

*Guidelines for Preparation for the  
Sacrament of Confirmation*

Element Four

*Retreat*

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## Retreat *Element Four*

### *Significant relationship* – candidate and peers

The goals of the retreat are:

- to foster the candidate's relationship with God within a community of peers
- to provide a reflection time, drawing the candidate to a greater understanding of the connection between faith in God and their everyday life
- to be encouraged to live as disciples of Jesus Christ through responsible participation in the life of the Church strengthened through the Sacrament of Confirmation.

The retreat may include:

Prayer, witness talks, faith sharing, celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation (or reconciliation service), skits, games, reflection, and other activities; all with a focus on the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Note: For a retreat to be considered a "Confirmation preparation" retreat, it ought to have the following characteristics:

- teaches about the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit. (pg. 123, NDC)
- teaches that Confirmation strengthens the baptismal conferral of the Holy Spirit on those confirmed in order to incorporate them more firmly with Christ, strengthens their bond with the church, associates them more closely with the Church's mission, increases in them gifts of the Holy Spirit, and helps them bear witness to the Christian faith in words and deeds. (pg. 123, NDC)

Some Available Retreat Options:

1. "Being in the Light" (Developed by Catholic Education Ministries; [www.stclouddiocese.org/cem](http://www.stclouddiocese.org/cem); 320-251-0111)
2. "Being the Body of Christ: A Confirmation Retreat" (Developed from Being, Becoming, and Believing Church from NFCYM; [www.nfcym.org](http://www.nfcym.org); 202-636-3825)

## CONFIRMATION RETREAT OPTION SAMPLE #1

### *"Being in the Light"*

Goals:

The participants will:

- build relationships with others who are excited about their faith
- hear the gospel proclaimed that Jesus loves, calls, challenges, forgives, and befriends them through the retreat, talks, dramas, small groups, a reconciliation service, and friendly outreach
- be invited to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in responsible participation in the life of the Church through the Sacrament of Confirmation
- understand Confirmation as a Sacrament of Initiation

#### RETREAT SCHEDULE

Arrival of Retreat Leaders:

- Arrive at the retreat site 1 hour before start of the retreat
- Meet the parish contact person
- Determine places for small groups
- Set up the large group space
- Set up nametags, sign-in sheet, and registration table
- Gather the small group leaders and invite them to pray for the retreat and review the small group process

Registration & Welcome of Participants:

- As participants and adults enter, ask them to each fill out a nametag.
- Check-off participants on sign-in sheet as they arrive.
- Welcome and reach out to the youth as they gather for the retreat.
- Each parish contact should prepare/divide small groups prior to the retreat. Try to divide males and females equally throughout the groups.

#### OVERVIEW OF THE RETREAT

**Session I:** (Welcome) – *Approximately 60 Minutes (See pg. 11)*

1. Games (Wagon Wheel game, Two Truths and a Lie, etc.)
2. Introduction Activity

3. Leader and Team Introduction
4. Welcome & Rules
5. Prayer
6. Dismissal to Small Group #1

### **Small Group #1**

- Small Group Rules
- Name Game
- Development of Group Name (create a poster with your group name)

### **Session II:** (What is Faith?) – *Approximately 85 Minutes (See pg. 13)*

Small Group Name Presentation

“Lion King” Clip – *Circle of Life*

Talk #1: Baptism – Our Gift from God

Faith Activities

### **Small Group #2**

Discussion of Faith

Poster

Break Option – *15 minutes*

Skit: Sweet Nell – Optional (*See pg. 34*)

### **Session III:** (Confirmation) – *Approximately 75 Minutes (See pg. 16)*

Poster Presentation

Talk #2: Confirmation: God’s call to SHINE as a Disciple of Christ!

Gifts of the Holy Spirit/Fruits of the Holy Spirit

Quiz

Video Clips for Illustrating Points

Small Group #3 Directions

### **Small Group #3**

Discussion & Candle Project: “How will I let my light shine?” Connection to Gifts of the Holy Spirit

### **Session IV:** (Living Discipleship) – *Approximately 15 - 25 Minutes (See pg. 18)*

1. Tale of Three Trees story
2. Talk #3: Forgiveness: SHINE! in the darkness or reconciliation skit
3. Large Group discussion on story and connection to God’s plan
4. Reconciliation Service: Option A – *45 Minutes* or Option B – *60 Minutes*

OPTION A - NO PRIEST (see pg. 18)	OPTION B - PRIEST (see pg. 22)
1. Greeting & Opening Prayer	1. Greeting & Opening Prayer
2. God's Love Letter video clip	2. Scripture
3. Parent letters	3. Examination of conscience
4. Examination of conscience	4. General Confession & Our Father
5. Evaluations	5. Individual Reconciliation
6. Thank You & Dismissal	6. Candle lighting service
Option A: Writing Letter to Jesus	7. Closing Prayer
Option B: Write Letter back to Parents	
6. Closing Prayer	

**SAMPLE Confirmation Retreat Schedule #1**  
(with Reconciliation)  
**12:00 – 5:30 PM**

11:00 AM Arrive at site

- Meet Confirmation Coordinator-go over schedule.
- Set up.

11:30 AM Meet with Group Leaders.

11:45 AM Greet Retreatants as they arrive.

- Name tags

12:00 PM Retreat begins

Large Group

- Welcome-Introductions
- Ice Breakers
- Rules
- Prayer
- Small Group Directions

12:30 PM Small Group 1

- *Small Group Rules*
  - a. respect
  - b. confidentiality
  - c. have students identify other rules
- *Together develop a Group Name and write it on a poster.*
- *All group members write their name and indicate a God-given gift on the poster.*

12:55 PM Large Group

- *Present Name Poster*

- 1:05 PM Large Group
- "Lion King" Clip – *Circle of Life*
  - *Talk: Baptism – Our Gift from God*
  - *Faith Activities (See pg. 14)*
    - *Willow in the Winds*
    - *Magic Carpet*
    - *Human Knot*
- 1:40 PM Small Group 2
- Start these discussions:
    - *Share one idea about the talk.*
    - *Share one thing you can take from the Faith Activity.*  
*(Willow in Winds/Magic Carpet/Human Knot)*
    - *Keeping in mind the talk /activity, how would you define faith in your own words?*
    - *What/who has supported you in your faith?*
    - *What has made it difficult for you to have faith?*
    - *How have you seen God strengthen your faith?*
- 2:50 PM Small Group 2 continued: "What is Faith" Poster
- *Visually illustrate where each student is in his or her spiritual journey.*
- 3:00 PM Large Group
- *Present Posters*
- 3:10 PM Break
- 3:20 PM Large Group
- *Skit with Student Involvement – Sweet Nell (See pg. 35)*
- 3:30 PM Confirmation Talk
- Speaker's Story of Their Confirmation – Family*
- Scripture Matthew 5: 14-16 (Gifts)*
- Quiz*
- Confirmation – Discipleship – Parish Family*
- Gifts/Fruits of the Holy Spirit*
- Holy Spirit in Life – Work/Family*
- 4:00 PM Small Group 3
- *Each person shares:*
    - an insight from talk*
    - which gift of the Holy Spirit they possess the most and how they share that gift*

*with family, friends, church, and community*  
*the gift of the Holy Spirit they need the most today and why*  
*Hand out candles so each person can indicate both the gifts of the Holy Spirit they*  
*discussed in the group. (See pg. 17)*

- 4:20 PM Large Group – Discipleship in Church  
*Tale of Three Trees*  
*Large Group Discussion on Story – Connect with God’s Plan*  
*God’s Love Letter video*  
*Follow reconciliation service*  
*option 1 (See pg. 22) - or -*  
*option 2 (See pg. 27)*  
*Evaluations*
- 5:30 PM Dismiss/Clean-up/Depart or Supper with Group

## SAMPLE Confirmation Retreat Schedule #1

*(without Reconciliation)*

**12:30 – 5:00PM**

- 11:30 AM    Retreat leaders arrive at site
- *Meet Confirmation Coordinator to review schedule*
  - *Set up*
  - *Meet with Group Leaders*
- 12:00 PM    Greet Retreatants as they arrive
- *Name tags*
  - *Lunch*
- 12:30 PM    Retreat Begins
- Large Group*
- *Welcome-Introductions*
  - *Ice Breakers*
  - *Rules*
  - *Prayer*
  - *Small Group Directions*
- 1:15 PM    Small Group 1
- *Small Group Rules*
    - respect*
    - confidentiality*
    - have students identify other rules*
  - *Together develop a Group Name and write it on a poster*
  - *All group members write their name and indicate a God-given gift on the poster*
- 1:35 PM    Large Group
- *Present Name & Gift Poster*
- 1:50 PM    Large Group
- *"Lion King" Clip*
  - *Talk: Baptism – Our Gift from God*

- *Faith Activities (See pg. 14)*
    - *Willow in the Winds*
    - *Magic Carpet*
    - *Human Knot*
- 2:25 PM Small Group 2
- *Start these discussions:*
    - *Share one idea about the talk.*
    - *Share one thing you can take from the faith activities.*
    - *In light of the talk and activities, how would you define faith in your own words?*
    - *What/who has supported you in your faith?*
    - *What has made it difficult for you to have faith?*
    - *How have you seen God strengthen your faith?*
- 2:50 PM Small Group 2 continued: "What is Faith" Poster
- *Visually illustrate where each student is in his or her spiritual journey.*
- 3:00 PM Large Group
- *Present Posters*
- 3:10 PM Break
- 3:20 PM Large Group
- *Skit with Student Involvement – Sweet Nell (See pg. 34)*
- 3:30 PM Confirmation Talk
- Speaker's Story of Their Confirmation – Family*
- Scripture Matthew 5: 14-16 (Gifts)*
- Quiz*
- Confirmation – Discipleship – Parish Family*
- Gifts/Fruits of the Holy Spirit*
- Holy Spirit in Life – Work/Family*
- 4:00 PM Small Group 3
- *Each person shares:*
    - an insight from talk*
    - which gift of the Holy Spirit they possess the most and how they share that gift with family, friends, church, and community*
    - the gift of the Holy Spirit they need the most today and why*
- Hand out candles so each person can indicate both the gifts of the Holy Spirit they discussed in the group.(See pg. 17)*

- 4:20 PM Large Group – Discipleship in Church  
*Tale of Three Trees*  
*Large Group Discussion on Story – Connect with God’s Plan*  
*God’s Love Letter video*  
*Forgiveness and Challenge – Fill out Barriers to God papers (See pg. 20)*  
*Light and Darkness*  
*Scripture Matthew 5:14-16*  
*Explanation of Candles and Closing Prayer*  
*Closing Song: “I am the Light of the World”*  
*Evaluations*
- 5:00 PM Dismiss/Clean-up/Depart

## SESSION I

*(Welcome) - Approximately 60 minutes*

**Games/Icebreakers:** *(See pg. 32-35)*

Complete 2 or 3 icebreakers.

### **Introduction Activity:**

*Goal: Introduce theme of retreat, leaders, and team members.*

*Setup: A retreat leader stands in front and small group leaders sit with candidates.*

A retreat leader addresses the participants, thanking them for being present on the retreat. A leader introduces the theme of the retreat.

**Leader and Small Group Introductions:** *BE CREATIVE (for example, use a skit, a song, or a rap). After introducing the theme, each team member can introduce him/herself.*

**Welcome and Rules:** *Welcome the students, letting them know you are happy and excited to be with them. Also make these points:*

A retreat is a time to get away from everyday life, a time to step back and look at where you are going in life.

- *It is also a time to think about and prepare for your confirmation...a time to think about God's love for you.*

Explain the rules:

- *Have fun.*
- *Be yourself.*
- *Respect yourself, others, property, and us.*
- *Stay on the property and participate in all activities.*

### **5. Prayer**

### **6. Dismissal to Small Group #1**

**Small Group #1** – *Approximately 15 minutes*

Goals

- *to get to know the names and something about each of your small group members*
- *to establish small group rules*
- *to come up with a team name*

### **Small Group Rules**

Respect: *appropriate language, one person sharing at a time*

Listen: *listening to what each person has to say*

Participate: *sharing openly and honestly*

*Ask the group to set any other rules they think are needed.*

*Confidentiality: Participants' stories need to remain private. Tell the group that people may provide them with a gift, by sharing of themselves, that is personal and between one another. There are limits, though, even to this. If someone shares a story in which they are going to harm another or themselves, we need to share that. If they share about physical or sexual abuse, we need to share that, as well. We need to share those things with a counselor at the county. Explain that we do not tell them this so that they will not share, but rather to explain that our society and our Church do not think that anyone ought to be in a position like that alone. People that are in situations like that need help and we would facilitate it for them.*

### **Name Games**

*(Choose 1 to 3 of the following activities.)*

#### **Candid Questions**

*Go around the circle and ask each person to introduce the person to their left and ask them an open-ended question (one that is not yes or no). Once everyone answers a question, the leader can ask questions of the whole group that are directed toward faith. (For example, "Do you want to be here? Why or why not?" or "Do you believe in God?")*

#### **Number Game**

*Ask everyone to say their favorite number and explain why it is their favorite. Instruct them to share one thing about themselves for every digit in the number they chose. (For example, if their number is 4, they tell 4 things and if their number is 190 you add 1+9+0 which equals 10 and they tell 10 things. You want a number no larger than 10.)*

#### **Memory**

*The first person in the group says his/her name, the second person says his/her name and the first person's name, the third person says his/her name, the second person's name and the third... until the last person says everyone's names.*

### **Group Name**

*(table name tags or song/skit intros)*

*Using the paper or poster provided, develop a team name. Tell your group to think about the conversation that has already happened in your small group and name yourselves accordingly.*

*Write the name on paper, using markers to decorate. Teams may choose to incorporate a theme.*

### **Poster Personalization**

Everyone adds his or her individual name on the poster. Each states a God-given gift they possess and then write out or make a symbol of that gift (An example would be a music symbol if they are good at music or a football if they are good at football or perhaps an ear if they are a good listener.) Each person helps with making the poster and presenting it in the large group.

### **Move to Large Group and Begin Session II**

## **SESSION II**

*(What is Faith?) - Approximately 85 minutes*

### **Small Group Name Presentations in Large Group**

Present your group's name and paper to the large group (emphasize creativity in the presentation – make it funny).

### **Show "Lion King" clip**

### **Transition into talk or activity** (Introduce speaker.)

### **Talk #1:** Baptism: God's gift to our start of Faith – *Approximately 15 minutes*

Scripture example: Romans 6:3-4

*"Are you unaware that we who are baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life."*

Goals:

*Share how you built a relationship with God – What is faith to you?*

*Briefly describe your spiritual journey from Baptism to today.*

*Relate prayer to building a relationship with God.*

The Talk:

*This talk is to encourage the retreatants to reflect on their own relationship with God.*

Guidelines for the speaker:

*The talk ought to focus on your spiritual journey and how you created your relationship with God. Focus in particular on answering what faith means for you.*

*Start with your Baptism and briefly relate how you have come to be where you are today (do not tell your whole story, but pick events that had major impact on your life – save Confirmation stories for talk #2). Ask yourself:*

- *From your initiation in the Church, how has your spirituality developed?*
- *Why do you want a relationship with God?*
- *What role has faith played in your life?*

*Relate the symbolism of Baptism to the start of your relationship with God. Consider the*

*importance Baptism has played in your spiritual journey.*

*Emphasize the importance of prayer in your spiritual growth. Ask yourself:*

- *What is prayer to you?*
- *How have you used prayer to create a relationship with God?*

*Emphasize that God wants to help us on our journey and that through prayer and Confirmation, God will bless us with gifts and grace. Reflect on how God has helped you on your journey. Possibly include an activity to make it interactive.*

*Transition to Faith Activities: Thank you, \_\_\_\_\_ name of speaker \_\_\_\_\_ (Recap the talk, begin explaining the next activity). This may be done by a speaker or other leader.*

**5. Faith Activities:** *Approximately 20 - 30 minutes – 10 minutes per station or variation*

**Goal:** Explain different aspects of faith through fun, interactive activities.

*Explain that faith is sometimes hard to describe. It might be easier to look at qualities of faith to better understand it. The following activity will explore these qualities of faith.*

a. *Action – Faith is living your beliefs.*

*“Magic Carpet”*

Lay a large blue tarp on the ground (with front and back visibly marked). The group must stand on the front of the tarp. Without leaving the tarp, the group must flip the tarp to its back. (If the group finishes quickly, fold the tarp in half, in quarters, or in eighths and ask them to repeat the activity.)

*Discussion Questions:*

- *Why was it difficult to flip the tarp?*
- *Was it hard to communicate a plan?*
- *In real life, is it hard to express ideas or direct actions in a large group?*

b. *Interdependence – Faith is built in community.*

*“Human Knot”*

The group stands in circle. Each person must hold hands with two different people at least two spots away from them in the circle. The challenge is to unravel the circle without letting go of each other’s hands.

*Discussion Questions:*

- *Did everyone have to move to unravel the knot?*
- *Could you ignore one person’s position in the circle and still unravel the knot?*
- *How did different people’s strengths help?*

c. *Trust – Faith is trusting in God’s love and guidance.*

*“Willow in the Wind”*

The group stands in a circle, shoulder to shoulder, with their arms held out in front of them. One person stands in the center and is blindfolded. The center person keeps his/her body straight and his/her feet planted. He/she then falls backward into the group. The group supports that person and passes them (slowly) around the circle. Everyone from the group must take a turn in the center (unless serious fears prohibit).

*Discussion Questions:*

- *Why was it hard to fall?*
- *Was it hard to trust your group?*
- *Is it hard to trust God?*

## **6. Small Group #2: Approximately 20 minutes**

Discussion and Poster: *What is Faith?*

Goal: Provide an opportunity for participants to discuss their individual concept of faith and express what has supported their faith development.

*Begin by discussing the talk and faith activities:*

- *Share one idea from the talk.*
- *Share one thing you can take from the faith activities.*
- *Keeping in mind the talk and activity, how would you define faith in your own words?*
- *What/who has supported you in your faith?*
- *What has made it difficult for you to have faith?*
- *How have you seen God strengthen your faith?*

Poster: *(make sure to have paper and markers)*

*Invite the group to conceptualize the discussion into a poster, which they will present to the large group. There can be many ways to do this. For example, ask the leader of the small group to draw a river down the middle of the paper (to represent God/the Spirit/life). Then ask the others in the group to draw some hills around the paper and some trees, while discussing the talk and where each person is on their faith journey. When the poster is well decorated, ask the students to each place themselves on the poster where they think they are on their spiritual journey. Are they close to God, talking every day? (This is next to or in the river.) Are they far away from Christ? (This would be up on a hill, looking toward the river.)*

Optional BREAK FOR SNACK  
*(This break can come at any time if it is needed.)*

## **Return to Large Group and Begin Session III**

Skit: *Sweet Nell* (See pg. 34)

## **SESSION III**

*(Confirmation) - Approximately 75 minutes*

## 1. Poster Presentations

### 2. Talk #2: Confirmation: God's call to continue in the Spirit

Scripture: Matthew 5:14-16

*"You are the light of the world. A city set on the mountain cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lamp stand, where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father."*

Goals:

- *Share a personal story of what happened at your confirmation.*
- *Emphasize that Confirmation is connected to discipleship.*
- *Review Gifts of the Spirit from Isaiah 11 and the Fruits of the Spirit in Galatians 5.*
- *Invite the participants to live as disciples of Jesus Christ.*
- *Hand out candles for small group discussion and project.*

The Talk:

*This talk is a reflection on Matthew 5:16. We have the Gifts of the Spirit that surround us and we choose to use them as better disciples.*

Guidelines for the speaker:

- *Share with the retreatants how you came to know of God's love in your life. Share your experiences in the form of a story. Ask yourself:*
  - *What did it mean to you?*
  - *What happened?*
- *Share your story about how the Holy Spirit came alive in your life. Ask yourself:*
  - *How have the Gifts of the Spirit inspired you?*
  - *How did you change when that happened?*
- *Emphasize why you are a disciple of Christ and why Confirmation has helped. As fully initiated members in the Catholic Church (which we become after confirmation), we can ignore the gifts of the spirit or embrace them. Living out your Confirmation means saying yes to the potential inside of us...and around us and saying yes to the work of the Holy Spirit in us. It is not the end, but the beginning!*

## TRANSITION TO SMALL GROUP # 3

### 3. Small Group # 3: Approximately 20 minutes

Decorating Candles Project:

*Each person is given a candle with an outer plastic sleeve and permanent markers. Ask the*

retreatants to decorate their candles: "How can you let your light shine for others and say 'yes' to the Spirit's gifts and 'yes' to confirmation?" For example: tutoring at school, volunteering at a food shelf, or going to Mass. They can make pictures, symbols, or words. Invite candidates to select the Gift of the Holy Spirit they are praying for most at this time. They may write that gift on their candle.

- A. Read Matthew 5:14-16 "Let your light shine."
- B. Ask the retreatants to write on their candles. As they are writing, ask each one how they are feeling about their confirmation.
- C. When everyone is finished, ask each person to share how they will use their gifts to say yes to the Spirit and yes to Confirmation.

*Optional B R E A K F O R S N A C K*  
(This break can come at any time if it is needed.)

***Return to Large Group and Begin Session IV***

### **SAMPLE REFLECTION SERVICE**

*(Priest Not Available)*

- a. Greeting and opening prayer - Give each student a pencil and piece of paper.
- b. "God's Love Letter" Video or similar video - As you introduce the video, have each student think about a barrier to God's love in their life. After the video, give the students

- a few minutes to write the barrier on his/her piece of paper.
- c. Parent Letters (optional)– Ensure every retreatant has a letter!  
*Team members may now distribute letters from parents to those who were a part of their small group. Tell them you have a little gift for them and hand them the letter. Give them enough time to read the letters.*
- d. Examination of Conscience – Barriers to God – Prayer Service

*\* NEEDED: Small table (to hold all of the candidates' candles), bowl or basket, matches or lighters. (Place basket and lighters in center of table.)*

Explain that everyone now will be offering the papers with their barriers to God's love by placing them in the bowl or basket. Explain that placing the paper in the basket is symbolic of giving their sin or struggle as an offering to God.

Invite retreatants to set their offering in the bowl and to bring their candle forward and place it on the table. Once they have placed their folded paper in the basket, retreatants may say out loud the Gift of the Holy Spirit they are praying for and light their candle at the same time.

#### **EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE:**

*Explain that everyone fails to put God first and allows barriers to enter our relationship with the God who loves us unconditionally.*

Our response is: **God, I am sorry.**

*For the times I have doubted God's love for me. (God, I am sorry.)*

*For the times I have not loved God. (God, I am sorry.)*

*For the times I have not loved myself and thought I was no good.*

*For the times I have not loved others and have put them down.*

*For the times I have hurt others through my actions or words.*

*For the times I have been dishonest by lying, cheating, or stealing.*

*For the times I have failed to understand others.*

*For the times I have not shown respect to others and myself.*

*For the times I have sinned sexually.*

*For the times I have abused alcohol and other drugs.*

*For the times I have tried to find happiness in material things.*

*For the times I have been selfish with my time and money.*

*For the times I have used other people.*

*For the times I have neglected my relationship with Jesus.*

*For the times I have purposely missed Mass.*

*For the times I have not trusted that you could help me.*

*For the times I have not admitted that I was wrong.*

*For the times I have not forgiven others.*

*For the times I have not forgiven myself.*

#### 5. Letter Writing Options

**Option 1:** Letter writing to Jesus, if no letter from parent

*(Directions for Jesus Letter: Adapted from Vine and Branches Volume 3, Maryann Hakowski)*

Spend a few moments talking to the retreatants about the importance of quiet time and how often we need quiet to truly listen to Jesus "speak to our heart." You may want to relate

an example of how Jesus may have spoken to you in quiet moments in your life. Ask the retreatants to spend the next half hour pondering the question, "What would you say if you could have a heart-to-heart talk with God?"

Stress that this is quiet time for everyone and ought to be spent in silence. They may find a quiet place to sit. Turn on some reflective music. Hand out the Jesus Letter, and paper and pencils to write a letter back to Jesus.

Ask a few questions:

- *How would you describe your relationship with Jesus?*
- *What have you learned today on this retreat or what are you thankful for?*
- *What spiritual goals do you want to set for yourself in the coming months?*
- *How can you live as a better person?*
- *How do you plan to continue building your relationship with Christ?*

After the participants finish their letters, ask them to seal their letter in the envelope and address it to themselves. Explain that the retreat leaders will mail their letters to them after their confirmation as a check-in. They can read their letters and see how they have met their goals in the past months.

**Option 2:** Letters back to parents

*Allow participants a chance to write some of their emotions down on paper. Many participants read the parent letters and are very moved (some to tears). Each small group leader should watch their small group participants and, as they finish, approach each student individually, explaining the option of writing back to their loved ones. They now can have time to write back to the person/s who wrote them the letter. (Ask the DRE or representative from the parish beforehand if they want the full address on the envelope or just the name to whom it is written). Gather all envelopes up at the front and continue with the service.*

6. Closing Prayer

**Leader:** *We are like these candles. When we are alone, it is so hard to shine brightly. When we are together in our faith, we can light up this room. For Christ has defeated sin through his death, and absolves us from our sins. It is our prayer for you that you will hold on to your faith and support one another in your faith. We know there is a great amount of darkness out there. We pray that you will stay in the light of Christ and bring it to those in darkness. We pray that, as you continue in discipleship, you will be guided by the light of Christ and the Holy Spirit. We ask all of these things through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

**SAMPLE RECONCILIATION SERVICE #1**

*(Priest Available)*

INTRODUCTION:

**Leader:** Today, Jesus asks us to come to him – to think, to pray, and to ask for forgiveness. Even though we have sinned against God and each other, Jesus loves us and wants to

free us from our sins. Let us ask God right now to help us think of our failings, to be sorry for what we have done and not done, and to make every effort to live the way Jesus wants us to live. Take a few minutes to open your hearts, reflect on how well we have opened our lives to God, see how we have failed through selfishness, unkindness, and dishonesty, and ask for God's love and forgiveness.

*(Pause for a moment of reflection.)*

OPENING SONG: Suggested – "Open My Eyes"

OPENING PRAYER:

**Priest:** O God, our creator, we believe that we are your children. You love us and call us to love each other. We admit that often we fail to love ourselves, to love others, and to love you. Help us to recognize our sins and to be truly sorry for them. Help us to fully understand the love and forgiveness you showed us by the death of your Son, Jesus, on the cross. We pray this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**ALL:** *Amen.*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: Alleluia

*- or -*

Your words are spirit and life, O Lord, richer than gold, stronger than death. Your words are spirit and life, O Lord, life everlasting.

GOSPEL READING: Matthew 5:1-12 (Priest)

REFLECTION OR HOMILY: (Priest)

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE: (Retreat Leader)

GENERAL CONFESSION OF SINS:

**Priest:** My brothers and sisters, confess your sins and pray for each other, that you may be healed.

**ALL:**

*I confess to almighty God  
and to you, my brothers and sisters,  
that I have sinned,  
in my thoughts and in my words,  
in what I have done and in what I have  
failed to do,  
through my fault, through my fault,*

*through my most grievous fault;  
therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin,  
all the Angels and Saints,  
and you, my brothers and sisters,  
to pray for me to the Lord our God.*

**Priest:** Let us now pray to God, our Father, in the words Christ gave us, and ask him for his forgiveness and protection from all evil:

**ALL:** *Our Father...*

**Priest:** Lord, draw near to your servants, who, in the presence of your Church, confess that they are sinners. Through the ministry of the Church, free them from all sin so that, renewed in spirit, they may give you thankful praise. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

**ALL:** *Amen.*

#### INDIVIDUAL RECONCILIATION:

*After individuals go to confession and have finished their penance, please bring your decorated candle forward and light it from the large candle, then place it on the table and return to your seat.*

#### PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING:

**Priest:** All-holy Father, you have shown us your mercy and made us a new creation in the likeness of your Son. Make us living signs of your love for the whole world to see. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**ALL:** *Amen.*

#### CLOSING PRAYER:

**Leader:** We are like these candles. When we are alone, it is so hard to shine brightly. When we are together in our faith, we can light up this room. Christ has defeated sin through his death, and absolves us from our sins. It is our prayer for you, that you will hold on to your faith and support one another in your faith. We know there is a great amount of darkness out there. We pray that you will stay in the light of Christ and bring it to those in darkness. We pray that as you continue in discipleship, the light of Christ and the Holy Spirit will guide you. We ask all of these things through Christ our Lord.

**ALL:** *Amen.*

#### CONCLUDING RITE:

**Priest:** May the blessing of the light be upon us through the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

**ALL:** *Amen.*

**Priest:** The Lord has freed you from your sins. Go in peace.

**ALL:** *Thanks be to God.*

CLOSING SONG: Optional "We Are the Light of the World"

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE – Beatitudes for Sample Reflection Service #1

The Beatitudes: Examining Our Conscience

This examination of conscience is based on the Beatitudes found in Matthew 5:1-13. Prayerfully reflect on the questions and then write about your overall experience in your journal.

**"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."**

- *Do I fear being poor, in spirit or otherwise, and prefer to be rich in money or*

power?

- *Do I contribute my time, talent, and money to the poor of the world?*
- *Do I look for the causes of poverty and seek solutions to changing unjust systems?*

**“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.”**

- *Do I grieve over loneliness, despair, guilt, and rejection in the lives of others?*
- *Am I willing to admit my own worries and fears and need for comfort?*
- *Am I doing anything to dry the tears of those who are in mourning over war, poverty, hunger, or injustice?*

**“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”**

- *Do I see any value in meekness or nonviolence?*
- *Do I cringe at the thought of being called meek?*
- *Do I favor cooperation over competition?*

**“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.”**

- *Have I kept silent when I ought to have spoken out against prejudice, injustice, and violence?*
- *Am I aware of current events and issues of injustice?*
- *Do I honestly try to improve the quality of life around me?*

**“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.”**

- *Do I operate on a double standard of expecting mercy, but not wanting to grant it?*
- *Are there people in my life who are suffering because of my unforgiving attitude?*
- *Am I a person of mercy, tenderness, and compassion?*

**“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”**

- *Am I open and honest about who I am and what I do?*
- *Am I trusting and trustful?*
- *Have I failed to take time for prayer, quiet, and reflection?*

**“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.”**

- *Do I think apologizing is a sign of weakness?*
- *Do I accept violence in films, television, and sports?*
- *Do I build bridges or walls in family arguments?*

**“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’s sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.”**

- *Am I embarrassed to stand up for what is right?*
- *Have I called myself a Christian without living the way I ought to?*
- *Do I support those who openly defend justice for others?*

**“Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great.”**

- *Do I believe that the Cross of Jesus Christ can conquer injustice with peace and*

*love?*

- *Am I a source of hope for others?*
- *Does my faith in God bring me joy?*

(Adapted from "Examination of Conscience," by Doris Donnelly, in *The Fire of Peace*, edited by Mary Lou Kownacki [Erie, PA: Pax Christi USA, 1992], pages 224-228. Copyright 1992 by Pax Christi USA.)

## **SAMPLE RECONCILIATION SERVICE #2**

*(Priest Available)*

GATHERING SONG:

**Leader:** God Created Adam and Eve in God's image, and created the Garden of Eden to supply their needs on earth. Adam and Eve were happy in the garden. They lived without clothes and were not ashamed to be naked. Then one day a serpent approached Eve and tempted her to disobey one of God's commands.

**Reader:** Genesis 3:1-7

*Now the serpent was the most cunning of all the animals that the LORD God had made. The serpent asked the woman, "Did God really tell you not to eat from any of the trees in the garden?"*

*The woman answered the serpent: "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; it is only about the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden that God said, 'You shall not eat it or even touch it, lest you die.'"*

*But the serpent said to the woman: "You certainly will not die! No, God knows well that the moment you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods who know what is good and what is bad."*

*The woman saw that the tree was good for food, pleasing to the eyes, and desirable for gaining wisdom. So she took some of its fruit and ate it; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized that they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.*

The Word of the Lord ...

**ALL:** *Thanks be to God.*

**Leader:** When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, they broke their relationship of trust with God. Once that relationship was broken, sin became a part of the human story. Ever since that moment, human beings have faced temptations that pull them away from God's love and grace.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Gospel: Matthew 4:1-10

*Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was hungry. The tempter approached and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become loaves of bread."*

*He said in reply, "It is written: 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.'"*

*Then the devil took him to the holy city, and made him stand on the parapet of the temple, and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written: 'He will command his angels concerning you and 'with their hands, they will support you, lest you dash your foot against a stone.'"*

*Jesus answered him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test.'"*

*Then the devil took him up to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in their magnificence, and he said to him, "All these I shall give to you, if you will prostrate yourself and worship me."*

*At this, Jesus said to him, "Get away, Satan! It is written: 'The Lord, your God, shall you worship and him alone shall you serve.'"*

*The Gospel of the Lord ...*

**ALL:** *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.*

## HOMILY REFLECTION

Litany:

**Side 1:** *We are sometimes torn between the voice that calls us to love...*

**Side 2:** *...and the voice that calls us to hate.*

**Side 1:** *We are sometimes torn between the voice that calls us to do good...*

**Side 2:** *...and the voice that calls us to do evil.*

**Side 1:** *We are sometimes torn between the voice that draws us to God...*

**Side 2:** *...and the voice that wants to block God out of our lives.*

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE: (See pg. 25 or 30)

## GENERAL CONFESSION OF SINS

Priest: My brothers and sisters, confess your sins and pray for each other, that you may be healed.

<b>ALL:</b> <i>I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do,</i>	<i>through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God</i>
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Priest: Let us now pray to God, our Father, in the words Christ gave us, and ask him for his forgiveness and protection from all evil:

**ALL:** *Our Father...*

Priest : Lord, draw near to your servants, who in the presence of your Church, confess that they are sinners. Through the ministry of the Church, free them from all sin so that, renewed in spirit, they may give you thankful praise. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**ALL:** *Amen.*

## INDIVIDUAL RECONCILIATION

## CLOSING PRAYER

**ALL:** *Give us the courage to do right in the face of wrong. Instill in our hearts a set of values that prompts us to think of others instead of just ourselves. Give us the willingness to stand up for what we believe in – not just following the crowd. Give us the strength to look evil in the eye and withstand it. Because we know with you by our side, all things are possible.*

## CLOSING SONG

## EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE – Sample Reconciliation Service #2

**1. I am the Lord your God, you shall have no other Gods besides me.**

*Did I fail to love God, to make God first in my life, to thank Him, trust Him, love Him as He deserves? Did I fail to pray? Do I give God time in prayer every day? Do I make a god out of my work, my possessions, or my image in the eyes of others so that these rule my life instead of God?*

**2. You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain.**

*Did I curse or swear? Did I use God's name in vain, lightly, carelessly, by blasphemy? Have I used foul language or jokes? In conversation, have I passively listened to slander and to jokes demeaning to God?*

**3. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.**

*Have I deliberately missed Mass on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligation? Did I leave Mass early without a good reason? Have I allowed myself to become so dominated by my work, play, and chores that I have not set aside Sunday for spiritual and family*

activities?

**4. Honor your father and your mother.**

*Did I honor and obey my parents? Did I respect my brothers and sisters? Did I respect others with lawful authority, especially teachers? Have I talked back? Did I fail to help at home or to spend time with my family? Do I blame my parents for my own shortcomings?*

**5. You shall not kill.**

*Did I give in to feelings of anger or jealousy? Did I keep hatred in my heart? Have I ever struck anyone in anger, intending to injure the person? Did I fight, give a bad example or cause scandal? Have I abused alcohol or drugs? Have I, in a sense, killed someone with bullying, gossip, or what I said?*

**6. You shall not commit adultery.**

*Did I consent to being impure with passionate kisses or touches? Did I give my mind over to lustful thoughts or fantasies? Was I immodest in dress or behavior? Did I look at pornography? Am I guilty of impurity with myself or with others? Do I avoid laziness, gluttony, idleness, and the occasions of impurity?*

**7. You shall not steal.**

*Have I stolen what is not mine? Did I return it or make up for what I have stolen? Have I cheated on tests or homework? Did I waste time at work or school? Have I been extravagant in my manner of life, to the neglect of the poor at home and abroad?*

**8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.**

*Have I lied or gossiped? Have I talked about another person behind their back? Do I always tell the truth? Am I sincere? Am I critical, negative, or uncharitable in my talk? Have I injured the reputation of others by speaking about their failures and sins with little desire or intention to help them? Have I condoned prejudice and hatred toward people of other nationalities, races, or religions?*

**9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.**

*Have I consented to impure thoughts? Have I encouraged them by stares, curiosity, or impure conversations? Did I neglect to control my imagination or desire of other people? Have I rejected my family in my heart, wishing to distance myself emotionally and personally from them?*

**10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.**

*Is my heart greedy? Am I jealous of what other people have? Am I envious of others because I do not have what they have? Do I habitually compare myself with others? Am I moody or gloomy? Do I work, study, and keep busy to counter idle thoughts? Am I critical, negative, or uncharitable in my thoughts of others? Is my heart set on earthly*

*possessions or on the treasures in heaven?*

## SAMPLE GAMES/ICE BREAKERS

### **1. "I never"**

*Goal:* Introduce participants, learn names, and move around.

*Setup:* Make a large circle of chairs with one person (the leader) standing in the center. There should be one less chair than there are people.

*Rules:* The person in the middle introduces themselves and shares one interesting fact about themselves. Then he/she says an "I never" statement (for example, I never traveled to Europe). Whoever in the group has done the activity must get up and move chairs (at least two away from where they were sitting). The person who remains in the center will repeat the same process.

### **2. Wagon Wheel**

*Goal:* Introduce and encourage discussion among the participants and the team.

*Setup:* Ask each person to pick a partner. Then instruct the large group to form two circles with one partner in the inner circle and one in the outer. Choose one of the introductory questions and have retreatants visit with the partner for a short period of time. Then say: "Now move to the right four people and answer this question with your new partner." Use any of the "Would You Rather" questions below, having them move to the right and to left any number of places. Shuffle them well.

#### Introductory Questions:

- Where would you go on vacation if you could go anywhere in the world?
- What is your favorite school subject?
- What is your favorite movie?
- What do you think is the best dance move (please demonstrate)?
- What would the perfect kiss sound like (please demonstrate)?
- What type of wild animal would you want as a pet?
- If you had to eat one thing for the rest of your life, what would it be?
- Where do you go to have quiet time?
- What is the best book you ever read?
- If you could have one celebrity wake you up every morning, who would it be?

#### Would You Rather Questions:

- Walk into the wrong bathroom OR have your pants fall down while you're hanging on the monkey bars?
- Discover that you bit through a worm in an apple OR take a big gulp of milk and find out it was really spoiled?
- Get great seats at the Super Bowl OR at your favorite band's concert?
- Eat chocolate pudding with ketchup on top OR a hot dog with whipped cream?
- Go bungee jumping OR sky diving?
- Be 20 feet tall OR 1 foot tall?
- Stick your foot in your shoe and find a mouse OR put your hand on your head and find bird poop?

### 3. Roaming Pictionary

*Goal:* Relieve tension and get participants moving.

*Setup:* Break into small groups and give each group a paper and pencil and distribute them throughout the large group meeting space. The game leader makes a list of eight to ten items that are fairly easy to draw.

*Rules:* Each group nominates a first artist and decides a rotation that includes everyone in the group. All the first artists come to the group leader to receive their first item, which they will draw (without talking) for the group. When the group guesses what their artist is drawing, the new artist must find the game leader to receive their new object to draw. The catch is that the group leader roams around the church property and the new artist must race to find him. When artists approach the group leader, ask them what the last clue was to determine what clue to give them next. Whichever group finishes all the clues first wins!

### 4. Walking Chicken Egg

*Goal:* Boost energy.

*Setup:* Explain that the game is based on the Rock/Paper/Scissors game.

*Rules:* Everyone starts as a walking chicken egg. They challenge each other in Rock/Paper/Scissors and whoever wins becomes a chicken.

Chickens can only challenge chickens and if they win, they become a tree. In the next stage they become a superhero. In the last stage, they become a statue. As a statue, they can play anyone, but if they lose, they become one less than that person (for example, if you lose to a tree, you become a chicken). If two statues play, then the loser becomes a walking chicken egg. After a few minutes, freeze everyone and find out who is in each stage.

## 5. Streets and Alleys

*Goal:* Relieve tension and allow participants to move around.

*Setup:* Explain that this is a game of tag, with one person being “it” and one person being chased.

*Rules:* The rest of the group will create the setting in which the game will take place.

Organize the group so each person stands arm’s-length away from the people on their sides, front, and back. Have the group stand in one direction and hold out their arms (creating streets). Now have the group turn to their left, creating perpendicular paths (creating alleys). Practice switching from streets to alleys. To start the game, place the “it” person on the opposite side from the “chased” person. Explain that both people cannot pass through the arms of the group. After starting the chase, switch the group between streets and alleys, making the chase more difficult. When the person is finally tagged, the “it” person becomes the “chased” and a new “it” person is chosen.

## 6. Screaming Yellow Bonkers

*Goal:* Relieve tension and allow participants to move around.

*Setup:* Play this game in a large area suitable for running.

*Rules:* Ask everyone to pair with another person and lock one arm, standing side by side. Distribute the pairs throughout the area. Next, choose two people and assign one to be “it” and one to be “chased.” When the game begins, the “it” person chases the “chased” and tries to tag them. To escape, the “chased” person links arms with any of the pairs. They are now safe. but groups of three are not allowed. The person at the end must let go and become the “chased.” If the “chased” persons are tagged, then they become “it” and have to chase the formerly “it” persons.

## 7. Sweet Nell Skit

This silly skit about Sweet Nell and the men who love her not only lets the audience actively participate, but has a few laughs, too.

*Props & People:*

Narrator, Mother, Heroine (Sweet Nell), Hero (Dudley), Villain (Snidely Whiplash), “Boo!” sign holder, “Yeah!” sign holder, front door, dogcart, chair, rug, love seat & dressing table

*Staging:*

- Team members play parts of narrator, mother, heroine, hero, and villain.
- People from the audience are chosen to be the cat, table, chair, etc. . .

- The narrator should be in the front and off to one side.
- All other team members should be on the side opposite the narrator, awaiting their entrance.
- Team members enter on cue from the narrator when needed.
- When not directly in the action, the remaining team members should choose and bring up students from the audience to play the various roles when the narrator asks for them.
- Two members of the audience should be chosen to be sign holders. Each time the name “Dudley” is said by the narrator, the person with the “Yeah!” holds it above his/her head and the audience shouts it out. Similarly, each time the name “Snidely Whiplash” is said by the narrator, the person with the “Boo!” holds it above his/her head and the audience shouts it out.

In the following script, the narrator reads the words. The team members repeat the underlined words as their lines.

The narrator must read loudly, coherently, and slowly, with pauses so actors can get to their places and have time to act.

Words in capital letters are to be emphasized for prompting.

### **Narrator’s Script:**

Please notice our attractive and friendly sign holders and give them a hand. Our story begins in a small cottage in the woods. In this cottage are: (team members bring people from the audience in as the narrator calls each role) a CHAIR, a DRESSING TABLE, a LOVE SEAT (2 people), and a DOOR. (Each person acts out part of the object they are playing.)

Next, in comes the RUG and flops down near the DOOR. The action begins with our heroine, SWEET NELL, coming in and sitting at the DRESSING TABLE. She fluffs her hair, pinches her cheeks, and blows herself a kiss. Suddenly there is a knock at the DOOR. Our heroine skips over to the DOOR singing, “You are my sunshine.” She opens the DOOR and in walks ... the DOG.

SWEET NELL glides back to the table and sits down. She puts on her mascara and lipstick and blush and perfume. Then she looks in the mirror and smiles. Just then the DOG sees the CAT on the LOVE SEAT. The DOG sits up and barks three times, then the CAT meows and goes to hide behind SWEET NELL. The DOG chases the CAT around the LOVE SEAT, growling ferociously. Finally, the CAT turns, hisses, and hits the DOG on the nose. The DOG howls in pain and goes to sit by the RUG. The CAT goes to lay by the LOVE SEAT, where SWEET NELL is filing her nails and whistling. Just then she hears someone coming. “Hark,” she says.

Then she recognizes the slow, heavy footsteps of her MOTHER. SWEET NELL puts her hands to her cheeks, jumps up, and says, “Oh dear, it’s my mummy. I was hoping it should be my

true lover, DUDLEY. (“YEAH!”) Her MOTHER enters, wipes her feet on the RUG, pets the DOG, pets the CAT, and pats SWEET NELL on the head. She says, “Well Dear, I hope that wimp DUDLEY (“YEAH!”) isn’t coming over tonight. I’ve invited a dashing young man over.” And putting her hand to her heart says, “His name is SNIDELY WHIPLASH.” (“BOO!”) SWEET NELL, batting her eyelashes, says, “But Mummy, DUDLEY (“YEAH!”) is my true love.” Her MOTHER responds sweetly, “Oh hush, NELL! I hear him coming now.” Just then there is a fiendish knock at the door, and in steps SNIDELY WHIPLASH. (“BOO!”)

He puts his hand to his heart and says, “SWEET NELL, your beauty is more than I can bear.” And he rushes over and kisses . . . her . . . hand. Just as SWEET NELL is looking horrified, DUDLEY (“YEAH!”) runs in. He trips over the DOG, falls at Nell’s MOTHER’s feet, and passes out. SWEET NELL runs over to help DUDLEY (“YEAH!”) and leaves SNIDELY (“BOO!”) standing alone. The DOG, seeing SNIDELY WHIPLASH (“BOO!”) and his ugly sneer, runs over and bites him on the leg. Just as SNIDELY WHIPLASH (“BOO!”) runs out with the DOG chasing him, DUDLEY (“YEAH!”) wakes up and hugs NELL. As they are hugging, her MOTHER sees the look of love on their faces, sighs, and leaves. DUDLEY says, “SWEET NELL, you’re swell.” And the two go walking off into the sunset, hand in hand, and live happily ever after. THE END!

## SAMPLE PARTICIPATION SONGS

### **“I will call upon the Lord”**

Teach all the retreatants the actions. Once they master the actions, start to sing the song with the actions. Encourage retreatants to get into the moves.

Song:

I (hand up) will call upon the Lord  
Who (right hand swipe) is worthy to be praised  
So (left hand swipe) shall I be saved from my enemies.  
(2X)  
The Lord Liveth! (Ha, chop)  
And Blessed be my rock (Ha ha, double chop)  
And let the God of my salvation be exalted!

### **“A-la, La, La”**

Refrain:

a-la, la, la, la,...la, la, la, le, lu, jah  
a-la, la, la, la,...la, la, le, lu, jah  
a-la, la, la, la,...la, la, la, le, lu, jah  
a-la, la, la, la,...la, la,... le, lu, jah

1. Shake a neighbor’s hand, shake a hand next to ya,

Shake a neighbor's hand,...and sing this song.  
Shake a neighbor's hand, shake a hand next to ya,  
Shake a neighbor's hand,...and sing... sing along.(Refrain)

*Make up your own verses, for example, tweak a friend's cheek, pick your neighbor's nose, rub a neighbor's back, etc.*

### **"Making Melodies with my Heart"**

This song is led and then repeated. Instruct participants to repeat the leader's verses and actions.

*Refrain:*

Making melodies with my heart, making melodies with my heart, making melodies with my heart, for the Lord God our king. Thumbs Up (repeat)

*Refrain:*

Elbows In... Knees Bent... Feet in... Butt Out... Chest Up... Head Back...Tongue Out

## SAMPLE PARISH CHECK LIST FOR RETREAT #1

Name of Parish(es)\_\_\_\_\_ City(s)\_\_\_\_\_

Parish Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number(s)\_\_\_\_\_

Retreat Location \_\_\_\_\_ Date and Time \_\_\_\_\_

Arrival Time of Retreat Leaders \_\_\_\_\_ Retreat Leader's Cell Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Students \_\_\_\_\_ Will Need \_\_\_\_\_ Adult Small Group Leaders (1 adult to 7-10 Youth)

All adults need background checks and we need documentation or confirmation of this from the contact person.

Has there been any recent circumstances affecting the students that the Retreat Leader ought to be aware of?

Facility and space: set up/clean up and/or transportation of students to location of retreat.

Food and Snack

Recommend 1 priest for every 10-15 students if reconciliation is included in the retreat

Letter for each child from parents received before retreat

- Media:
  - LCD Projector/Computer/Speakers/TV/DVD player
  - Large Screen or Blank White Wall
  - CD/MP3 Player available
  - Extension Cords/Power strips
- 1 Bible per small group
- All copies and handouts (retreat outline/schedule, Gifts/Fruits of Holy Spirit Reconciliation Service handouts, music)
- Supplies:
  - markers: permanent & broad-tip (enough for each small group)
  - name badges
  - pens/pencils (enough for each small group)
  - poster board: 2 per small group
  - masking tape
  - skit props
  - tarps for faith activity
  - media files (Mp3s, Mp4s, DVDs)
    - ("Lion King," "Tale of Three Trees," "God's Love Letter," Confirmation Talk clips)
  - candles: 3-day votive inserts (1 per student)
  - lighter/matches
  - scratch paper and basket
  - paper/envelopes for Letter to Jesus or Parents

## RESOURCES FOR CONFIRMATION RETREAT OPTION - SAMPLE #1

### VIDEO CLIPS

The video clips used in this retreat are available on YouTube. To access them from the internet, go to [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com). Type the name of the clip below you would like to use in the search box and click "search." For some of the clips, there will be multiple options of the same clip. Choose one of the clips from the options.

- Lion King "Circle of Life" ©1994 Disney

- Tale of Three Trees - A Traditional Folktale ©1989 by Angela Elwell Hunt, Illustrated by Tim Jonke
- God's Letter of Love

#### SAMPLE GAMES/ICE BREAKERS

Additional examples of games and ice breakers can be found at:

- <http://www.thesource4ym.com/games/>
- <http://www.egadideas.com/>

#### RECONCILIATION SERVICE

**Song Suggestions:** These songs are available for purchase at [www.spiritandsong.com](http://www.spiritandsong.com).

- "Open my Eyes" by Jesse Manibusan © 1988, 1998
- "We Are the Light of the World" by Jean Anthony Greif, arranged by Tom Tomaszek © 1966, 1977

## CONFIRMATION RETREAT OPTION – SAMPLE #2

***Being the Body of Christ, the Church:*** A Confirmation Retreat

(This is one retreat from *Being, Becoming, and Believing Church* published by National Federation for Youth Ministry, Inc. The overview and session preview is taken from page 41.)

### **Overview**

"This retreat explores our connection to the body of Christ, compelling participants to a knowledge of our church's roots in Scripture, as well as exploring their call to make a difference as members of a Eucharistic community. It is designed for use with high school age youth, but many of the activities may be adapted for the developmental needs of junior high

youth, as well.”

### **Session Preview**

*(5 to 7 hours with optional activities)*

Welcome.....	15 minutes
Opening Prayer.....	5 minutes
Icebreakers.....	20 minutes
Parts of the Body.....	45 minutes
Optional: Witness on the Young Church at Work Today.....	15 minutes
Break.....	15 minutes
Spirit of the Body.....	30 minutes
Optional: Spiritual Jeopardy.....	30 minutes
Break.....	15 minutes
Introduction of Next Activities.....	5 minutes
Life Support Meditation.....	30 minutes
“Cells” of the Body.....	30 minutes
Break.....	10 minutes
Work of the Body of Christ, the Church.....	15 minutes
We are the Body.....	30 minutes
Optional: Mass.....	60 minutes

To buy *Being, Becoming, and Believing Church*, contact:

National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry

415 Michigan Ave NE Suite 40

Washington, DC 20017

202-636-3825

[www.nfcym.org](http://www.nfcym.org)

**For more information, contact:**

Catholic Education Ministries  
305 Seventh Avenue North, Suite 201  
St. Cloud, MN 56303  
(320) 251-0111

[www.stclouddiocese.org/cem](http://www.stclouddiocese.org/cem)