

CATECHIST NOTES

In the past, we have done this lesson by having classes move through different prayer stations. You will do similar activities as in the past but they will all be done in your classroom.

There will be a short large group session in the Chapel. Presenter will be Dr. Peg. She will only set the context for the session.

If possible, see if you have a portable speaker (or ask your peers) you can plug your phone, I-Pad or laptop into. You will need this for the music portion of the lesson. We have three sets of speakers available, which will work with the Chromebooks, but may not work with your phones or I-Pads.

Later in this lesson plan you will find

1. Instructions for leading your group in Lectio Divina
2. A Script for the Guided Meditation called **Meeting Jesus** from St. Mary's Press. You read this script to the teens
3. Audio Guided Meditation by Abide **Waiting for the Lord** Based on Psalm 27
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SelHnTII9h0&t=427s>

* You can download the Abide App on your phone for free, as well.

OBJECTIVES

- To realize that prayer is essential to growing closer to God
- To help teens explore how to use scripture to pray

OVERVIEW

1. 4:00-5:00pm - Mass
2. 5:15-5:45pm – 7th Grade Large Group/Attendance in Chapel w/ Dr. Peg
3. 5:45-6:45pm - Small Group Lesson Plan

LESSON COMPONENTS

- A. Community Building (5-10 min)
- B. Shared experiences by adults and teens (15 minutes)
- C. Scripture & Prayer (35 min)
- D. Catholic Teaching/Insight
- E. Putting Faith Into Action (5-10 min)

Announcements

A. Community Building

Use whatever you are accustomed to using to check in with your teens – happy/crappies, week's review. Since the holidays are approaching you might ask everyone to share one thing from their Christmas list this year or one holiday tradition their family has for Christmas they are really looking forward to this year.

B. Shared experiences by adults and teens

1. Direct teens to TH p 1. Explore the very top line - **Prayer is both an encounter and a conversation between you and God** (us and God).
2. Move to the God speaks to every generation box on TH p 1. Explore what is in the box and then go to the questions immediately following in the Think Aloud box.
3. In your own words cover the three points in the Follow the Logic box. This is the heart of the lesson.

Transition into section C

Explore the Hearing the Voice of God takes practice insight on TH p 1. Great time to share a story about your experience in creating a pray life or what you have found that works for you.

C. Scripture and Prayer

1. Experience # 1: Lectio Divina – Direct the teens to TH p 2.

Explain what Lectio Divina is (there is a 2-sided handout in your catechist binders that gives you more information if you need it.)

Then have the group do the exercise using Matt 6: 5-13 (the Lord's Prayer) or Luke 11: 1-4 (The Lord's Prayer) or 9-13 (Ask and you shall receive).

LECTIO-DIVINA (to be read to teens)

Lectio-divina is latin for holy (divina) reading (lectio). This is an ancient Christian practice and one many people find very helpful.

There are four (4) main steps in this process

1. Reading (Lectio)
 2. Meditation or Reflection (Meditatio)
 3. Prayer/Respond (Oratio)
 4. Contemplation/ Rest and Return (Contemplatio)
- I am going to read the passage slowly to you. Please listen carefully.
 - Now open your Bibles to (give the passage you have chosen)
 - I am going to read the passage a second time. This time I want you to highlight, underline or circle words or phrases that make an impression on you.
 - Period of silence (30-45 seconds)

Now please join your small group for shared reflection

- What is this passage talking about?
- What words or phrases stood out to you?
- Think for a moment, do any of these words or phrases connect to what is going on in your life right now?
- Why do you think these particular words or phrases stood out to you?
- What message do you think God is sending to you through this passage?
- How can you put that message from God into action?
- What did you think of this experience?

2. Experience # 2: Guided Meditation

GUIDED MEDITATION (to be read to teens before meditation starts)

Meditation is a simple but life-transforming skill that can help you to relax, enhance understanding about yourself and develop your inherent potential. Like all skills, meditation requires practice. If this is your first experience with guided meditation be gentle with yourself. You may find it difficult to keep your mind and heart focused. This is very common.

CATECHIST NOTES

Lectio Divina worksheets teens can use to jot down their thoughts during the experience are in your bins.

Most people do not pray because

- It is not a priority
- They feel they do not know how to do it well and it makes them feel uncomfortable.
- They don't think God listens or cares
- They feel awkward conversing with a God that seems distant and silent.
- They do not worship regularly. When people disengage from worship, their private prayer suffers.
- They don't think prayer really works

Having the teens share the fruits of doing Lectio Divinia is important to the process of teaching the technique and when doing it as a group.

CATECHIST NOTES

Though it may not be apparent to you, there is a gentle yet profound transformation taking place within you when you meditate. It is like a fruit ripening on a tree. The ripening process is slow, but no doubt it is happening. So rest assured that every minute that you put into stilling your body, mind and soul is never wasted.

The one thing we ask of each person here is to remain quiet during the meditation. Allow yourself and others the space needed to get into the meditation. If you do not find this method of prayer helpful, please respect those who do.

This meditation uses visualization as a tool to engage the imagination. If you find the visualization difficult, then let your mind and heart answer the various questions the facilitator asks during the course of the meditation.

Guided Meditation Script below

Meeting Jesus: A Guided Meditation

Begin with the Sign of the Cross.

God made each of us, including our imaginations. Today we will use our imaginations to experience a guided meditation. Remember, Jesus said, "Seek, and you will find." If we seek Jesus and offer him our imaginations, we can sometimes meet him and spend time with him in a way that helps us understand how he wants us to live. Let's try it and see!

Close your eyes and relax. . . . Listen to your breathing. . . . Don't change it, just listen to it. . . . As you inhale, breathe in all the love God has for you. . . . As you exhale, feel all your distractions leave . . . any aches and pains . . . any worries . . . any distractions at all. Try to feel your heart beating . . . the heart God created for you. . . . [pause]

Now picture, right before you, a large door, standing all alone. . . . [pause]

Go to the door, push it open, and walk through. . . . You find yourself in a beautiful garden. . . . Take a moment to look around . . . feel the grass beneath your feet . . . smell the flowers . . . listen to the birds. . . . Enjoy! [pause]

Then Jesus says, "At your Baptism, you became a child of God the Father and a member of the Body of Christ. Through the Holy Spirit, I will be with you forever, during the good times and the difficult times. . . . [pause]

In the distance you see a stream winding through the garden. . . . There is a shade tree next to the stream, and a bench beneath the tree. . . . Jesus is there, waiting for you. . . . He smiles, and calls you by name. . . . Go to him. . . . [pause]

This meditation is one the Catechist facilitates by reading a script. Make sure you prepare the environment (dim lights if possible, have the teens spread out...)

Read loudly and slowly

The pauses are essential. Give the teens enough time to experience the meditation in their minds.

CATECHIST NOTES

Jesus takes you into his arms with a warm hug. . . . "I'm so glad you came," he says. . . . "Come, let's sit down and be together for awhile. . . ." So you sit on the bench and enjoy each other's company. . . . [pause]

Think about what Jesus is like. . . .

Jesus takes you by the hand and says, "I have been with you always, through times of joy, and times of sadness." [pause] Then Jesus shows you moments in your life, beginning when you were very young. . . . He shows you how he was there, sharing each moment with you.

. . . [pause] What does Jesus show you? . . . How do you feel? . . . [pause]

Then Jesus says, "At your Baptism, you became a child of God the Father and a member of the Body of Christ. Through the Holy Spirit, I will be with you forever, during the good times and the difficult times. . . . [pause]

Jesus points out the stream, and invites you to go into the water to renew yourself as you call to mind your Baptism. . . . [pause] Together you go, hand in hand. . . . To your surprise the water is warm and life-giving. . . . With great joy Jesus gently dips you into the water. . . . Think about what it feels like. . . . [pause]

As you stand in the stream with Jesus, you hear invisible voices cheering and clapping. Jesus laughs and says: "You hear our family, the Church, greeting you! They are the family and friends you meet every day and all those in Heaven and around the world who pray for you each time the Eucharist is celebrated."

The sound fades, and you and Jesus return to the bench. . . . As you leave the water, you become completely dry, and your heart fills with God's peace. . . . As you sit beside Jesus . . . you realize you can tell him anything. . . . What do you tell Jesus? . . . How does he respond? . . . [pause]

Jesus then tells you it is time to go . . . but first he has something for you . . . something that will unite you closer with him and with all your brothers and sisters in the Church. . . . He takes from his cloak a small loaf of bread. . . . He blesses it, . . . breaks it, . . . and says, "This is my Body," . . . "take and eat." Together you share the meal. . . . [pause]

Now you both stand up to go. . . . He invites you to return anytime and says he will be waiting. . . . He tells you he will be with you throughout your journey. . . . You will sense his presence in the people and events of your daily life. . . . You will be able to hear his voice in the Bible and find his love in the Sacraments.

. . . Then Jesus says, "I look forward to being with you in the Eucharist." He takes you into his arms for a farewell hug. [pause]

You turn to go, and you see the door is still standing open. . . . As you walk up to it, you take one last look at Jesus and remember that you can return at any time. . . . You go through the door, closing it behind you

. . . and find yourself back here in this room. . . . Slowly you wiggle your fingers and toes . . . stretch your arms and legs . . . and, when you are ready, open your eyes.

Close with the Sign of the Cross.

Option 2: Waiting for the Lord (Based on Psalm 27)

This is a perfect meditation for the Advent season. Produced by ABIDE Christian Meditation App

After doing either of the meditations get the teens to share their experience of meditation with scripture.

- What did they like about it?
- What didn't they like about it?
- Did they find it easy to do? Do they know why?
- Did they find it difficult to do? Do they know why?
- Did visualization help or hinder making the scripture passage more accessible?
- What might have helped them enter more fully into the experience?

Remind the teens

1. Meditation takes practice. If this was their first time they might want to try it Again, just so they can be familiar enough with the technique before they accept or reject it.
2. Not all prayer forms suit all individuals.

Experience 3: Praying with music

Music has always been a way we have used to pray with Scripture, particularly in Worship. The lyrics of Praise and Worship songs and popular Christian Music are often taken from scripture. Not only do the lyrics speak to us the music itself engages our senses and both creates or elicits feelings. Talk with the teens about why music is so important in people's experience of prayer.

Direct Teens to TH p. 3 on the box Praying with Music. Follow the discussion prompts provided.

Choose a couple of songs to play and discuss.

E. Putting Faith Into Action

As a class, try to brainstorm ways to pray. What are some strategies you can use to pray every day? Where in your day could you insert prayer? Where are you already praying? Review the tips for praying on TH p 4 and read through the possible ways teens might go about integrating prayer into their lives.

CATECHIST NOTES

This is an audio meditation you can download from YouTube on a Chrome book

If you have an iPhone or iPad you can download the ABIDE Christian Meditation app on your phone from the App store.

Processing the experience with the teens if important.

Choose a few songs to play during this part of the lesson. Again, use your phone or one of the Chromebooks.

If your group all names a particular song, they find meaningful, google it and listen to it as a group, then talk about why the teens resonate with it.

LESSON PREPARATION NOTES:

Is there something I want to pick up or go over from last week's class?

My community building activity this week will be

What parts of the lesson will the Peer Ministers lead/facilitate?

Do I need anything from the Faith Office prior to class?

Other

CATECHIST NOTES

Things I will need for class this week:

The Key Ideas/Objectives for this week are

Things I need to consult Teen Faith about
