manual.

### **Transitions**

Each retreat will include a prayer or a short musical lyric for the children to learn as they transition from station to station. This prayer or musical lyric has been provided for them on the handout.

# Format of the Retreats

Retreats can be set up a variety of ways. This manual uses the approach of transitioning the children and parents through various stations. Each station should be no more than 12 children. If there are more than 12 children, then they should be split up into two groups having two stations running at each period.

The following is a basic format that can be used for any of the retreats.

## I. Preparation and Time Allotment

- A. The retreats are set up with a general time frame of 3-5 hours. The time will depend on how many participants you have and how much time is actually spent in each station.
- B. Create an inviting environment for children and their parents.
  - 1. Include background music
  - 2. Room set up, table and chairs, table decorations
  - 3. Snacks and drinks

## II. Welcome & Sign in

- 1. Name tags using markers for nice bold letters
- A. Introductions and instructions
  - 1. The pastor should begin with introductions and a short welcome
  - 2. The coordinator should give out the handouts included in this manual.
  - 3. The coordinator should explain the layout and flow of the retreat
  - 4. The pastor or coordinator should explain to the parents how they will be participating in this retreat

## III. The First Set of Stations

- A. Rotate through four stations, take a break and then conclude with four more stations.
  - 1. Church station
  - 2. Craft station
    - During this station parents participate in a directed *lectio divina*
  - 3. Drama station
  - 4. Prayer room station

## IV. Breaks

- A. A break is the mid-point of the retreat. It takes place in the Social Hall. This can be a snack break or a meal.

## V. The Final Stations

- A. Finish with completing the last four stations



## VI. Prayer

A. The end of the retreat should conclude with a time set aside for formal prayer.

1. Children's Eucharistic Adoration or prayer service
2. Children's Reconciliation service
3. Mass

**Note:** Some of the stations are really only focused around the children, such as the examination of conscience and the craft stations. Therefore you can either have the parents join their children throughout the retreat or have them separated during those times in which the pastor can provide prayer or catechesis at an adult level. The next section is an introduction on *lectio divina*. Each retreat contains one session of *lectio divina*.

## ***Lectio divina***

A *lectio divina* Station is included in each of the retreats in which parents, sponsors and team members participate while their children complete the craft. The following introduction is provided for those who want a little more background on *lectio divina*.

### **Introduction to *lectio divina***

We live in a society that is inundated with words and images which seldom comfort or uplift us and rarely speak of God. Yet, there is evidence of a great spiritual hunger among all people in every culture. There is good reason for this.

By creating us God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit established a bond with each one of us, a relationship we are capable of experiencing and embracing in freedom.

Not only is God our true origin, He is also our end; every human person needs God, needs to experience His saving presence to be whole and happy.

In order to experience personally and to encounter intimately the living God, we need to hear His Word, the Word that saves, the Word of perfect wisdom and unquenchable personal love.

The Word of God the Father is the Person of Jesus Christ, the Son of God made man. He became one of us so as to lift us up to Himself. By His becoming man and the sending of the Holy Spirit upon His Mother Mary and the Apostles (Acts 1-2), He ensured that every generation would have access to His Word through His Church.

Given the many challenges to receiving this Word of God, we need to “go apart awhile” (cf. Mk 6:31) and seek the One who loves us beyond all imagining. *Lectio divina* (which is Latin for “divine reading”), although an ancient method of prayer, is particularly suited to meeting the spiritual need of modern busy Christians. It is a way for us to receive words and images that do speak of God and bring us His life, light and love.

### **Attitudes for *lectio divina***

In order to derive the greatest fruit from *lectio divina*, it is important to cultivate the right attitudes.

First, only in a **silence** that is both exterior and interior are we able to hear what God is saying to us. By withdrawing from the external noises of daily life (radio, TV, conversation, etc.) and by seeking to listen deeply to the voice of God in the depths of our hearts, we open ourselves to His grace and transforming love. Cultivating this type of silence becomes the daily challenge of a faithful disciple in the midst of a noisy world.

Secondly, we should recall that Mary, the Mother of God, is the perfect example of being a disciple of Christ, her Son. At the Annunciation (Lk 1:26ff), Mary reveals a posture of deeply humble **active receptivity**, a radical openness to all that God willed to say to her and to accomplish in her life. Mary trusted that all things were possible with God and surrendered totally to His Word so that it would be fulfilled in her. Therefore, we should strive to actively receive as Mary did, relying on her intercession to obtain this grace.

Lastly, because God is trustworthy, we should **trust** Him without hesitation at every moment as did Mary.

### **Method of *lectio divina***

The four movements of the *lectio divina* prayer are typically known by their ancient Latin names: *lectio* (pronounced “lek-tsee-o”), *meditatio* (“me-di-ta-tsee-o”), *oratio* (“o-ra-tsee-o”), and *contemplatio* (“con-tem-pla-tsee-o”). They follow four fundamental steps in relating to God: reading (*lectio*) to remember the Word of God, meditation (*meditatio*) to understand the Word of God, responding (*oratio*) to choose what God wills, and resting (*contemplatio*) and resting in the Word and our relationship of love with God. The four steps should be preceded by an introductory prayer and ended with a brief prayer.

### **The Exercise**

*Lectio divina* should preferably be done in the church. If it is not available, it should take place in a quiet place, where the other activities of the retreat cannot be heard. Instructions are given for each step, after which silence follows for the allotted time. The following table shows how much time should be given for each step.

<b>Step</b>	<b>Time</b>
<i>Lectio</i> / Reading	3-4 minutes
<i>Meditatio</i> / Meditation	10-15 minutes
<i>Oratio</i> / Praying	5-8 minutes
<i>Contemplatio</i> / Contemplation	2-3 minutes
<b>Total</b>	<b>20-30 minutes</b>

*Lectio divina* can be concluded with a time of sharing. While this is optional, it can be an enlightening time for participants to hear about the experiences of others. They will see that the same text can speak to people very differently.



# Reconciliation Retreat



# Reconciliation Retreat

## Introduction:

A retreat provides time in a setting outside of the normal routine to encounter Jesus Christ and come to a deeper understanding of the mystery of the sacrament. We also receive insights about God’s love for us and how He wants us to live. Parents should be invited to attend the retreat and share in this encounter with Christ alongside the children.



Sacraments are powers that come forth from the Body of Christ to heal the wounds of sin and to give us new life in Christ. Jesus calls all, young and old, to conversion. It is through Baptism that the first and principle place of conversion occurs through the washing away of our sins and the beginning of our new life in Christ. Yet Jesus does not leave us to our own accord after Baptism. He continually calls us to conversion and His call should resonate in our lives as we grow in holiness.

To grow in holiness means we open our hearts to the grace Jesus wants to give us. This starts with Baptism and continues through our whole lives when we receive the other sacraments. This call to conversion after Baptism is as the Catechism calls an “uninterrupted task for the whole church” to gather sinners into her bosom so a ‘contrite heart’ may respond to the merciful love of God through the sacrament of Reconciliation. (CCC 1428)

## Stations for the Reconciliation Retreat:

There are eight stations for the Reconciliation retreat. Depending on the number of children attending the retreat you can either split them into groups or keep them together as they visit each station. Except for first and last station, each station is around 20-30 minutes long. The retreat begins in the social hall as they gather.

Station / Activity	Room	Length	Page
Station 1: Welcome & Sign In	Social Hall	10 min	26
Station 2: Opening Prayer & Prodigal Son	Church	20-30 min	29
Station 3: Attention to details activity	Prayer Room	20-30 min	34
Station 4: Role playing confession	Drama Room	20-30 min	37
Break		30 min	
Station 5: Votive candle holder craft	Social Hall	20-30 min	44
Parents’ Station: <i>Lectio divina</i>	Church	20-30 min	45
Station 6: Saints skits	Drama Room	30 min	50
Station 7: Light of the Holy Spirit activity	Prayer Room	20-30 min	55
Station 8: Close the retreat with prayer, Mass or a Reconciliation service	Church	30-60 min	

\*The shortest time it would take to put on this retreat would be just over three hours. If you use the maximum time, including a Reconciliation service (of about one hour), it will be closer to five hours.

# Check List of Materials Needed

## Station 1: Welcome & Sign-in

- Name tags & markers
- Lists of names and station rotation if you have more than one group
- Optional: Simple food and refreshments
- Retreat handout for transition prayer and take home reflection questions

## Station 2: Salvation Story and the Prodigal Son

- Bible
- Picture of the story of Rembrandt's The Return of the Prodigal Son
- Pictures to help do Salvation History overview

## Station 3: Examination of Conscience

- Sign on door indicating the station
- Image of Jesus, one copy per child
- Pencils
- Examination of Conscience aids, one per child

## Station 4: Role Playing Reconciliation

- Sign on door indicating the station
- A pretend makeshift confessional and Crucifix
- A pretend stole
- A pretend sin bag
- Slips of paper and pencil

## Station 5: Stain Glass Candle Votive Holder Craft

- Sign on door indicating the station
- Glass Jars, one per child
- Colored tissue paper
- White school glue
- Small plastic bowl or disposable container for glue
- Paintbrushes
- Votive candles or LED tea lights, one per child
- Optional: Pressed flowers or leaves
- Optional: Markers that can write on glass

## Station 6: Saints Skits

- Sign on door indicating the station
- Saint stories
- Optional: Costumes and various props

## Station 7: Light of the Holy Spirit

- Sign on door indicating the station
- Two votive candle holders, one new and one empty
- Photocopies of renewal of Baptismal Promises

## Station 8: Prayer, Mass or Reconciliation Service



## Retreat Environment

The environment you create should help foster prayer and be a visual reminder of the sacredness of the sacrament for which the children are preparing. Use the general example given in the beginning of this manual for creating the environment. Some items you could include in the environment, including the sacred space, for the Reconciliation retreat are:

- Use purple cloths to drape over things you don't want seen, such as desks, etc.
- Use purple cloths on each sacred space to place items on.
- Place a priest's stole on one or more of the sacred spaces.
- Place a card with the Act of Contrition on one or more of the sacred spaces.
- Place sacred art relating to the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

In the life of the body a man  
is sometimes sick, and unless  
he takes medicine, he will die.

Even so in the spiritual life  
a man is sick on account of sin.  
For that reason he needs medicine  
so that he may be restored to health;  
and this grace is bestowed in  
the Sacrament of Penance.

- St. Thomas Aquinas

# Station: Welcome & Sign-In

## Large Group in the Social Hall

### Greeting:

1. Assign a retreat team member to greet people at the door. First impressions of a warm welcome are essential to set the tone of the retreat. Make sure your greeter knows the overall retreat so they can answer questions.

### Activity:

*Welcome & Sign-In*

### Objective:

*Welcome the children and their parents*

*Explain the events of the day*

### Materials Needed:

*Sign-in sheet*

*Name tags*

*Handouts*

2. Each child should sign in on the appropriate sheet and put on their name tag.

**Note:** If the children are being divided into smaller groups, the children in each group and the small group leader should be assigned before the retreat begins. Names written on their name tags in a different colored marker could be a means to distinguish the members of each group.

3. As they arrive, it is recommended that the parish priest mingle with the participants.
4. If refreshments are served, a different volunteer oversees them than the one who welcomes and assists registering the children.

### Directions:

1. Have parents and children gather in the social hall where they can visit as people enter.
2. Give each parent the retreat handout. The questions should be discussed after the retreat between parent and child. However, the handout will be needed to help children learn the transition prayer, which is prayed between each station.
3. Explain the layout of the retreat, that is, that they will be moving from station to station.  
**Note:** if a large number of children are divided into smaller groups, explain that each group may do the stations in a different order. They should know who their group leader is and follow them.
4. Be clear with expectations for the children and parents: For example, because we are not at a baseball game, there should be no gum chewing or hats worn inside. We are on a retreat and will be spending some time in the church where we need to show proper respect and reverence for God's house and be attentive to what He wants to give us this day.
5. When you are ready to begin the retreat have them move into the church. This way you begin the retreat in front of Jesus in the tabernacle and it sets the mood for how the retreat will flow.

# Reconciliation Retreat Handout

## The Transition Prayer: The Act of Contrition

Oh my God I am heartily sorry for having offended You. I detest all my sins because of Your just punishments, but most of all because they offend You, my God, Who are All-good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Your grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasions of sin. Amen.

**Directions:** The questions below are for parents and children to discuss after the retreat.

### Station: The Story of the Prodigal Son with the artwork

What did I like about this station?

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### Station: Examination of Conscience (Attention to Details Activity)

What was helpful for me to learn in this station?

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### Station: Role Playing Confession

What was helpful for me to learn in this station?

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### Station: Craft of making a votive candle

What did I like about this craft? What can I use it for?

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**Station: Saint Skits**

What did I like about this station?

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**Station: Light of the Holy Spirit Activity**

What was helpful for me to learn in this station?

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**Station: Prayer Time and/or Reconciliation**

Was I prepared? Did I know what to do?

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# Station: The Salvation Story and the Prodigal Son

## In the Church

### Opening Prayer:

Usher the children to sit in the very front pews so they can easily see the Prodigal Son picture. Remind them to genuflect towards the tabernacle before entering the pew. Have the parents or other family members fill in the pews behind the children. Once people settle into the church and quietness descends, begin with a short prayer such as:

Father, we gather today to prepare our hearts  
to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation.  
Help us to be sorry for offending you,  
in order that we may grow closer to You and  
to recognize the Holy Spirit working in our lives.  
We pray this through Christ Our Lord. Amen

## Part I: The Salvation Story

### Directions:

1. Begin with a review of the salvation history using coloring pages to use as a visual. This activity will help place everything in context. (coloring pages are found on the Fargo Diocese Web site)

### Questions for Review:

1. In the beginning, what did God create?  
*(The world and everything in it)*
2. Who are our first parents?  
*(Adam and Eve)*
3. Who tempted Eve to eat the fruit?  
*(Satan / the devil, he is called the father of all lies because he twists the truth into a lie to make us believe him and do what he wants us to do.)*
4. What separates us from God?  
*(sin)*

5. Did God abandon Adam and Eve once they were kicked out of the Garden of Eden?  
*(No, God promised them a savior)*
6. Did Jesus come right away then?  
*(No, God had to prepare his people to receive His Son)*
7. How did God prepare His people, who did he send to do that job?  
*(People like Moses and other prophets)*
8. How did the birth of Jesus finally come about?  
*(An angel appeared to a woman named Mary and by the power of the Holy Spirit she conceived a baby whom she was to name Jesus)*
9. Where was Jesus born? What kind of place was that?  
*(He was born in Bethlehem in a stable)*
10. Who were his parents?  
*(Mary was his mother, and Joseph was his foster father)*
11. Who were the apostles?  
*(They were His friends and specially chosen to carry on His mission)*
12. How did Jesus pay the price for our sin?  
*(Jesus took all our sin and died on the cross for us)*
13. What happened after he died on the cross?  
*(He rose from the dead, the Resurrection!)*
14. What do we call the event of when Jesus goes to heaven?  
*(The Ascension)*
15. What happened at Pentecost?  
*(The Holy Spirit came upon Mary and the Apostles, and the Church was started)*

\* The coloring pages used for a visual during the review can be sent home with each child.

## Part II: The Prodigal Son

### Directions:

1. The priest should read the Prodigal Son. (Lk 15:11-32)  
Read the scripture passage from Luke out of the Bible then summarize at their level or use the story from this manual.
2. Have the image of the Return of the Prodigal Son in view as you read.

### Questions for Reflection:

1. Who tells us this story and why?  
*(Jesus, He wanted to teach us about the Father's forgiveness)*
2. What did the younger son want?  
*(He wanted his inheritance early so he could spend it)*
3. Did the father allow him this?  
*(Yes)*
4. Where did the son go and what happened to him?  
*(He went far away and spent the money on bad things that his father would not have liked.)*
5. Why did the son decided to return home?  
*(A famine hit the land and he could not earn enough to even feed himself)*
6. What did he tell his father?  
*(He asked his father to forgive him)*
7. What happened when he returned home?  
*(His father had been waiting and hoping he would return, he forgave him and gave him many gifts)*
8. Examine the print by Rembrandt.



Direct their attention to the artwork of the Return of the Prodigal Son. Explain that this artwork is a print of a famous painting done by Rembrandt. This is his idea of how he saw the story.

- A. Tell me what is going on in this painting? Who is the son who returned? Who is the father? *(The other people are those assisting the father to welcome the son back.)*
- B. What is the father doing? *(Showing forgiveness & mercy)* And how is the son responding? *(he is on his knees, a sign of being sorry for his sins)* Notice the ragged clothes on the son. It shows he has had a really hard time and living conditions.

9. How many of you think the father should have forgiven his son and taken him back?
10. Does it matter what sin you have done? Will God the Father always forgive you?  
*(God the Father always loves and will always forgive us.)*
11. Today as you move around to different rooms and activities it would be good to have this image of the father forgiving the son in your mind as you start to think about your own sins and the mercy and forgiveness God the Father wants to give you.

### **Transition Prayer:**

End with reciting the Transition Prayer for this retreat, which is the Act of Contrition: "Oh my God ..."

Genuflect and leave the Church. Have small group leaders gather their group and continue to the next station. Parents or small group leaders should hold onto the handouts in-between use so the children do not need to keep track of it.



## Story of the Prodigal Son

Jesus told us the story of the Prodigal Son to teach us about God's love and mercy that we receive in the Sacrament of Penance. The story goes something like this ...

There once was a man who had two sons. The younger son no longer wanted to live on the farm or do all that his father told him. So, one day, he said to his father: "Father, give me the share of your land that is to be mine. I want all that I would receive after your death right now." The Father was saddened by this, but he respected his son's wishes. His son could choose to go any time. So the father gave to his younger son the money he would have left for him after his death. The younger son took all he had and left the farm and went into a far off country.

Now the younger son was not very good with money, and spent it all very quickly on things that would not please the father. In fact, the way he spent his money was very offensive to the father and hurt him very much. After he spent all his money, a famine hit this country and the son had to work very hard just to have food to eat. One day, the younger son realized that his father's servants had a better life than the one he was living. They had lots of food, but he was always hungry. So, this son decided to return to his father, and confess or tell him his sins, and tell his father that he is sorry. The younger son started on his way home.

Now back on the farm, the father longed for his younger son to return to him, for he loved him very much! He would watch and wait for his son to return. One day, the father saw his son coming and he was filled with joy and love. He ran to his son, hugged and kissed him. The son told his sins to his father and told him that he was sorry. The father was so excited and overjoyed at the return of his son, that he sent his servants to bring his best robe, a ring to put on his finger, and shoes on his feet. They cooked a great feast and had a big party. His father knew that his son was lost and dead because of sin, but now that he had confessed his sins and returned to his father, he was home and alive with grace.

The same will happen to you when you go to confession. Sometimes we are weak and sinful, and this saddens God our Father greatly. He waits for us to return to Him because He loves us. When we confess our sins and are sorry, God forgives us and is happy that we have turned away from sin and back to God. This is what we do in the Sacrament of Penance.

# Station: Examination of Conscience

## Prayer Room Station

### **Activity:**

*Examination of Conscience*

### **Objective:**

*To help children understand what it means to examine your conscience*

### **Materials Needed:**

*Image of Jesus copies, one per child, pencils (Image included in booklet)*

*Examination of Conscience aids, one per child. (aids included in booklet)*

### **Directions:**

1. Hand out the image of Jesus with the many pictures depicted inside the image.
2. Explain there are many hidden pictures inside the head of Jesus, like details of His life.
3. Explain that the children will have to search for all the hidden pictures.
4. Direct the children to circle all the different images they find. Give them 5 min.

### **Explanation:**

This image of Jesus has other pictures in his head. These little pictures represent the many things Jesus might have thought about.

1. All the different pictures you found are related to His life. Jesus was perfect, so he did not have any sinful thoughts.
2. You and I are different, we are not perfect. We commit

sins by the things we sometimes do, say or think. All those things we did, said or thought are stored up in our memory. We call that part of our memory, which helps us figure out what is good and bad, our conscience.

### **Examples:**

1. I can ask you what you had for breakfast and your memory would bring to your attention the food you ate.
2. I can ask you what nice thing you did for your mom this week. Your memory would bring different things to your attention and your conscience would tell you if you did a good thing or a bad thing.
3. The word 'examine' means to look into, to seek after and to hunt. If you dropped a dollar in a dark room it would be hard to find. You might try to feel the floor in the dark as you examine what you are touching to see if it's your dollar.
4. To examine our consciences on our own can be like looking for a dollar in a dark room. We have lots of things going on in our lives so it is hard to remember everything. The easiest thing to do would be to turn on the light. Then you would see the dollar much easier. It is the same with our conscience. We need to turn on the light. The light is the Holy Spirit, like a bright flame burning inside of us. The Holy Spirit can help us remember all those details that we have forgotten, the good things and the bad things, like our sins.

**Application:**

1. Hand out one of the Examination of Conscience aid/sheets found in this booklet.
2. Explain how this can help us to remember our sins to “jog our memory.”
3. Instructor should go through and explain each of the sins.
4. You may want the children to write them separately on a sheet of paper rather than just checking off boxes.
5. Say a prayer to the Holy Spirit as a group asking for His help and give the children quiet time to examine their consciences.

**Transition Prayer:**

End with reciting the Transition Prayer for this retreat, which is the Act of Contrition: “*Oh my God ...*”



# Children's Examination of Conscience

## Responsibilities to God

- \_\_\_ Do I try to pray, even when I find it hard to do so?
- \_\_\_ Do I always show respect to God, my family and friends by the words I use?
- \_\_\_ Have I gone to Mass every Sunday or asked an adult to take me to Mass?
- \_\_\_ Do I have a good attitude about attending Mass?
- \_\_\_ Have I been good in church?

## Responsibilities to others

- \_\_\_ Have I ever been disobedient or disrespectful to my parents?
- \_\_\_ Have I talked back to parents, teachers or others?
- \_\_\_ Have I been selfish toward my parents, siblings, teachers or friends?
- \_\_\_ Have I lied or been deceitful to my parents or to others?
- \_\_\_ Have I been arrogant, stubborn or rebellious?
- \_\_\_ Have I pouted and been moody?
- \_\_\_ Have I gotten angry and lost my temper?
- \_\_\_ Have I held grudges or not forgiven others?
- \_\_\_ Have I hit or shoved anyone?
- \_\_\_ Have I made fun of others and called them names?
- \_\_\_ Have I said mean things about another person behind their back?
- \_\_\_ Have I used bad language?
- \_\_\_ Have I stolen anything? Have I returned it?
- \_\_\_ Have I skipped my household chores when I was supposed to do them?
- \_\_\_ Have I skipped my homework when I was supposed to do it?
- \_\_\_ Have I ever copied another person's answers on a test or assignment?
- \_\_\_ Have I destroyed or damaged someone's property?
- \_\_\_ Have I ever been jealous about what other people have?
- \_\_\_ Have I ever been jealous about what other people get to do?

# Examination of Conscience

## To begin the Examination of Conscience

- How long has it been since my last good confession?
- Did I hide any sin from the priest?
- Did I do the penance the priest gave me?

## 1st Commandment

- Have I refused to believe anything which the Holy Catholic Church teaches? What was it?
- Have I failed to learn my catechism: the Apostles Creed? The Ten Commandments? The seven sacraments? My prayers?

## 2nd Commandment

- Have I taken the holy name of God in vain? How many times?
- Have I spoken disrespectfully to the priest? Or holy things? How many times?
- Have I used other bad language? How many times?

## 3rd Commandment

- Have I missed Mass on Sunday through my own fault? How many times?
- Have I misbehaved in church?
- Have I paid no attention to my prayers?

## 4th Commandment

- Have I been disobedient or disrespectful to my parents or teachers? How many times?
- Have I tried to provoke them? How many times?

## 5th Commandment

- Have I had any fights or quarrels? How many times?
- Have I made fun of anybody or called them names? How many times?
- Have I picked on anyone or tried to provoke them? How many times?

## 6th Commandment

- Have I done anything dirty or impure? How many times?

## 7th Commandment

- Have I stolen anything?
- Have I harmed anyone's property?
- Have I cheated anyone?
- Have I helped others to commit sin in any way?

## 8th Commandment

- Have I lied about anyone? How many times?
- Have I told other lies? To whom? How many times?
- Have I talked behind other people's back? How many times?
- Have I kept bad company? How many times?

## 9th Commandment

- Have I purposely thought of dirty or impure things? How many times?

## 10th Commandment

- Have I desired to have for myself what belongs to another?

# Station: Role Playing Reconciliation

## Drama Room Station

### **Activity:**

*Role Playing Reconciliation*

### **Objective:**

*To help children understand how to go to confession.*

### **Materials Needed:**

1. Crucifix
2. Pretend confessional set up
3. Pretend stole
4. Paper and pencils for the pretend sin bag

### **Directions:**

To create a sin bag: Write pretend yet possible sins for children on slips of paper and put the slips of paper into a bag or hat.

Children should assist in writing these sins on slips of paper. Use the children's examination of conscience for ideas or simply talk about the things that have happened in their lives. During the pretend confession the child draws out slips of paper and tells those sins.

Examples could be:

*"I stole gum from the store."*

*"I said mean things about my classmate."*

Etc.

**There are four scenes in this script and two characters.**

SCENE ONE: Getting Ready

SCENE TWO: Going to Confession

SCENE THREE: Absolution Explanation

SCENE FOUR: After Reconciliation

CHARACTERS: Director and Child

**Note:** Because this is a pretend confession with pretend sins, a priest should not play the part of the Director.

# Role Playing Reconciliation Script

## SCENE ONE: Getting Ready

Director: Let's practice receiving the sacrament of Reconciliation. Let's begin by asking the Holy Spirit to help us by praying the Prayer Before Reconciliation.

Come, Holy Spirit, give me Your light to see my sins, and give me Your help to be sorry for them and show me why I sinned. Help me never again to sin on purpose. Amen.

Director: Let's also think about Jesus and His suffering and death on the cross to forgive our sins. Think of how much He loves us – you and me. Can you find the crucifix?

Director: Look at the crucifix and think about all Jesus has done for us.

Director: Next we do an examination of conscience to think of our sins. The only person who needs to know your sins is the priest. We will do the examination for pretend. (*continue with examination for children*)



## **SCENE TWO: Going to Confession**

Director: I'll pretend to be the priest. (*assume position, set up extra chair or place to kneel*)

Child: (*enter pretend confessional – either sit or kneel*)

(*make the Sign of the Cross*)

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

Director: Hello. How are you doing today?

Child: Good.

Director: Are you ready to begin?

Child: Yes.

Bless me Father for I have sinned.

This is my first confession.

These are my sins. (*or similar words*)

Child: (*pulls out 4 or 5 pretend sins from the Sin bag and reads them out loud*)

Child: (*when finished reading pretend sins*)

I am sorry for all my sins.

Director: (*may ask questions about the sins confessed and offer advice*).

Child: (*answers questions and listens closely*)

Director: For your penance, \_\_\_\_\_.  
(*say a made up penance, for example, "Recite an 'Our Father' and a 'Hail Mary.'"*).  
Now make your Act of Contrition.

Child: (*loudly and clearly, so it can be heard*)

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended You. I detest all my sins because of Your just punishments, but most of all because they offend You, my God, Who are All-good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Your grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasions of sin. Amen

(*or use one of the other Act of Contrition the child has learned*)

### **SCENE THREE: Absolution**

Director: *(stop the pretending)*  
Good job. Do you know what happens next, when you go to reconciliation?  
*(give the child a chance to answer)*

Child: *(says answer)*

Director: The priest will say the Prayer of Absolution.  
According to God's plan, these words, when prayed by a priest, remove sins.  
Let me read the words and then we will talk about what they mean.

God, the Father of mercies,  
through the death and resurrection of His Son  
has reconciled the world to Himself  
and sent the Holy Spirit among us  
for the forgiveness of sins;  
through the ministry of the Church  
may God give you pardon and peace,  
and I absolve you from your sins  
in the name of the Father, and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Director: *(explain the prayer, especially that the word "ABSOLVE" means 'to be made free from sin')*

Director: After the priest prays this prayer, you then thank the priest.

Child: Thank you.

#### **SCENE FOUR: After Reconciliation**

Child:       (*go to pretend pew*)  
              (*say your assigned penance; for example, an 'Our Father' or 'Hail Mary'*)

Child:       (*end with Prayer after Reconciliation or some words of thanking God*)

My Jesus, I thank You for washing away my sins in Your Precious Blood. Help me to accept my cross each day and not to hurt You or anyone else. I love You with my whole heart and soul.

#### **As Time Allows ...**

Run through the skit again with adults acting out the parts. This time give examples of a bad confession.

Things you might want to include this round: chewing gum, being silent when asked about sins, telling the priest a whole long story and never getting to the point of what the sin was, telling the priest only one sin and saying that is it, etc.

Then run through again correctly, letting other children take turns.

You may also want to show the children the actual confessional.

#### **Transition Prayer:**

End with reciting the Transition Prayer for this retreat, which is the Act of Contrition: "Oh my God ..."

# Station: Stain Glass Candle Votive Holder

## Craft Room Station

Parents go to a different room for *Lectio divina*.

### Activity:

Make a “stained glass” candle votive holder

### Objective:

To help children remember the gift of their baptism

### Materials Needed:

3. Glass jars
4. Colored tissue paper
5. Pressed flowers or leaves (optional)
6. White school glue
7. Small plastic bowl or disposable container
8. Paintbrushes
9. Markers (that can write on glass/paper)
10. Votive candles or LED “tea lights”

### Directions:

1. Give the children a few sheets of tissue paper and ask them to rip it into small pieces (2-3 inches).
2. In the small bowl or container, mix  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of white glue with  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of water. It should form a thin white solution. Give the children paintbrushes and have them cover a section of the jar with a thin coat of glue solution. Repeat, overlapping the tissue paper pieces, until the entire jar is covered. Talk to the children as they work about the different colors formed as they overlap the tissue (for example, yellow and blue make green, red and blue make purple). When the entire jar is covered, overlay a few pressed leaves or flowers (if you’re using them), and cover each with a thin coat of glue solution.
3. Optional: Let the children add some final touches with their markers—a personal message, name, or some drawings. Then place a votive candle inside your new votive candle holder. Or for safety you can purchase the LED light tea lights that flicker as well.



### Explanation:

1. When the candle glows, it will illuminate the tissue paper and designs, allowing light to shine through them.
2. Remind them of the light of the Holy Spirit inside of them given in their baptism. Their parents and Godparents were given a lit candle at their Baptism as a sign of the Holy Spirit as they were Baptized. They should always keep the light of the Holy Spirit burning inside of them. The candle is to remind them, even though they don't always have to keep the candle lit, it is a symbol.

### Transition Prayer:

End with reciting the Transition Prayer for this retreat, which is the Act of Contrition: “Oh my God ...”

## Station: *Lectio Divina*

This station is an activity for parents during the time their children are completing the craft. For those who want a little more background on *lectio divina* should read the introduction included at the beginning of this manual.

### **Activity:**

*Lectio divina*

### **Objective:**

*To direct parents in a prayerful encounter of the Trinity*

### **Materials Needed:**

*None*

### **Directions:**

*Lectio divina* should preferably be done in the church. If it is not available, it should take place in a quiet place, where the other activities of the retreat cannot be heard, and there are comfortable chairs for the participants. They do not need to bring or have anything with them.

A member of the retreat team directs the group. If they do not feel that they can adequately explain each step of *lectio divina*, the leader can follow the script which begins on the next page. Instructions for each step are spoken out loud, then silence follows for the allotted time.

# Lectio divina

## The Introductory Prayer

Assume a prayerful and serene posture, comfortable yet not too relaxed. Sit upright, feet on the floor. If you wish, you may close your eyes.

*(Make the Sign of the Cross while saying)* In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

We will take a few moments to recognize the loving Presence of the indwelling Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The three Divine Persons are present here, within your heart, desiring to have a deep, intimate relationship with you.

Praise and thank God the Father for His Word and for this time of prayer with Him. *(pause for 15-20 seconds)*

Invite God the Son, the Word, to have an intimate encounter with you. Ask him to heal you of any resistance to the Father's plan for you. *(pause for 15-20 seconds)*

Ask God the Holy Spirit for the gift to receive the Word of God as the Father wills. *(pause for 15-20 seconds)*

## Step 1: Lectio, Reading the Word

The first step is to listen to the Word of God. Listen and simply receive the Word. Don't analyze it.

I will read to you a text from the bible twice. With great reverence be attentive to the Word which God the Father speaks to you. Notice the words which strike you in a particular way, either positively or negatively. Listen to the Word, — and be aware of your reactions to the Word. We will examine these responses in the next step. Be silent and listen to what the Word of God says.

Jesus said, "A man had two sons, and the younger son said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of your estate that should come to me.' So the father divided the property between them. After a few days, the younger son collected all his belongings and set off to a distant country where he squandered his inheritance on a life of dissipation. When he had freely spent everything, a severe famine struck that country, and he found himself in dire need. So he hired himself out to one of the local citizens who sent him to his farm to tend the swine. And he longed to eat his fill of the pods on which the swine fed, but nobody gave him any.

Coming to his senses he thought, 'How many of my father's hired workers have more than enough food to eat, but here am I, dying from hunger. I shall get up and go to my father and I shall say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as you would treat one of your hired workers."' "

So he got up and went back to his father. While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him, and was filled with compassion. He ran to his son, embraced him and kissed him. His son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son.' But his father ordered his servants, 'Quickly bring the finest robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Take the fattened calf and slaughter it. Then let us celebrate with a feast, because this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and has been found.' Then the celebration began."

*(Pause for 20-30 seconds. When the text is read a second time, read the underlined section very deliberately, that is, slightly pausing between the phrases.)*

A man had two sons. The younger son said to his father, "Father, give me the share of your estate that should come to me." So the father divided the property between them.

After a few days, the younger son collected all his belongings and set off to a distant country where he squandered his inheritance on a life of dissipation. When he had freely spent everything, a severe famine struck that country, and he found himself in dire need. So he hired himself out to one of the local citizens who sent him to his farm to tend the swine. And he longed to eat his fill of the pods on which the swine fed, but nobody gave him any.

Coming to his senses he thought, "How many of my father's hired workers have more than enough food to eat, but here am I, dying from hunger. I shall get up and go to my father and I shall say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as you would treat one of your hired workers.'"

So he got up and went back to his father.

While he was still a long way off,  
his father caught sight of him,  
and was filled with compassion.

He ran to his son,  
embraced him,  
and kissed him.

His son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son."

But his father ordered his servants,  
"Quickly bring the finest robe and put it on him;  
put a ring on his finger  
and sandals on his feet.

Take the fattened calf and slaughter it.  
Then let us celebrate with a feast,  
because this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again;  
he was lost, and has been found."

Then the celebration began.

*(Pause for 20-30 seconds before moving on to the next step)*

## **Step 2: Meditatio, Meditation on the Word**

In the first step we read the text, and simply considered, “What does the Word of God say?” In this second step we will consider, “What does the Word of God say *to me*?”

Reflect on your reaction as you heard the Word. Talk with God about *why* a particular word or phrase struck you. How does it apply to you, — here and now? Talk with God about this encounter with the Word. How does it console you? Challenge you? Confuse you? Call you to a change of heart? In this reaction, what is God showing you about yourself? In this experience, God will show you how He sees you?

We will now pause for 10 minutes of silence for meditation. Consider, “What does the Word of God say to me?”

*(Pause for 10 minutes of silence.)*

## **Step 3: Oratio, Praying with the Word**

In the first step we listened as the Word of God was read. We simply considered what the Word of God said. In the second step, we meditated on the Word of God: “What does the Word of God say *to me*?” Now we will consider our response to the Word.

In a conversation with God, respond to Him sincerely, as you would talk with a friend. In response to His Word to you, tell with Him what is really in your heart. Your prayer may be praise or thanksgiving. You may petition God, asking for a deeper understanding or some other grace, or want to intercede for others. Be sincere in your conversation. Speak to God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. This is prayer.

We will now pause five minutes for you to pray, that is, for you to spend some time responding to God’s Word to you.

*(Pause for at least 5 minutes of silence.)*

## **Step 4: Contemplatio, Resting in the Word**

We will now spend a few minutes resting in the Word. Be with the Word you received. What does God reveal that He wants for you? As He invites you to a deeper relationship, what conversion of heart is God asking for? Rest in the peace and love of the Word.

*(Pause for 2 minutes of silence.)*

## **Final Step: the Concluding Prayer**

Heavenly Father, I praise you and thank you for this time of prayer with you, your Son, and your Holy Spirit.

Jesus, I venerate your saving name and am grateful for this encounter with you.

Holy Spirit, thank you for helping me receive the Word as the Father wants me to receive it.

God,—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—I worship you, three Divine Persons, and thank you for the gift of your presence within me. Let your Word become a living word within my heart. Continue to dwell in me that I may live from this encounter of prayer.

We will conclude by saying the Lord’s Prayer together. “Our Father, ...”

*(Make the Sign of the Cross while saying)* In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.



### **Optional Step: Sharing**

*If time permits, you may invite the participants to share what they received. It should not last longer than ten minutes. Emphasize that prayer is “holy ground,” and that what is shared should be received with great reverence. Whatever is said is for the sake of the group and should be considered confidential, that is, it should not be shared with anyone outside the group.*

*This is **not** a time to answer questions about the text. It is a time to listen in reverence about a person’s encounter with God. Do not comment on or correct anything that is said. Allow the participant to receive again what they received in prayer.*

*You may begin this time by saying, “Would anyone like to briefly share what they received in prayer?” Be patient. Do not be afraid of the silence. It may take a little while for the first person to begin.*

*After the sharing is complete, thank everyone for their participation.*

### **Scripture Text**

*The scripture text included in this exercise is from Luke 15:11-24 and was downloaded from the U.S.C.C.B. website ([usccb.org/bible](http://usccb.org/bible)).*

# Station: Saint Skits

## Drama Room Station

### **Activity:**

*Saints Skits*

### **Objective:**

*To help children know and understand how the saints responded to God's love and forgiveness*

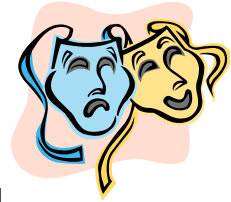
### **Materials Needed:**

*Saint stories provided below*

*Optional: Costumes  
(suggestions of where to buy them listed in Resource section)*

### **Introduction:**

There are some great saint stories that can be used when teaching about sin, mercy and Reconciliation. There are three chosen for this retreat, but certainly many more could be used. The saints chosen are St. John Vianney, St. Faustina and Blessed Jacinta and Francesco. Children and their parents should sit in one area while space is left to make a stage for the drama to take place. These are simple stories that the children can act out.



### **Directions:**

1. Choose the children who will act out the parts.
2. Teacher should be the narrator. (*read slowly with pauses*)
3. Props and costumes are fun to have but not necessary.
4. Explain to the children that when a person is called up in the story, they are to act out the part.

### **Example:**

1. If the story says the saint was a holy and pious child, then the actor/actress can pose kneeling with hands folded in prayer while that part is read. If it says the saint could read someone's soul, then two people would get up from their spots and one could be pointing a finger at another and waving their arms around like they know something about the other person. The other person can look surprised and say, "how did you know that?"
2. After each part the actor/actress should then sit down but the main character in the story remains up front as the story continues.
3. You may want to ask an older volunteer, like a high school student helper, to help the children think of what actions they can use during the skit.

### Optional Saint Story to begin the session:

A story given by Rev. P.A. Halpin in his book titled *Children's Retreats*:

One day a servant of God was praying in a church at a time when many people were going to confession. He saw them going into the confessional one by one, and coming out after they had made their confession. God at the same time opened his eyes that he might see the state of the soul of each of these people. He saw some going in whose souls seemed black and ugly; they came out white and beautiful. These were they who had gone into confession with mortal sin on their souls, and had come out forgiven. He saw others going in black, and come out still blacker and more hideous. These were the sinners who had made bad confessions. Others again he saw who entered the confessional white and beautiful, had come out shining with greater beauty and splendor. These were they who had not committed any grievous crime, but in whose souls there were venial faults; they had by virtue of the sacramental grace given by absolution, obtained pardon for them, and an increase of grace which made them more and more beautiful.

### Transition Prayer:

End with reciting the Transition Prayer for this retreat, which is the Act of Contrition: "Oh my God ..."

# ***Bl. Jacinta & Francisco Marto***

Feast Day: February 20

Born in Fatima, Portugal

Jacinta born March 11 1910, died Feb 20, 1920

Francisco born June 11 1908, died April 14, 1919

Patrons of Children

Parts needed: Jacinta, Francisco, parents, Lucia, sheep, angel and Blessed Mother

Jacinta and Francisco were born to very poor parents in Portugal. Jacinta was very energetic and loved to dance and sing. Francisco was more quiet than Jacinta, but had a mischievous side. He loved animals and he would often bring home snakes and lizards, which made his mother mad.

Both Jacinta and Francisco liked to go with their cousin Lucia to help tend the sheep in the fields each day. While they were in the fields, they would pray the rosary. They thought the rosary took too long and they wanted some time to play so they only said the first few words of each Hail Mary to make it go faster.

One day in the year 1916 an angel appeared to them and started to teach them how to pray. The angel taught them to pray for those people who sin. He said to them, "Pray these words, 'My God, I believe, I adore, I hope, and I love You! I ask pardon of You for those who do not believe, do not adore, do not hope and do not love You!'" He then told them that they would have a visit from the Blessed Mother.

On May 13, 1917 The Blessed Mother appeared to all three of them. She asked them to pray for sinners and showed them how greatly offended and sad Jesus was when people sinned. Mary also showed them what Hell was like and asked them to pray that people do not go there. She also said that they should pray the whole rosary and that she and Jesus love to hear the prayers of the rosary. She told them to tell the people of her Immaculate Heart how much she loves them and wants everyone with her in Heaven but that many people are committing sins and are not sorry for them. They need prayers and the sacrifices of others to change their lives and bring them back to God.

The children started praying more and making small sacrifices for others. They wanted to be holy and to not offend God with their sins. They also told people about how Mary and Jesus love everyone so much.

# ***St. Faustina Kowalska***

Feast Day, October 5

Born in August 25, 1905, Poland

Died October 5, 1938

Patroness of those seeking Divine Mercy from God, for the dying and for sinners

Parts needed: Faustina, parents, other children, nun who rejects her, nun who welcomes her, Jesus and people with bad sins.

Faustina was born in Poland in 1905 to a poor but religious parents. As a child Faustina stood out from the other children because she loved to pray and help the poor. When she got older she heard a call from God that she should become a nun. She went to visit several convents but she was rejected. It was not until she knocked on the door of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy that she was received and welcomed.

One day in prayer, Jesus came to her and told her of His Mercy that he has for all people. Jesus wanted her to spread this message to the world and to be a model to others of how to show mercy.

Jesus gifted her with many spiritual gifts, like telling people their sin just by looking at their soul. She could tell when someone had committed bad sins and needed to go to confession.

Jesus came to Sister Faustina one day and asked her to have an image painted of Him with the inscription: "Jesus I trust in you" and to spread this image around the world. He also asked that the Sunday following Easter be Divine Mercy Sunday.

Jesus wanted all his children to know how merciful He was and that people need to ask for forgiveness and go to confession to receive His Mercy.

Jesus asked her to pray and do sacrifices for all the people who don't ask for forgiveness for their sins. Jesus then asked her to write all this down in a diary. Sister Faustina could not write very well, but she did it. Many years later the Pope declared her a Saint and also through her messages declared the Sunday after Easter as Divine Mercy Sunday in hope that people will come to understand that Jesus wants to show His love and Mercy to those who ask for it and go to confession.

# *St. John Vianney*

Feast Day: August 4

Born in Lyons, France 1786

Died 1859

Patron of Parish Priests

Parts needed: John, bishop, a few sinners, a few sinner who had a conversion.

John was born in 1786 in France. John grew up working on his father's farm. When he turned 18 he decided that he wanted to become a priest. First he needed some help learning Latin though. It was very hard for him and he wanted to give up many times. One day he decided to go and pray at the shrine of St. John Francis Regis (he was a popular saint in France). He prayed that God would help him with his Latin. After praying there he still had problems with his Latin, but he never again wanted to give up on it. God gave him the strength to keep going even though it was hard.

He finally got to enter seminary. Classes were hard and he didn't do very well on his tests. He was just not very smart, but somehow the bishop thought he was holy and should be a priest anyway, so he ordained him.

The bishop sent him to a small rough town called Ars to be the parish priest. He had never seen so many sinners. He saw many people drinking too much alcohol. People were also swearing a lot, and church was virtually empty on Sundays. He decided to pray for these people and he also did some penance for them so that they would change their lives. Eventually his prayers were answered and people started coming to Mass and the taverns started to close.

Most of these people hadn't been to confession in a long time, so he started spending hours in the confessional. The people began to realize how important it was to go to confession on a regular basis. They realized they felt so much better and closer to God after going to confession. Sometimes he could tell if someone was not telling him all of their sins. He could read people's hearts and he would tell them if they forgot to mention a certain sin. He helped convert many sinners and he helped people make the right decisions. All they needed to do was be sorry for hurting God with their sin and come and confess it.

St. John liked the little parish in Ars and the people to. He wanted to see all of those people in heaven and he was going to do whatever it took to get them there.

St. John Vianney can teach us never to give up when things get hard. God will give us the strength we need whenever we ask Him.

# Station: Light of the Holy Spirit

## Prayer Room Station

### **Activity:**

*The Holy Spirit Flame within us*

### **Objective:**

*To help children understand what sin can do to our soul*

### **Materials Needed:**

*Candle (votive candles work well)*

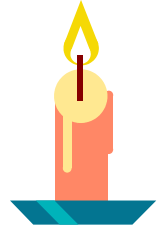
*Empty votive candle holder*

*Copies of Baptismal Promises*

- **Practice the activity before the retreat**

### **Directions:**

1. Have parents and children sit in chairs in a circle with a candle and the empty votive candle holder next to it.



### **Explanation:**

1. We have all received the Holy Spirit in our Baptism to come live in us. Often times we refer to the Holy Spirit as the light inside of us.
2. This lit candle is going to represent the Holy Spirit inside of us since we are all baptized.
3. Light the candle

### **Application:**

1. Hand out the Baptismal Promises. Tell the children that they should respond "I do" to each of the invocations.
2. At your baptism your parents and Godparents made promises on your behalf. Now we are going to say them again as you renew those promises, ...

### **Explanation to children:**

1. Baptism washes away all our sin. However, we grow up and commit sins.
2. When we commit sins it offends God because He created us and wants us to be holy.
3. We also hurt other people when we sin, even if we don't realize it.
4. We can commit little sins called venial sins or big sins called mortal sins.
5. Venial sins are those things we do or say that hurt our relationship with God. It makes the Holy Spirit's flame in us go dim.
6. Mortal sins are very bad sins that cut our relationship off from God completely. They are deadly. The Holy Spirit's flame within us goes out completely when we commit mortal sins.
7. Venial sins, or smaller sins, are the sins most of us do daily. Some examples are calling someone a bad name or taking small things from our brother or sister that don't belong to us.
8. Those venial sins can lead to commit mortal when we get older.

### **Examples:**

1. If you sneak into your brother's room and take one of his toys without asking him, that is a venial sin. (small sin) But let us say that you don't say you are sorry and ask for forgiveness and let us say you got away with it, so you try it again and again. It becomes much easier each time you sneak into his room to steal a toy. When you get older someone talks you into sneaking into someone's house to steal a computer. This time you have to break the lock and sneak in to steal. Now you have committed a mortal sin.
2. Do you see how it could be easy for all those small sins we do and say to lead us to commit mortal sins when we get older?
3. That is why we go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation. It is the only way that our mortal sins can be forgiven. We also receive God's Grace even for the small venial sins we confess. That grace helps us to become holy so that we are strong in our faith and are not tempted into doing a mortal sin when we are older.

### **Application:**

1. We are all called to be a witness to others about Jesus Christ and to share our faith.
2. That means we live good and holy lives and we share what we know and have about Jesus Christ with others.
3. Some day you will grow up and maybe have your own children and you will share what you know about Jesus with them. But if you let all the little sins you commit, go without asking God for forgiveness, then remember what can happen.

*Place the empty votive candle holder inversed over the top of the lit candle (cutting off air)*

4. Those smaller sins will dim the light inside of you and eventually if you let them go without asking for forgiveness those little sins can easily lead to even bigger sins.

*Wait for the flame to go out, and say right away, "At that point, you can't give what you don't have, the Light of Christ!" If you wait about 2 seconds you can then lift the candle holder and the flame should come back. If not then light the candle again.*

5. After we go to confession, the light of the Holy Spirit shines brightly in us again.

### **Transition Prayer:**

End with reciting the Transition Prayer for this retreat, which is the Act of Contrition: "*Oh my God ...*"



## **Renewal of Baptismal Promises**

**V. Do you renounce Satan?**

**R. I do.**

**V. And all his works?**

**R. I do.**

**V. And all his empty show?**

**R. I do.**

**V. Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth?**

**R. I do.**

**V. Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our  
Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered  
death and was buried rose again from the dead  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father?**

**R. I do.**

**Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy  
Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the  
forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting?**

**R. I do.**

**V. And may almighty God, the Father of our Lord  
Jesus Christ, who has given us a new birth by  
water and the Holy Spirit, and bestowed on us  
forgiveness of our sins, keep us by his grace, in  
Christ Jesus our Lord, for eternal life.**

**R. Amen.**

## **Renewal of Baptismal Promises**

**V. Do you renounce Satan?**

**R. I do.**

**V. And all his works?**

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**V. And all his empty show?**

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Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered  
death and was buried rose again from the dead  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father?**

**R. I do.**

**Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy  
Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the  
forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting?**

**R. I do.**

**V. And may almighty God, the Father of our Lord  
Jesus Christ, who has given us a new birth by  
water and the Holy Spirit, and bestowed on us  
forgiveness of our sins, keep us by his grace, in  
Christ Jesus our Lord, for eternal life.**

**R. Amen.**

# Resources

## Artwork

Artwork for the retreats can be purchased on-line at [www.allposters.com](http://www.allposters.com). The price for the artwork is about \$40 without the frame and \$50 with the frame.

Amazon.com sells the '*Return of the Prodigal Son*' for \$4.40 unframed.

## Costumes

Costumes may be purchased at [www.autom.com](http://www.autom.com). Do a search for costumes. Prices range from \$8-\$12.

## Books

The following is a list of some good books to have on display or to sell at the retreat

### Books relating the sacrament of the Reconciliation:

Ahern, Dianne, and Katherine Larson. *Today I Made My First Reconciliation*. Ann Arbor, MI: Aunt Dee's Attic, 2004. Print.

Bolton, April, and Brent Beck. *Seven Lonely Places, Seven Warm Places: the Vices and Virtues for Children*. Cincinnati, OH: St. Anthony Messenger, 2003. Print.

Reynolds, Aaron, and Peter Whitehead. *Tale of the Poisonous Yuck Bugs*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zonderkidz, 2005. Print.

Vollbracht, James R., and Christopher L. Fay. *Small Acts of Kindness*. New York, NY: Paulist, 1995. Print.

Reynolds, Aaron, and Peter Whitehead. *The Nineteenth of Maquerk*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zonderkidz, 2005. Print.

### Other great books that will work for any of the retreats:

Laser, Aia. *The Greatest Miracle of All: The Story of Jesus*. Israel: A. Laser, 2005. Print.

Roche, Luane, and Chris Sharp. *The Promise*. Liguori, MO: Liguori Publications, 1996. Print. Ser. 2.

Beckett, Wendy. *A child's book of prayer in art*. London: Dorling Kindersley, 1995. Print.

Bishop, Jennie, and Preston McDaniel. *The Princess and the Kiss: [a Story of God's Gift of Purity]*. Anderson, IN: Warner, 1999. Print.

Bishop, Jennie, and Preston McDaniels. *The Squire and the Scroll: a Tale of the Rewards of a Pure Heart*. Anderson, IN: Warner, 2009. Print.

Lucado, Max, and Mitchell Heinze. *Because I Love You*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1998. Print.

Lucado, Max, and George Angelini. *The Oak inside the Acorn*. Nashville, TN: Tommy Nelson, 2011. Print.

Lucado, Max, and Maria Monescillo. *The Tallest of Smalls*. Nashville, TN: Tommy Nelson, 2009. Print.

Lucado, Max. *You Are Special*. Wheaton, MO: Crossway, 1997. Print.

Reynolds, Aaron, and Peter Whitehead. *The Nineteenth of Maquerk*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zonderkidz, 2005. Print.

Seuss, Dr. *Horton Hears a Who!* Burbank, CA: Warner Bros., 2008. Print.

Whitlock, Matt. *The Gigantic Little Hero: A Story About Perseverance*. Colorado Springs, CO: Faith Kids, 2001. Print.

Whitlock, Matt. *The Non-praying Mantis: a Story about Prayer and Thankfulness*. Colorado Springs, CO: Faith Kids, 2003. Print.

Amadeo, Diana M., Irina Lombardo, and Augusta Curreli. *Holy Friends: Thirty Saints and Blesseds of the Americas*. Boston, MA: Pauline & Media, 2005. Print.

Lovasik, Lawrence G. *Mary, My Mother*. New York, NY: Catholic Book Publ., 1978. Print.

Nippert, Brenda, and George Nippert. *An alphabet of Catholic saints*. 2nd ed. Carlisle, Pa.: Joseph's Heartprint, 2006. Print.

Ball, Ann, and Julianne M. Will. *Our Sunday Visitor's Catholic encyclopedia for children*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 2003. Print.

Engelbrecht, Edward A., and Gail E. Pawlitz, eds. *Moses, Gods Chosen Leader Drawn Directly from the Bible*. Saint Louis, MO: Concordia Pub House, 2011. Print.

Gallery, Phillip D., and Janet L. Harlow. *Can You Find Jesus?: Introducing Your Child to the Gospel*. Cincinnati, OH: St. Anthony Messenger [u.a, 1996. Print.

Reynolds, Aaron, and Peter Whitehead. *Breaking out of the Bungle Bird*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zonderkidz, 2005. Print.



# Confirmation Retreat



# Confirmation Retreat

## Introduction:

A retreat provides time in a setting outside of the normal routine to encounter Jesus Christ and come to a deeper understanding of the mystery of the sacrament. Parents and Sponsors should be invited to attend the retreat and share in this encounter with Christ alongside the children.



The Catechism of the Catholic Church beautifully explains the Sacrament of Confirmation and the necessary preparation for it.

*“Preparation for Confirmation should aim at leading the Christian toward a more intimate union with Christ and a more lively familiarity with the Holy Spirit - his actions, his gifts, and his biddings - in order to be more capable of assuming the apostolic responsibilities of Christian life. To this end catechesis for Confirmation should strive to awaken a sense of belonging to the Church of Jesus Christ, the universal Church as well as the parish community.” (CCC 1309)*

We know that the sacraments give us grace. That grace is God dwelling within us. If I have God in me I can live in a healthy spiritual way. Confirmation is being sealed with the Holy Spirit; you only need to receive it once and it will last your entire life. It is the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

## Stations for the Confirmation Retreat:

There are ten stations for the Confirmation retreat. Depending on the number of children attending the retreat you can either split them into groups or keep them together as they visit each station. Except the first and last station, each station takes about 20-30 minutes. The retreat begins in the social hall as they gather.

Station / Activity	Room	Length	Page
Station 1: Welcome & Sign-in	Social Hall	10 min	68
Station 2: Salvation History and Pentecost	Church	20-30 min	71
Station 3: Effects of Baptism and Confirmation	Prayer Room	20-30 min	75
Station 4: Renewal of Baptismal Promises and the Holy Oils	Baptism Font & Ambry	20-30 min	77
Break	Social Hall	10 min	
Station 5: Gifts of the Holy Spirit	Any room	20-30 min	82
Station 6: Windssock Craft	Craft room	20-30 min	87
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Parents' Station: <i>Lectio divina</i>	Church	20-30 min	91
Station 7: King & Queen Skit with Creed	Skit room	20-30 min	94
Station 8: Fruits of the Holy Spirit	Any room	20-30 min	100
Break	Social Hall	10 min	

Station 9: Role-play of Confirmation	Church	20-30 min	105
Station 10: Prayer with an Opportunity for Reconciliation	Church	30-60 min	

The shortest time it would take to put on this retreat is about four hours. If you use the maximum time, including a Reconciliation service, it will be over five hours.

There are things given to the children at various stations (handouts, scrolls, windsock, etc). It is recommended to designate an adult in each group to gather these items after each station and take them to the social hall or other main location where the children with their parents can collect the items at the end of the retreat and take them home as keep-sakes.



# Check List of Materials Needed

## Station 1: Welcome & Sign-in

- Name tags & markers
- Lists of names and station rotation if you have more than one group
- Retreat handout for transition prayer and take home reflection questions
- Simple food and refreshments (optional)
- Paper lunch sacks labeled with each child's name for take-home items (optional)

## Station 2: Salvation History & Pentecost

- Bible
- Picture of the story of Pentecost - Jean Restout II Pentecost
- Pictures to help present the Salvation History overview

## Station 3: Effects of Baptism & Confirmation

- Sign on door indicating the station
- 2 flashlights, spare batteries
- Table
- Gold or white table cloth over the table
- Clear, tall glass (empty)
- Pitcher filled with milk
- Chocolate Syrup and spoon

## Station 4: Renewal of Baptism & the Holy Oils

- Identify the location of Holy Oils and obtain key if located in Ambry
- Photocopies of Baptismal promises (1 per child)
- Chrism Oil out and ready for smelling
- Optional song: Fragrance Prayer (*Spirit & Song*, Volume 2 by Tom Booth)
- Optional: Holy water bottle filled with holy water (1 per child)

## Station 5: Gifts of the Holy Spirit

- Sign on door indicating the station
- Crayons or markers for children (enough to share)
- Photocopies of handout to color (1 per child)

## Station 6: Windsock Craft

- Sign on door indicating the station
- Red big sheets of red construction paper (for the body of the windsock)
- Glue or paste or tape
- Hole-puncher and scissors
- Stapler and spare box of staples (you will use a lot of staples)
- White ribbon (wide ribbon is recommended for the tassels of the windsock)
- String or yarn (to hang the windsock)
- Photocopies of doves on white paper
- Photocopies of flames on orange paper (fruits of the Holy Spirit printed on the flames)
- Optional: Gold or silver glitter

Station 7: King & Queen skit with Creed

- Sign on door indicating the station
- Costumes – robes, crowns
- Sword (borrow a Knights of Columbus sword or use a play sword)
- Photocopies of scroll with creed - rolled up and tied with ribbon (1 per child)
- Small table with cloth
- Nice pen (feather quill guest-book type recommended)
- Cover up as many items in the room as possible by draping sheets over the items
- Paper & pencils if doing the optional letter activity
- Basket if doing the optional letter activity
- Optional: Gift of some kind (holy medal on a string necklace, rosary, etc)
- Optional: Make a treasure chest for the scrolls
- Optional: Soft instrumental music to play in the background

Station 8: Fruits of the Holy Spirit game

- Sign on door indicating the station
- Cards with the fruits on them (2 cards per participant)
- Folding chairs set up in a circle (enough folding chairs for all who wish to play)

Station 9: Role-play of Confirmation

- If including a practice of renewal of baptismal promises, have copies available (see station 4)
- Take home handout of the full Rite of Confirmation (1 per child)

Station 10: Closing Prayer with an Opportunity for Reconciliation

- If offering Reconciliation at the end, have examination of conscience aids available
- Optional: Soft instrumental music to play in the background

## Retreat Environment

The environment you create should help foster prayer and be a visual reminder of the sacredness of the sacrament for which the children are preparing. Use the general example given in the beginning of this manual for creating the environment. Some items you could include in the environment, including the sacred space, for the Confirmation Retreat are:

- Many candles
- Large pieces of red material to cover things that are not being used.
- Artwork that is framed such as, Jean Restout, Pentecost
- Sacred space could include red material, Chrism oil,
- Place a sacred art relating to the Sacrament of Confirmation. Using an image depicting the Holy Spirit would be appropriate or using Rublev, Icon of the Trinity would also be appropriate as it shows that the Holy Spirit is a person, not a bird.

Confirmation is to baptism what growth is to generation. Now it is clear that a man cannot advance to a perfect age unless he has first been born; in like manner, unless he has first been baptized he cannot receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

- St. Thomas Aquinas

## Station: Welcome & Sign-in

### Large Group in the Social Hall

#### Greeting:

5. Assign a retreat team member to greet people at the door. First impressions of a warm welcome are essential to set the tone of the retreat. Make sure your greeter knows the overall retreat so they can answer questions.

#### **Activity:**

*Welcome & Sign-In*

#### **Objective:**

*Welcome the children and their parents*

*Explain the events of the day*

#### **Materials Needed:**

*Sign-in sheet*

*Name tags*

*Handouts*

6. Each child should sign in on the appropriate sheet and put on their name tag.

**Note:** If the children are being divided into smaller groups, the children in each group and the small group leader should be assigned before the retreat begins. Names written on their name tags in a different colored marker could be a means to distinguish the members of each group.

7. As they arrive, it is recommended that the parish priest mingle with the participants.
8. If refreshments are served, a different volunteer oversees them than the one who welcomes and assists registering the children.

#### **Directions:**

6. Have parents and children gather in the social hall where they can visit as people enter.
7. Explain the layout of the retreat, that is, that they will be moving from station to station.
8. Give each parent the retreat handout. The questions should be discussed after the retreat between parent and child. However, the handout will be needed to help children learn the transition prayer, which is prayed between each station.

**Note:** if a large number of children are divided into smaller groups, explain that each group may do the stations in a different order. They should know who their group leader is and follow them.

9. Be clear with expectations for the children and parents: For example, because we are not at a baseball game, there should be no gum chewing or hats worn inside. We are on a retreat and will be spending some time in the church where we need to show proper respect and reverence for God's house and be attentive to what He wants to give us this day.
10. When you are ready to begin the retreat have them move into the church. This way you begin the retreat in front of Jesus in the tabernacle and it sets the mood for how the retreat will flow.

# Confirmation Retreat Handout

## Tongues of fire *(to the tune of "Frere Jacques")*

Tongues of fire, tongues of fire,  
Mighty wind, mighty wind,  
Holy Spirit coming, Holy Spirit coming,  
With His power, with His Power!

**Directions:** The questions below are for parents and children to discuss after the retreat.

### Station: The Story of Pentecost with the artwork

What did I like about this station?

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### Station: The Effects of Baptism & Confirmation (flashlight and chocolate milk)

What was helpful for me to learn in this station?

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### Station: Renewal of Baptismal Promises & the Holy Oils

What was helpful for me to learn in this station? What did the Chrism smell like?

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### Station: Gifts of the Holy Spirit

What was helpful for me to learn in this station?

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### Station: Holy Spirit Windsock Craft

What did I like about this craft? What will it remind me of when I look at it?

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**Station: King and Queen Skit with profession of faith (creed)**

What did I like about this station? Who were the King and Queen?

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**Station: Fruits of the Holy Spirit**

What was helpful for me to learn in this station? Which fruits did I get?

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**Station: Role-play of Confirmation**

Do I remember the words the Bishop will say? And my responses?

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**Station: Prayer Time and/or Reconciliation**

Was I prepared? Did I remember what to do for reconciliation?

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**Prayer to the Holy Spirit**

*By St. Augustine of Hippo*

Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit,  
that my thoughts may all be holy.

Act in me, O Holy Spirit,  
that my work, too, may be holy.

Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit,  
that I love but what is holy.

Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit,  
to defend all that is holy.

Guard me, then, O Holy Spirit,  
that I always may be holy.

Amen.

# Station: Salvation History & Pentecost

## In the Church

### Opening Prayer:

Usher the children to sit in the very front pews so they can easily see the Pentecost picture. Remind them to genuflect towards the tabernacle before entering the pew. Have the parents, sponsors or other family members fill in the pews behind the children. Once people settle into the church and quietness descends, begin with a short prayer such as:

Father, we gather today to prepare our hearts to receive confirmation. Help us grow closer to You and recognize Your Holy Spirit at work in our lives. We pray this through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

## Part I: The Salvation Story

### Directions:

2. Begin with a review of the salvation history using coloring pages to use as a visual. This activity will help place everything in context. (coloring pages are found on the Fargo Diocese Web site)
3. This activity places everything in context of the bigger picture of salvation history. It is essential to do this station at the very beginning of the retreat. It is meant to be a brief snap-shot, so do not dwell on one part for very long.

### Questions for Review:

1. In the beginning, what did God create?  
*(the world and everything in it - the plants & animals, man and woman, angels, etc.)*
2. Who are our first parents?  
*(Adam and Eve)*
3. Who tempted Eve to eat the fruit?  
*(Satan / the devil, he is called the father of all lies because he twists the truth into a lie to make us believe him and do what he wants us to do.)*
4. What separates us from God?  
*(sin)*

5. What is sin?

*(choosing evil instead of good or choosing to listen to Satan instead of God)*

*God gave us intellect or smart minds to know right from wrong. God also gave us free will to voluntarily do right or wrong.)*

6. What was God's plan to fix our sin problem

*(Jesus, the Son of God was sent to us to fix our sin problem)*

7. How did this plan come about?

*(After God had formed his people he sent an angel to a town called Nazareth to a virgin named Mary. The angel told her that the Holy Spirit would come upon her and she would conceive a son, who would be the Son of God. Jesus.)*

8. Where was Jesus born?

*(He was born in Bethlehem in a stable)*

9. Jesus grew up and became a man. He taught people many things. One of the most important was that He taught us about God, the Father. He also taught us how we should treat one another. What are some other things Jesus taught us?

*(Answers will vary)*

10. At the Last Supper with His Apostles, Jesus shared with His apostles His Body and Blood. How does He share His Body and Blood with us?

*(Through Holy Communion)*

11. How did Jesus pay the price for our sin?

*(Jesus took all our sin and died on the cross for us)*

12. What happened after he died on the cross?

*(He rose from the dead, the Resurrection!)*

13. What do we call the event of when Jesus goes to heaven?

*(The Ascension)*

14. When did the Apostles receive the Holy Spirit?

*(Pentecost)*

15. What did the Apostles go out and do?

*(Start the Church)*

16. Who are the Apostles today?

*(Bishops)*

17. Who is our Bishop?

*(Bishop Aquila)*

\* The coloring pages used for a visual during the review can be sent home with each child.



## Part II: The Story of Pentecost

### Directions:

3. The priest should read the story of Pentecost. (Acts 2:1-12)  
Read the scripture passage from Acts out of the Bible then summarize at their level.
4. Have the image of the Pentecost in view as you read.

### Questions for Reflection:

1. What were the words the author used to describe what filled the whole entire house?  
(A strong driving wind)
2. The wind is used as a symbol to represent what?  
(The Holy Spirit)
3. What do the tongues of fire mean?  
(Fire is also a symbol of the Holy Spirit)
4. What did the tongues of fire do?  
(Came to rest on each one of them; they became filled with the Holy Spirit)
5. What happened to their speech after this?  
(They began to speak in different languages, all could understand them)



6. Examine the print by Jean Restout.

Direct their attention to the artwork of the Pentecost. Explain that this artwork is a print of a famous painting done by Jean Restout. He lived in France and painted this in 1732. This is his idea of how he saw the story.

He wanted to show a dramatic representation of what happened at Pentecost. This painting shows the Blessed Mother, Mary in the center standing tall and the others around her look like a strong wind has come down upon them. The strong wind is the Holy Spirit pouring forth His grace in full measure.

- A. Can you see the flames above each of their heads? These are the tongues of fire.
- B. Why were the disciples locked in the upper room? (*they were afraid*)
- C. Who looks surprised in the painting? (*the Apostles*) Who doesn't look surprised or caught off guard? (*Mary*) And why? (*Mary is sinless. She is ready for the coming of the Holy Spirit. Mary is the spouse of the Holy Spirit*)
- D. After the Holy Spirit came upon them in a strong wind and with tongues of fire, what happened next?

- E. This painter (*point to the picture*) decided to make Pentecost look very dramatic, with the fire and the expressions of the disciples. At your confirmation you will probably not see tongues of fire and you may not have this dramatic of an experience on the outside, but the Holy Spirit is going to work in you the same way. You will be given the gift of the Holy Spirit just like the disciples received. The same Holy Spirit wants to do great things in you! The Holy Spirit will help you to go and boldly talk and share the Good News with other people. The Good News is all you have learned from your parents, your pastor and teachers about Jesus Christ and His Church.
- F. After receiving the Holy Spirit, were the apostles afraid any longer? (*No*) Why weren't they afraid anymore? (*the Holy Spirit took away their fear and gave them courage and boldness and strength to tell others about Jesus*)

### **Transition Prayer:**

Teach the following song to the children. It is sung to the tune of "Frere Jacques". It is contained on the children's handout. Distribute the handout so the children have the words in front of them to sing along.

Tongues of fire, tongues of fire,  
Mighty wind, mighty wind,  
Holy Spirit coming, Holy Spirit coming,  
With His power, with His Power!

Genuflect and leave the Church while singing the song. Have small group leaders gather their group and continue to the next station. Parents or small group leaders should hold onto the handouts in-between use so the children do not need to keep track of it.

# Station: The Effects of Baptism & Confirmation

## Prayer Room Activity Station

### Part I: Flashlight Analogy

#### Activity:

*The Importance of the Holy Spirit acting in our lives*

#### Objective:

*To help children learn about the effects of the Holy Spirit*

#### Materials Needed:

*2 flashlights; 1 with working batteries, the other with the batteries removed*

*Clear glass of milk, chocolate syrup, spoon*

#### Directions:

1. Give two students the two flashlights and ask them to stand up front.
2. Tell the group that we are like flashlights. We were created to give off light, the light of Christ.
3. Next, ask the two students to turn their flashlights on.
4. Ask: Why did one turn on and the other did not? Let the students open the flashlight and discover the batteries missing in the empty flashlight.

#### Explanation:

The batteries are the Holy Spirit. When we have the power of the Holy Spirit working in our lives we are like the flashlight with batteries. We are given the gift of the Holy Spirit at our Baptism. He comes and lives in our hearts and gives each of us power to

live a life that pleases God. Without the Holy Spirit we are like the flashlight without batteries, we don't work like we were designed to work.

### Part II: Chocolate Milk Activity

#### Directions:

1. Have children and parents gather around a table that is covered with a white or gold cloth.
2. Place a large clear glass on the table.
3. Place a clear pitcher of milk (*not the milk carton itself*) on the table.
4. Place a bottle of chocolate syrup on the table.
5. Have a spoon on the table.

#### Explanation:

1. We are going to do a little demonstration of what is happening in our soul when the Holy Spirit pours His Grace into us. It is an analogy.
2. We begin with this glass (*point to the glass*), this is like us before Baptism.

3. Fill the glass with milk. The milk represents you and I on the day of our Baptism. The chocolate I am about to use represents the spiritual gifts given to us by the Holy Spirit that day.
4. *You will squeeze the syrup three times into the milk but do not stir it up yet.*

Explain: At Baptism, the priest said the prayer and poured water over our heads saying: "I baptize you in the name of the Father (*squeeze*), and of the Son (*squeeze*) and of the Holy Spirit (*squeeze*). At that moment we became children of God and members of God's family! We didn't look any different than before we were baptized with water (hold up the glass), but actually a huge change took place! God adopted us and we became members of His family, the Church.

5. *You will squeeze more syrup into the milk.*

Continue: Now at Confirmation, the Bishop places chrism oil on your head and says: "Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit" (*squeeze a generous amount in*) And you say "Amen". Amen means "Yes! It is true."

6. *Pick up spoon to stir.*

Well, saying "Amen" is like stirring up the Holy Spirit (*stir the syrup so it is now chocolate milk*). You won't look any different than before you were confirmed but you may feel joyful inside because you have been sealed with the Holy Spirit and now have all the grace and help that you need to live out your Catholic faith!

In this example, the chocolate syrup is like the spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit that are given to us in baptism and confirmation. Remember the Pentecost story? Jesus promised that He and the Father would send a helper, the Holy Spirit, but we must cooperate with the Holy Spirit. If we choose not to pray and obey the Holy Spirit then we are like the glass of chocolate milk that when you leave it to sit, (WHAT HAPPENS?) the chocolate will separate and sink to the bottom of the glass and the milk will no longer taste chocolate.

### **Application:**

1. So, what should we do to cooperate with and keep the Holy Spirit stirred up in our lives?

For example: pray, use the gifts of the Holy Spirit, obey the 10 commandments, go to Mass, go to Reconciliation, read the Bible, be kind to others, share with the poor, develop the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

### **Transition Prayer:**

Sing to the following song to the tune of "Frere Jacques". It is contained on the children's handout.

Tongues of fire, tongues of fire,  
Mighty wind, mighty wind,  
Holy Spirit coming, Holy Spirit coming,  
With His power, with His Power!

# Station: Renewal of Baptismal Promises & the Holy Oils

## **Activity:**

*Renew Baptismal Promises  
and view the Holy Oils*

## **Objective:**

*Help the children to become  
familiar with the words of  
baptismal promises and the  
Holy Oils*

## **Materials Needed:**

*Copies of the Renewal of  
Baptismal Promises for each  
child*

*Key to the Ambry if needed*

*Holy Water bottle filled with  
Holy Water for each child  
(optional)*

## **Part I: Renewal of Baptismal Promises**

### **Directions:**

1. If possible, conduct this station gathered around the Baptismal Font or by a Holy Water font near the entry of the church.

### **Explanation:**

2. Before you are Confirmed, the bishop will have you renew your baptismal promises. These baptismal promises are like a pledge or agreement that we try our best to keep as Catholics.
3. These baptismal promises are similar to the words we pray in the Creed at Mass because it is a summary of what we believe and it is good to think about and repeat often so that we can become strong in our faith.
4. Ask: How many of you were baptized as a baby? (*most hands will raise*)
5. At your baptism, your parents and Godparents made these promises for you, on your behalf because you were too little to talk. Now you are old enough to speak, so you will be asked to declare what you believe in.
6. Renewing the baptismal promises helps remind us what we believe. These baptismal promises mean we are trying to be faithful followers of Christ so that we can share in eternal life with Him in heaven.

*(Distribute handouts.)*

### **Application:**

1. Let's practice renewing our baptismal promises. You say "I do" after each question the Bishop asks you.
2. I will pretend to be the Bishop. Follow along. Say your responses loud and clear.
3. You will need the sheet for later. Have your parent (or group leader) hold onto your sheet.

*(Do renewal of Baptismal promises.)*

**Optional:** Distribution of holy water bottles. You can briefly remind them that we use Holy Water in church and at home to bless ourselves and make the sign of the cross, saying the words “In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” These are the same words that were used at our baptism. It is a reminder of our baptism and that we are part of God’s family, the Church.

**Transition to the ambry:**

If it is some distance, sing **Tongues of fire** ... (sing to the tune of “Frere Jacques”)

## Part II: Visit the Ambry

### Directions:

If possible, bring the group to the Ambry where the Sacred Oils are stored or another location with the Sacred Oils set out to be seen up close by the children.

**Introduction:** Sacred Oils are used to bless and strengthen us. A blessing with any of these three oils serves as an outward sign of God's presence.

### Explanation:

1. The bishop blesses these oils when he celebrates a special Mass once a year called the Chrism Mass. At the Chrism Mass the bishop blesses and asks the Holy Spirit to come down upon these oils. There are three oils (*point to the oils*) The OS, OI and SC.
2. At Confirmation you will be anointed with Sacred Chrism oil. When the bishop anoints your forehead with Sacred Chrism oil, this outward sign represents what God is doing inside your soul. At baptism you became a member of God's family, the Church. At Confirmation you are receiving a spiritual seal on your heart when the bishop says the prayer "Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit". This seal of the Holy Spirit strengthens our relationship with Christ and His Church.
3. Let the children come forward and smell the Chrism oil. Do not hand the container to the child. Let an adult hold it and the children take a turn coming forward to smell the Chrism.

### Abbreviations and Explanation of the Holy Oils

#### OS – OLEA SACRA

"Olea Sacra" is Latin for "Holy Oil". This sacred oil of Catechumens is used to bless and strengthen those preparing for baptism.

#### OI – OLEUM INFIRMORIUM

"Oleum Infirmerium" is Latin for "Oil of the Sick". Oil of the Sick is used by priests to bring Jesus' strength and healing to those who are seriously ill or about to have surgery.

#### SC – SANCTUM CHRISMA

"Sanctum Chrisma" is Latin for "Sacred Chrism". It is used to celebrate the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders. The Chrism is made from olive oil and balsam, a fragrance (perfume) which reminds us of the presence of God. We anoint the newly baptized with it as a sign of God's life in them, they belong to God. It is also used in Confirmation as a sign to remind us to call on the presence of the Holy Spirit who gives us the grace to carry out God's mission.

### Application:

1. When you are confirmed you will be able to smell the balsam in the Sacred Chrism oil. The scent is a symbol of the enjoyment we have in following Christ.
2. For example: Think of something that smells nice. Flowers smell nice. Do you like the smell of flowers? (yes).
3. You are to be like nice smelling flowers. At confirmation you are blessed to be the sweet aroma of Christ to others. By your kind and loving actions you are to help spread God's fragrance everywhere you go. In other words, people should enjoy being around you just like they enjoy smelling flowers.

4. The word “Christ” means “anointed”. Just as God anointed Christ with the Holy Spirit, we are anointed so we can be more like Christ, to be his followers, to be Christians. (see CCC 1289)
5. In ancient times and also today, we use oil in lotions and salves to help heal dry, cracked skin and cuts. Athletes rub ointment made with oil into sore muscles to bring healing to their bodies.
6. Before leaving the Church, go kneel in the front pews and say a short prayer, such as:  
“Father, thank you for the gift of Confirmation. Help us to use the Gifts of the Holy Spirit each day of our lives so we may become more like Jesus. We want to share the sweet aroma of Christ with others. Amen”

**Optional:** Play the song: “Fragrance Prayer” (*Spirit & Song*, Volume 2 by Tom Booth) based on this prayer:

Dear Jesus, help me to spread your fragrance  
everywhere I go;  
Flood my soul with your spirit and life;  
Penetrate and possess my whole being so completely  
That all my life may be only a radiance of yours;  
Shine through me and be so in me  
That everyone with whom I come into contact  
May feel your presence within me.  
Let them look up and see no longer me—  
but only Jesus. Amen.  
- Blessed John Newman

**Transition Prayer:** *Remind the children to genuflect before leaving the Church.*

Sing to the following song to the tune of “Frere Jacques”. It is contained on the children’s handout.

Tongues of fire, tongues of fire,  
Mighty wind, mighty wind,  
Holy Spirit coming, Holy Spirit coming,  
With His power, with His Power!



## Renewal of Baptismal Promises

**Bishop:** *Do you renounce Satan and all his works and all his empty show?*

**Confirmation Candidates:** I do!

**Bishop:** *Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?*

**Confirmation Candidates:** I do!

**Bishop:** *Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered death and was buried, rose again from the dead, and is seated at the right hand of the Father?*

**Confirmation Candidates:** I do!

**Bishop:** *Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who came upon the apostles at Pentecost and today is given to you in confirmation?*

**Confirmation Candidates:** I do!

**Bishop:** *Do you believe in the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?*

**Confirmation Candidates:** I do!

The Bishop confirms their profession of faith by proclaiming the faith of the Church: *This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

The whole congregation responds: Amen!

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The whole congregation responds: Amen!

# Station: Gifts of the Holy Spirit

## Any room

### **Activity:**

*Coloring the Gifts of the Holy Spirit*

### **Objective:**

*Review the Gifts of the Holy Spirit*

### **Materials Needed:**

*Crayons or colored markers*

*One copy for each child of the sheet listing the Gifts of the Holy Spirit*

*Optional: Have a sample completed windsock to see*

### **Directions:**

1. Have the children sit at tables with crayons or markers.

### **Explanation:**

1. We first receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit in Baptism.
2. There are seven gifts, wisdom, understanding, knowledge, counsel, fortitude, piety, and fear of the Lord. (cf. Is 11:1-3; CCC 1831).
3. These gifts are strengthened in Confirmation. The gifts of the Holy Spirit help us to live as children of God.
4. They make us ready to follow God with a happy heart.

### **Example:**

1. Imagine an artist. An artist cannot become an artist until they know what tools they need. So too, a Christian cannot live as a Christian until they know what tools they need. Fortunately, we do know what gifts we need: Wisdom, understanding, knowledge, counsel, fortitude, piety, and fear of the Lord.
2. Imagine an artist again. An artist cannot paint without tools like brushes, a canvas, paints, etc., so too a Christian cannot live as a Christian without the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
3. Knowing what tools to have and having the tools is still not enough for an artist to be an artist. An artist needs to know HOW to use artist's tools, so too a Christian cannot live as a Christian unless they know how to use the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
4. Unfortunately, the gifts of the Holy Spirit are not as easily seen as an artist's tools, nor is the way to use them easily known. Fortunately, the Holy Spirit is with us always as our interior teacher and guide. We can always ask for help. Knowing the meaning of each of the gifts is the beginning for understanding how to use them in your daily life as a Christian.

## Application:

Ask the children to name the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: One way to remember the gifts is:  
W.U.C.K. P.F.F. (“wook puff”)

- |                  |                     |
|------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Wisdom        | 5. Piety            |
| 2. Understanding | 6. Fortitude        |
| 3. Counsel       | 7. Fear of the Lord |
| 4. Knowledge     |                     |

*(Hand out sheet and crayons for the children to color in the words one at a time as you talk about the gift. These strips of paper will be used at the next station for decorating their windsock. Show completed windsock for example.)*

**Wisdom.** Wisdom is the highest gift of the Holy Spirit. Wisdom is the gift that God gives us so that we choose His ways and thoughts. How many of you children have had the experience of your mom or dad telling you, “I think you should do it this way,” and they tell you the way you should do it and then how many of you have ever said, “No, I’m going to do it my way?” Yes. *(the hands go up)*. Then what happens when you do it your way? You get in trouble. What else happens? It turns out wrong sometimes. The same is true with God. God has shown us the way in Jesus Christ and He gives us the gift of the Spirit of Wisdom so that we will have His ways and thoughts. When we do not follow those ways and thoughts, then things get messed up and we wonder why. Wisdom enables our minds to see, in God’s plan, where we have come from, where we are going, and how to get there.

What’s the next gift of the Holy Spirit on your sheet?

**Understanding.** Who do we want to understand? (Jesus) Right. We want to understand Jesus. We want to understand God and the teachings of the Church, the teachings of Jesus. We can’t understand God and the mysteries of the Faith without the gift of understanding.

The next gift of the Holy Spirit?

**Counsel.** Counsel is that gift that God gives to us that helps us to always choose what over what? (right over wrong) To choose the right thing over the wrong thing. To choose the good over the bad. To choose Jesus over Satan. Right! Counsel is that gift of the Holy Spirit that God bestows on us so we will make the right decisions and the right choices; to know what to think, say or do each day. God also gives us that gift of counsel because God has a plan for each and every one of you. He may plan for some of you to be in the married state. He may plan for some of you young boys to be priests. He may plan for some of you young girls to be religious sisters. God has a definite plan for you. So pray for that gift of Counsel.

Another gift of the Holy Spirit?

**Piety.** Piety is that gift of having reverence for God, putting God first. How many of you love your parents? *(all hands raise)* Do you try to please them and do what they wish because you love them? Yes. It is the same with God. Piety is a gift that makes us worship and serve God. Our actions are done with a happy heart because we love God and want to please Him.

Another gift of the Holy Spirit?

**Knowledge.** Knowledge is that gift that God gives to us to help us know who? Jesus. And who else? God the Father, Jesus his Son, and the Holy Spirit. Right. Knowledge is a very important gift. Do you know your parents when you were first born? No. Do you know everything about your parents today? No. You're still learning about your parents and your parents are still learning about you. Do you know everything there is to know about the Father, Son and Holy Spirit? No. Do your moms and dads? No. Do your grandparents? No. That knowledge can continue to grow. It can continue to deepen. Children, what happens when knowledge of another person grows? You get smarter. Yes. But what about in a relationship, when you grow to know someone better, what happens in that? It spreads. What else happens? What grows? You know more about them and what do you become? What do you become if you know somebody? You become familiar with them and you become friends with them. Right. As you come to know that person more, not only does the friendship grow, but also your love of that person grows.

Another gift of the Holy Spirit?

**Fortitude.** Fortitude is that gift that God gives to make us strong and courageous. Is everybody going to like you because you believe in Jesus? No. Are they going to like you because you're Catholic? No. So fortitude is that courage to live the faith. It is that courage to live your faith day in and day out and to speak the truth, even when the truth is difficult. Sometimes we know what we should do---it's what Jesus would do, but we do not have the courage to follow our conscience. For example, we play with friends who want to do bad or mean things and get us into trouble. Are they being very good friends? No. The gift of knowledge will tell us that we should stop playing with them; but the gift of fortitude will give us the courage and strength we need to actually stop playing with them or stop them from getting into trouble.

What is the final gift of the Holy Spirit on your sheet?

**Fear of the Lord.** Does God want you to be afraid of Him? No. God holds you in his hand. Fear of the Lord reveals to us the greatness of our God, so that we are filled with awe and wonder at how much He loves us, and so that we understand that His love is unconditional. Fear of the Lord is having a grateful heart filled with wonder and awe, a heart that desires to never offend God by sin because we know He loves us.

So, let's say aloud the seven gifts that you will be receiving at Confirmation: (remember 'W.U.C.K. P.F.F.')

- |                  |                     |
|------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Wisdom        | 5. Piety            |
| 2. Understanding | 6. Fortitude        |
| 3. Counsel       | 7. Fear of the Lord |
| 4. Knowledge     |                     |

All seven of these gifts of the Holy Spirit are yours for the rest of your life.

We develop and use these gifts when we pray and act in a loving manner. When we are infused with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, we can respond to the promptings of the Holy Spirit the way that Christ Himself would. We think, do and say what Jesus would think, do and say.

*(Have the children put their name on the top right corner of the sheet and collect the sheets to be used in the windsock craft activity.)*

**Transition Prayer:**

Sing to the following song to the tune of "Frere Jacques". It is contained on the children's handout.

Tongues of fire, tongues of fire,  
Mighty wind, mighty wind,  
Holy Spirit coming, Holy Spirit coming,  
With His power, with His Power!

**WISDOM**

\_\_\_\_\_ name

**UNDERSTANDING**

**COUNSEL**

**PIETY**

**KNOWLEDGE**

**FORTITUDE**

**FEAR OF THE LORD**

# Station: Holy Spirit Windsack Craft

## Craft Room

Parents (and sponsors) go to a different room for *Lectio divina*.

### Activity:

*Windsack Craft*

### Objective:

*Make a windsack*

### Materials Needed:

1. Large sheet of paper
2. Dove, photocopied from pattern (at the end of this Station)
3. Gifts of the Holy Spirit sheet they colored previously
4. Fruits of the Holy Spirit sheet, photocopied on orange paper
5. Ribbon cut into equal strips
6. Stapler, scissors, hole-puncher
7. Glue or paste or tape
8. String or yarn

### Introduction:

Gifts of the Holy Spirit enable us to live a holy Christian life. As we mentioned earlier wind is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. This windsack we are about to make is meant to sway in the wind.

**Directions:** Have extra helpers here.

1. Give large sheets of paper to each child and have them put their name on the back.
2. Cut out the dove and paste it onto the windsack in the middle of the paper (or piece of foam).
3. Optional embellishment: use glue to trace around the dove and add glitter.
4. Cut out the seven strips from the gifts of the Holy Spirit sheet the children colored previously. Paste each strip onto the windsack.
5. Cut out the 12 orange flame shapes from the fruits of the Holy Spirit sheets.
6. Attach each 'flame' to the bottom of a ribbon. One flame per ribbon. Staple the ribbons to the bottom edge of the windsack.
7. Staple the sides of the windsack together to form a cylinder shape.

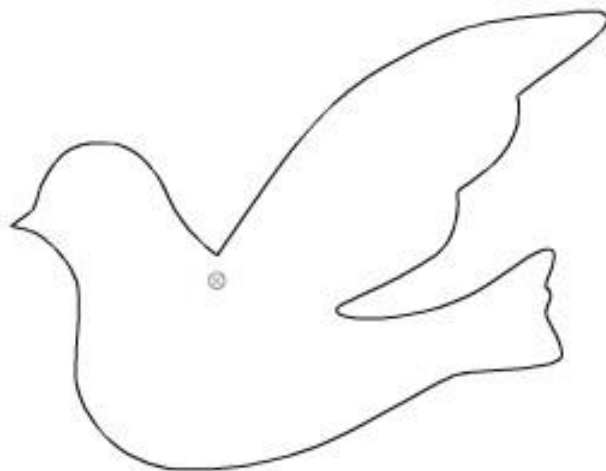
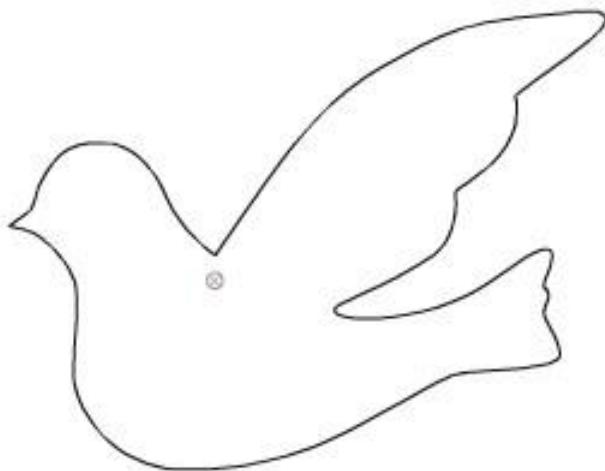
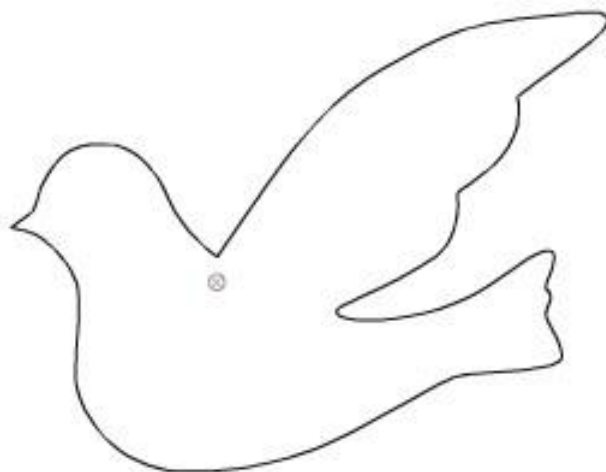
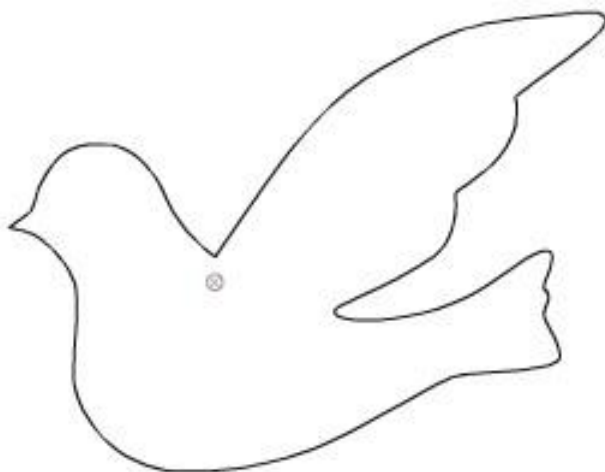
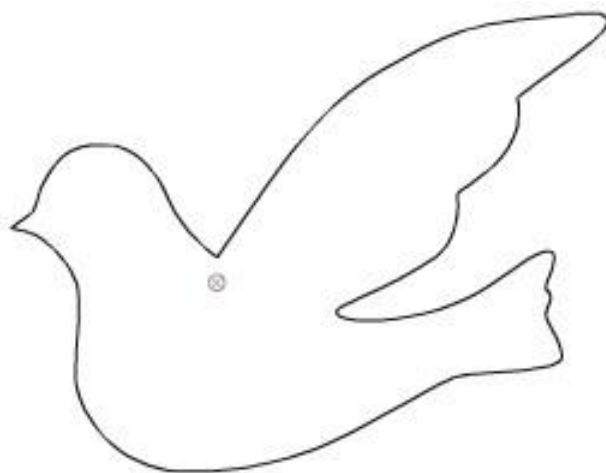
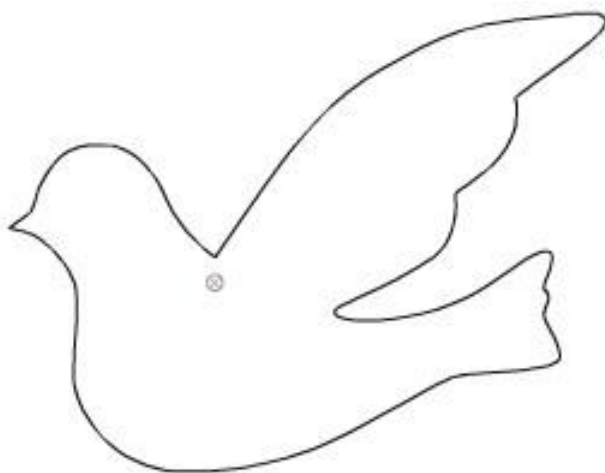


8. Hole-punch three spots (evenly-spaced) on the top of the windsack. Add string or yarn to hang it up.

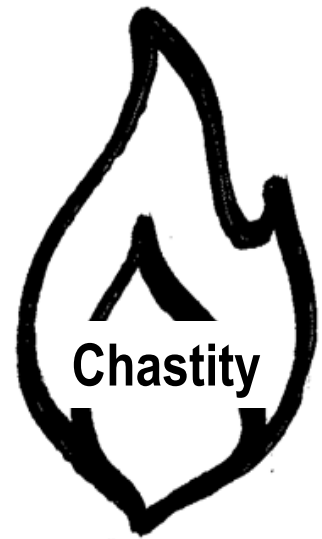
### Transition Prayer:

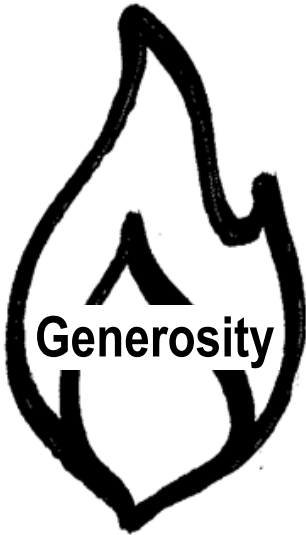
Sing to the following song to the tune of "Frere Jacques". It is contained on the children's handout.

Tongues of fire, tongues of fire,  
Mighty wind, mighty wind,  
Holy Spirit coming, Holy Spirit coming,  
With His power, with His Power!









## Adult Station: *Lectio Divina*

This station is an activity for parents (and sponsors) during the time their children are completing the windsock craft. For those who want a little more background on *lectio divina* should read the introduction included at the beginning of this manual.

### **Activity:**

*Lectio divina*

### **Objective:**

*To direct parents in a prayerful encounter of the Trinity*

### **Materials Needed:**

*None*

### **Directions**

*Lectio divina* should preferably be done in the church. If it is not available, it should take place in a quiet place, where the other activities of the retreat cannot be heard, and there are comfortable chairs for the participants. They do not need to bring or have anything with them.

A member of the retreat team directs the group. If they do not feel that they can adequately explain each step of *lectio divina*, the leader can follow the script which begins on the next page. Instructions for each step are spoken out loud, then silence follows for the allotted time.

# Lectio divina

## The Introductory Prayer

Assume a prayerful and serene posture, comfortable yet not too relaxed. Sit upright, feet on the floor. If you wish, you may close your eyes.

*(Make the Sign of the Cross while saying)* In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

We will take a few moments to recognize the loving Presence of the indwelling Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The three Divine Persons are present here, within your heart, desiring to have a deep, intimate relationship with you.

Praise and thank God the Father for His Word and for this time of prayer with Him. *(pause for 15-20 seconds)*

Invite God the Son, the Word, to have an intimate encounter with you. Ask him to heal you of any resistance to the Father's plan for you. *(pause for 15-20 seconds)*

Ask God the Holy Spirit for the gift to receive the Word of God as the Father wills. *(pause for 15-20 seconds)*

## Step 1: Lectio, Reading the Word

The first step is to listen to the Word of God. Listen and simply receive the Word. Don't analyze it.

I will read to you a text from the bible twice. With great reverence be attentive to the Word which God the Father speaks to you. Notice the words which strike you in a particular way, either positively or negatively. Listen to the Word, — and be aware of your reactions to the Word. We will examine these responses in the next step. Be silent and listen to what the Word of God says.

The Spirit comes to the aid of our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit itself intercedes with inexpressible groanings. And the one who searches hearts knows what is the intention of the Spirit, because it intercedes for the holy ones according to God's will.

*(Pause for 15-20 seconds. Afterward, reread the text a second time. Pause for 15-20 seconds before moving on to the next step)*

## Step 2: Meditatio, Meditation on the Word

In the first step we read the text, and simply considered, "What does the Word of God say?" In this second step we will consider, "What does the Word of God say **to me**?"

Reflect on your reaction as you heard the Word. Talk with God about **why** a particular word or phrase struck you. How does it apply to you, — here and now? Talk with God about this encounter with the Word. How does it console you? Challenge you? Confuse you? Call you to a change of heart? In this reaction, what is God showing you about yourself? In this experience, God will show you how He sees you?

We will now pause for 10 minutes of silence for meditation. Consider, "What does the Word of God say to me?"

*(Pause for at least 10 minutes of silence.)*

### **Step 3: Oratio, Praying with the Word**

In the first step we listened as the Word of God was read. We simply considered what the Word of God said. In the second step, we meditated on the Word of God: “What does the Word of God say *to me*?” Now we will consider our response to the Word.

In a conversation with God, respond to Him sincerely, as you would talk with a friend. In response to His Word to you, tell with Him what is really in your heart. Your prayer may be praise or thanksgiving. You may petition God, asking for a deeper understanding or some other grace, or want to intercede for others. Be sincere in your conversation. Speak to God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. This is prayer.

We will now pause five minutes for you to pray, that is, for you to spend some time responding to God’s Word to you.

*(Pause for at least 5 minutes of silence.)*

### **Step 4: Contemplatio, Resting in the Word**

We will now spend a few minutes resting in the Word. Be with the Word you received. What does God reveal that He wants for you? As He invites you to a deeper relationship, what conversion of heart is God asking for? Rest in the peace and love of the Word.

*(Pause for 2 minutes of silence.)*

### **Final Step: the Concluding Prayer**

Heavenly Father, I praise you and thank you for this time of prayer with you, your Son, and your Holy Spirit.

Jesus, I venerate your saving name and am grateful for this encounter with you.

Holy Spirit, thank you for helping me receive the Word as the Father wants me to receive it.

God,—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—I worship you, three Divine Persons, and thank you for the gift of your presence within me. Let your Word become a living word within my heart. Continue to dwell in me that I may live from this encounter of prayer.

We will conclude by saying the Lord’s Prayer together. “Our Father, ...”

*(Make the Sign of the Cross while saying)* In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

### **Optional Step: Sharing**

*If time permits, you may invite the participants to share what they received. It should not last longer than ten minutes. Emphasize that prayer is “holy ground,” and that what is shared should be received with great reverence. Whatever is said is for the sake of the group and should be considered confidential, that is, it should not be shared with anyone outside the group.*

*This is **not** a time to answer questions about the text. It is a time to listen in reverence about a person’s encounter with God. Do not comment on or correct anything that is said. Allow the participant to receive again what they received in prayer.*

*You may begin this time by saying, “Would anyone like to briefly share what they received in prayer?” Be patient. Do not be afraid of the silence. It may take a little while for the first person to begin.*

*After the sharing is complete, thank everyone for their participation.*

*(The scripture text is from Rom 8:26-27, and it was downloaded from [usccb.org/bible](http://usccb.org/bible).)*

# Station: King & Queen Skit

## Drama Room

### **Activity:**

*King & Queen Skit*

### **Objective:**

*To help children recognize their mission as soldiers of Christ by virtue of their Confirmation*

### **Materials Needed:**

*Two copies of the script*

*Props: Crowns, robes, sword, scrolls,*

*Copy of the Creed for each child, rolled to form a scroll and tied with a ribbon, as well as an additional one for the Queen*

*A quill pen or a pen decorated with a feather*

*Optional: Treasure chest to hold the scrolls (decorate a box)*

**Optional activity:** *1 basket, instrumental background music, paper and pencils (enough for everyone)*

### **Introduction:**

In this station the children will be participating in a drama activity to help the children recognize their identity as God's beloved sons and daughters and encourage them to take up the mission to go and share the Gospel with others, to become the soldiers of Christ they are called to be by virtue of their Confirmation.

### **Directions:**

1. Sign on the door should read: "Kingdom of Heaven."
2. Drape a table with a nice cloth. On the table arrange the scrolls (tied with ribbons) and the quill pen.
3. Try to drape sheets over as much in the room as possible, to help give the room a new feel and to hide distracting objects.
4. Have an adult man and woman dress up as a King and Queen and act out the following skit. They will need to practice it beforehand so it can go smoothly and be effective.
5. Children should not be allowed to play with the sword.
6. Optional: If you have time to do the optional prayer activity, have paper and pencils and a basket ready as well as soft instrumental background music.
7. Optional: Make a treasure chest from where the scrolls are pulled out of.

### **Transition Prayer:**

It is sung to the tune of "Frere Jacques". It is contained on the children's handout.

Tongues of fire, tongues of fire,  
Mighty wind, mighty wind,  
Holy Spirit coming, Holy Spirit coming,  
With His power, with His Power!

## King & Queen Script

**Queen:** *(meet the children at the door)*

Welcome to the Kingdom of Heaven! It's so good to see all of you! I am Mary, Queen of heaven and earth. Come. Let me take you to my Son, Jesus. He is waiting for you!

**King:** Hello! Come, gather around *(gesture)*.

I am Jesus. Let me explain why I have summoned you here today. You have been loyal servants of God the Father and me, the Son. You have been very good at paying attention to your teachers and parents and have learned a lot about my Father's kingdom, the kingdom of heaven. You have been training well to be faithful knights and ladies of this royal court.

**King:** This is a large kingdom *(gesture with sweeping arm)*. One day you will inherit this kingdom prepared for you by my Father. Did you know that you are royalty? *(heads nod or shake)*  
Yes! You ARE royalty! At your Baptism you became God's sons and daughters and my brothers and sisters. But before you enter this heavenly kingdom you have a job to do on earth.

**Queen:** You have been chosen for a very important assignment *(taking a scroll from the treasure chest)*. You are to take the King's decree and share it with the people. Many people do not know my Son, Jesus and His family, the Church. And some of them have forgotten and need to be reminded. You are to share the Good News with all peoples. Say "yes" if you will accept this duty. Will you do this? *(Help children to respond, "Yes")* Here, take this scroll as a reminder of all that we believe.

*(Hand every child a scroll.)*

**King:** It is up to you to share this. At times it will be easy and at times it will be difficult to share the Good News. When I walked on the earth I was sometimes ignored or laughed at. And in the end I was crucified. But my Mother stood by my side (*gesture and take the Queen's hand as a sign of solidarity*). She understood my Father's plan for me to pay the price for sin and open the gates of heaven.

**Queen:** (*with excitement*) As royalty you will not be alone! At confirmation, the Holy Spirit will again be given to help you. You must cooperate with the Holy Spirit.

**King:** Yes! You must cooperate with the Holy Spirit. You need the Holy Spirit and His seven-fold gifts. You were given these gifts at baptism: Wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety and fear of the Lord. And you will be strengthened in these gifts at your confirmation. These seven gifts will allow you to successfully complete your mission.

**Queen:** Come (*gesture*). Stand together in a line before the King and let us together profess the creed we believe. (*raises her scroll and unties it, showing the children what to do*)

(*Give the children a moment to untie the scroll and open it.*)

**Queen:** (*Lead everyone in reciting the Apostle's Creed.*)  
I believe in God, ...

**King:** You have declared your belief. Now kneel before me and one by one I will make you knights and ladies of the royal kingdom which you have just professed allegiance to. Then you will go with my Mother (*gesture to table with quill pen*) and sign your name to your profession of faith.

**King:** (*Using the sword, gently knight the child – touch to each shoulder while saying*)

ARISE, (n) ! GO AND ANNOUNCE MY GOSPEL!



**Optional gift:** *This would be a good time to give them a holy medal on a string necklace or rosary or other small gift.*

**Queen:** *(Help the child to their feet and lead the first one to the table with the quill pen, and show them where they sign their name.)*

*(Once they are all knighted, have them gather together again around the King & Queen.)*

**Queen:** You now have your marching orders and then at Confirmation you will be anointed with the power of the Holy Spirit to accomplish this mission I have given you. Before you leave this heavenly kingdom you must not forget your royal duty to stay in touch with me, your Queen Mother and with God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Write and tell us how you are doing. The way you stay in touch is to pray. Prayer is talking to us just as you talk to your parents or other trusted adults whom you love. Ask us for help to go and announce the Gospel. Pray the rosary. I will hear you and take your prayers to my Son and He will send you the Holy Spirit.

*Have an adult volunteer collect all the scrolls and take them to the social hall or other designated pick up location for the end of the retreat.*

**If time permits do this optional prayer activity: (5-7 minutes)**

**King:** *(holding a basket)* There are many ways to stay in touch with us. Now please write a letter to God, our Father. I will collect your letters and present them to the Father on your behalf *(hold up the basket)*.

Your parents (and sponsors) are invited to write a letter as well.

No one will look at them. They will be placed in front of the altar for only God to see.

You can start your letter with “Dear Father,” and then say whatever you like. You can tell Him that you love Him. You can thank Him for your family and all the good things He has given you. You can ask Him for help to be loving and kind to your family and friends and even your enemies. You can ask Him how to get to know Him better. You can write anything you want in your letter to God the Father.

*Hand out paper and pencils for them to write a letter to God the Father.*

*Only spend about 5 minutes writing the letters. Have soft instrumental music playing in the background to help keep everyone quiet.*

*The prayers in the basket can be placed at the foot of the altar for the final prayer service. Afterwards, the papers should be shredded.*

## **The Apostles' Creed**

I believe in God the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth;  
and in Jesus Christ,  
His only Son, our Lord,  
Who was conceived  
by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.  
He descended into hell;  
on the third day  
He rose again from the dead.  
He ascended into heaven,  
sits at the right hand of God,  
the Father almighty.  
From there He shall come  
to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins, the  
resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting. Amen.

*(signature)*

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*(signature)*

# Station: Fruits of the Spirit & Review Game

## A Large Room

(children will need some space to run around during the game)

### **Activity:**

*Fruits of the Holy Spirit and Review Game*

### **Objective:**

*To help children understand and know the 12 fruits of the Holy Spirit*

### **Materials Needed:**

*Picture of tree with the 12 fruits on it*

*Index Cards (two for each person playing the game)*

### **Directions:**

1. First review the 12 fruits and what they are. Then play the review game.
2. Have chairs set up in one big circle with nothing in the center of the circle. They will be running across the circle to a new chair.
3. Visual Aide: Hold up the picture of the tree with the 12 fruits on it while you talk. (*Found on Diocese of Fargo Web Site*) Be sure each child has a chance to look at the picture.

### **Explanation:**

1. Fruits of the Holy Spirit are like fruit growing on a tree. The Fruits of the Holy Spirit grow from the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
2. We are like a tree. We have been given the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit at Baptism and in Confirmation the gifts are increased in us so we can bear good fruit.
3. We need to be planted in good soil, receive water and sunshine in order to produce good fruit (*external conditions that help lead us to faith*). The sap inside a tree is what gives the tree life. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are the sap inside of us. When we pray we are causing the sap to move around inside of us and produce good fruit.

### **Application:**

Ask the children to name the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Briefly talk about them and what they mean. If they have not talked about the fruits of the Holy Spirit with their teacher during their regular religious education classes, then you may wish to use the brief examples to help them recognize the fruits at work in their lives. Feel free to use your own examples in place of these.

**Charity (Love):** Loving God above all things and loving our neighbor; doing things with a happy heart

Example: When your Mom asks you to help clear the table after supper and you help without complaining and have a smile on your face. You are exercising charity.

**Joy:** Unshakable happiness because we are aware of God's presence in our lives

Example: You smile even when you lose the game you are playing because you know inside your heart that it's just a game and God is with you no matter if you win or lose.

**Peace:** An internal calm because we trust God

Example: Your grandparent is very sick and might die soon. You have peace in your heart because you trust God and His plan for your grandparent. Whatever happens it will be ok.

**Patience:** Waiting calmly and accept God's timing

Example: You have to wait for it to snow before you can make a snowman. You do not complain each morning when you wake up and see no snow yet. You are exercising patience.

**Kindness:** Acting like Jesus towards others – being kind and concerned for persons in need

Example: Your classmate fell off their bicycle and is crying. Instead of laughing at them you go to them and help them off the ground, asking if they are ok. You show them kindness.

**Goodness:** Wishing to do good to everyone; God wants us to be good

Example: Seeing a friend drop and spill their snack, you go over and help them clean it up and offer to share yours with them. You are exercising goodness.

**Generosity:** Giving what we have to God and others without expecting anything in return

Example: You hear about a family whose house burned down. They lost all their belongings. You take some of your toys and ask your parents to give them to the family. You are exercising generosity.

**Gentleness** Restraining our anger

Example: Your big brother is upset and is yelling at you. You decide not to yell back or break something of his. You are exercising gentleness.

**Faithfulness:** Following Jesus in every way

Example: You arrive early at Mass and there is time to go to Reconciliation. You decide to go. You are exercising faithfulness.

**Modesty:** Proper dress and behavior; being humble and not being a show-off

Example: You scored the winning goal for your team but you decide not to show-off by doing a big victory dance. You are exercising modesty.

**Self-control:** Knowing when enough is enough; not being impulsive

Example: You are at the cake table and you decide to take the smallest piece because you know you will be too full if you eat any more. You are exercising self-control.

**Chastity:** Purity in thought, word and act

Example: You are at a gas station and see a 'dirty magazine'. You turn away and do not look at it any longer. You are exercising chastity.

## Play the Fruits Review Game

Have the person in charge explain the rules and moderate the game. Be aware if someone has a handicap that will affect their full participation and try to incorporate them as best as possible.

1. Form a circle with the chairs. One chair per person. Have some space between chairs to make the circle bigger. (Adults can play as well. It works best with at least 15 chairs slightly spaced apart)
2. Each participant is handed two cards each with one fruit on it and the corresponding definition. They keep these cards while playing the game.
3. One person stands in the middle of the circle; they do not have a chair. They are 'it'.
4. Person in the middle says "I need all the fruits of the Holy Spirit, but I especially need " \_\_\_\_\_ " and " \_\_\_\_\_ " and " \_\_\_\_\_ "!" (*they can name 1, 2 or 3 fruits in each round*)
5. The people holding an index card of the fruit named by the person in the middle get up quickly and run to find a new seat across the circle. You cannot go to a seat directly next to your chair. You must travel at least 3 seats away from you. Many people will be running to new chairs. (you want at least 4 people to have their fruit called, so try to plan accordingly when handing out index cards)
6. Tell them to watch where they're going so they don't accidentally run into someone. First person to touch the chair gets it, so be quick to dash across the circle!
7. Person in the middle who just called out the fruits also tries to find a seat. Last person standing is 'it' next. They repeat the phrase and can pick new fruits to call out, saying: "I need all the fruits of the Holy Spirit, but I especially need " \_\_\_\_\_ " and " \_\_\_\_\_ " and " \_\_\_\_\_ "!"
8. Repeat as time allows.
9. This is a good game to burn off some of their energy. Be sure to make it a learning experience, too. Point out when someone exhibits kindness or gentleness or self-control during the game.
10. A variation to the game would be to ask for volunteers to define the fruits just mentioned once people are newly seated and before a new round begins. They can look at their cards for help. You could even reward the person who correctly answers by letting them stay seated during the next round
11. Another variation is to switch a card. Person in charge says "Switch". Then tell everyone to choose one of their cards and hand it to the person to their right. Or have them pass it down the line 2 or 3 people. Switching helps them become familiar with more of the definitions.

# **CHARITY (Love)**

**loving God above all things  
and loving our neighbor;  
doing things with a happy  
heart!**

# **JOY**

**unshakable happiness  
because we are aware of  
God's presence in our lives**

# **PATIENCE**

**waiting calmly and accepting  
God's timing**

# **KINDNESS**

**acting like Jesus towards  
others— being kind and  
concerned for persons in  
need**

# **GOODNESS**

**wishing to do good to  
everyone; God wants us to be  
good**

# **FAITHFULNESS**

**following Jesus  
in every way**

# PEACE

an internal calm  
because we trust God

# SELF- CONTROL

knowing when enough is  
enough; not being impulsive

# GENEROSITY

giving what we have to God  
and others without expecting  
anything in return

# CHASTITY

purity in thought, word and act

# MODESTY

proper dress and behavior;  
being humble  
and not being a show-off

# GENTLENESS

restraining our anger



# Station: Role Playing Confirmation

## In the Church with a Priest or Deacon

Near the end of the retreat, it is recommended to gather every small group back together in the Church. If parents have not been accompanying their children, they should now be present to watch the role-play.

### Introduction:

#### **Activity:**

*Role Play Confirmation*

#### **Objective:**

*To help the children become familiar with the Sacrament*

#### **Materials Needed:**

*Copies of the Baptismal Promises- used in station 4*

*Rite of Confirmation (1 per child)*

1. The purpose of this session is to walk through the Rite of Confirmation so the children (and adults) can become comfortable with what will be happening. Allowing them to each have a turn to practice where to stand and what to say ensures that things will go smoothly and the children will be ready for the actual day of their Confirmation.
2. The priest conducts this role-play. It is up to the priest to determine how much of the Rite to walk through. The minimum essential part would be to have the children come forward one at a time, hear the words "Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit" reply: "Amen" as well as "Peace be with you" reply: "and with your spirit" (shake hands).
3. If you wish to first practice the renewal of Baptismal promises you may do so but this activity was offered as part of an earlier station: Renewal of Baptismal Promises & the Holy Oils
4. Be sure the children understand that this is role-play and not their actual Confirmation.

### Directions:

1. Have the children seated in the front center pews. They should not be seated with their parents.
2. On the day of your Confirmation you will come forward and stand before the bishop, Bishop Aquila. Your sponsor will stand behind you and place their hand on your shoulder as a sign of support.
3. We are now going to role-play it so you can each see what it will be like. This is not your actual confirmation. I am going to pretend to be the bishop and your parent can pretend to be your sponsor (*unless your sponsor is here*).
4. The bishop will say "be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit" and he will trace the sign of the cross on your forehead using the Chrism oil. You say "Amen". Let's practice that part. bishops says ""be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit". You say ... (*gesture to them*)
5. Next bishop says "Peace be with you" and he will shake your hand. You say "And with your spirit". Let's practice. Bishop says "Peace be with you" (*gesture like shaking hand*). You say .... (*and with your Spirit.*)

6. Form a line and come forward one at a time to practice. Your parent (or sponsor) will tell me your Confirmation name if you have one or otherwise tell me your first name.
7. N. Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit” (*tracing the cross on their forehead without oil*). Be sure the children practice saying “Amen”. Bishop: “Peace be with you” (*shake hands*) and the children reply “And with your spirit”. Do this with every child so they each have a turn to practice.
8. This role-play on retreat is in addition to the standard rehearsal. It is not meant to replace the necessary rehearsal on the actual day of their Confirmation. Rather it is to increase readiness of the children. The more comfortable they are, the better they can fully enter into the Rite of Confirmation.
9. The optional handout can be an additional take-home resource for families to practice at home and become even more familiar with the rite of confirmation. Furthermore, the prayers are good to meditate upon.

## The Rite of Confirmation

Confirmation is usually celebrated in the context of Mass. It begins immediately after the Liturgy of the Word. Only the actual celebration or Rite of Confirmation is printed here.

### Presentation of the Candidates

**Sit / Stand / Sit**

After the Gospel the bishop and the priests who will be ministers of the sacrament with him take their seats.

The pastor or another priest, deacon, or catechist presents the candidates for confirmation, according to the custom of the region. If possible, each candidate is called by name and comes individually to the sanctuary. If the candidates are children, they are accompanied by one of their sponsors or parents and stand before the celebrant. If there are very many candidates, they are not called by name, but simply take a suitable place before the bishop.

**Priest:** (say name of candidate)

**Candidate:** (*stand and say*) Present.

**Sponsor:** (*stand with the candidate*)

After all the names have been called, sit down.

### Homily or Instruction

**Sit**

The bishop then gives a brief homily. He should explain the readings and so lead the candidates, their sponsors and parents, and the whole assembly to a deeper understanding of the mystery of confirmation. He may use these or similar words:

**Bishop:** On the day of Pentecost the apostles received the Holy Spirit as the Lord had promised. They also received the power of giving the Holy Spirit to others and so completing the work of baptism. This we read in the Acts of the Apostles. When Saint Paul placed his hands on those who had been baptized, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they began to speak in other languages and in prophetic words.

Bishops are successors of the apostles and have this power of giving the Holy Spirit to the baptized, either personally or through the priests they appoint.

In our day the coming of the Holy Spirit in confirmation is no longer marked by the gift of tongues, but we know his coming by faith. He fills our hearts with the love of God, brings us together in one faith but in different vocations, and works within us to make the Church one and holy.

The gift of the Holy Spirit which you are to receive will be a spiritual sign and seal to make you more like Christ and more perfect members of His Church. At His baptism, by John, Christ Himself was anointed by the Spirit and sent out on His public ministry to set the world on fire.

You have already been baptized into Christ and now you will receive the power of His Spirit and the sign of the cross on your forehead. You must be witnesses before all the world to His suffering, death, and resurrection; your way of life should at all times reflect the goodness of Christ. Christ gives varied gifts to His Church, and the Spirit he distributes them among the member of Christ's body to build up the holy people of God in unity and love.

Be active members of the Church, alive in Jesus Christ. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit give your lives completely in the service of all, as did Christ, who came not to be served but to serve.

So now, before you receive the power of the Holy Spirit, I ask you to renew the profession of faith you made in baptism or your parents and godparents made in union with the whole Church for you.

## **Renewal of Baptismal Promises**

***Stand***

After the homily the candidates stand and the bishop questions them:

**Bishop:** Do you renounce Satan and all his works and all his empty show?

**Candidates:** I do.

**Bishop:** Do you believe in God the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?

**Candidates:** I do.

**Bishop:** Do you believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered death and was buried, rose again from the dead and is seated at the right hand of the Father?

**Candidates:** I do.

**Bishop:** Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who came upon the apostles at Pentecost and today is given to you sacramentally in confirmation?

**Candidates:** I do.

**Bishop:** Do you believe in the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

**Candidates:** I do.

**Bishop:** This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**All:** Amen

## **The Laying On Of Hands**

***Stand***

The concelebrating priests stand near the bishop, who faces the people and with hands joined, sings or says:

**Bishop:** My dear friends, in baptism God our Father gave the new birth of eternal life, to his chosen sons and daughters. Let us pray to our Father that he will pour out the Holy Spirit to strengthen his sons and daughters with his gifts and anoint them to be more like Christ the Son of God.

**All:** (pray in silence for a short time)

The bishop and the priests who will minister the sacrament with him lay hands upon all the candidates (by extending their hands over them). The bishop alone says:

**Bishop:** All-powerful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by water and the Holy Spirit you freed your sons and daughters from sin and gave them new life. Send your Holy Spirit upon them to be their Helper and Guide. Give them the spirit of wisdom and understandings, the spirit of right judgment and courage, the spirit of knowledge and reverence. Fill them with the spirit of wonder and awe in your presence. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**All:** Amen

## **The Anointing With Chrism**

***Stand / Process***

The deacon brings the chrism to the bishop. Each candidate goes to the bishop, or the bishop may go to the individual candidates. The sponsor places his right hand on the confirmand's shoulder and gives the candidate's confirmation name to the bishop or the candidate may give his own confirmation name.

The bishop dips his right thumb in the chrism and makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of the one to be confirmed, as he says:

**Bishop:** (making the Sign of the Cross on the candidate's forehead, with Chrism) N., be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.

**Confirmand:** Amen.

**Bishop:** Peace be with you.

**Confirmand:** And with your Spirit.

## **General Intercessions**

***Stand***

The general intercessions follow, in this or similar form.

**Bishop:** My dear friends:  
let us be one in prayer to God our Father  
as we are one in faith, hope and love his Spirit gives.

**Deacon or minister:**

For these sons and daughters of God, confirmed by the gift of the Spirit, that they give witness to Christ by lives built on faith and love, let us pray to the Lord.

**All:** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Deacon or minister:**

For their parents and godparents who led them in faith, that by word and example they may always encourage them to follow the way of Jesus Christ, let us pray to the Lord.

**All:** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Deacon or minister:**

For the holy Church of God, in union with N. our pope, N our bishop, and all the bishops, that God, who gathers us together by the Holy Spirit, may help us grow in unity of faith and love until his Son returns in glory, let us pray to the Lord.

**All:** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Deacon or minister:**

For all men, of every race and nation, that they may acknowledge the one God as Father, and in the bond of common brotherhood seek his kingdom, which is peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord.

**All:** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Bishop:** God our Father, you sent your Holy Spirit upon the apostles and through them and their successors you give the Spirit to your people. May his work begun at Pentecost continue to grow in the hearts of all who believe. We ask through Christ our Lord.

**All:** Amen

## **Liturgy of the Eucharist**

After the general intercessions the Liturgy of the Eucharist is celebrated and the Rite of Communion follows. When coming forward to receive the Holy Eucharist first make a bow. The Bishop will say “the Body of Christ” and you reply “Amen”. The same bow and response is done if you are receiving precious blood from the Chalice. The minister will say “the Blood of Christ” and you reply “Amen”. Be sure to firmly hold the chalice and carefully take a small sip of the precious blood.

## **Concluding Rite**

***Stand***

The bishop extends his hands over the people and says:

**Bishop:** The Lord be with you.

**All:** And with your spirit.

**Deacon:** Bow down for the blessing.

**All:** (*bow heads*)

**Bishop:** God our Father made you his children by water and the Holy Spirit: may he bless you and watch over you with his fatherly love.

**All:** Amen.

**Bishop:** Jesus Christ the Son of God promised that the Spirit of truth would be with his Church for ever; may he bless you and give you courage in professing the true faith.

**All:** Amen.

**Bishop:** The Holy Spirit came down upon the disciples and set their hearts on fire with love: may he bless you, keep you one in faith and love and bring you to the joy of God’s kingdom.

**All:** Amen.

**Bishop:** May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit.

**All:** Amen

## **Station: Closing Prayer and Optional Reconciliation Service In the Church**

### **Closing Prayer:**

Make any final announcements; thank the retreat team and others who helped. Tell the children to stop by the craft room before leaving to pick up their windsock, etc.

Have the children recite the prayer of St. Augustine located on their handout to the Holy Spirit.

Invite the priest to give a final blessing.

**Optional:** provide the opportunity for the sacrament of Reconciliation. Have copies of an examination of conscience and the Act of Contrition available. If there is a large group, invite additional priests to be present for celebration of the sacrament.

### **Prayer to the Holy Spirit** *by St. Augustine of Hippo*

Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit  
that my thoughts may all be holy.

Act in me, O Holy Spirit,  
that my work, too, may be holy.

Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit,  
that I love but what is holy.

Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit,  
to defend all that is holy.

Guard me, then, O Holy Spirit,  
that I always may be holy.

Amen.



# Resources

## Artwork:

Artwork for the retreats can be purchased on-line at [www.allposters.com](http://www.allposters.com). The price for the artwork is \$40 without the frame and \$50 with the frame.

## Costumes:

Costumes may be purchased at [www.autom.com](http://www.autom.com). Do a search for costumes. Prices range from \$8-\$12.

## Crafts:

Many crafts supplies can be purchased on-line at [www.orientaltrading.com](http://www.orientaltrading.com)

## Books:

The following is a list of some good books to have on display or to sell at the retreat

### Books relating the sacrament of the Confirmation:

Lovasik, Lawrence G. *The Holy Spirit*. New York, NY: Catholic Book Publ., 1978. Print.

Sullivan, Thomas K. *Called to Knighthood: The Sacrament of Confirmation in the Kingdom Family of God*. 2009. Print. Can be purchased on-line at [www.calledtoknighthood.com](http://www.calledtoknighthood.com) This book is for adults.

### Other great books that will work for any of the retreats:

Laser, Aia. *The Greatest Miracle of All: The Story of Jesus*. Israel: A. Laser, 2005. Print.

Roche, Luane, and Chris Sharp. *The Promise*. Liguori, MO: Liguori Publications, 1996. Print. Ser. 2.

Beckett, Wendy. *A child's book of prayer in art*. London: Dorling Kindersley, 1995. Print.

Bishop, Jennie, and Preston McDaniel. *The Princess and the Kiss: [a Story of God's Gift of Purity]*. Anderson, IN: Warner, 1999. Print.

Bishop, Jennie, and Preston McDaniels. *The Squire and the Scroll: a Tale of the Rewards of a Pure Heart*. Anderson, IN: Warner, 2009. Print.

Lucado, Max, and Mitchell Heinze. *Because I Love You*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1998. Print.

Lucado, Max, and George Angelini. *The Oak inside the Acorn*. Nashville, TN: Tommy Nelson, 2011. Print.

Lucado, Max, and Maria Monescillo. *The Tallest of Smalls*. Nashville, TN: Tommy Nelson, 2009. Print.

Lucado, Max. *You Are Special*. Wheaton, MO: Crossway, 1997. Print.

Reynolds, Aaron, and Peter Whitehead. *The Nineteenth of Maquerk*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zonderkidz, 2005. Print.

Seuss, Dr. *Horton Hears a Who!* Burbank, CA: Warner Bros., 2008. Print.

Whitlock, Matt. *The Gigantic Little Hero: A Story about Perseverance*. Colorado Springs, CO: Faith Kids, 2001. Print.

Whitlock, Matt. *The Non-praying Mantis: a Story about Prayer and Thankfulness*. Colorado Springs, CO: Faith Kids, 2003. Print.

Amadeo, Diana M., Irina Lombardo, and Augusta Curreli. *Holy Friends: Thirty Saints and Blesseds of the Americas*. Boston, MA: Pauline & Media, 2005. Print.

Lovasik, Lawrence G. *Mary, My Mother*. New York, NY: Catholic Book Publ., 1978. Print.

Nippert, Brenda, and George Nippert. *An alphabet of Catholic saints*. 2nd ed. Carlisle, Pa.: Joseph's Heartprint, 2006. Print.

Ball, Ann, and Julianne M. Will. *Our Sunday Visitor's Catholic encyclopedia for children*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 2003. Print.

Engelbrecht, Edward A., and Gail E. Pawlitz, eds. *Moses, Gods Chosen Leader Drawn Directly from the Bible*. Saint Louis, MO: Concordia Pub House, 2011. Print.

Gallery, Phillip D., and Janet L. Harlow. *Can You Find Jesus?: Introducing Your Child to the Gospel*. Cincinnati, OH: St. Anthony Messenger [u.a, 1996. Print.

# First Eucharist Retreat



# First Eucharist Retreat

## Introduction

The Sacrament of the Eucharist completes the Sacraments of Initiation. As the Catechism says, Those who have been raised to the dignity of the royal priesthood by Baptism and configured more deeply to Christ by Confirmation participate with the whole community in the Lord's own sacrifice by means of the Eucharist. (CCC 1322) It is in the Eucharist that we are intimately united to Jesus as we receive Him in Holy Communion. The Eucharist is the Source and Summit of the Christian life. The Eucharist is our spiritual food for the journey of this life so that we may ultimately be united to Him, Body and Soul, in the Heavenly Kingdom.



It is essential to help the children understand what it means to grow in holiness and how as Catholics this is only possible with a love of the Eucharist, because it is Jesus himself who comes to us veiled in the form of bread and wine. Not only do we receive Jesus in the Eucharist, but when we come to worship at Mass each Sunday, we are made present at the most important event the world has ever seen! It is the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ made present to us at Mass and we are brought so intimately into that mystery that He gives Himself to us in the Eucharist. What a profound Mystery! It is this profound mystery we must keep in mind as we guide the children and their parents through this retreat.

## Stations for the First Eucharist Retreat

There are eight stations for the First Eucharist retreat. Depending on the number of children attending the retreat you can either split them into groups or keep them together as they visit each station. The retreat begins in the social hall as they gather.

Station / Activity	Room	Length	Page
Station 1: Welcome & Sign In	Social Hall	10 min	121
Station 2: Opening Prayer & Last Supper Painting	Church	20-30 min	124
Station 3: Reenacting The Last Supper	Drama Room	30 min	126
Station 4: Making a Monstrance Craft	Social Hall	30 min	131
Parents' Station: <i>lectio divina</i>	Church	20-30 min	132
Break		30 min	
Station 5: Church tour clue game	Church	30-60 min	136
Station 6: Saints Skits	Drama Room	30 min	138
Station 7: Cup of Gooley Water	Prayer Room	20-30 min	142
Station 8: Adoration of Blessed Sacrament or prayer service	Church	20-30 min	144

The shortest time it would take to put on this retreat would be just over 3 hours. If you use the maximum time it will be almost 5 hours.

# Check List of Materials Needed

## Station 1: Welcome & Sign-in

- Name tags & markers
- List of groups & stations photocopied
- Optional: Simple food and refreshments
- Retreat handouts for take home reflection questions and transition prayer

## Station 2: The Last Supper

- Bible
- Picture of Vincente Juan Macip, The Last Supper

## Station 3: Reenacting the Last Supper

- Sign on door indicating the station
- Table with legs up to be placed on the floor
- Bread and grape juice
- Plates and cups (place setting in front of each child)
- Water pitcher and towels (enough pitchers for half the group)
- Bowls for washing feet (enough for half the group)
- Scripts for each child (13 copies; you may want to highlight parts for each child)
- Names place cards for each apostle at each spot
- Optional: Apostle costumes

## Station 4: Jesus in the Monstrance

- Sign on door indicating the station
- Glue
- Large construction paper for each child
- Gold doilies per child
- Gold paper, enough for each child to make the center of the Monstrance
- Craft jewels
- White paper for hosts in middle
- Brown paper for stand
- Card stock cutouts of stand for children to use for tracing
- Pictures of Jesus for behind the host (optional)

## Station 5: Vessels, Vestments and a Church Tour

- Sign on door indicating the station
- Church activity cards: One clue set and one mini set per child in that session
- For each card that will be used, the appropriate vessel or vestment should be placed out

## Station 6: Saints Skits

- Sign on door indicating the station
- Saint stories
- Costumes and various props (optional)

Station 7: Cup of Goopy Water

- Sign on door indicating the station
- Picture of Jesus on each table
- Two clear cups per child labeled with their names
- Enough water, dirt, chocolate syrup, pickle juice and broken crackers for each child
- One fresh rose per child

Station 8: Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

- Liturgy Script filled out
- Optional: Carpet squares for children to have their own spot

# Retreat Environment

## Creating the Environment for the Retreat

The environment you create should help foster prayer and be a visual reminder of the sacredness of the sacrament for which the children are preparing. Use the general example given in the beginning of this manual for creating the environment. Some items you could include in the environment, including the sacred space, for the First Eucharist retreat are:

- Use white cloths or sheets to drape over things you don't want seen such as desks, etc.
- Use white cloths on each sacred space to place items on.
- Place a Chalice and Ciborium along with bread and wine.
- Place a children's Mass book
- Place sacred art relating to the Sacrament of the Eucharist

*When you have received Him, stir up your heart to do Him homage; speak to Him about your spiritual life, gazing upon Him in your soul where He is present for your happiness; welcome Him as warmly as possible, and behave outwardly in such a way that your actions may give proof to all of His Presence.*

*- St. Francis de Sales*



## Station: Welcome & Sign In

### Large Group in the Social Hall

#### Greeting:

9. Assign a retreat team member to greet people at the door. First impressions of a warm welcome are essential to set the tone of the retreat. Make sure your greeter knows the overall retreat so they can answer questions.

#### **Activity:**

*Welcome & Sign-In*

#### **Objective:**

*Welcome the children and their parents*

*Explain the events of the day*

#### **Materials Needed:**

*Sign-in sheet*

*Name tags*

*Handouts*

10. Each child should sign in on the appropriate sheet and put on their name tag.

**Note:** If the children are being divided into smaller groups, the children in each group and the small group leader should be assigned before the retreat begins. Names written on their name tags in a different colored marker could be a means to distinguish the members of each group.

11. As they arrive, it is recommended that the parish priest mingle with the participants.
12. If refreshments are served, a different volunteer oversees them than the one who welcomes and assists registering the children.

#### **Directions:**

1. Have parents and children gather in the social hall where they can visit as people enter.
2. Give each parent the retreat handout. The questions should be discussed after the retreat between parent and child. However, the handout will be needed to help children learn the transition prayer, which will be prayed between each station.
3. Explain the layout of the retreat, that is, that they will be moving from station to station.  
**Note:** if a large number of children are divided into smaller groups, explain that each group may do the stations in a different order. They should know who their group leader is and follow them.
4. Be clear with expectations for the children and parents: for example, because we are not at a baseball game, there should be no gum chewing or hats worn inside. We are on a retreat and will be spending some time in the church where we need to show proper respect and reverence for God's house and be attentive to what He wants to give us this day.
5. When you are ready to begin the retreat have them move into the church. This way you begin the retreat in front of Jesus in the tabernacle and it sets the mood for how the retreat will flow.

# First Eucharist Retreat Handout

## The Transition Prayer

Lord I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof  
but only say the word and my soul shall be healed. Amen

**Directions:** The questions below are for parents and children to discuss after the retreat.

### **Station: The Story of the Last Supper with the artwork**

What did I like about this station?

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### **Station: Acting out the Last Supper**

What did I like about this station?

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### **Station: Making a Monstrance Craft**

What did I like about making this craft?

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### **Station: Church Tour / Find the Sacred Items**

What did I learn about the church in this game?

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### **Station: Saint Skits**

What did I like about this station?

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### **Station: Cup of Goey Water Activity**

What was helpful for me to learn in this station?

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**Station: Prayer and/or Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament**  
Was I did I like about Adoration?

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# Station: The Last Supper

## In the Church

### Opening Prayer:

Usher the children to sit in the very front pews so they can easily see the Last Supper picture. Remind them to genuflect towards the tabernacle before entering the pew. Have the parents or other family members fill in the pews behind the children. Once people settle into the church and quietness descends, begin with a short prayer such as:

Father, we gather today to prepare our hearts  
to receive the sacrament of the Eucharist.  
Help us to grow closer to You and  
recognize the Holy Spirit at work in our lives.  
We pray through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

### Directions:

1. Begin by reading the scripture passage on the Last Supper, (Matthew 26: 17-30) and then the washing of the feet from John's Gospel, (13:1-16). You may want to read from a children's Bible to simplify.

### Questions for Review:

1. It says that Jesus and His disciples were to celebrate the Passover meal together. What is Passover?  
*(The Jewish people are reliving a day that happened long ago. They were told to prepare a special meal and put the blood of the lamb on their doorpost. The angel of death was going to pass by, the blood of the lamb would protect them and no one in house would die. It was soon after this that Moses led God's people out of Egypt away from Pharaoh into the Promised Land.)*
2. Who did Jesus say would betray Him? (*Judas*) and how would Judas do this?  
*(Judas would betray him by telling the authorities where Jesus was staying. Judas was paid to turn him in.)*
3. What did Jesus mean when he said, "take and eat this Bread, this is my Body?"  
*(Jesus was transforming the bread and the wine into His Body and Blood and telling His disciples to eat of it, which is why we do the same at Holy Communion.)*
4. Why did Jesus wash their feet?

*(He wanted to show them that they are to serve not to be served. He showed them that He has served them and now they must go out and do the same.)*

Using the artwork, The Last Supper by Vicente Juan Macip, to help children imagine in their mind this event of the Last Supper. Explain to them that Vincente painted his picture as how he saw the story and what he wanted to show people from that story.

### Questions for Reflection:

1. Where is Jesus in this artwork? *(He is in the middle)*
2. What is Jesus holding? *(A host)* Does it look like bread?

*(In this picture the artist wanted you to see that the bread shared at the Last Supper became His Body and it is the same Bread that we receive at Mass which also is His Body.)*



3. How are the disciples responding to Jesus in this artwork? What is the artist trying to show us?

*(The Disciples are all leaning in toward Jesus. They are showing us how much they desire to receive His Body in the form of bread.)*

4. There is one disciple who is turned away. See lower right side of picture. He is the only one who is not leaning toward Jesus. It almost looks like he wants to escape? Who could that be? *(Judas)*
5. Which disciple is Jesus looking at in the artwork?

*(He is looking at you. You are the disciple He wishes to share Himself with in the Eucharist.)*

6. What are the two objects in front of the table? *(water pitcher and bowl)*
7. The artist made them big in size so that your eyes go right to them. Notice how they stand out in front. What is the artist trying to tell us about the water pitcher and bowl?

*(He is trying to tell us that the washing of the feet happened at the Last Supper. Vincent is showing you how important that part of the story is.)*

8. What is Jesus trying to tell them by washing their feet? What is he trying to tell you?

*(Jesus is showing them how to serve one another. Jesus gives Himself to you in Holy Communion just like the disciples. Jesus is also asking you to serve one another.)*

Today as you move around to different rooms and activities it would be good to have this image of Jesus at the Last Supper in your mind and to remember that He wants to give himself to you in the Eucharist, just as He gave Himself to the disciples.

### Transition prayer:

The transition prayer is said at the end of each session (it is contained on the retreat handout):

Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof,  
but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

# Station: Reenacting the Last Supper

## Drama Room Station

### **Activity:**

*The Last Supper*

### **Objective:**

**To help children understand the mystery of the Eucharist**

### **Materials Needed:**

1. Table (on the floor)
2. Costumes
3. Bread on a plate, grape juice in cups
4. Water pitchers and bowls for washing feet; (for about half the group, just share), towels
5. Scripts (13 of them)
6. Names of Apostles for each spot

*Optional: Carpet squares for each child*

### **Directions:**

1. The Last Supper room should be set up with a long table placed on the floor without putting the legs of the table down.
2. The table should be set with cups, bread and grape juice and scripts in front of each spot with the names labeled.
3. On the side should be water pitchers, towels and bowls
4. Chairs should be placed along the perimeter of the room for the parents.
5. Have the children enter the room and pick out a costume. Costumes are optional but can really add to the effect of the drama activity. See reference page for costumes.
6. Each child should sit in a designated spot by the name of one of the Apostles. The part of Jesus is a priest or another adult male.
7. Invite the adults to take one of the parts if there are not enough children. However, they will have to go back to their seat when the washing of the feet occurs.

### **Explanation:**

1. We are going to recreate the Last Supper by acting out our own drama. Each of you are one of the disciples and the priest (or the adult male) is going to play the part of Jesus. First look at your script and find the parts that you are to read.
2. The retreat coordinator or other volunteer should be there to help the reenactment flow correctly.
3. As the children put on their costumes and take their spots, "Jesus" should begin the drama by thanking them for joining him for this supper of Passover in the Upper Room.
4. "Jesus" should give a simple explanation of Passover and how this meal was celebrated at the time of Jesus.
5. Begin the play.

## Application:

### Questions for Reflection done by the priest or adult male playing the role of Jesus

1. Why is this event called the “Last Supper?” What happens to Jesus after this supper?  
*(He suffers and dies on a cross)*
2. Jesus took the bread and called it His Body and told them to eat it. He then took the wine and told them to drink it for it was His Blood. Can Jesus turn bread into his Body and wine into his Blood? How can he do that?  
*(It is a miracle we call the transubstantiation which means a change. Jesus is God, He can do anything!)*
3. Then Jesus asked His disciples to do the same in remembrance of Him. What was He asking them to go out and do? Is He giving them the power to take bread and wine to be changed into His Body and Blood?  
*(Yes, and he is asking them to do the same)*
4. Does the Eucharist we receive at Mass taste like human flesh? Does the wine taste like blood? Why not?  
*(Jesus chose to hide himself, His Body and Blood in the form of bread and wine. Even though it tastes like wafer bread and wine, it really is Jesus you are receiving, for Jesus made it possible at the Last Supper.)*
5. When the priest says the prayers of Consecration at Mass, the prayers where he takes the bread and wine and says the words, this is my Body..., this is my Blood... He changes them into the Body and Blood of Jesus. Jesus is acting in the priest at that moment.
6. After the meal Jesus washed His disciple’s feet. It was customary back then that when you entered a house, a servant would come and wash your feet. Since they lived in a desert climate, their feet were always very dirty. It would be the same as us taking off our shoes as we enter someone’s house.
7. However, Jesus was the teacher. He was the Messiah, the Son of God. He was not a house servant! Why would he stoop to be so lowly to do a servant’s job? What was he trying to tell them? What is Jesus trying to tell you?  
*(Jesus was teaching them how to serve one another and to follow His example)*

## Transition Prayer:

The transition prayer is said at the end of each session (it is contained on the retreat handout):

Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof,  
but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

## **The Last Supper and The First Mass**

**Jude:** The great feast of Passover was coming.

**James:** The leaders in Jerusalem were looking for a way to kill Jesus.

**Andrew:** But Jesus decided to go into the city of Jerusalem to celebrate the great feast of Passover.

**Jude and John:** Jesus, where should we eat the Passover meal?

**Jesus:** Go into the city. A man carrying a water jug will meet you. Follow him into the house he enters. Ask the owner of the house if we can use the big room upstairs. Prepare the feast for us there.

**Matthew:** We all went to a big upstairs room just as the sun was going down. Jesus took his place at table. We, his twelve apostles, sat down, too.

**Jesus:** I have wanted so much to eat this Passover meal with you before I suffer. One of you will betray me.

**Jude and John:** Not me.

**Simon and Philip:** Not me.

**James and Matthew:** Not me.

**Thomas and Andrew:** Not me.

**Judas:** Not me. I won't betray you.

**Jesus:** You will, Judas.

**Peter:** We did not understand how Judas would betray Jesus.

**Philip:** Then Jesus took the bread and gave thanks.



**Jesus:** *(Takes the bread and holds it in his hands.)* Blessed are you, God. You give us this bread. We thank you for earth that grows seed and hands that make bread. Tonight we remember how you set our ancestors free.

**All:** Blessed are you, God.

**Simon:** Jesus broke the bread and gave pieces to us, his friends, the way he always did. But then He said words we had never heard before.

**Jesus:** Take and eat. This is My Body which is given for you. Do this to remember Me.

*(Passes around the bread and everyone takes a piece and eats it.)*

**Thomas:** After supper Jesus took the cup of wine and gave thanks.

**Jesus:** *(Takes the cup and holds it in his hands.)* Blessed are you, God. You give us wine to drink. Thank you for earth that grows vines and hands that make wine.

**Andrew:** Jesus passed the cup to us, his friends, the way He always did. But then He said words we had never heard before.

**Jesus:** Take and drink. This is My Blood which will be poured out for you. Do this to remember me.

*(Jesus lifts up his cup and drinks and everyone follows.)*

*(Jesus gets up and prepares to wash their feet.)*

**Jesus:** Now I am going to wash your feet, please remove your shoes and socks.

**Andrew:** Peter refused to let Jesus wash his feet.

**Peter:** Lord, you shall never wash my feet.

**Jesus:** If I do not wash your feet, you cannot be my disciple.

**James:** Then Peter let Jesus wash his feet.

*(Jesus washes the feet of Peter and then of each of the disciples.)*

**Jesus:** Do as I have done to you. Serve and help each other. Love one another just like I have loved you.

*(Students then wash the feet of their parents who have attended. If parents are playing any of the parts, they should return to the chairs with the other parents at this time. Ask parents to remove shoes and socks as their child takes a turn washing their feet.)*

**Philip:** The Passover celebration was now over. Jesus took us to a garden to pray. We fell asleep. Only Jesus stayed awake.

**Matthew:** Judas was not with us. Later he came and brought soldiers to arrest Jesus. This is how Judas betrayed Jesus.

**Thomas:** Jesus was taken and crucified. He died and was buried in a tomb. On the third day, He rose from the dead.

**James:** Jesus sent us to tell the world all about it.

**Peter:** We formed the first church and became the first bishops. And I became the first pope.

**John:** Each Sunday we gathered together to break bread and pray. We call this the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

**Philip:** Jesus promised to always be with us in the Eucharist.

# Station: Monstrance Craft

## Craft Room

### Activity:

*Making the Monstrance craft*

### Objective:

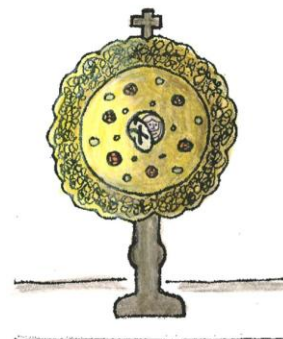
*To help children become aware of the gift Jesus has given us in the Eucharist and how we are able to come and adore Him outside of Mass*

### Materials Needed:

11. Glue
12. One large piece of construction paper for each child.
13. One gold doily, per child
14. Gold paper (enough for each child to make the center of the monstrance)
15. Craft jewels
16. White paper for host in the middle.
17. Brown paper for stand of monstrance
18. Card stock cutouts of stand for tracing.
19. Optional; picture of Jesus for the middle

### Directions:

1. Hand out all the materials each child will need for their project.
2. Give three or more patterns of the stand and have some of the children start tracing and cutting.
3. Have the other children begin with the gluing of the jewels on their monstrance.
4. Start with the large piece of construction paper as the base and glue the gold doilies and paper on to look like the monstrance.
5. After assembling and coloring add a white piece of paper in the middle for the host.



**Optional:** cut out a small picture of Jesus and place in the center on top of the host. Then cut another white circle the same size as the host and only glue on the side of it, so it flips open to reveal Jesus.

### Explanation:

1. Teach children that the vessels used in the church for Mass and other liturgies are to be made of precious metals. That is why we used gold and jewels in our project.
2. The Monstrance looks like a sun beam. It is to remind us that Jesus is the light that shines out of darkness, like a sun beam. He is the Son of God.
3. The monstrance is very special because the Eucharist is placed in there so that we can come and adore Jesus outside of Mass.

### Transition Prayer:

The transition prayer is said at the end of each session (it is contained on the retreat handout):

Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof,  
but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

## Station: *Lectio Divina*

This station is an activity for parents during the time their children are completing the craft. For those who want a little more background on *lectio divina* should read the introduction included at the beginning of this manual.

### **Activity:**

*Lectio divina*

### **Objective:**

*To direct parents in a prayerful encounter of the Trinity*

### **Materials Needed:**

*None*

### **Directions**

*Lectio divina* should preferably be done in the church. If it is not available, it should take place in a quiet place, where the other activities of the retreat cannot be heard, and there are comfortable chairs for the participants. They do not need to bring or have anything with them.

A member of the retreat team directs the group. If they do not feel that they can adequately explain each step of *lectio divina*, the leader can follow the script which begins on the next page. Instructions for each step are spoken out loud, then silence follows for the allotted time.

# Lectio divina

## The Introductory Prayer

Assume a prayerful and serene posture, comfortable yet not too relaxed. Sit upright, feet on the floor. If you wish, you may close your eyes.

*(Make the Sign of the Cross while saying)* In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

We will take a few moments to recognize the loving Presence of the indwelling Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The three Divine Persons are present here, within your heart, desiring to have a deep, intimate relationship with you.

Praise and thank God the Father for His Word and for this time of prayer with Him. *(pause for 15-20 seconds)*

Invite God the Son, the Word, to have an intimate encounter with you. Ask him to heal you of any resistance to the Father's plan for you. *(pause for 15-20 seconds)*

Ask God the Holy Spirit for the gift to receive the Word of God as the Father wills. *(pause for 15-20 seconds)*

## Step 1: Lectio, Reading the Word

The first step is to listen to the Word of God. Listen and simply receive the Word. Don't analyze it.

I will read to you a text from the bible twice. With great reverence be attentive to the Word which God the Father speaks to you. Notice the words which strike you in a particular way, either positively or negatively. Listen to the Word, — and be aware of your reactions to the Word. We will examine these responses in the next step. Be silent and listen to what the Word of God says.

I received from the Lord what I handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night he was handed over, took bread, and, after he had given thanks, broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes. Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will have to answer for the body and blood of the Lord.

*(Pause for 15-20 seconds. Afterward, reread the text a second time. Pause for 15-20 seconds before moving on to the next step)*

## Step 2: Meditatio, Meditation on the Word

In the first step we read the text, and simply considered, "What does the Word of God say?" In this second step we will consider, "What does the Word of God say **to me**?"

Reflect on your reaction as you heard the Word. Talk with God about **why** a particular word or phrase struck you. How does it apply to you, — here and now? Talk with God about this encounter with the Word. How does it console you? Challenge you? Confuse you? Call you to a change of heart? In this reaction, what is God showing you about yourself? In this experience, God will show you how He sees you?

We will now pause for 10 minutes of silence for meditation. Consider, “What does the Word of God say to me?”

*(Pause for at least 10 minutes of silence.)*

### **Step 3: Oratio, Praying with the Word**

In the first step we listened as the Word of God was read. We simply considered what the Word of God said. In the second step, we meditated on the Word of God: “What does the Word of God say **to me**?” Now we will consider our response to the Word.

In a conversation with God, respond to Him sincerely, as you would talk with a friend. In response to His Word to you, tell with Him what is really in your heart. Your prayer may be praise or thanksgiving. You may petition God, asking for a deeper understanding or some other grace, or want to intercede for others. Be sincere in your conversation. Speak to God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. This is prayer.

We will now pause five minutes for you to pray, that is, for you to spend some time responding to God’s Word to you.

*(Pause for at least 5 minutes of silence.)*

### **Step 4: Contemplatio, Resting in the Word**

We will now spend a few minutes resting in the Word. Be with the Word you received. What does God reveal that He wants for you? As He invites you to a deeper relationship, what conversion of heart is God asking for? Rest in the peace and love of the Word.

*(Pause for 2 minutes of silence.)*

### **Final Step: the Concluding Prayer**

Heavenly Father, I praise you and thank you for this time of prayer with you, your Son, and your Holy Spirit. Jesus, I venerate your saving name and am grateful for this encounter with you.

Holy Spirit, thank you for helping me receive the Word as the Father wants me to receive it.

God,—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—I worship you, three Divine Persons, and thank you for the gift of your presence within me. Let your Word become a living word within my heart. Continue to dwell in me that I may live from this encounter of prayer.

We will conclude by saying the Lord’s Prayer together. “Our Father, ...”

*(Make the Sign of the Cross while saying)* In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

### **Optional Step: Sharing**

*If time permits, you may invite the participants to share what they received. It should not last longer than ten minutes. Emphasize that prayer is “holy ground,” and that what is shared should be received with great reverence. Whatever is said is for the sake of the group and should be considered confidential, that is, it should not be shared with anyone outside the group.*

*This is **not** a time to answer questions about the text. It is a time to listen in reverence about a person’s encounter with God. Do not comment on or correct anything that is said. Allow the participant to receive again what they received in prayer.*

*You may begin this time by saying, "Would anyone like to briefly share what they received in prayer?" Be patient. Do not be afraid of the silence. It may take a little while for the first person to begin.*

*After the sharing is complete, thank everyone for their participation.*

### **Scripture Text**

*The scripture text included in this exercise is from 1 Cor 11:23-27 and was downloaded from the U.S.C.C.B. website ([usc.cb.org/bible](http://usc.cb.org/bible)).*

Alternative text:

Jesus said to them, "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him. Just as the living Father sent me and I have life because of the Father, so also the one who feeds on me will have life because of me." (John 6:53-56)

# Station: Vessels, Vestments and a Church Tour

## In the Church

### Directions:

1. Decide if you are going to use all of the Church Cards or just some of them. This would depend on what is used in your church and the amount of time available. Place the sacred items out either in the sacristy or in the sanctuary.
2. Place a stack of mini cards by each matching object. Place enough cards for as many children as you have doing the church tour this round.
3. Make sure you have a matching stack of larger cards with the clues. Mix the stacks so not everyone starts on the same sacred object. Give those to the children.
4. This activity is for children to do with their parents. Parents and their children should work together to figure out the clue and try and match it to the correct sacred object.
5. Once they find the correct object, they pick up a mini card with the matching picture. At the end of the game they hand them in.
6. Have the parents and children continue this until all cards are picked up.



### Activity:

*Church Tour Clue Game*

### Objective:

*To help children become familiar with Jesus in His Church and the meaning behind all the sacred items used in liturgy or for prayer*

### Materials Needed:

*Church activity Clue Cards (purchase from the Diocese of Fargo or print off website)*

*All the vessels, vestments and other objects that will be used should be placed out somewhere in the church or sacristy*

### Application:

As the parents and children walk around the church they will be learning about the different vessels, vestments and other sacred items in the church. They will get to touch them and discover the meaning behind why a certain item is used in Mass or other liturgies or why a certain area is important in the church.

### Conclusion:

Ask the parents and children who have completed the activity to conclude by visiting the tabernacle or lighting a votive candle or visit some other suitable place in the church where they can quietly say a prayer with their child while the other families are finishing up. Have them wait in the pews until everyone is completed. They may also review the cards again while waiting in the pew.

### Transition prayer:

Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof,  
but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.



## Sample Set of Clue Cards

Can be purchased from the Diocese of Fargo

Clue #1: God gave us His \_\_\_\_\_ on earth as a sign of His love for us, so we can celebrate His love as a family as we worship together.



Clue #2: Jesus founded the \_\_\_\_\_ when He was on earth, and made Peter the first Pope.

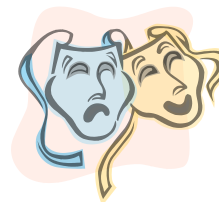
Clue #1: The \_\_\_\_\_ is the place from which the Word of God is announced so that God's message can be easily heard by the people.

Clue #2: There is a large book placed on the \_\_\_\_\_ where a person reads the Word of God.



# Station: Saint Skits

## Drama Room Station



### **Activity:**

*Saints Skits*

### **Objective:**

*To help children know and understand the great love the saints had for the Eucharist.*

### **Materials Needed:**

*Saint stories provided below.*

*Optional: Costumes*

*(suggestions of where to buy them listed in resource section)*

### **Introduction:**

There are some great saint stories that can be used when teaching about the Eucharist. There are three chosen for this retreat, but certainly many more could be used. The Saints chosen are St. Clare of Assisi, St. Anthony of Padua and Blessed Imelda Lambertini. Children and their parents should sit in one area while space is left to make a stage for the drama to take place. These are simple stories that the children can act out.

### **Directions:**

1. Choose the children who will act out the parts
2. Teacher should be the narrator (read slowly with pauses)
3. Props and costumes are fun to have but not necessary
4. Explain to the children that when a person is called up in the story, they are to act out the part.

### **Example:**

1. If the story says the Saint was a holy and pious child, then the actor/actress can pose kneeling with hands folded in prayer while that part is read. If it says the Saint could read someone's soul, then two people would get up from their spots and one could be pointing a finger at another and waving their arms around like they know something about the other person. The other person can look surprised and say "How did you know that?"
2. After each part the actor/actress should then sit down but the main character in the story remains up front as the story continues.
3. The saint stories are provided.
4. You may want to ask an older volunteer, like a high school student, to help the children think of what actions they can use during the skit.

### **Transition Prayer:**

Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof,  
but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

# ***St. Anthony of Padua***

Feast Day: June 13

Born 1195 in Lisbon, Portugal

Died June 13th

Patron of lost items, fisherman and Faith in the Blessed Sacrament

**Parts needed:** Anthony, parents, other brothers and man with donkey

Anthony was born into a wealthy family. His parents really wanted him to be a great nobleman when he grew up, but Anthony chose to be a poor Franciscan priest.

Anthony felt he was called by God to go out and evangelize as a Franciscan priest. He took off on a ship to a far away land. However, he ended up getting shipwrecked off the island of Sicily. He decided to join some other brothers there who at the time were living in a cave. He only left the cave to attend Mass and to sweep the nearby monastery.

One day a scheduled speaker failed to appear at the local church so the brothers pressed Anthony into speaking in his place. He impressed everyone so much that he was thereafter constantly traveling, evangelizing, preaching and teachings about Jesus.

One day a man came walking along with his donkey. The man told Anthony that he did not believe in the presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Anthony proposed to him that if his donkey would believe it, would he believe it too? He thought this was crazy, but replied yes. So Anthony told the man not to feed the donkey for three days and to come see him on the third day. The man did as he said. On the third day the man came with his donkey to see Anthony. Anthony then held the Blessed Sacrament in one hand and some oats in the other. The donkey refused the oats and went to kneel in front of the Blessed Sacrament held in the other hand. The man became a believer in the true presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.

Anthony had a love of the Child Jesus. One day a man was walking by a window in which he peered in to see Anthony gazing with rapture on the Holy Child whom he was holding in his arms. This is why you often see images of St. Anthony holding the Christ Child.

St. Anthony died at the age of 36 of a severe illness.

St. Anthony is often the intercessor for lost items. The story of where he got this title is from when a novice monk ran away from his monastery carrying with him a valuable Holy book which Anthony had been using. Anthony prayed for it to return. Meanwhile the novice monk had a vision from heaven telling him to return the book, which he did.

The story of St. Anthony and donkey can show us what it means to love Jesus in the Eucharist

# St. Clare of Assisi

Feast Day: August 11

Born in Assisi, Italy on July 16, 1194

Died August 11, 1253

Patroness of Television

**Parts needed:** Clare, Francis, bishop, other women (sisters) and invaders

Clare was born into a wealthy family in Assisi, Italy. As a teenager she began hearing of a holy man who had devoted himself to the poor. His name was Francis. She began to follow him and his group and developed an inner joy and peace.

After becoming close friends with Francis she finally decided that maybe this was what she should do the rest of her life. On Palm Sunday the bishop presented her with a palm of which she took as her sign from God to join Francis.

She left home to live a life of poverty like Jesus. Francis cut her long hair and gave her a rough woolen habit to wear. He then gave her a house near San Damiano Church where other women came to join her and they began a new religious order called the Order of the Poor Ladies, or as they are known today, the "Poor Clares".

Her community wanted to live according to the rule that St. Francis had developed. They slept on the floor each night, wore no shoes, kept silent most of the day, ate no meat, and spent hours in prayer. They also ate donated food, because they had no money. They were very happy living there and were full of happiness and peace.

One day the convent and the whole city were threatened by invaders. There was wide spread panic. Clare told her sisters not to be afraid and to trust in Jesus. Just as her convent was to be attacked, Clare displayed the Blessed Sacrament in a monstrance at the convent gate, and prayed before it for protection. The attackers were suddenly frightened and left. Jesus had protected them.

Toward the end of her life, she was often very ill. One Christmas she was so ill she could not attend Mass. This saddened her deeply and she prayed to Jesus for comfort. Suddenly there was an image on her of Mass going on in the chapel. She was overjoyed. This is why she is the patroness of Television.

She died of natural causes.

St. Clare can teach us to put all of our trust into Jesus and to realize the power in the Blessed Sacrament.

# ***Blessed Imelda Lambertini***

Feast Day: May 13

Born 1322 in Bologna, Italy

Died 1333

Patrons of First Communicants

**Parts needed:** Imelda, parents, sisters, Mother Superior and priest

Imelda was the only child of a very wealthy couple. Her family was very pious and attended Mass very often. Imelda had a longing to receive Jesus in the Eucharist, as she knew that it was Jesus Himself she would be receiving. However, back then children did not have their First Communion until the age of 14.

At the age of nine, Imelda asked to go and live with the sisters at a Dominican convent. Back then it was common for young children to enter convents to be raised by the sisters. She was hoping the sisters would let her have her First Communion and she begged Mother Superior for this. Mother Superior told her she had to still wait a few years.

Imelda would spend long hours in the chapel in front of our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament begging Jesus to let her receive Him in Holy Communion. One day as she was praying in the chapel, a sister walked by and saw a light over her head. Then she saw that Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament had come out of the tabernacle and was hovering in a glorious light above Imelda's head.

The amazed sister ran to get the priest. He rushed into the chapel. He knew right away that Jesus wanted Imelda to make her First Communion. Very carefully the priest took the shining host and gave the little girl her First Communion.

The sisters left little Imelda in the chapel to make her prayers of thanksgiving. She stayed there a long time with the most beautiful smile on her face. A few hours later two sisters came back to find her. She was still there kneeling with a smile on her face. They touched her shoulder and she then collapsed because she was dead, still with a smile on her face.

Jesus had come into Imelda's heart and then taken her to be close to His heart forever in Heaven.

Blessed Imelda can inspire in us the great joy and the gift Jesus has given us in the Eucharist.

# Station: Cup of Goey Water

## Prayer Room Station

### **Activity:**

*Cup of Goo*

### **Objective:**

*To help children understand how sacred the Holy Eucharist is and how we would want to be free of mortal sin when we receive the Eucharist*

### **Materials Needed:**

1. A picture of Jesus on the center of each table.
2. Two clear cups for each child, labeled with their names.
3. Water, dirt, chocolate syrup, pickle juice and broken crackers.
4. Fresh roses for each child.

### **Directions:**

1. Have children and parents sit together around tables.
2. Place a cup in front of each child filled with some water.
3. Have the other ingredients in the center of the table
4. The picture of Jesus on each table is to help children focus on who this is really about.



### **Explanation and Application:**

1. Tell the children that this cup full of pure clean water represents their soul.
2. Help them to see how transparent it is. Also how light can shine through it, etc.
3. Now explain that when we sin, it's like adding goo to our soul.
4. Add the dirt. Ask the children what happened to the clear water. Help them to see that dirt is sin we add to our soul. Our soul is no longer transparent. However, you can still see a little bit. This represents our small sins.
5. Ask how easy it would be to clean up this water? What about water purifier? The water purifier would be like us asking for forgiveness from God before Mass starts for the small sins we do.
6. Now add chocolate syrup. Now our cup is getting pretty goey. Although we all like chocolate, it wouldn't be so bad to drink up the chocolate if it wasn't for the dirt already in the cup. The chocolate represents really bad sins, for example not only did you call someone a mean name you beat them up and hurt them badly. That's a really bad sin. Sometimes bad sins can appear to be fun, like beating someone up. However, we should not do these things even if it makes us feel good.
7. However, all sin is bad. A sin might give you some pleasure at first but it always turns sour in your soul. Add the pickle juice and say, "just like this pickle juice."
8. Then we add the broken crackers. This represents our selfishness. The more sins we commit without asking for forgiveness, the more selfish we become. Notice that when you add the broken crackers, you can't see very clearly all the mucky goo underneath. This is what happens to our

soul when we keep sinning without asking forgiveness, it just builds up and eventually we don't even notice all the bad sins. We just see a few broken crackers on top, but God sees everything!

9. Give to each child a real rose. Tell them this rose represents Jesus in the Eucharist. Ask if they would want to dip their rose into the cup of gooey water? This is what happens when we come to communion with all this sin especially mortal sins when we have not gone to confession. The rose is not able to drink the pure water from us and we are not able to receive the sweet perfume the rose gives off. The same is true when receiving Jesus in Holy Communion. We always want to be pure so that Jesus can come into us and find no sin.
10. After we go to confession, all the goo is gone and we have pure clean water again. (*Rather than spending time cleaning out the cups just give them new cups with fresh water in them.*) Now we can put our rose which represents Jesus in the water. In fact, let's leave the rose in the water cups until the retreat is finished. Then you can take home your roses.

### **Transition prayer:**

Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof,  
but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

How many of you say: I should like to see His face, His garments, His shoes. You do see Him, you touch Him, you eat Him. He gives Himself to you, not only that you may see Him, but also to be your food and nourishment."  
- *St. John Chrysostom*

# Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

## In the Church

### Introduction:

A beautiful way to end the retreat is to bring Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament to the children so that they may adore Him whom they are preparing to receive in their First Holy Communion. A priest or a deacon can lead a short time of adoration (*20 min.*) including a Benediction. An optional script to be used is included in the resource section.



Pope Benedict XVI stated in his Wednesday Audience on June 10, 2007 that, "There is an intrinsic connection between celebration and adoration. The holy Mass, in fact, is in itself the Church's greatest act of adoration." He added, "adoration outside holy Mass prolongs and intensifies what happened in the liturgical celebration and renders a true and profound reception of Christ possible."

### Explanation:

Before you begin, a brief explanation should be given especially for those children and parents who will be experiencing adoration of the Blessed Sacrament for the first time. Help the children to understand that adoration of the Blessed Sacrament flows from the Mass. Also help them to understand what it means to adore. What they should say to Jesus, how to listen in silence to Jesus speaking to our hearts and even what their posture should be.

Some parishes have collected carpet squares that were not needed anymore from carpet stores. This is a great way to promote a good posture as the children will be on their carpet square in their own space before the Blessed Sacrament. In this way they can be taught to kneel, to sit, and to bow before our Lord. They are much less distracted when they are given their own space to adore Jesus. Parents would then remain in the pews while the children are up front in the sanctuary on their carpet squares or designated spots.

The priest or deacon can then expose the Blessed Sacrament by praising Him with a hymn of Exposition. The priest or deacon can also be right with the children as they lead them through prayers.

This time of adoration the children can sing, prayer a decade of the rosary, pray formal prayers and give spontaneous praise. Show the children the different postures they can also do by leading them through it. The children will follow whatever the priest or deacon does. The priest or deacon can then vocally praise our Lord and lead everyone in prayer. There should also be a time for silence. (*at least 5 min.*) The priest or deacon should prepare the children by explaining the time of silence will be a time that Jesus will want to speak to your heart. Ask the children what Jesus wants to say to them. You will not hear him like you are hearing me but he wants you to know Him. Listen to Jesus.



## **Transition Prayer:**

**Say the transition prayer** (a prayer the children have prayed throughout the day) **before you end the Benediction**

Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof,  
but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

End the prayer time with Benediction and Reposition.

# Eucharistic Exposition and Benediction

**GATHERING:** *Choose one or two songs to gather people.*

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**EXPOSITION** – *After the people have assembled, the following or another suitable song may be sung while the minister prepares the Holy Eucharist for adoration.*

**O saving Victim, open wide,  
The gate of heav'n to us below,  
Our foes press on from ev'ry side;  
Your aid supply, your strength bestow.**

**O salutaris Hostia  
Que caeli pandas ostium:  
Bella premunt hostilia,  
Da robur, fer auxilium.**

**To your great name be endless praise,  
Immortal Godhead, One in Three;  
O grant us endless length of days  
In our true native land with Thee. Amen.**

**Uni trinoque domino  
Sit sempiterna Gloria,  
Qui vitam sine termino  
Nobis donet in patria. Amen.**

**ADORATION** – *There may be prayers, songs, readings from scripture and a brief homily to direct the attention of the faithful to the worship of the Lord.*

1. Choose several options for songs during adoration

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2. Pray some formal prayers such as a decade of the Rosary
3. Praise Jesus with spontaneous prayer
3. Have a 5-7 minute period of silence.
4. Conclude with this Eucharistic song.

**Down in adoration falling,  
This great Sacrament we hail;  
Over ancient forms of worship  
Newer rites of grace prevail;  
Faith will tell us Christ is present,  
When our human senses fail.**

**Tantum ergo Sacramentum  
Veneremus cernui,  
Et antiquum documentum,  
Novo cedat ritui;  
Praestet fides supplementum,  
Sensuum defectui.**

**To the everlasting Father,  
And the Son who made us free,  
And the Spirit, God proceeding  
From them, Each eternally,  
Be salvation, honor, blessing,  
Might and endless majesty. Amen.**

**Genitori Genitoque  
Laus et jubilatio,  
Salus, honor, virtus quoque  
Sit et benedictio:  
Procedenti ab utroque  
Compar sit laudatio. Amen.**

**EUCCHARISTIC BLESSING** – *If the minister is a priest or deacon, there may be a blessing. Before the blessing a prayer such as the following may be said.*

Lord Jesus Christ,  
you gave us the Eucharist  
as the memorial of your suffering and death.  
May our worship of this sacrament of your body and blood  
help us to experience the salvation you won for us  
and the peace of the kingdom  
where you live with the Father and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen**

**REPOSITION** – *After the blessing the minister places the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle.*

**ACCLAMATION** – *The people may say an acclamation.*

**Blessed be God.**  
**Blessed be his Holy Name.**  
**Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true Man.**  
**Blessed be the Name of Jesus.**  
**Blessed be his most Sacred heart.**  
**Blessed be his most Precious Blood.**  
**Blessed be Jesus in the most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.**  
**Blessed be the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete.**  
**Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary most holy.**  
**Blessed be her holy and Immaculate Conception**  
**Blessed be her glorious Assumption.**  
**Blessed be the name of Mary, Virgin and Mother.**  
**Blessed be St. Joseph, her most chaste spouse.**  
**Blessed be God in his angels and in his saints.**

Pray the transition prayer (a prayer the children have prayed throughout the day) before you end the Benediction

**Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof,  
but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.**

**SONG** – *Then sing another song such as the following.*

**Holy God, we praise thy name;  
Lord of all, we bow before Thee;  
All on earth Thy scepter claim,  
All in heaven above adore Thee.  
Infinite Thy vast domain,  
Everlasting is Thy reign!  
Infinite Thy vast domain,  
Everlasting is Thy reign!**

**Hark, the loud celestial hymn;  
Angel choirs above are raising;  
Cherubim and Seraphim,  
In unceasing chorus praising,  
Fill the heavens with sweet accord:  
Holy, holy, holy, Lord!  
Fill the heavens with sweet accord:  
Holy, holy, holy**

# Resources

## Artwork:

Artwork for the retreats can be purchased on-line at [www.allposters.com](http://www.allposters.com). The price for the artwork is \$40 without the frame and \$50 with the frame.

## Costumes:

Costumes may be purchased at [www.autom.com](http://www.autom.com). Do a search for costumes. Prices range from \$8-\$12.

## Crafts:

Many crafts supplies can be purchased on-line at [www.orientaltrading.com](http://www.orientaltrading.com)

## Books:

The following is a list of some good books to have on display or to sell at the retreat

### Books relating the sacrament of the Eucharist:

Ahern, Dianne, and Katherine Larson. *Today I Made My First Communion*. Ann Arbor, MI: Aunt Dee's Attic, 2003. Print.

Coggi, Roberto, Laura Pietra, Mirko Pellicioni, Rosa Pellicioni, and J. Francis Stafford. *Little Catechism on the Eucharist*. New Hope, KY: New Hope Pub., 2005.

Nobisso, Josephine, and Katalin Szegedi. *The weight of a Mass: a tale of faith*. Westhampton Beach, N.Y.: Gingerbread House, 2002. Print.

Welborn, Amy, ed. *Friendship With Jesus Pope Benedict XVI Talks to Children on Their First Holy Communion*. San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Pr, 2011. Print.

### Other great books that will work for any of the retreats:

Laser, Aia. *The Greatest Miracle of All: The Story of Jesus*. Israel: A. Laser, 2005. Print.

Roche, Luane, and Chris Sharp. *The Promise*. Liguori, MO: Liguori Publications, 1996. Print. Ser. 2.

Beckett, Wendy. *A child's book of prayer in art*. London: Dorling Kindersley, 1995. Print.

Bishop, Jennie, and Preston McDaniel. *The Princess and the Kiss: [a Story of God's Gift of Purity]*. Anderson, IN: Warner, 1999. Print.

Bishop, Jennie, and Preston McDaniels. *The Squire and the Scroll: a Tale of the Rewards of a Pure Heart*. Anderson, IN: Warner, 2009. Print.

Lucado, Max, and Mitchell Heinze. *Because I Love You*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1998. Print.

Lucado, Max, and George Angelini. *The Oak inside the Acorn*. Nashville, TN: Tommy Nelson, 2011. Print.

Lucado, Max, and Maria Monescillo. *The Tallest of Smalls*. Nashville, TN: Tommy Nelson, 2009. Print.

Lucado, Max. *You Are Special*. Wheaton, MO: Crossway, 1997. Print.

Reynolds, Aaron, and Peter Whitehead. *The Nineteenth of Maquerk*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zonderkidz, 2005. Print.

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