

Wednesday, September 26th 2018

1st-4th Grade Lesson Plan: Introduction to Faith Formation

- I. **Welcome** children to the small group as they arrive and introduce yourself. Take attendance. If you are interested in having a coloring sheet out as the children arrive to keep them busy, email Heidi or turn in a Materials Request Form.
- II. **Opening Prayer**
 - Gather around your prayer table- turn on the candle, bless the children with holy water if you'd like
 - Opening Song- A Rightful Place- follow [this link](#) for the youtube video. Encourage your small group to sing along!
 - Scripture Reading: Psalm 139: 1-12
Using the Catholic Children's Bible, find this scripture reading together and have someone read it out loud. For this reading, I would suggest having the children close their eyes so they can take in the imagery of the psalm. Ask the children what this Psalm made them think of as they were listening. Let them know that God is leading them and has been with them their whole lives.
 - Prayer intentions- if anyone has a prayer intention that they would like to write down, they can use one of the strips of paper which you can find on top of the small group leader mailboxes. You can also encourage them to speak their prayer intentions out loud to the rest of the group. Collect Prayer intentions and put them in the basket which can be found in the Faith Formation office. We will lift up all our prayer intentions from our small groups the next time we have large group prayer on Family Night.
 - Read the following prayer or do a spontaneous prayer. Begin and end with the sign of the cross- teach the sign of the cross if not everyone is familiar with it. *Loving God, we thank you for the opportunity to grow in faith as a small group this year. Help us to feel your presence with us as we get to know each other, pray together, and learn together this year. Guide us to grow in faith and learn to be the best followers of Jesus that we can be. Help us to have fun, stay safe, and grow in relationship with you today and all year long. Amen.*

III. **Get-to-Know-You:** choose one of the following activities

- Roll the die and answer a question get to know you activity. The PDF of this activity can be found on the website right under the link to this lesson plan. Email Heidi or fill out a Materials Request Form if you'd like a jumbo die to be able to do this in your small group.
- Beach ball get to know you: We have two beach balls with get to know you questions printed on them. You can find an open space (outside might be fun if the weather is nice), have your group stand in a circle, and throw the ball around. Every time someone catches the ball, they have to answer the question closest to their right thumb. These questions are meant for older kids, so I don't know that I would recommend this activity for first and second graders; they might be a little bit tough to answer. Email Heidi or fill out a Materials Request Form to reserve one of the two beach balls.
- Would You Rather: Follow [this link](#) and scroll about halfway down to the list of would you rather questions. Designate a corner of the room for each answer (you can make it easy by saying first option this corner, second option this corner). Once they've arrived at the corner after the question is read, have at least one person explain why they chose each option.

IV. **Introduce Check-ins**

Each time your small group meets this year, you will be doing a check-in or "highs and lows". One of our main focuses this year is building community and we can build community in small groups by telling each other how we're doing and what's going on in our lives on a regular basis. Decide how you're going to do this each week, introduce this idea to your small group, and do check-ins. Since it's the first time you'll be doing it, you should start with your check-in to model it.

Here are a few ideas for check-ins. Some of these ideas could be combined:

- Hackey sack: toss the hackey sack around the table and whoever gets it shares their high and low of the week (or summer, or two weeks since the last session). I have plenty of these that you can request from me.
- Talking stick: for talkative groups, get a talking stick (you can request it from me or make your own) so that only the person who has the stick is allowed to talk. Or you can use a hackey sack like a talking stick.
- Rose and thorn: Instead of using the language of highs and lows, use rose and thorn, hill and valley, or whatever your group likes best.

V. Small Group Pledge

Together as a small group, come up with some ideas of rules for the small group that will keep everyone safe and support everyone's learning. Let the group come up with their own ideas of how to be respectful of each other, you, the space, and the materials. Write the rules down on the poster board provided, and have everyone sign their name showing that they agree to these rules.

VI. Meet your Small Group Saint

- You may have noticed that each small group room has been named for a Saint or other Holy person. Using your new screens, do a little research together on the saint that your Small Group's room is named after. Loyola Press Saint Stories for Kids and Catholic Online are two good place to start. Try to answer the following questions as best as you can (you can write the answers down if you want or just find the answers and then move on- this may depend on timing).

Where and when did this Saint live?

How did this person serve God and others during his or her lifetime?

What is this Saint best known for?

What can we learn from this Saint's example?

VII. Closing Prayer

- Pray the Our Father together- the words can be found in the Catholic Prayers app under "Basic Prayers" if you want to put them up on the screen.