

ONEWITH

OneWith community, **OneWith** faith, **OneWith** Christ.

November 8, 2020

Reflection Break Outline Grade 9 ~ Session #3



Session Goals

Mass Unpacked:

Catholic worship (Mass) is arranged in 4 major movements (Introductory Rites, Liturgy of the Word, Liturgy of the Eucharist and Concluding Rites). The flow of the Mass can be compared to a traditional Thanksgiving dinner...

- As a Group, Explore the analogy of Thanksgiving Meal to a Catholic Mass
 - *Introductory Rites = Everyone arriving, greeting each other, getting prepared.*
 - *Liturgy of the Word = Sharing stories, connecting with each other's lives...*
 - *Liturgy of the Eucharist = Sharing a meal/table, acknowledging what/who we are thankful for...*
 - *Concluding Rites = Leaving full, sent with leftovers to remind and fill you...*

Scripture Unpacked:

- Articulate the meaning of a Scripture passage from the Sunday readings (or homily).
- Reflect on *and articulate* at least 1 way these lessons could apply to contemporary life.
- Commit to one practice of Christian discipleship that corresponds to their own learning before the next session.

Catholicism Unpacked:

- Reflect on, *and articulate* personal beliefs about Jesus.
- Collaborate with Discipleship Group peers to create a list of beliefs about Jesus that everyone can agree on.



Ice Breaker Activity / Questions (about 5 minutes)

OneWith format is a very different way of exploring the Catholic faith and experiencing liturgy. Peer-to-peer witnessing is a critical part of the discipleship process – but such authentic sharing does not happen easily. It may take a few or perhaps many sessions for your group to build trust in each other and become comfortable with this new format for exploring their faith.

- *Take a few minutes to help everyone get to know each other and feel as comfortable as one can, given the current circumstances...*
- *Try some “softball questions” to get them talking... Favorite activity/moment of the week,*

Pro Tip: *Some established groups have a standard faith question that they use as an opener. In addition to creating a known question/topic that the youth can reliably anticipate being discussed, you also build in the expectation that everyone will be expected to share.*

- *What was your “God-Moment” since the last time we met.*
- *1-5... On a scale of one (“Where the heck are you?”) to five (“We’re like this!” - side-by-side fingers)... Where are you and God right now?*
- *Who did you bless this week? / Who blessed you?*
- *How did you do on your “Discipleship Commitment” from our last session? (more on that below)*

Mass Unpacked (5-10 minutes)

The Catholic Mass is arranged in 4 major movements: The Introductory Rites, the Liturgy of the Word, the Liturgy of the Eucharist and the Concluding Rites. I don’t know how many people can name all of them and/or their function in the form of the Mass but with Thanksgiving coming up, I thought we could make nice analogy between the Mass and a “traditional” Thanksgiving celebration – for both flow and function... After all the word Eucharist (eukharistía) is a Greek word that means Giving Thanks to God! Work through the analogy with your group... here’s some of the comparisons that I came up; with see what else y’all can brainstorm

- **Thanksgiving Meal Analogy**
 - *Introductory Rites = Everyone arriving, greeting each other, getting prepared.*
 - *Liturgy of the Word = Sharing stories (some familiar, some new), connecting with each other’s lives...*
 - *Liturgy of the Eucharist = Sharing a common meal, gathered as family, acknowledging what/who we are thankful for...*
 - *Concluding Rites = Leaving full (of gratitude and tryptophan), sent with leftovers to remind and fill you...*

Scripture Unpacked (About 10 minutes)

God's Word is more than "oddly phrased" words that people read during Mass... The wisdom and Truth of scripture are just as alive today as they were when they were first scribed millennia ago... The following questions are important to help our young disciples to learn the process of identifying, clarifying and focusing on the MEANING of the scripture passage.

Be on the lookout for answers that synthesize "gospel" concepts ("True" forgiveness) with "secular"/cultural beliefs (being nice). This is our (your) chance to correct or put a theological fine point on any misconceptions or perceptions that our teens might have.

Ask questions like...

- What did you hear in Scripture readings from Mass?
- What did you hear in the homily (Fr. Mike's teaching)?
- What do you think was Father Mike/Don's main point?

Close this part of the lesson by reiterating the teaching focus for the session - see pages 5-7 for more detail and some tips from the experts.

Scripture Application Questions

Disciples Do! The "Discipleship Challenge" asks our youth to take the practical lesson/wisdom that they have discerned from the Scripture readings (aka – the Bible) and/or the homily – and apply that in the context of their own lived experience.

*Note: We are looking for something specific/concrete for them to commit to. "Being a better person" would be too generic... We also want to stay away from "praying" or "praying for someone" - We certainly want them to pray, but prayer is a separate practice of discipleship. If a youth is having problems coming up with something, start with their learned lesson/wisdom and work from there. **The point here is to put faith into action by working up a tangible way for them to become agents of mercy, justice and love in their families, among their friends and in our world.***

"Discipleship Challenge"

- What is one "practical lesson" or bit of wisdom that YOU can take away from the Bible readings and/or homily?
- What is **one thing that you can do in the next two weeks** to make this lesson/wisdom from tonight, a positive reality in your life or the life of someone who is in need?

Catholicism Unpacked (About 10 minutes)

“I Believe...”

More than 300 years after his death Jesus’ followers were still debating “who” he was. Was he really human or only human in appearance? Was Jesus fully divine or part-God/part-human? Etc.

After much prayer, discernment and a lot of time sorting out “heresies” of all kinds, the Church was able to say with confidence some things about the true nature of Jesus... Jesus is fully human. Born from a virgin - Mary. He taught with great spiritual insight and authority... Jesus is fully God. He performed miraculous deeds. He was publicly executed but rose from the dead after 3 days. Jesus is and always has been “one-with” God.

This debate began during Jesus’ own ministry. Many wondered who this man could be to work such wonders and speak so compellingly about the nature of God and his kingdom. In the Gospels, Jesus asks his disciples two important questions... “Who do people say the Son of Man is?” [Matthew 16:13] and “But what about you? Who do you say I am?” [Matthew 16:15]

It is this question that every disciple must answer for themselves and the question that we ask our young people to consider tonight!

~ Barry

Make (and keep) an actual list from the following questions...

- What do you believe about Jesus?
- Name some qualities of Jesus that are distinct from God?

Looking at your list of things that you believe about God...

- *Is there anything that you would like to add?*
- *Identify those things on which you can all agree.*
- *Work this list to your top 5-6 qualities/attributes that you can all agree on.*

If we are completely honest with ourselves...

- *What effect do these “qualities” of Jesus have on the way you live your life?*
- *What effect should your “relationship” with Jesus have on the way you live your life?*

Keep your list! You will be referring back to this list in a few weeks.

Want to Go Deeper?

Answering the question “Why do you believe in God” can be an intimidating and complicated proposition. Since most of us have not formulated a concise answer for that let’s start off our discussion with something we CAN articulate - and is no less powerful... our own life experiences.

- *Share one personal example of how Jesus and/or His teaching has influenced your life?*

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Addendum: Session Goals/Resources

Sunday Readings: <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/110820.cfm>

Resource Videos:

Fully Human/God (analogy): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EtoevOdB7m0>

Jesus' Miracles: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7EyrbdQ1M9U>

Jesus & Kingdom of God (Bible Project): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xmFPSof-kzs&t=>

Jesus & "Love" (Bible Project): <https://thebibleproject.com/explore/the-advent-series/>

Mass Unpacked (Mass Moment):

- Four Movements of the Mass
 - <http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/the-mass/order-of-mass/> (USCCB)

Links to websites with games and activities:

- <https://www.jubed.com/9-Icebreakers-Thatll-Leave-Your-Group-Buzzing>
- <https://teens.lovetoknow.com/teen-activities/youth-icebreakers-without-materials>
- <https://www.thereligionteacher.com/catholic-ice-breakers/>

“Virtual” OneWith Reflection Guide

The Catholic Mass is an inexhaustible Mystery! Not the kind of mystery that you don't know/cannot find the answer to – but a spiritual mystery that continues to open up new layer after new layer... the more carefully you look the more exquisite and profound its meaning. What layer of mystery did you uncover today?

Youth make and use the notes from their “Virtual” OneWith Reflection Packet to help them participate in the following discussions...

Liturgical Reflection

What was the one element of the liturgy that stood out to you? How did it help focus or enrich your experience of Mass.

(See the “Virtual” OneWith Reflection Packet for full details about this reflection.)

- Introductory Rites Reflection:
- Liturgy of the Word:
- Liturgy of the Eucharist:
- Closing Rites:

Scripture Reflection

The ability to listen deeply to God's word and extract its wisdom and meaning for our lives today is vital to the life of a Christian disciple! This part of the reflection is designed to help youth develop the skill set to be able distill the meanings and wisdom that are found in the weekend scripture AND (with a little help from the priest or deacon – perhaps) apply these lessons/wisdom to our own life. This is not easy task! Be patient, but persistent – our youth are pretty sharp, and they should be able to borrow from their academic skill set of literature analysis, etc.

Scripture Readings of the week

- Reading #1: Wis 6:12-16
- Responsorial Psalm: 63:2-8
- Reading #2: I Thessalonians 4:13-18
- Gospel: Matthew 25:1-13

*[A full copy of the readings for the week can be found on the U.S. Bishop's website:
<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/110820.cfm>]*

Choose one of the readings used at Mass this weekend...

- *Who is speaking in this passage?*
- *To whom are they speaking?*
- *What is the main “message” from this passage and how might that be applied in your own life? (3-4 sentences)*

What was the main point of the Priest/Deacon's homily (preaching)? How does this message connect to your lived experience? (2-3 sentences)

Gospel Reflection - By Greg Sunter

The three gospel accounts from the final three weeks leading up to the season of Advent all come from Chapter 25 of the Gospel of Matthew. They can be seen together as an extended treatise on living life in response to Jesus' message and preparing for the end of time. This week's gospel starts out as a Kingdom parable and becomes a bit more of a metaphor for living a Christian life.

The gospel parable relates to ten bridesmaids—five foolish and five wise—who are participating in a wedding ritual that involves meeting the bridegroom and escorting him the last part of his way to the wedding reception. The foolish bridesmaids have not brought sufficient reserves of oil for their lamps and have to leave at the critical time to try to obtain more. When they eventually arrive at the reception hall they are turned away because they have shamed themselves as well as the bride and groom by not fulfilling their duty.

Some of the original audience of Matthew's gospel, along with many of the early Christian followers, had an expectation that Jesus was going to return and usher in the end of the world in their lifetime. The message of this gospel is captured in Jesus' final words, "So stay awake, because you do not know either the day or the hour." The timing of Jesus' coming cannot be predicted and so all Christian believers, like the bridesmaids, need to continue to act with hope and expectation; being prepared for the fact that it may be further off than anticipated. Many early Christians were living their lives as though the world would end at any time. The gospel warns them, and us, to continue to follow the example of Jesus and not to become complacent—expecting that everything is about to come to an end.

Living the Gospel – Living in hope.

A feature of Christian faith is an approach to life that views the future with hope. In our world today many people look to the future with distrust and even fear. As Christians, we look forward with hope. When change occurs, some allow that change to happen *to* them whilst others engage in the change process and approach it with hope and expectation. Today's gospel reminds us to be ready for what the future holds; to look with hope towards what lies ahead, but to ensure that we've prepared ourselves properly. The future can only be viewed with expectant hope if we've done the proper preparation!

Questions for Teens

- Why would Jesus have used a story about bridesmaids waiting for a groom?
- Why wouldn't the wise bridesmaids give their spare oil to the others?
- In what ways is this story a parable of the Kingdom of God?
- What message comes out of this gospel for a modern audience?

Questions for Adults

- In what ways are some Christians today like the foolish bridesmaids?
- In what ways is this story a parable of the Kingdom of God?
- How can you properly prepare for the coming of the Kingdom?
- If this story were to be put in a contemporary setting, what is a modern metaphor for preparedness that might be used?