



JOY

Y²AM

Ministry Plan

2019-20

Finding Christ
Through Confession (March 2020)



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LEARNING SESSION ONE

MARCH 2020

Finding Christ Through Confession

MONTH:

February 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, we want to help You make the world a place where everybody loves You, and we all love each other. Help us to keep our attention on You and Your will for us. Help us to avoid getting distracted by the things that lead us away from You. Have mercy on us, Lord, and keep us always close to You.

Amen.

LEARNING SESSION: JOY RESOURCES 2019-20

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 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.
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.)

LEARNING SESSION: JOY RESOURCES 2019-20

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?

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?

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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:

February 2020

GOAL:

To learn about Confession

OBJECTIVE:

To identify ways to prepare for Confession

ESTIMATED DURATION:

45 minutes

LEARNING SESSION:
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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.

“Christ our Lord, You gave sight to the blind man and wisdom to simple fishermen. Give to our minds the grace of the Holy Spirit. We ask for understanding to learn and choose to do good works to glorify You.”

Amen.

LEARNING SESSION:
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ICEBREAKER:

10 minutes

Tell us your name, and your favorite game to play when you were in Kindergarten. Would you still play it today?

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.

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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

(story adapted below for JOY age readers)

Saint Peter was from Bethsaida of Galilee. He was the son of Jonas and the brother of Andrew the First-called. He was a poor fisherman with no education, and his name was Simon. Jesus later gave him the name Peter. He followed Jesus from the beginning of His ministry until His arrest, when, in the court of Caiaphas the high priest, he three times denied knowing Him for fear of being arrested himself. But after many tears of repentance, he was completely forgiven. 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. He died about the year 66 or 68,

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leaving two letters to the Church of Christ which are found in the New Testament of our Bible.

Paul, the Apostle to the Nations and teacher of the whole world, was from Tarsus in what is now Turkey. He was a Roman citizen who spoke Greek, an expert in the Jewish Law, and a Pharisee. Paul was extreme in his defense of the traditions of the Jews, and therefore hated the Church of Christ; at that time, his name was Saul (Acts 22:3-4). In his great anger against the disciples of the Lord, he went to Damascus with letters from the high priest giving him the authority to bring the disciples of Christ back to Jerusalem as prisoners. As he was traveling to Damascus, about noon there was suddenly a light from Heaven. Falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" And he asked, "Who are you, Lord?" And the Lord said, "I am Jesus Whom you are persecuting." And that heavenly voice and bright light made him shake with fear, and he was blinded for a time. He was led by the hand into the city, and baptized by the Apostle Ananias, and he was able to see again. And immediately he began to speak with boldness in the synagogues, saying that "Christ is the Son of God" (Acts 9:1-21). The story of his faithful service to Christ, all the troubles he lived through, and his incredible success in bringing the Good News to people of many nations, is told in the Book of Acts and in his letters. Having completed the work of his ministry, he also ended his life as a martyr when he was beheaded in Rome during the reign of Nero, at the same time, some say, when Peter was crucified.

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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 Saint Peter and Saint Paul?

ACTIVITY 2: DIVINE LITURGY

10 minutes

Read the following lines from the Divine Liturgy and then ask participants the following questions 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 are weighing on their hearts currently. Ask them to write the situation down 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>)