

Middle School Faith Formation: Curriculum Guide

This is a guide that should help you through the Celebrating the Lectionary curriculum. Use this page to 'guide' you through the guide!

Supplies Needed:

- You will always get your bin with general materials.
- Please encourage children to either buy (we have them for sale) or bring a Bible.
- All non-bold print means I will take care of the materials.
- **All bold print means you are responsible for bringing that material.**
- I can always help you if there are materials you can't find and need!!!

Gathering: I usually have you use the curriculum introduction, but watch for modifications I post here.

Introducing the Word: Watch for modifications or suggested questions to ask.

Exploring the Word: I will often give you extra questions to ask the students. The questions should always go in order, but you may need to figure out where they fit into the conversation best. Or, I give you a heads up to what topics the conversation could arise.

Doctrinal Connection: Again I will give you more questions or modifications.

Integrating the Word: The book always gives you 3 options here. I may suggest which one I think will work the best, or give you another idea that is not in the curriculum. You may choose to do whatever you want. If there is a whole new idea you think of, go ahead and use it. Watch for supplies needed in the various activities because I will not get them ready for you unless you ask for them (or I state that they will be ready for you).

Closing: Good!! I will often suggest the Five Finger Prayer. Please use as often as you can, it's a great way for kids to feel comfortable praying!

**LOOK HERE
FOR
INFORMATION
FROM THE
CATECHISM
OF THE
CATHOLIC
CHURCH
PERTAINING
TO THE
LESSON.**

Middle School Faith Formation: Curriculum Guide

November 4, 2007

(Overlooking, pages 63-68)

Supplies Needed:

1. Bin (including name tags)
2. Bibles
3. 9 copies of *Activity Sheet Zacchaeus*
4. **A Variety of objects to see with, ex. Kaleidoscope, magnifying glass, ect. And some objects to look at.**
5. **If you need copies or supplies for the Integrating the Word section please let me know by October 28th.**

Gathering: If you don't have room to play this game, try the Birthday Challenge: everyone stands up and tries to line up in order from oldest to youngest WITHOUT TALKING!! Before you begin the game pull one person aside and tell them that they will use the birthday of Jesus when it's time to play the game.

Prayer: You may use this one OR see if anyone can remember the 5 finger prayer. If not, remind them and see if there is a volunteer who would like to pray.

Song: You may do this if the group is comfortable, no big deal if you don't!

Introducing the Word: GOOD!

Exploring the Word:

Zacchaeus Presentation: More Questions to use **before** the others:

- "Last week we talked about having the 'right' relationship with Jesus. Did Zacchaeus have that type of relationship before he met Jesus? Then why do you think he still desired to see Jesus? (Guide them to the fact that we are all sinners, but that doesn't mean that we can't desire Jesus.)
- Why do you think Jesus chose to eat at Zacchaeus' house and not the home of a righteous person? How do you think those other people felt?

Covenant Code:

- Make sure to connect to the fact that all the people of Jerico made a judgment on Zacchaeus, Jesus did not and therefore He could help Zacchaeus become a better person. Sometimes kids in jr. high are making bad choices, so it's easy to make a judgment on them. If we can avoid doing that, we too can act like Jesus and help them.

Integrating the Word: Do any of these 3.

Sycamore Song: let me know if you want copies (You don't have to sing, you could just read it as a group.)

Aerial Views: please bring your own map if you choose this one.

See Others as Jesus Does: *** Could be integrated into a service activity!!*** We may have some supplies to help with the project, just ask the week before!!!

Closing: However you want to do your closing prayer would be great! (again sing only if your group wants to)

Middle School Faith Formation: Curriculum Guide

November 11, 2007

(What's Coming? pages 69-72)

Supplies Needed:

6. Bin (including name tags)
7. Bibles
8. Index cards (1/student)
9. **Sympathy cards (1/student)**
10. **Alphabetical code (if you choose to use it)**
11. **Pre-written questions and response**

Gathering: Great! Don't forget to **pre-write the response** so the kids can just read it and not have to memorize it!

Introducing the Word: Please find some sympathy cards on your own (you could have the kids pair up if you don't have many). Write the questions before!

Exploring the Word:

TIP: Sadducees is pronounced: SAD-dzhoo-seez

The Youth may not know how to look something up in the Bible, please take a moment to explain if necessary.

- When the Bible says "The children of this age marry and remarry; but those who are deemed worthy to attain to the coming age and to the resurrection of the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage." (Luke 20:34-35) Make sure the students know that he is talking about the people in heaven that do not marry or remarry. (Some would confuse this and think that you can't marry anyone on earth and then still go to Heaven.)
- After you ask what Jesus' Response is, ask what He's talking about when He says the dead will rise? (Answer: the final coming of Jesus (end of the world), like in the Apostles Creed we say, "we believe...in the resurrection of the body and life everlasting.")
- Make sure they don't get any of this confused with reincarnation!!!
- Some reference to use when they are trying to describe what happens after we die...Revelations 21:2, 10-27; 22:1-5 (helps to describe what Heaven COULD be like) or Catechism 1020-1037 *see below*
- ***This discussion may invoke questions about purgatory, for guidance see Catechism 1030-1032 *see =>*. If you want a 'youth friendly' way to describe purgatory, see me and I can help! The biggest thing is to explain that it is NOT a place, just a state of achieving holiness.***

Covenant Code:

- Remind the students that Heaven is an awesome place and death is a reunion with God. They should not be scared!!
- If students are not responding well to the code idea, you may just write normally and then read others anonymously, or do the whole thing as a discussion.

Integrating the Word: Do any of these 3 OR make a drawing/collage of what they think Heaven will be like. You could bring a wide variety of materials for them to use and it would be a great way to express creativity. I can help if you need materials.

Closing: Use the Five Finger Prayer!! ☺

*** Ask students to bring in old magazines for December 2nd. ***

WHAT DOES THE CATECHISM SAY ABOUT HEAVEN AND PURGATORY???

Heaven...

1026 By his death and Resurrection, Jesus Christ has "opened" heaven to us. The life of the blessed consists in the full and perfect possession of the fruits of the redemption accomplished by Christ. He makes partners in his heavenly glorification those who have believed in him and remained faithful to his will. Heaven is the blessed community of all who are perfectly incorporated into Christ.

1027 This mystery of blessed communion with God and all who are in Christ is beyond all understanding and description. Scripture speaks of it in images: life, light, peace, wedding feast, wine of the kingdom, the Father's house, the heavenly Jerusalem, paradise: "no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him."⁶⁰³

And Purgatory...

1030 All who die in God's grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven.

Middle School Faith Formation: Curriculum Guide

December 2, 2007

(Keep Awake: pages 95-99)

The Seasonal Background has great information!! Check it out!! (p. 85-93)

Supplies Needed:

12. Bin
13. Bibles
14. Index Cards (1/person)
15. Copies of p. 99 and Our Lady of Guadalupe Info Sheet
16. **Christmas CD**
17. **Green holly leaves cut out (1/person)**
18. **Magazines**

Gathering: If you can't find Christmas music let me know. Again, you don't have to sing the songs, but please do the rest of the 'sing' portion. (Reminder: you will only have 2 weeks of Advent with your group.) ~Please light the candle on your own.~

Introducing the Word: The definition of vigil is: a watch formerly kept on the night before a religious feast with prayer or other devotions OR an evening or nocturnal devotions or prayers OR an act or period of watching or surveillance.

Exploring the Word: Read "Notes on the Readings: Isaiah" p. 86 before!!

- How did you hear Isaiah talking about peace?
- How is that connected to the last sentence in this passage?

Climbing Mountains:

- What are some 'mountains' people your age might have to climb?
- How could they use the positive things we do when we wait to help them climb that mountain?

Waiting this Advent:

- How could you ask God to help you as you wait?
- ~No small groups necessary, please do as a whole group.

Doctrinal Connection:

~You do not need to make the cards to distribute. Please, discuss and you could make prayer cards for Mary or Our Lady of Guadalupe.
~Because the Immaculate Conception falls on a Saturday this year, regular Sunday (or Saturday) Mass fulfills the Holy Day of Obligation.
~Please see the Catechism posting for the doctrine on the Immaculate Conception. (You can find more in the Catechism #490-493.) A great web page for information on Our Lady of Guadalupe or Juan Diego is www.sancta.org. See attached for a short overview to share with the students (if you want copies of this let me know!!!)

Integrating the Word: You may choose one of these if you would like. I would highly suggest finding some form of a service project for Advent. There are many good suggestions on p. 86 & 87 in your book. Even if this is not your main service project for the year, it's still great to show the students that this is a time for giving, not receiving. Let me know if you have any needs of supplies!

Closing: Good!! OR Five Finger Prayer!!

WHAT DOES THE CATECHISM SAY ABOUT THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION??

491 Through the centuries the Church has become ever more aware that Mary, "full of grace" through God,¹³⁴ was redeemed from the moment of her conception. That is what the dogma of the Immaculate Conception confesses, as Pope Pius IX proclaimed in 1854:

The most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Savior of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin.¹³⁵

493 The Fathers of the Eastern tradition call the Mother of God "the All-Holy" (*Panagia*), and celebrate her as "free from any stain of sin, as though fashioned by the Holy Spirit and formed as a new creature".¹³⁸ By the grace of God Mary remained free of every personal sin her whole life long.

*The Student Bible for Catholics also has some information on Mary on p. 36 & 37.

Middle School Faith Formation: Curriculum Guide

December 9, 2007

(Belted with Righteousness: pages 101-106)

Supplies Needed:

19. Bin
20. Bibles
21. Advent Wreath (matches)
22. Copies of "Dream Reflection" (1/person)
23. Paper, ribbon, paper clips, staplers for Fans.
24. **Christmas CD**
25. **Paper Holly Leaves and paper clouds**
26. **Wrapped present with treats inside**

Gathering: Great! Give each student a copy of the "Dream Reflection" for the prayer.

Introducing the Word: The students may come up with a list of more 'modern' visionaries like Martin Luther King, Gandhi, etc. OR you could do a quick lesson on saints.

- Who would be a visionary that you know today and what is their vision? (Principal, coach, Priest, social justice worker, etc.)

Exploring the Word: I don't think the tough times were talked about too much last time, so maybe just discuss it a little before you begin this section.

- Do you think that the war torn countries of our world today have turned their backs on God like the Hebrew people did?
- Does anyone know what religion is dominant in the Middle East? (Islam) Do they believe in the same God that we do? (In essence yes, but they call him Allah and have some diverse teachings on God)
- Does their religion tell them to kill themselves with bombs or to kill other people? (No, the terrorists take their religion to the extreme. It would be like thinking that if you're Catholic and believe the Eucharist is the bread of life, then that's the only thing we need to eat for the rest of our lives. <You may use another example, that is just one I thought of.>)
- So are they following God like they should?
(Isaiah 11:1-10) --What do you think the people in our world today hope for?
(Matthew 3:1-12) – I would use the word 'hope' instead of 'dream'.
 - Why does John need to tell the people to repent?
 - How does this passage relate to Isaiah's message?

Doctrinal Connection: You may go over the Christmas Shopping list if you want, but most kids this age are not buying too many gifts, they are receiving them. Maybe you could use it for a guide to give them ideas on what they could ask for rather than the usual gifts they desire.

Integrating the Word: Unless you are working on a service project that you started last week, please do 'Shalom Vision Christmas Fans'. (Explain that Shalom means 'peace'.) I will have the supplies for you, but tell me if you are going to do something else, please.

Closing: Please encourage each student to participate in the prayer but stating what they wrote on their holly leaves or clouds. If they are persistent about not praying out loud, you can do a prayer chain where everyone holds hands and each person has a chance to say a prayer silent or out loud. When you are done with your prayer you squeeze the hand of the person next to you to pass the prayer on.

WHAT DOES THE CATECHISM SAY ABOUT OTHER RELIGIONS??

843 The Catholic Church recognizes in other religions that search, among shadows and images, for the God who is unknown yet near since he gives life and breath and all things and wants all men to be saved. Thus, the Church considers all goodness and truth found in these religions as "a preparation for the Gospel and given by him who enlightens all men that they may at length have life."

WHAT ABOUT JOHN THE BAPTIST?

523 *St. John the Baptist* is the Lord's immediate precursor or forerunner, sent to prepare his way. "Prophet of the Most High", John surpasses all the prophets, of whom he is the last. He inaugurates the Gospel, already from his mother's womb welcomes the coming of Christ, and rejoices in being "the friend of the bridegroom", whom he points out as "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world". Going before Jesus "in the spirit and power of Elijah", John bears witness to Christ in his preaching, by his Baptism of conversion, and through his martyrdom.