



GOYA

# Y<sup>2</sup>AM

## Ministry Plan

2019-20

Finding Christ  
Through Confession (March 2020)



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# LEARNING SESSION ONE

MARCH 2020

## **Finding Christ Through Confession**

### MONTH:

March 2020

### GOAL:

To learn about Confession

### OBJECTIVE:

To identify one way to repair a broken  
relationship

### ESTIMATED DURATION:

45 minutes

## SUPPLIES NEEDED:

1. blank paper for each participant
2. pen for each participant
3. string
4. washers or key rings for each participant
5. scissors

## OPENING PRAYER

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

*Lord, allow us “to offer ourselves as a living sacrifice,” one that is, “holy and acceptable to God for this is Your true and proper worship.” Allow us “not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewal of our minds.” So that we may be able to “test and prove what is God’s will, His good, pleasing and perfect will.”*

*Amen.*

*(a passage from Romans 12:1-2)*

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## ICEBREAKER:

*10 minutes*

Tell us your name, and your favorite duo (food, people, activities, etc.).

### **Remember:**

*It's always helpful to start with an activity to help participants relax and allow community to build. Early in the session, focus primarily on getting participants to open their hearts and connect with what's happening in the group. This is an opportunity to encourage participants to share their honest opinions and thoughts, as well as listen to those of others. Take this time to connect with what's important to them, and to understand what they've connected with.*

## ACTIVITY 1: CONFESSION

*10 minutes*

1. Ask participants to break into groups of two and face their partners. Give each pair two washers or keyring and a piece of string. Ask each participant to hold one end of the string and place their washers on the line. Explain that the string represents the relationship between the two people holding it, and the washers represent ourselves and our hearts.
2. Next, go around and cut each string. Explain that the cut string represents a falling out between the two people; a conflict that sometimes happens in life. There is a way to repair the string, to knot it. In life, this would be done by apologizing and asking for forgiveness.
3. Ask participants to tie the two pieces of string back together. Now that the relationship has been patched up, ask participants to put their washers back onto their side of the string.  
*(Note: The washers should not be able to touch because of the knot. If they can still touch, knot the string again until they cannot.)*



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4. Explain that there may still be something that is holding the two people back from fully sharing themselves and their hearts. They apologized, but have they forgiven? When a break happens, there not only needs to be an apology, but forgiveness as well.

5. Ask participants to take the washers off and hand out the key rings to each participant. Ask participants to put the key rings on the line. The rings are able to freely move on the line, despite the knot. Explain that forgiveness causes a change of heart. This change of heart needs to occur to heal the broken relationship.

## ACTIVITY 2: DISCUSSION

*10 minutes*

Pass out a piece of paper and a pen to each participant. Ask participants the following questions. This can be done as a whole-group discussion or in small break-out group discussions, depending on how many Youth Workers are present to facilitate.

### **Debrief:**

- What did you think of this activity? What kinds of feelings did you have during the activity?
- Did your thinking about relationships change? How?
- Can you think of a time where this (strained relationship, apology, forgiveness) happened in your relationship with someone?
- What did you learn through this activity?

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## ACTIVITY 3: SCRIPTURE

*10 minutes*

### **Luke 19:1-10**

“1 He entered Jericho and was passing through. 2 And there was a man named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector, and rich. 3 And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not, on account of the crowd, because he was small of stature. 4 So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was to pass that way. 5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, ‘Zacchaeus, make haste and come down; for I must stay at your house today.’ 6 So he made haste and came down, and received him joyfully. 7 And when they saw it they all murmured, ‘He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner.’ 8 And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, ‘Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have defrauded any one of anything, I restore it fourfold.’ 9 And Jesus said to him, ‘Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. 10 For the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost.’”

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### **Debrief:**

- Who are the characters in this passage and what are their roles?
- What is the connection between this passage and confession?
- When did Christ go to Zacchaeus' home, before or after Zacchaeus repented? What does that tell us about Christ?
- How does Zacchaeus confess?
- How can we follow the example of Zacchaeus when thinking about our own confession?
- What things keep us from allowing Christ into the home of our hearts?

## CONCLUSION: WRAP-UP

*5 minutes*

Go around the circle and ask each individual to name one new idea they learned during the session.

## CLOSING PRAYER

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

*“Thank You, Lord, for Your strength and guidance in my work. You are the fulfillment of all good things. Fill also my soul with joy and gladness, that I may praise You always.”  
Amen.*

## LEARNING SESSION TWO

MARCH 2020

# Finding Christ Through Confession

### MONTH:

March 2020

### GOAL:

To learn about Confession

### OBJECTIVE:

To identify ways to prepare for Confession

### ESTIMATED DURATION:

45 minutes

## SUPPLIES NEEDED:

1. Divine Liturgy books
2. blank paper for each participant
3. pen for each participant
4. a few copies of the Saint story below
5. a few copies of the debrief questions

*Note: if possible please have a Priest present to hear Confessions*

## OPENING PRAYER

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

*Lord, allow us “to offer ourselves as a living sacrifice,” one that is, “holy and acceptable to God for this is Your true and proper worship.” Allow us “not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewal of our minds.” So that we may be able to “test and prove what is God’s will, His good, pleasing and perfect will.”*

*Amen.*

*(a passage from Romans 12:1-2)*

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## ICEBREAKER:

*10 minutes*

Tell us your name, and a story about something that broke.

### **Remember:**

*It's always helpful to start with an activity to help participants relax and allow community to build. Early in the session, focus primarily on getting participants to open their hearts and connect with what's happening in the group. This is an opportunity to encourage participants to share their honest opinions and thoughts, as well as listen to those of others. Take this time to connect with what's important to them, and to understand what they've connected with.*



## ACTIVITY 1: SAINT STORY

*10 minutes*

Break up the large group into three small groups based on their answer to the icebreaker question. Give each group a copy of the story of Saint Peter and Saint Paul and the debrief questions.

**<https://www.goarch.org/chapel/saints?contentid=103>**

Instruct groups to read the story and work together to answer the questions. After a few minutes, have the groups come back together into one and have each group share their answers.

### **Saint Peter and Saint Paul**

The divinely-blessed Peter was from Bethsaida of Galilee. He was the son of Jonas and the brother of Andrew the First-called. He was a fisherman by trade, unlearned and poor, and was called Simon; later he was renamed Peter by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, Who looked at him and said, "Thou art Simon the son of Jonas; thou shalt be called Cephas (which is by interpretation, Peter)" (John 1:42). On being raised by the Lord to the dignity of an Apostle and becoming inseparable from Him as His zealous disciple, he followed Him from the beginning of His preaching of salvation up until the very Passion, when, in the court of Caiaphas the high priest, he denied Him thrice because of his fear of the Jews and of the danger at hand. But again, after many bitter tears,

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he received complete forgiveness of his transgression. After the Resurrection of Christ and the descent of the Holy Spirit, he preached in Judea, Antioch, and certain parts of Asia, and finally came to Rome, where he was crucified upside down by Nero, and thus he ascended to the eternal habitations about the year 66 or 68, leaving two Catholic (General) Epistles to the Church of Christ. Paul, the chosen vessel of Christ, the glory of the Church, the Apostle of the Nations and teacher of the whole world, was a Jew by race, of the tribe of Benjamin, having Tarsus as his homeland. He was a Roman citizen, fluent in the Greek language, an expert in knowledge of the Law, a Pharisee, born of a Pharisee, and a disciple of Gamaliel, a Pharisee and notable teacher of the Law in Jerusalem. For this cause, from the beginning, Paul was a most fervent zealot for the traditions of the Jews and a great persecutor of the Church of Christ; at that time, his name was Saul (Acts 22:3-4). In his great passion of rage and fury against the disciples of the Lord, he went to Damascus bearing letters of introduction from the high priest. His intention was to bring the disciples of Christ back to Jerusalem in bonds. As he was approaching Damascus, about midday there suddenly shone upon him a light from Heaven. Falling on the earth, he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?" And he asked, "Who are You, Lord?" And the Lord said, "I am Jesus Whom you are persecuting; it is hard for you to kick against the poking." And that heavenly voice and brilliance made him tremble, and he was blinded for a time. He was led by the hand into the city, and on account of a divine revelation to the Apostle Ananias (see Oct. 1), he was baptized by him, and both his bodily and spiritual eyes

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were opened to the knowledge of the Sun of Righteousness. And straightway- O wondrous transformation! - beyond all expectation, he spoke with boldness in the synagogues, proclaiming that "Christ is the Son of God" (Acts 9:1-21). As for his zeal in preaching the Gospel after these things had come to pass, as for his abating labors and afflictions of diverse kinds, the wounds, the prisons, the bonds, the beatings, the stonings, the shipwrecks, the journeys, the perils on land, on sea, in cities, in wildernesses, the continual vigils, the daily fasting, the hunger, the thirst, the nakedness, and all those other things that he endured for the Name of Christ, and which he underwent before nations and kings and the Israelites, and above all, his care for all the churches, his fiery longing for the salvation of all, whereby he became all things to all men, that he might save them all if possible, and because of which, with his heart aflame, he continuously traveled throughout all parts, visiting them all, and like a bird of heaven flying from Asia and Europe, the West and East, neither staying nor abiding in any one place - all these things are related incident by incident in the Book of the Acts, and as he himself tells them in his Epistles. His Epistles, being fourteen in number, are explained in 250 homilies by the divine Chrysostom and make manifest the loftiness of his thoughts, the abundance of the revelations made to him, the wisdom given to him from God, wherewith he brings together in a wondrous manner the Old with the New Testaments, and expounds the mysteries thereof which had been concealed under types; he confirms the doctrines of the Faith, expounds the ethical teaching of the Gospel, and demonstrates with exactness the duties incumbent upon every

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rank, age, and order of man. In all these things his teaching proved to be a spiritual trumpet, and his speech was seen to be more radiant than the sun, and by these means he clearly sounded forth the word of truth and illumined the ends of the world. Having completed the work of his ministry, he likewise ended his life in martyrdom when he was beheaded in Rome during the reign of Nero, at the same time, some say, when Peter was crucified.

### **Debrief:**

- How does this story relate to the theme of confession?
- How did Peter live his life as a disciple?
- How did Paul live his life before becoming a disciple?
- How can the denial of these saints reveal how we might deny Christ in our lives?
- How can we learn about repentance from Sts. Peter and Paul?

## ACTIVITY 2: DIVINE LITURGY

*10 minutes*

Read the following lines from the Divine Liturgy and then ask participants the questions below and facilitate a discussion:

*“I believe and confess, Lord, that You are truly the Christ, the Son of the living God, Who came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the first. I also believe that this is truly Your pure Body and that this is truly Your precious Blood. Therefore, I pray to You, have mercy upon me, and forgive my transgressions, voluntary and involuntary, in word and deed, in knowledge or in ignorance. And make me worthy, without condemnation, to partake of Your pure Mysteries for the remission of sins and for eternal life. Amen.”*

### **Debrief:**

- When is this heard or recited during the liturgy?
- What is the purpose of these words?
- What is the connection between confessing our sins and the fact that the Lord is truly Christ?
- What are we confessing when we read this passage?  
What makes this confession important?

## ACTIVITY 3: PREPARE FOR CONFESSION

*10 minutes*

Pass out paper and a pen to each participant.

Ask participants to think about a situation, person or people in their lives that is weighing their hearts down currently. Ask them to write the situation on the paper.

Remind the participants that this paper is their own and that no one else will be looking at it.

Read this blog post to participants to help them understand the importance of confession:

**<https://blogs.goarch.org/blog/-/blogs/three-common-misconceptions-about-confession>**

Next, pass out this confession preparation handout.

**<https://www.goarch.org/-/preparation-for-holy-confession>**

Ask participants to write down their thoughts or create a list (whatever will be most helpful for them to prepare).

***Note for Youth Worker:*** Gently, remind participants that Lent is a great time to go to confession in preparation for Pascha, the Resurrection of our Lord. If possible, please have your parish priest available that day to hear their confessions after the session.

## CONCLUSION: WRAP-UP & COMMITMENT

*5 minutes*

Go around the circle and ask each individual to name one new idea they learned during the session.

## CLOSING PRAYER

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

*“Lord my God, I confess that I have sinned against You in thought, word and deed.*

*I have also omitted to do what Your holy law requires of me. But now with repentance and contrition I turn again to Your love and mercy.*

*I entreat You to forgive me all my transgression and to cleanse me from all my sins.*

*Lord, fill my heart with the light of Your truth. Strengthen my will by Your grace.*

*Teach me both to desire and to do only what pleases You.”*

**Amen.**

*(Prayer before confession*

*<https://www.goarch.org/-/preparation-for-holy-confession>)*