

Weekly Reflections

What Bible verse was used for the basis of last Sunday's sermon?

What were some of the main takeaways? What did you learn?

So far this week, how have you applied what you learned from the sermon last Sunday?

Going forward, how will you apply what you learned from the sermon last Sunday?

Point to Ponder...

Call to Action...

Help spread the gospel: *Extra! Extra! Read all about it!*

I wonder... ➤ What is the gospel? ➤ What are the main points of the gospel? ➤ How did Jesus teach the gospel?	I believe... ➤ The gospel is the message of the grace, love, and reconciliation that God grants us in Jesus Christ. (Catechism Q&A question 137) ➤ The major statements are about the kingdom of God, the commandment to love one's neighbor, the attitude of man's heart, and the coming of the Son of Man. (Catechism Q&A question 151) ➤ Jesus illustrated the main content of the gospels through more than 40 parables recorded in the first three Gospel books (Matthew, Mark, and Luke). (Catechism Q&A question 150)
References: Catechism Q&A questions 89-90, 114, 135, 137, 150-151; Bible verses: Luke 17:21, John 3:13, John 3:16,	

1. What does the word "gospel" mean?

2. What is the good news of THE gospel?

3. If the gospel is the good news, what is the bad news?

4. What is the evidence of the bridge being opened between man and God?

5. What are some of the responsibilities of a Christian mentioned in the video?

6. How did Jesus teach the gospel and make it understandable?

Point to Ponder: Think about why Jesus' life, death, resurrection, ascension, and promise to return are necessary for us as human beings.

Call to Action: Either as a whole group or in smaller groups, at some point before the next small group session, use your phone to make a news report for the good news of the gospel. If time allows, share them the next time the youth group gets together.

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Point to Ponder...

Call to Action...

Help spread the gospel: *Doctrine without borders*

I wonder... ➤ What is the Apostles' doctrine? ➤ Why is it called the Apostles' doctrine? ➤ Is the Apostles' doctrine taught today?	I believe... ➤ The Apostles' doctrine is the gospel of the life, death, resurrection, and return of Jesus (Catechism Q&A question 619) ➤ This message is referred to in the Bible as the apostles' doctrine because it is the message that the apostles preached and taught about after Jesus' ascension (Catechism Q&A question 619) ➤ The Apostles' doctrine is the message of Jesus and is still what is taught in the church today.
References: Catechism 6.4.1.4; Catechism Q&A questions #37, 392, 393, 619; Bible: Matthew 24:14, 28:19-20, Mark 16:20, Luke 9:6, John 3:16, Acts 2:42, Acts 8:12, Ephesians 5:15-17, Philippians 1:27, Colossians 3:16, 2 Timothy 3:16, 1 John 1:1-3, 1 John 3:16	

1. What does the word "doctrine" mean?

2. How are "the apostles' doctrine" and "the gospel of Jesus Christ" related?

3. Why did the apostles feel that they had to teach about Christ?

4. Is the apostles' doctrine still taught today?

5. Having heard the gospel message, what is our responsibility as Christians ?

Point to Ponder: The apostles of Jesus' time spread the same message we spread today thousands of years later.

Call to Action: Using the index cards with the "3:16" Bible verses on them from the hook activity, imagine that these few verses were the only passages of Scripture you had ever read. Write a paragraph in your own words summarizing what you know about the Christian faith based on these important verses

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Call to Action...

Help Spread the Gospel: *We the People*

I wonder... ➤ What is a creed? ➤ How are we like other Christian denominations?	I believe... ➤ A creed contains all the beliefs which the members of a particular religious denomination profess. It is by way of a creed that a religious denomination distinguishes itself from another. (Catechism Q&A question 29) ➤ Articles 1-3 constitute a binding element among all Christian denominations. (Catechism Q&A question 36)
References: Catechism Q&A questions 29, 31, 34-40, 366, 371, 407	

Read the Preamble to the US Constitution and discuss with the group. WE THE PEOPLE of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

1. What are the early church creeds that all Christian religions have in common?

2. What is included in the New Apostolic creed in addition to the content of the early church creeds?

3. What do all Christian denominations have in common?

4. How do we differ from other Christian denominations?

Point to Ponder: Why is it important to have established and consistent belief statements (as a church, family, or even personally) ?

Call to Action: This week, discuss your New Apostolic religion with a friend of a different religion and see what the two have in common.

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Call to Action...

Help Spread the Gospel: *Salvation is yours and mine*

I wonder...

- Why should I want salvation?
- How can I attain salvation?

I believe...

- Salvation liberates us from sin and prepares us for an eternal future with God. (Catechism Q&A question 247)
- Human beings attain salvation by believing in Jesus Christ and using the sacraments and the word of God in their lives. (Catechism Q&A question 250)

References: John 3:16-17, Acts 4:12 Catechism Q&A questions 247, 250, 253-259, 473

1. What does "salvation" mean? How does it relate to my life?

2. What do sacraments have to do with salvation?

3. How can we help point others to Christ and receive salvation?

Point to Ponder: Read Acts 4:12. Write your impressions in the space provided on the student sheet.

Call to Action: This week, tell one of your friends that Jesus makes salvation possible.

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Call to Action...

Help Spread the Gospel: *Why do I need to go to church?*

I wonder... ➤ Why does God want us to come together? ➤ What does the congregational experience offer? ➤ As a member of the NAC, what does God expect from me?	I believe... ➤ Believers desire and need to worship God in fellowship with one another. (Catechism Q&A questions 367, 613, 681) ➤ The divine service is an encounter between God and man. (Catechism Q&A questions 367, 370, 613, 624,626) ➤ I am expected to THRIVE. (Catechism Q&A question 628)
References: Catechism Q&A questions 367, 370, 613, 624,626, 628, 681 Bible: Matthew 16:18, Hebrews 10:24-25 THRIVE Membership Expectations booklet	

Read Matthew 16:18: "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."

1. For what two purposes do you think Christ created the church?

2. Why do you think God wants us to praise and worship together?

3. How you can encounter God (feel/experience His presence) during these different moments in the divine service?

- Singing hymns of praise and worship (give each pair a hymnal)
- Hearing the sermon message from the altar
- Praying individually, and as a congregation
- Participating in Holy Communion

Point to Ponder: Think about the different moments in the divine service and choose one to pray about so you will recognize and feel God's presence more.

A Call to Action: Leave your cell phone in the car next Sunday, so you can completely engage in every moment of the divine service experience. Be prepared to share how this was different from previous Sundays.

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Call to Action...

Help Spread the Gospel: *Sharing is Caring*

I wonder... ➤ How can I share the gospel? ➤ When do I share the gospel? ➤ How can I be a credible witness of the gospel?	I believe... ➤ I share the gospel through my conduct and interactions with others. (Q&A question 358) ➤ I am a representative of Christ at all times. (Q&A questions 286, 582) ➤ It is important to be loving and focus on the similarities that our Church shares with other beliefs. (Q&A question 749)
References: Catechism Q&A questions 286, 358, 582, 749, Bible: Matthew 6:19, Mark 12:30-31, John 8:7, Romans 1:15-16, Romans 12:21, Hebrews 11:1	

Read the following story: (Based on a true story)

A young Christian boy was in the hospital recovering from an illness. His roommate was a boy suffering from a terminal illness. The terminally ill boy told the Christian boy how afraid he was of dying. The Christian boy told him he didn't need to be afraid because Jesus loved him and wants to spend eternity with him. The Christian boy explained that God loves him so much He sent Jesus to die on the cross so his sins could be forgiven, and that God will send Jesus again to take those who love Him and believe in Him, dead and alive, to heaven to be with Him. The terminally ill boy said he didn't know Jesus and was concerned Jesus wouldn't be able to find him after he died. The Christian boy looked at his roommate and noticed how small he was and then told him, "Jesus knows you, but just in case, raise your hand so He sees you." The next morning the Christian boy woke up to find the bed next to him empty. He asked the nurse where his roommate was, and she replied he had passed away during the night, and that when she found him, strangely, he had one arm raised above his head.

1. How did the boy share the gospel?

2. Why is confidence important in our profession of the gospel?

3. Rather than meeting in a hospital room, imagine the boys bumped into each other at school, knocking each other's books to the ground. Should the Christian boy share the same message?

4. How can I be a credible witness of the gospel?

Point to Ponder: Think about why you believe the gospel is important to share with others.

A Call to Action: This week, share the gospel in some way each day, either in your conduct towards others or by telling them about it. Even sharing a Bible verse on social media can have an impact.

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Call to Action...

Help Spread the Gospel: *Feed the hungry*

I wonder... ➤ Why should I help those in need? ➤ How am I supposed to serve those in need? ➤ How does helping others in need spread the gospel?	I believe... ➤ We are called to meet the physical and spiritual needs of others. (Catechism Q&A question 155) ➤ God expects us to love and serve those around us wherever possible, not just when it is convenient, and however possible. (Catechism Q&A question 286) ➤ Because of the love Christ has shown me, I am willing to sacrifice to serve others and share His love with them. (Catechism Q&A questions 177, 283).
References: Matthew 25: 35-36, Catechism Q&A questions 155, 177, 283, 286	

1. Why should I help those in need?

2. How am I supposed to serve those in need?

3. What are some things you must do in order to feed, clothe, and visit those in need?

4. How does helping others in need spread the gospel?

Point to Ponder: Think about God as the One who knows all your needs and can fulfill them.

Call to Action: Over the next week, pay attention to the people around you. Can you find someone who is in need? (This may require you to talk with people to discover any needs they may have.) Make a plan, using some of the ideas brainstormed in the lesson, of how you will help this person in the week following your time of observation.

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Call to Action...

Help Spread the Gospel: *Do You Forgive as Much as You Are Forgiven?*

I wonder... ➤ How am I supposed to forgive? ➤ Why should I be forgiving? ➤ How does forgiving help spreading the gospel?	I believe... ➤ I must forgive and show mercy to others constantly. (Catechism Q&A question 649) ➤ God is the judge and takes an account of offenses. (Catechism Q&A question 58) ➤ Because God is gracious and forgives us, He expects us to likewise forgive those who have wronged us. The gospel is a message of reconciliation. We can demonstrate that by pursuing reconciliation with our neighbor. (Catechism Q&A questions 638 and 651)
References: Catechism Q&A questions 58, 638, 649, 651 ; Bible verses: Matthew 18:21-35, Mark 11:25, Romans 12:18	

Read through the Parable of The Unforgiving Servant again and then answer the following questions:

1. Why does God want us to continue to forgive others even when they have wronged us numerous times?

2. Why is it necessary to forgive others in God's eyes?

3. Thinking about the balloon hook activity, what effect does it have on our lives when we do not forgive others and when we are not forgiven?

4. When you finally make the decision to forgive someone, what impact does it have on you, the other person, as well as God?

Point to Ponder: What factors contribute to you NOT forgiving someone?

Call to Action: Take time to think about someone who has wronged you recently and you have yet to forgive them. Pray to God for both the strength and kindness to forgive that person. Do your best to work on forgiving that person.

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Call to Action...

Help Spread the Gospel: *Love Your Neighbor*

I wonder... ➤ To whom am I to show love and care? ➤ How am I expected to love and care for others?	I believe... ➤ My neighbor is anyone in need of kindness. (Catechism Q&A questions 155, 287) ➤ I am expected to do all that I can to help those who are suffering. (Catechism Q&A questions 285, 286)
References: Catechism Q&A questions 155, 285 – 288; Bible verses: Luke 10: 25-37, John 13: 34-35	

Luke 10:25-37 And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" So he answered and said, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbor as yourself.'" And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live." But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side.

But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.' So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?"

1. Who are we supposed to care for and show love to?

2. How can we become more like the Good Samaritan?

3. Is it harder to help someone that is different than you are? Why or why not?

Point to Ponder: Refer back to the parable of the Good Samaritan and think about the 3 men who encountered the man on the side of the road. Even though Jews and Samaritans did not get along, he went above and beyond to help him.

Call to Action: This week, every time you see a person, remind yourself that this is someone that Jesus Christ died for. Jesus loves them, and so should you.

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Call to Action...

Help spread the gospel: *Living and Leading Like Christ*

I wonder... ➤ How should I treat those whose sin is obvious? ➤ Should I ignore the sins of others? ➤ How is living and leading like Christ spreading the gospel?	I believe... ➤ I should not focus on the sin of others, but reflect on my own sinful nature. (Romans 14:12) ➤ I should not accept sinful behavior, but should accept the sinner and seek to save him/her by leading him/her to Christ. ➤ This is demonstrated by admission of my own sin and my need for Christ's redeeming power. Christ makes us new and we have the opportunity to demonstrate how a relationship with Him impacts our lives. (2 Corinthians 5:17)
References: Bible: John 8:4-11, Romans 14:12-13, 2 Corinthians 5:17, 1 Peter 2:24	

1. Today we read about the woman caught in adultery. How do you think she felt when she was caught? What do you think she expected to happen?

2. Have you ever had an experience where you should have been punished but weren't? How did you feel?

3. How can you show Christ's love to others who sin?

Point to Ponder: Think about a situation where you knew someone sinned. How did you react – did you want them to experience the consequences of their sin? Did you react as Jesus would?

Call to Action: Think about something you've asked to be forgiven for. How relieved were you to be able to know you could access Christ's salvation? Share your feelings with a friend or family member.

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Call to Action...

Help spread the gospel: *Am I a Peace Breaker, Faker, or Maker?*

I wonder, when in conflict... ➤ How can I glorify God? ➤ Why should I look at my own faults? ➤ How should I approach someone who has caused conflict? ➤ How can I forgive when someone has hurt me deeply?	I believe... ➤ When I resolve conflict God's way, I glorify Him and serve others. ➤ When I consider my own faults, it's easier to overlook the faults of other's. ➤ When I love my neighbor, I can help them see where they need to change. ➤ When I am hurt deeply, I can rely on God's abundant grace to help me forgive others.
References: Bible: Matthew 5:23-24, Matthew 7:5, Galatians 6:1, 1 Corinthians 10:31	

Read the following scenarios and choose option A, B, or C in regards to how you would respond to each situation. You will have 3 minutes to complete the exercise (be honest and to go with your "gut reaction"). Do not share your answers with anyone. When finished, tally how many A responses you have, B responses, and C responses.

(scenarios taken from "The Peacemaker Student Edition", Sande, 2008)

- You clash with a friend who has incredibly strong opinions. You try hard to see her point, but she doesn't care much about yours.
 - You tell her she's prejudiced and doesn't know what she's talking about.
 - You listen and pretend you agree, but you really don't.
 - You find her later, when she's more calm, and let her know you would like to hear more about her opinion, and would like to share your opinion with her.
- You resent the coach who sidelines you for a missed play. You want to mouth off, but you also want to keep your spot on the team.
 - You gossip to your teammates about how unfair your coach is.
 - You decide to quit the team.
 - You go to your coach after practice and ask what skills he recommends you work on.
- Your parents set boundaries you don't think you need. They say "safe", you say "overprotective".
 - You fight with your parents and tell them they are treating you like a 2-year old.
 - You go to your room, slam the door, and don't talk to them for several days.
 - You ask if a family meeting could be scheduled so the boundaries can be discussed together as a family.
- You get caught in a verbal crossfire of racial battles in your school or neighborhood.
 - You join in one side because your friends have been mistreated by one of the groups involved.
 - You don't get involved and don't tell anyone because it's pretty typical behavior in your school or neighborhood.
 - You contact a counselor or neighborhood watch leader and share your concern about the tension between these two groups.
- Your history class is taught by a teacher who is famous for confusing lectures, and when you go and ask him for help, you get treated like it is your fault that you don't understand.
 - You tell him he is the worst teacher you've ever had and you've learned nothing in his class.
 - You blame him for your confusion because his lectures don't make sense.
 - You ask if you could review your notes from his last lecture with him, so he can clear up any misconceptions or misunderstandings.

Point to Ponder....

Think about a recent conflict you had. Did your response classify you as a peacemaker, breaker, or faker?

A Call to Action....

Write down a few tips for yourself to help you be a peacemaker in future conflicts you may find yourself in.

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Point to Ponder...

Call to Action...

Help spread the gospel: *IGNITE*

How would you summarize the message of the gospel?

What would you say to someone that claims the gospel is just about a man that lived thousands of years ago and that it isn't relevant for us today?

How can you align your life to the gospel and teaching of Jesus Christ?

Is there anyone that the gospel isn't for?

Is there an area of your life that the gospel just doesn't apply to? Why or why not?

How have you spread the gospel in your life so far?

A Point to Ponder....

- God wants the gospel message to be spread to everyone.

A Call to Action...

- This week, write a letter/prayer to God about the thing that stuck with you the most from this "H" semester. You can thank Him for it, you can ask Him for help in growing in it - just talk with Him about it.