**FIRST MEETING** C:\Program Files\Microsoft Office\Clipart\standard\stddir4\so01616_.wmf

PRAYER AND SPIRITUAL LIFE

Due first week of November

*We are not concerned about instant sainthood in this discussion. The focus should be on developing skills and habits that will lead the candidate to closer identification with Jesus over the years.*

***How*** *one prays is not as critical as the fact that you* ***do*** *pray. In this discussion, the sponsor should focus on nurturing a positive attitude toward prayer and helping the candidate develop a style of praying that is suitable for him or her at this point in life.*

Discussion format

* Begin with a prayer. It can be traditional, spontaneous, memorized, or scripture reading.
* Obstacles to Prayer – Listed below are four elements that affect our ability to pray and common things that get in the way of praying. Share how these problems affect your own prayer life and try to help the candidate find some practical ways to overcome them.

1. Time
   1. Can’t find time
   2. Don’t take time
   3. Other
   4. Possible solution

2. Inner quiet

* 1. Can’t seem to settle down
  2. Can’t concentrate
  3. Other
  4. Possible solution

3. External quiet

a. Can’t find a suitable place to pray

b. Can’t find a place with good atmosphere for praying

c. Other

d. Possible solution

4. Aids to prayer

a. Can’t find the right book or other aid for praying

b. Don’t know how to use the Bible well for this

c. Other

d. Possible solution

* Read and discuss the Nicene Creed together. What parts mean the most to you? Why?
* Scripture Search – Prayer

1. Read together each of the following Scripture passages about prayer.

2. Discuss each passage in light of these questions:

* What truth or principle does it seek to teach us about prayer?
* Does my own prayer reflect that truth? Should it?
  + Luke 2: 41-43 Matthew 5: 5-15
  + Mark 1: 35-36 Matthew 13: 57-58
  + Mark 7: 24-29 Matthew 17: 14-21
  + Mark 8: 11-12 Matthew 18: 19-20
* Summarize your discussion and help your candidate develop a “program” for praying to be tried between now and your next session together.

Sponsor signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Candidate signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

MEETING SUMMARY (*To be filled out by candidate*)

One thing I enjoyed about our meeting was:

Some things I learned about prayer:

Something I learned about myself:

Our next meeting date is:

Keep this in your red Confirmation folder – bring folder to interview.

SPONSOR INFORMATION

Stated most simply, this aspect of the candidate’s preparation for Confirmation involves a series of meetings with you, the sponsor. During these meetings, you are to serve as a kind of mentor (coach) in helping the candidate grow in those skills, knowledge, attitudes, and practices that are considered essential to being a mature, responsible, committed (that is, confirmed) member of the Church, a professed follower of Jesus.

This program of apprenticeship is modeled after elements of a longer and more arduous period of preparation converts in the early Church experienced prior to their baptism/confirmation into the Church. That program was called a catechumenate.

If you are like most persons who have been asked to serve as sponsors, you feel both flattered and a little inadequate. You would probably be the last one to hold yourself up as fully informed, totally dedicated Catholic and a suitable person for guiding others.

Keep two things in mind here. First, your candidate freely chose you, so he or she must feel you have some basic qualities and experiences that can help the candidate grow. Second, you are asked to be somewhat more mature, more informed and experienced than the candidate. No one, least of all the candidate, expects perfection of you. Just a willingness to share – and to continue to grow in your own faith.

Also, it is important to be realistic toward the candidate as you are toward yourself. The goal of this program is growth, not perfection, for the candidate. Readiness for confirmation requires that the candidate demonstrate willingness and a capacity to continue to grow toward mature and committed faith. The actual goal of perfected faith and total imitation of Jesus remains a lifelong quest. Your task is to help the candidate take the next step in that quest, not the final step.

If you properly understand the purpose of this apprenticeship, you will realize that you have all the necessary qualities for assisting your candidate.

That confidence, coupled with the personal investment of your time – and humble prayer for Jesus’ assistance – will insure that this program will be a successful and rewarding experience for both the candidate and you.

**12 tips for sponsors**

1. Pray for your candidate daily and ask them to do the same for you.
2. Arrange a definite schedule of meeting dates. This will benefit both your busy lifestyle and theirs. Take them to lunch, dinner, a ballgame, or some other “fun” event occasionally.
3. Take them to Mass. Arrange to meet them at church in a specific pew or pick them up for church. Go out for breakfast afterward or to coffee and donuts.
4. Be a good listener. Be attentive to their needs, growth, and concerns. Don’t impose your ideas on them, voice old complaints, or get bogged down with old “nun” stories.
5. Be honest and open. A young person won’t tolerate anyone who appears to the be least bit “phony.”
6. Do a service project together. Rake leaves, paint a fence, clean a garage, or shovel snow for an elderly person in the neighborhood. Visit a shut-in. Let them do something for you - - baby-sit, wash a car, etc.
7. Proudly introduce them to other members of the parish. This makes them feel like important members of the community as well as exposes them to various aspects of parish life.
8. Be sensitive to family situations.
9. Ask them about their schoolwork or achievements in sports. Attend their games, if possible.
10. Send a card on their birthday, at Christmas, or the anniversary of their Baptism.
11. Be accurate. You are there to be a role model, not a catechist. But if some question comes up, try to answer it. If you don’t know, don’t hesitate to say, “Let’s ask.”
12. Pray for guidance.

Sponsor – Candidate Meeting Guidelines

* Set up a mutually agreeable schedule for you and your candidate.
* Meetings with your candidate should always include food.
* Generally it will take from 30 – 60 minutes to complete the discussion topic.
* Bring a bible to each meeting.
* Never end your meeting without deciding a definite time and place for the next meeting.
* Respect his or her privacy and never disclose things told to you in confidence, unless of course, it might endanger his/her health or well being.
* If you have any questions about faith issues brought up in the meetings, please don’t hesitate to call our parish office (phone 573-445-7915) and speak to Miriam Lynch. I will be glad to help out or give you resources to read.
* Relax and let the Holy Spirit work through you. The whole point of the meetings is to share how you live your faith. None of us is perfect!

SECOND MEETING

SAINTS AND SERVICE

Due first week of December

*The judgment speech of Jesus, Mt 25:31-46, is really based on the two great commandments of love; love of God and love your neighbor as yourself. Christ tells us very clearly we will be judged by how well we take care of those who are disadvantaged. True commitment to our faith requires us to change our inner being – our spirits, dispositions and attitudes toward serving others. Saints are models of people who have lived this way, serving God and others by doing the works of mercy****.***

*The focus here is on developing an attitude toward service more than doing some particular thing on a one-time basis to fulfill a requirement. The goal is to help the youth realize that responsible Christianity implies a commitment to a lifetime of service to others.*

Discussion Format

* Begin with a prayer
* Share how you have been praying more often in your life
* Read together each of the following scripture passages about service. Discuss each passage together in light of these questions:

Matthew 25: 31-46 James 2: 14-26

1 Corinthians 12 Luke 12: 8-12

* + What truth or principle does it teach us about service?
  + Do my own efforts at service reflect this truth?

What are obstacles to serving others?

* + Time
    - Sports
    - Homework
    - Telephone conversations or online messaging
    - Video games
    - Other
    - Possible solution
  + Lack of opportunity
    - Don’t know who needs help
    - Feel you don’t have the skills to help
    - Transportation
    - Other
    - Possible solution

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Spiritual Works of Mercy | | Corporal Works of Mercy | |
| Instructing  Advising  Consoling | Comforting  Forgiving  Bearing Wrongs Patiently | Feeding the Hungry  Sheltering the Homeless  Clothing the Naked | Visiting the Sick and Imprisoned  Burying the Dead |

* **Discuss the work of mercy that is easiest to understand and practice.**
* **Which work of mercy is hardest to practice?**
* **Is service done when we are confirmed? Why or why not?**
* **Talk about how you as an adult serve others.**
* **What saint means the most to you? Why? How did they live the works of mercy?**
* **Discuss people who are living today that are saintly. What qualities do they have?**

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Candidate signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

MEETING SUMMARY (*To be filled out by candidate*)

One thing I enjoyed about our meeting was:

Some things I learned about service and saints:

Something I learned about myself:

Our next meeting date is:

Keep this completed form in your red Confirmation folder – bring folder to interview

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LITURGY AND COMMUNITY

# Due first week of February

*Eucharistic liturgy is the cornerstone of our faith. It combines community and God in a powerful way. Through liturgy, we experience God four different ways. The first is in the readings of God’s word. The second is the presence of Christ in those gathered. Matthew 18: 20 “wherever two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.” The third way is through the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. The fourth way is through the person of the priest. Liturgy then is a powerful experience of God that strengthens us for our daily lives.*

*The focus of this discussion is why your involvement in community is important, what makes our liturgy different from other Christian denominations, and also to understand the parts of the Mass. Remember we all “say the Mass.” The priest leads us in that celebration.*

Discussion Format

* Talk about what groups you belong to (family, church, school, team, social, work etc.)
  + Pick two characteristics
    - What makes these groups strong?
    - What makes them weak?
  + Describe what the group would look like if people chose not to be present or rarely showed up for meetings.
  + Discuss what your group would look like if all the members decided to care deeply about one another, suffer for one another, and to serve one another.
    - What demands would be made of you?
    - What sacrifices?
    - What stumbling blocks?
    - What rewards would there be?
* Read Acts 2: 43 – 47. How did the early church care for one another?
* What are some practical things you can do to make our church community better?
* Discuss how the church would be changed if we all made this level of commitment.
* Use the outline on the back of the sponsor meeting guidelines to discuss the Mass. It would be a great idea to attend together and then go out after and discuss it.

**FOR USE WITH MEETING THREE ON LITURGY**

INTRODUCTORY RITES

Gathering song

Greeting The celebrant welcomes us and invites us to pray.

Penitential Rite We confess our sinfulness and ask forgiveness of God and each other

Gloria Prayer of praise

Opening Prayer

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First reading Taken from the Old Testament

Responsorial Psalm

Second Reading Taken from the New Testament

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel A reading by the priest or deacon from one of the four gospels

Homily Explanation of the readings given by the priest or deacon

Profession of Faith The Nicene Creed is recited.

General Intercessions (Prayer of the Faithful) Short petitions of prayer offered for the needs of the church and all God’s people.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Preparation of the Altar and Gifts The preparation for the meal as we offer our gifts to God.

Prayer over the Gifts

Eucharistic Prayer A prayer of praise and thanksgiving during which the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ (Transubstantiation)

Communion Rite

The Lord’s Prayer Our Father

Sign of Peace We greet one another with the Lord’s peace

Breaking of the Bread The celebrant breaks the Eucharistic bread and pours the consecrated wine in preparation for communion.

Communion

Period of Silence or Song of Praise

Prayer after Communion

CONCLUDING RITE

Greeting

Blessing

Dismissal The deacon or priest invites all to go in peace.

* As Catholics we believe the bread and wine is not just a symbol of Christ, we believe it **is** Christ. How is this different from other Christian denominations? Bible references Mt 26:26, Mk 14: 22-25, Luke 22:14-23
* If you have any experience with other Christian denomination services, how are they like our Mass and how are they different?
* What are obstacles that get in the way of attending liturgy?
  + Want to sleep in
  + Boring
  + Don’t have a ride
  + Too much to do, sports, homework etc.
  + Other
  + Possible solutions?
* Should Mass be a place where you go to be entertained?
* If someone asked you what the readings from Sunday were on Monday morning, could you tell them? (Can you tell who won the latest sporting event or what news headlines were in the paper this week?)
* Remember the idea of commitment and how the level of involvement influences the community. Share ways you stay involved in Mass? (lector, usher, choir member, Eucharistic minister)

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Candidate signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

MEETING SUMMARY (*To be filled out by candidate*)

One thing I enjoyed about our meeting was:

Some things I learned about community and Eucharistic liturgy:

Something I learned about myself:

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