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Developing a Relationship With God Through Prayer

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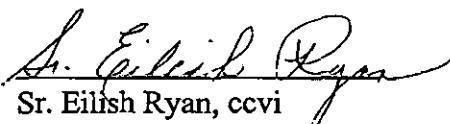
DEVELOPING A RELATIONSHIP
WITH GOD THROUGH PRAYER

A Practium
Presented to the Pastoral Institute,
The University of the Incarnate Word, in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts in
Religious Studies

by

Diane Louise Brown, BA

Approved by:


Sr. Eilish Ryan, ccvi
Faculty Advisor

Date: April 1, 1998

This project is dedicated to my
husband Mark and my three children,
Rema, Stan and Irene, who have
given me their love, support and
patience during my studies.

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OVERVIEW OF THE NEED:

Providence High School, established in 1951, is a private, Catholic secondary institution for girls, separately incorporated and sponsored by the Sisters of Divine Providence of San Antonio, Texas. The Providence High School program aims to educate young women about the concepts, skills, and understanding they need to lead meaningful and purposeful lives. It also promotes a value system and faith dimension that will direct them to make responsible, Christian choices in their personal lives and future careers. The school has sought to develop within the students a positive self-image and a personal pride in womanhood and also a sense of reality about the world and a desire to serve others with an awareness of personal leadership potential. The student body at Providence High School is composed predominantly of Hispanic, middle class income, who come from across the Archdiocese of San Antonio.

The mission of Providence High School is to provide quality education to young women in an academic community which is grounded in and permeated by trust in a provident God who loves and cares for all creation. The mission also promotes that each person is called by God to be actively involved in bringing about justice, peace, freedom and love. The school is committed to providing an educational program that meets the needs of all students. This includes an honors program, college prep and a career bound track. The school strives to educate young women in the concepts, skills and understandings that they will need in the world. It also tries to instill a value system and faith dimension that will direct students to make positive choices in their lives. It develops in all students self-knowledge, willingness to claim and develop their gifts, and pride in their womanhood. Providence hopes to foster in students an awareness of personal leadership potential and commitment to work for justice and service to others and the transformation of their church and world. Finally, the ultimate goal will be to engage others in the mission of Providence High School.

Since I am a member of the faculty in the Religion Department it would seem that I could be a influential component of the Providence Community. It is my aim to promote and support the philosophy of the school so that this philosophy can have meaning in the lives of the young women who attend Providence High School.

Some of my goals are to deepen an awareness of a trust in a loving Provident God who cares for all creation and to foster and encourage in each student an awareness that as a woman she has a unique contribution to make to the church and society. I also hope to assist in their understanding and acceptance of their responsibility for Christian moral decision especially those that touch on critical life issues in our society today.

In building on the goals and the mission that Providence High School has established for each young woman that attends the school, my aim is to develop an awareness of who God is in their lives. I plan to use a variety of ways to bring the girls into a deeper relationship with God through their prayer life. I hope to introduce them to a variety of ways that prayer can be expressed. I would like for the girls to realize that there are many ways to talk to God and have a relationship with Him. I will use journaling, group reflection, group discussions and finally retreats for the sophomore class. The goal is to deepen their perception of who God is for them. Ultimately my hope is to make their faith take on a deeper awareness and be something that will be part of their lives long after they have graduated from Providence High School.

PASTORAL RESPONSE:

In St. Paul's letter to the Corinthians we read, "There are many parts but one body". Through my religion classes I hope to make the students see that they are all called into the one body by their Baptism. They begin to respond to this call by learning what their relationship with God is. God invites everyone to know and love him. In Mark 2:17 it suggests that, God invites us to follow him and he will make us fishers of men. This is saying that we are all called by God to be disciples to understand and spread the "good news" and reach out with love and understanding to members of our community. With prayer and guidance I hope to deepen the students' relationship with God. I pray that they will be touched by the challenge to grow in their faith process. I would like for the lives of the students to be enriched with a greater understanding of Church, of worshipping, sharing and caring about the members of their family and community. Sacred Scripture teaches about the importance of community and the importance of prayer in our lives. These goals can be reached by first helping the students deepen their love of God and being aware of their relationship with him.

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION:

We are called as catechists to minister by providing appropriate faith development opportunities to the people within our church communities. We are asked to communicate the Word of God in order to deepen people's faith. The Adult Renewal and Basic Catechist Formation Program Manual presents a five step plan for ministers to follow:

- To develop:
1. Spiritual formation as a minister of the word;
 2. Scriptural and theological learning related to life;
 3. Catechetical skills;
 4. Encouragement to further study;
 5. Experience of the Archdiocese as church.¹

The development of the youth is each person's responsibility who ministers to the church. On March 6, 1985 Pope John Paul II stated that "The formation of catechists is an essential element of the common task for the development and the vitality of the church. In some places one can say that the church lives, thanks to the work of catechists".²

Ministry involvement asks every individual to stretch themselves spiritually, intellectually, and emotionally. Every individual should be challenged because the "vineyard" is large. Ministry may even ask an individual to change some aspect of the ecclesiastical system. People should hunger for a vision of what they can be. The baptized have many gifts to make the vision of the church a reality. These gifts need to be discovered in an actual pastoral setting. To discover our gifts we need a supportive environment of a discerning community. All ministers need to be convinced that they have a mission here on earth. For people to find their ministry in the "vineyard" may take a certain amount of discernment.

Among the theological principles which guide the different ministries of the church is an awareness of being sent on a mission. "Apostle" means "messenger". It is of the very nature of ministry to be an ambassador sent by someone or by some church. We see in Matthew 10:5 and in Luke 9:2 that Jesus "sends" his disciples on their mission. In fact, in sending them he gave them rather specific instructions: "Go no where among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel". In Acts 13:3 the community of Antioch sent and commissioned Paul and Barnabas. The imposition of hands in this case is not an ordination in the usual sense of the word, but a missionary calling. The sending of

teachers and prophets is immediately seen as an action of the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:4). Parish pastoral councils and parish communities who commission their DRE's, teachers and ministers are following good biblical practice.

While everyone searches for their work in the "vineyard", they need to be aware that they are called by God to fulfill God's plan, will and mission. There may be a variety of ways in which God reveals that call, often through the gifts that we already possess. God may also call us through the changing needs of the community and the world. As was stated in the Handbook of Lay Ministry by Rademacher,

There is a need to be aware that God, as a jealous lover, is constantly calling the beloved, often through new needs and new situations. While the call comes from inside through faith and personal gifts, it also comes from outside discernment. All these outside factors are part of the wider, and more difficult, obedience to which we are called.³

Rademacher also suggests that it is up to each person to shape their ministry and find their place both through "call" and through the "sending". We need to be aware of these elements in our ministry. The call to ministry is never finished in a one-time happening. It continues daily as part of God's ongoing covenant of love. Our call to continue God's mission is never finished. Rademacher also suggests that as a minister you are also accountable to God, the giver of gifts. You do not become the owner of God's gifts but the giver of gifts. You do not become the owner of God's gifts but their steward. As Jesus looked for figs on the fig tree (Mt 21:19), so God looks for fruitfulness from your ministry, the building of the church and the reign of God.⁴

It was in response to these needs in ministry of the Catholic community that I sought to share my gifts in developing the students relationship with God through prayer. Shaping the students relationship with God would help them to recognize God's constant love for them. This will also deepen their spiritual lives and help them understand that when they are loving, caring, forgiving, and living Christian values that they are the domestic church. It is in developing these values that they in turn will one day hopefully choose in ways to minister to their community. If they develop throughout the school year in their religion classes, a deeper relationship with God, then the activities that were introduced were a

success. From the responses written on their evaluations, I think the goal was achieved for the most part.

NOTES:

1. Adult Renewal And Basic Catechist Formation Program Manual (Copyrighted by San Antonio Archdiocesan Catechetical Center; Oct.1991),4.
2. Catechesi Tradendae, On Catechesis In Our Times; An Apostolic Exortation of His Holiness; (Washington D.C.: USCC Office of Publishing and Promotion Services, 1985),6.
3. William J. Rademacher, Lay Ministry: (New York, 1991), 212.
4. Rademacher,p.189.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

My area of ministry is teaching the sophomore religion class at Providence High School. I would like the students to develop a deeper relationship with God. This project will be an attempt to bring these students into a deeper understanding of themselves and their church community. The ultimate goal is that the students will grow spiritually by the grace of God.

The time period for this project will be from August 1997 to March 1998. I will start with several surveys and other forms which will give an overview of where the students are presently in their faith development. We will proceed on a weekly basis to develop their love and relationship with God, using the textbook as a basis for the themes. The students will be given different activities that they will work on individually as well as in groups to expand their prayer life.

GOALS:

- A. To develop in the students at Providence High School a deeper perception of who God is in their life.
- B. To foster and encourage in the students a deeper relationship with God which builds on their present relationship.
- C. To increase the variety and comfort of prayer for the students.
- D. To enable the students to ask themselves what they need for their spiritual journey.

OBJECTIVES:

- A. To create a survey to discover what the students at Providence think, feel and want in their faith journey with God.
- B. To create a focus group within the Religion Department at Providence which will assist in the development of ideas that will reach the goals of the project.

- C. To introduce the students to journaling, leading prayers in the classroom and group discussion.

PLAN OF ACTION:

Various activities are planned to develop what the religion textbook presents. This will provide opportunities to develop and deepen the students love of God through prayer. It is important for the students to realize and develop their sharing of the love of Jesus by their concern for one another. In John 4:13 it suggests that God loves all Christians and reality should be a share in that love through which the Spirit transmits to all of us Christ's life, by which we become God's children.

Specifically, I intend to incorporate in the daily lessons variety of ways to pray and talk to God. The hope would be to take the lessons that we will be studying and help the students see that it does have meaning in their own lives today. I plan through surveys to discover where each student is in their relationship with God. Most important of all I hope that the students will realize the sharing of the love of Jesus by our experience of God in our lives.

FOCUS GROUP:

In order to broaden the decision making and to establish procedures to be carried out in developing the students relationship with God, I established a focus group. The group helped in the choices that I introduced this year in our Religion Classes. They also assisted in the ways that the different tasks were accomplished.

The most likely choice for my focus group was the members of the Religion Department. Angela Gokelman, who is head of the department, along with five other religion teachers, helped with their advice so that I was able to accomplish the different goals. By establishing this group, it was to help not only in decision making on the activities that I choose, but also in the support that I needed in achieving the goals. We met at least once a month as a group and more often with certain teachers. Kateri Martinez, who teaches the other sophomore religion class, and I met on almost a daily basis. She was going to implement a lot of the same material with her class so that all the sophomore classes would be exposed to the same activities.

The focus group operated effectively because everyone was already accepted as a Department at Providence High School. In coming together, we moved beyond the support in order to achieve a common purpose. The purpose was to bring the students to a deeper relationship with God in their lives. We were empowered by our awareness that as a focus group we shared the same hopes and needs for the students that we teach. I felt that working together for a common goal helped me to stay organized and it also gave me support throughout the year. In establishing this group, we all realized that this is a goal that we all believe in, the future of our church. The goal that we hoped to achieve with the students is rooted in the values of the gospels. I wanted to expose the students to various forms of prayer life that are related to their lesson themes that would hopefully deepen their love of God. In the sophomore religion class, the study is in Scripture, Old Testament and New Testament. I feel it is important for the students to realize that the Bible can have meaning in their lives today. It is important for each student to realize that the Bible was not only something that was written over 2,000 years ago but that it also can have a strong influence in their lives today. With the help and guidance of my focus group at Providence High School I hope to achieve this goal. My aim was to give each student a deeper relationship with God through prayer activities that

they would take with them long after they have graduated from Providence High School.

NEEDS ASSESSMENTS:

On the following pages are the surveys and other forms used in getting information from the students. It was important to know that these students came from all parts of the diocese of San Antonio. In knowing what middle school they attended, I was able to understand the amount of Religious Education they had up to this point in their lives. The other forms gave me a little personal knowledge about each student. This I felt was important as we began to expand on their relationship with God. In knowing their likes and dislikes and some of their own personal feelings gave us a starting point to begin and develop their prayer life and their relationship with God.

Name: Kirstin Evans

Period: E-1

Address: 3107 Autumn Lane 78219

Students Phone: # 661-9674 Parents # 661-9674

Last School Attended: St. Benedict's

Parents Name: Don and Glenis Evans

Talents/Hobbies - swimming, listening to music, playing guitar, talking on phone, hanging out with friends

Name: Nkechi Okafo

Period: E-1

Address: 3114 Climbing Rose St. 78230

Students Phone: # 697-9042 Parents # 697-3457

Last School Attended: St. Martin Hall

Parents Name: Elizabeth Okafo

Talents/Hobbies - I play clarinet, piano, and violin. I love to bake/cook and am in Colorguard for our band (beginner). I also love talking on the phone.

Name: Norma Olivera

Period: # (4)

Address: 8906 Hankia

Students Phone: #924-7452

Parents # same

Last School Attended: St. James the Apostle School

Parents Name: Ray and Adel Olivera

Talents / Hobbies - I used to play the flute ^{when I was younger}. I own a dog that I enjoy taking care of. I like to go to play. I like to read and listen to music. I like to spend time with family and friends.

Name: Briana Muñoz ☺

Period: H 4

Address: 1009 Claver San Antonio Tx. 78201

Students Phone# 733-5690

Parents# 733-9510

Last School Attended: St. Mary Magdalen

Parents Name: Beppie Muñoz

Talents/Hobbies - I am in the Letergical Choir.

here at Providence, I am in a bowling league,
and instead of a favorite animal I have a
favorite insect which is the butterfly and ladyl
I also like any type of flower.

NAME Mpriseda Valle ADVISOR _____

ADVISOR Mrs. Brown RM 107

PERSONAL PROGRESS REPORT

INSTRUCTIONS: Please answer the following questions as completely and honestly as possible. Your responses are meant to help us help you.

What is the best thing that has happened to you since school started last month?

That I have more confidence in myself to achieve my goals.

Which of your classes do you do your best work in?

Spanish, English, Biology, World History, Religion

Which of your classes are your hardest?

Geometry

Have you gone to TUTORING for help in classes you are having trouble with? If not why not?

Yes. For Geometry

Have you joined any clubs/organizations? Name.

CLC, Spanish Club, FMCC?, MED PREP Program

What has been the single most difficult thing for you to adjust to at Providence?

Losing some friends. All of the negative gossip.

If you could change anything at Providence what would it be?

All of the gossip going around about everyone. Change boring classes to exciting ones.

Read the statement on the back of your POLLY PROVET card and write a paragraph describing the ways in which you have tried to be the ideal PROVET. You may use the back of this sheet.

I feel I have done a pretty good job of trying to be an ideal Proviet. I've respected others and their belongings. I've been of service to others. I've grown closer to God and I am loyal to my ideals and values.

NAME Luisa Escalante ADVISOR _____

ADVISOR Mrs. Brown RM 107

PERSONAL PROGRESS REPORT

INSTRUCTIONS: Please answer the following questions as completely and honestly as possible. Your responses are meant to help us help you.

What is the best thing that has happened to you since school started last month?

I'm making a lot more friends, that we got a day off.

Which of your classes do you do your best work in?

I'm doing well in Keyboarding, Religion, Spanish.

Which of your classes are your hardest?

English, Geometry, and Biology are my hardest.

Have you gone to TUTORING for help in classes you are having trouble with? If not why not?

I haven't gone because I haven't had time, but I'm planning on going.

Have you joined any clubs/organizations? Name.

I have joined Spanish and Art club.

What has been the single most difficult thing for you to adjust to at Providence?

The block schedule has been the most difficult.

If you could change anything at Providence what would it be?

I guess the schedule, and my lunch period.

Read the statement on the back of your POLLY PROVET card and write a paragraph describing the ways in which you have tried to be the ideal PROVET. You may use the back of this sheet.

I try to obtain all the standards that Providence expects of me, with full pride.

0

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PERSONAL INVENTORY SHEET

Student Katie Roberts Birthdate June 3, 1982
Parent(s)/Guardian: Sue Roberts Best time to call After 5:30 pm.
Grady Roberts Home Number (210) 334-8205
Mother's Work # (210) 334-4108
Father's Work # (210) 334-3294/61

YOU ARE LIVING WITH (X ONLY ONE)

- (X) both parents () father only () mother & step-father
() mother only () legal guardian () father & step-mother
() other _____

THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN LIVING AT HOME:

Number of older brothers 1 Number of older sisters _____
Number of younger brothers _____ Number of younger sisters _____

Others _____ Whom? _____

What language is spoken at home? English

Elementary school(s) attended? St. Anthony Yrs. 4

Did any of the women in your family attend Providence? NO

Whom: _____

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. List extra activities and special interests.

Cheerleading

2. What are your responsibilities after school? _____ Work _____ # hours per week;
_____ Babysitting _____ # hours per week; Other (specify) _____
_____ # hours per week

3. What are your best subjects?

Science & Religion

4. What subjects do you find difficult?

I have no Idea.

5. How much homework were you assigned in 7th and 8th grade (time required to accomplish)?

About an hour

6. What subject(s) did you usually have the most assignments in?

History

7. How do you keep track of your homework assignments?

I wrote them in my ~~book~~ date book

8. How good are you in meeting deadlines? Very good ☒ Pretty good
I have a hard time meeting deadlines.

9. Do you have a certain place to study at home? Where?

Yes at my Desk
Is this a good place to study?

yes

10. When do you usually do your homework?

When I get home from school.

11. Who usually helps you with your homework?

My mom.

12. Do you keep a record of your grades for each class?

yes.

13. Were you in any special programs in elementary school? (Gifted, Band, Sports, etc)

Cheer leading

14. Your grades in the past have been Above average ☒ Average Below average

15. What grades do your parents expect you to get?

A's & B's

16. How much reading do you do outside of homework? Newspapers ☒ Books

☒ Magazines

17. Do you have a computer in your home?

NO

18. Name someone whom you admire. Why?

My old teacher Mr. McCurdy because he was carrying I worked hard so did he.

19. Do you have any special worries about this school year?

Being accepted.

20. How important do you feel it is to do well in high school? Explain.

I feel I need to do my best all 4 years
so I will be able to get into the school
I want to.

21. Do you have a particular or special goal for your first year in high school?

To do well.

NAME Sara Smith HMRM 101
ADVISOR Ling Smith RM _____

PERSONAL PROGRESS REPORT

INSTRUCTIONS: Please answer the following questions as completely and honestly as possible. Your responses are meant to help us help you.

What is the best thing that has happened to you since school started last month?

I got my 2 big sisters they are really nice. They make me feel at home. Everyone is very nice and I'm happy I met a lot of new friends. I do my best work in Theatre Arts and Science.

Which of your classes are your hardest?

Religion and algebra are my hardest classes.

Have you gone to TUTORING for help in classes you are having trouble with?

If not, why not?

I have not gone to any tutoring because I am passing all my classes and none of my teachers.

Have you joined any clubs/organizations? Name. I think I have asked in I'm in cheerleading & I want to be in [to join]

What has been the single most difficult thing for you to adjust to at Providence?

Getting to my locker in between classes and getting to class on time.

If you could change anything about Providence, what would it be?

Longer periods in between classes.

Read the statement on the back of your POLLY PROVET card and write a paragraph describing the ways in which you have tried to be the ideal PROVET. You may use the back of this sheet.

I've tried to be the ideal Provect. It's hard for me to adjust to my new school. I try hard and my grades will go up as soon as I learn how to adjust. I'm a cheerleader so I've got Provect spirit and I'm pretty nice to everyone I meet.

(11)

PERSONAL INVENTORY SHEET

Student Sara Smith Birthdate May 20, 1982

Parent(s)/Guardian:

Robert C Smith (grandpa)

Best time to call 300-10:00pm

Home Number 674-6305

Mother's Work #

Father's Work #

YOU ARE LIVING WITH (X ONLY ONE)

() both parents () father only () mother & step-father

() mother only (X) legal guardian () father & step-mother

(X) other grandfather (legal guardian)

THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN LIVING AT HOME:

Number of older brothers 0

Number of older sisters 0

Number of younger brothers 0

Number of younger sisters 0

Others Whom?

What language is spoken at home? English

Elementary school(s) attended? St. John Bosco Yrs. 9

Did any of the women in your family attend Providence? yes

Whom: my Aunt Liz

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. List extra activities and special interests.

Cheerleading + horseback-riding (not school related)

2. What are your responsibilities after school? Work # hours per week;

 Babysitting # hours per week; Other (specify) ,

 # hours per week

3. What are your best subjects?

Science, Health

4. What subjects do you find difficult?

algebra, English, Religion

5. How much homework were you assigned in 7th and 8th grade (time required to accomplish)? 2 hours

6. What subject(s) did you usually have the most assignments in?

English, Religion

7. How do you keep track of your homework assignments?

Student planner

8. How good are you in meeting deadlines? ☐ Very good ☒ Pretty good
☐ I have a hard time meeting deadlines.

9. Do you have a certain place to study at home? Where?

my room
Is this a good place to study?

yes

10. When do you usually do your homework?

in the evenings

11. Who usually helps you with your homework?

my grandpa

12. Do you keep a record of your grades for each class?

not all classes but some

13. Were you in any special programs in elementary school? (Gifted, Band, Sports, etc.)

no (to busy with horseback-riding)

14. Your grades in the past have been ☐ Above average ☒ Average ☐ Below average

15. What grades do your parents expect you to get?

it doesn't matter as long as I try my best.

16. How much reading do you do outside of homework? ☐ Newspapers ☐ Books

☒ Magazines

17. Do you have a computer in your home?

no

18. Name someone whom you admire. Why?

my grandpa, b/c he is a single parent raising

19. Do you have any special worries about this school year? ^{without losing me}

not really except for the school work getting harder

20. How important do you feel it is to do well in high school? Explain.

Very important because I want to go to
Texas A&M to go to veterinary school.

21. Do you have a particular or special goal for your first year in high school?

just to make good grades and
good friends.

PRAYER:

This section shows some of the variety of ways prayer was brought into the classroom. Each student had a day assigned when they were to prepare a service for the class. Each day after roll was taken, religion class began with prayer led by a different student each day. On the following pages are the guidelines that they were asked to use. Basically they were asked to choose a theme for their prayer service, to select readings from the Bible, and to allow students to include their own petitions if they wished to do so. Their closing prayer could be done in a variety of ways, such as a poem, a song, or a quiet meditation. The hope was that they would be able to put their own flavor into the prayer service that they shared with their classmates. It gave them the opportunity to give to the rest of the class something that they created and with which they were comfortable.

PRAYER SERVICE GUIDE

THEME:

ENVIRONMENT (physical &/or musical):

1st READING:

PSALM:

RESPONSE:

(2ND READING:)

PETITIONS:

CLOSING:

15	Theme
20	Environment
10	Appropriateness of Environment
15	Appropriateness of 1st Reading(s)
15	Appropriateness of Psalm
5	Appropriateness of Response
5	Petitions
10	Appropriateness of Closing
10	Delivery (pronunciation, smoothness, posture, etc.)

PRAYER SERVICE GUIDE LINES

LEADER: O God, come to my assistance.

ALL: O Lord, make haste to help me!

LEADER: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit

ALL: As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen!

1st Psalm (from New American Bible) (Leader prays the first verse. Class alternates sides)

Leader: Glory be

All: As it was

2nd Psalm

Gospel Reading (by Leader)

Petitions

Canticle of Mary (New American Bible Lk)
 (Leader prays first verse. Class alternates sides)

Leader: Glory be

All: As it was

Closing Prayer (Leader)

POSSIBLE POINTS = 100

1st Psalm 20pts

2nd Psalm 20pts

Gospel Reading 20 pts

Closing Prayer 20 pts

Do they follow a common theme?

If not, points will be taken off

Poise 20 pts points will be subtracted for mispronounced words, for unprepared readings, for laughing, or for keeping the class waiting. Prayer will begin as soon as the bell rings. A prayer service grade will count the same as a test .

When we were studying the creation stories in Genesis, we discussed that we cannot get caught up with the facts on how the world was created. Instead, we need to focus on the idea that God loved humanity so much that he created this beautiful universe. We had a meditation prayer on this idea and then the students were asked to express the beauty that they see in creation in a drawing. At the end of the meditation they were asked to bring up their drawing as their gift. The following page is an example of how one student expressed the beauty in our world that God created.

GOD CREATED EVERYTHING GOOD.



Amythe Vazquez Religion I - A

A+





Light

THE
Masterpiece of
Creation
(The Whole Earth)

plants
birds
sun

stars

trees

grass

love

clouds

sky

Peace

Love

people

animals

darkness

Light

man

water

leaves

Irma Hernandez
period: CG
Religion II
10-6-97

At Angenae
Good!

GROUP WORK:

The goal of this projects was to involve the students in prayer activities in small groups. This helped them to learn to work together and share their feelings. This first project was designed to make the students aware that the Stations of the Cross were taking place in their lives today. This tied in well with the four Gospels narratives that we were studying at the time. When were studying the Passion of Jesus, I wanted the students to realize that the Stations are present in their daily lives.

I asked the students to read the four Gospel narratives of the Passion. Each class was divided into four groups, and each group took one gospel account and was also given a traditional "Stations of the Cross" booklet to reflect on. The students were also asked to reflect on what was going on in their own lives and to create their own stations of the cross. The students also used the newspaper to reflect on the world events around them. Each group was asked to come up with four stations. We compiled the prayers and typed them and prayed as a class together. Some of the girls also created drawings of the stations that they created.

This prayer activity seemed very effective. The "Stations of the Cross" took on a deeper meaning for each student. By tying it in with our class lesson of the Passion stories of Jesus, it seemed to help the students relate to and understand what Jesus went through for humanity. The goal of this project was to help the students better understand the events that led up to and included Jesus' death and resurrection.

Another activity that the classes experienced as a group was a Reconciliation Prayer Service. Advent, I felt, would be an excellent time to share this experience with the students. We talked about reconciliation, and through feed back from the students I realized that most of them had not taken the opportunity to take part in reconciliation through their parishes. The Prayer Service took place in the following manner.

RECONCILIATION PRAYER SERVICE:

1. ENVIRONMENT - I felt this was important to set the mood. The room was darkened, background music, seats in a circle and a prayer table in the center with a candle on it and a empty basket.
2. OPENING PRAYER - We began by asking God to be with us in a special way and by calling to mind that we are all sinners and have made mistakes throughout our lives.
3. EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE - We looked back over our

lives and examined the different areas that we had failed to love God completely.

4. "DEAR GOD LETTERS"- Each student was asked to write a letter to God beginning with "I'm sorry for ...". When all the students were ready, they were asked to come up to the prayer table one at a time and put their letters in the empty basket and take a sealed envelope that was on the prayer table. When all the students had come up with their letter and received their envelope, they were told that they could open it. Inside each envelop, each student received a picture of a "smiling Jesus". This was to reinforce the fact that no matter what we do, God's love is always present.
5. CLOSING - We closed this prayer service with a story I Will Love You Forever.

The service was very effective and the students seemed very moved at the end of this reconciliation prayer service. Many students mentioned this prayer service in their evaluations.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS



1. Lord, there are so many misunderstandings and angry words in our lives. Help us accept the mistakes of others as you have accepted our own blindness and mistakes in life.
2. Compared to many people in the world, Lord, our problems seem small. Yet to us they seem big and they still hurt. They aren't easy either, Lord. But remembering you and your cross, maybe we can find strength to walk on.
3. Help us to be like you, Jesus. Help us not give up when things don't work out right in our own lives or in the lives of others. Pick us up, Jesus, and show us how to give our best effort in everything we do.
4. Thank you, Lord, for the gift of family and friends - people who are there when we need them. Teach us to show we appreciate their care - and show us how to care for others in the joys and the sorrows of their lives.
5. Sometimes, Lord, we need a good push or tug like Simon to help someone out. Don't let us fail these people. Lord, after all, it's really as if you yourself were asking our help. Show us how to make that extra effort.
6. Thank you, Lord, for the many ordinary Veronicas, - the ones who take a little time and go to a little trouble to do what we all should do: heal and comfort the tired and sick. Help us to be a little more thoughtful, Lord.
7. We need you, Jesus, to keep on going - to rise again in spite of the troubles in the world and in our lives. Hope is hard to come by, Lord help us find it.
8. Lord, how often we get wrapped up in our own problems and forget about others. Now is the time to start paying attention to the needs of those around us: please help us remember.
9. Love is always patient and trustful. We really need that, Lord, if we are going to keep picking ourselves up and helping others up. We all fall or make mistakes so often - teach us to understand and keep trying.
10. Lord, you taught us to love our enemies and pray for those who harm us. As you have forgiven and loved us, Jesus, may we love and forgive one another.
11. How often we hurt each other, Lord, and often for silly and unimportant reasons. Never let us drive a nail into anyone again, Lord - and never let us close our hands or our hearts to anyone around us, even if it does mean some pain.
12. Lord, you felt all the pain and suffering life can offer. You don't need our tears or words of sympathy. You need our presence, Lord, as you suffer and die today. Let us be there Lord; let us be there.
13. No matter how long we might live, Jesus, let us care about people in our daily life, especially those people in need. When we find them, Lord, we know we also find you.
14. Are we with you, Jesus? We hope so because this is our only hope - and the only hope for our world - to see you alive in everyone, everywhere. This is the Good News that started your Church; may it be our message and our belief today.

JOURNALING:

This section is devoted to prayer and reflection through various types of journaling. We started at the beginning of the school year. About two times a week the students would be given a topic to reflect on. Each student was asked to keep a journal section in their notebook. The students could share their feelings if they wished to, or simply keep it to themselves. Most of the topics related to their lessons, but it was also related to their own personal lives. It gave them the opportunity to look at their own lives in a spiritual way. As a teen, it seems that it is hard for some students to just spend quiet time with themselves and reflect on where their life is and where their relationship with God is at.

Many students really opened up to their true feelings and seemed to benefit from this type of reflection. Due to the one hundred minute class schedule, we were able to include this as part of our daily activity. My hope is that the students will continue to journal on their own and make it part of their own prayer and reflection time.

On the following pages are examples of some of the journaling topics that were assigned. At the beginning of the year, when we were discussing Yahweh and the relationship to the Hebrew people, I asked them to reflect on "How They See God" in their own life. They were given the handout with different images of God, as a starting point for them to begin their writing. Each journal entry always related in some way to the lesson in Scripture that we were studying, so that the Bible would take on more meaning in their lives today. The goal was to expose the students to a meaningful way to reflect and pray to God. As the year progressed, I discovered the length of their reflection papers also increased and most students became comfortable with the idea of journaling.

Eusabith Rodriguez
Aug 15, 1997

How Do I See God?

SOURCE OF ALL
BEING



AVENGER



ROCK

MOTHER
MOM



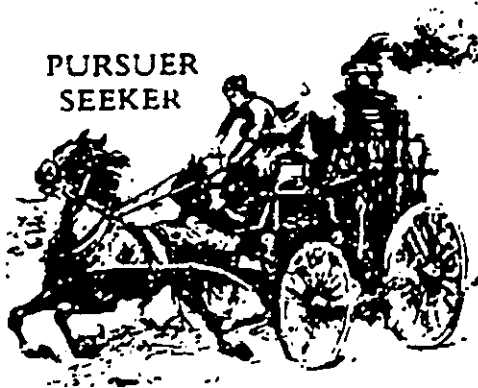
FRIEND

DIRECTOR

SPIRIT,
BREATH

THE HOLY ONE

PURSUER
SEEKER



LORD

WATCHER,
SPY,
"BIG
BROTHER"
(in the negative
sense)



JUDGE,
RECORD KEEPER

ARTIST

STILL, SMALL VOICE WITHIN

SPARK OF LIGHT
FLAME



MOST HIGH
ABOVE ALL
THINGS,
MIGHTY
ONE

PROTECTOR
SHIELD

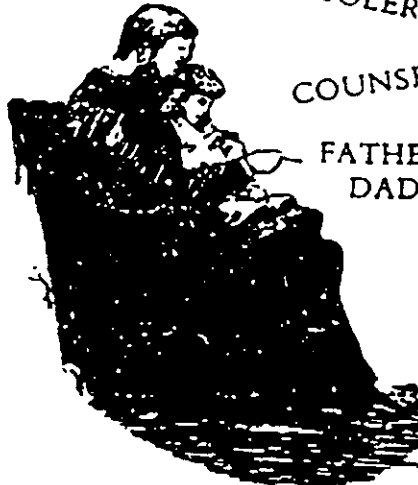


PUPPET-MASTER

CONSOLER

COUNSELOR

FATHER,
DAD



KING

SHEPHERD,
VINEKEEPER



WISDOM



How Do I See God?

Aug. 15

How I See God is a spark of light because he will guide me in a dark path when I need a guide for help. God will help in anyway he can. Spark of light I would know that it is God! I would always enjoy his help. When God helps me I would thank God!

NAME Victoria Treviño

DATE: 2/12/98

SPIRITUAL REFLECTION:

READ MATT 13:1-9

+ good insight

* I AM THE GROUND ON WHICH THE SEED OF GOD'S SOWING HAS FALLEN

WHAT KIND OF GROUND HAVE I BEEN LATELY?

Lately I have been on the ground with the thorns because everything that I have done cannot be undone and it is all coming up around me. Just as the ~~thorns~~ thorns grew up to choke the seeds, my problems that I had ignored are fast coming about me and suffocating me.

WHAT KIND OF GROUND WOULD I LIKE TO BE?

I would prefer to be on the rich soil because everything is plentiful and prosperous there. It seems as though the rich soil was put there with love and care. Here there are no worries because you are confident with your love of God and others.

HOW MIGHT I BEGIN TO BECOME WHAT I WANT TO BE?

One of the main things I should do to be on rich soil is learn to forgive others. I should also listen to what my heart tells me to do instead of my acquaintances. I should also be more open-minded and listen to others when they are trying to make peace.

NAME Quica Escalante DATE Feb 11, 1998

SPIRITUAL REFLECTION:

READ MATT 13:1-9

* I AM THE GROUND ON WHICH THE SEED OF GOD'S SOWING HAS FALLEN

WHAT KIND OF GROUND HAVE I BEEN LATELY?

I have been the ground of which there is little soil. I feel that the seed God has given me is too much for me to handle and so it withers away just as I'm letting all my problems wither me away. I have not been the rich soil, that has prayed or asked for God's help but I know I am very capable of.

WHAT KIND OF GROUND WOULD I LIKE TO BE?

I would like to be that rich soil, that produces fruit and looks so beautiful. Just as the rich soil, I would like to have God as my seed so that he can grow with me & my faith in him.

HOW MIGHT I BEGIN TO BECOME WHAT I WANT TO BE?

I might begin to become what I want to be by first establishing a strong foundation of trust with God and ask him for help; and be true to him. I need to be more open and understanding to what challenges come to me.

NAME

Jackie Alcalá

DATE:

2-12-98SPIRITUAL REFLECTION:

READ MATT 13:1-9

* good insight

* I AM THE GROUND ON WHICH THE SEED OF GOD'S SOWING HAS FALLEN

WHAT KIND OF GROUND HAVE I BEEN LATELY?

Lately I have been a rocky ground with little soil. Last year I felt I had so much faith, and ^{felt} that I could handle anything. A lot of problems and hardships arose in my life. I thought ~~I~~ I could handle them, but they kept getting worse. I realized I didn't have enough faith, or actually the amount of faith I thought I had. I started gining into my problems and lost some faith. I felt like I withered away.

WHAT KIND OF GROUND WOULD I LIKE TO BE?

I would ~~like~~ like to be rich soil that produces fruit. I want to restore my faith in God and make it stronger. I want to grow in my faith to God. I want to be strong enough to handle any problems that come my way. I don't want to die again, but continue to grow and be fruitful.

HOW MIGHT I BEGIN TO BECOME WHAT I WANT TO BE?

I might begin by reevaluating my priorities and getting them straight. I also have to evaluate myself and the problems I face. I need to go to church more often and listen to & apply the readings into my life. I need to learn to trust more. I also need to talk to others who have already begun the journey and get advice from them. Most importantly I need to open my heart more to ~~Jesus~~ God.

Paulette Cashner
Religion II / Per. 14
Feb. 9, 1998

Your History... Jesus' History

1. Fill in the following personal facts about yourself and Jesus.

For you ...

Politics in your time: Politics is a choice between democratic and republican. We, however, live in a democratic society.

Geographic sites in your area: Alamo

Religious influences in your culture: Archbishop Flores, Pope

Secular ideas in your culture: Music, Movies, Celebrity Scandals

Educational background: Catholic school, St. James the Apostle

Economic factors: One full-time working parent

Race: A combination of German and Mexican

Ethnic heritage: My mother is Mexican, my father is German

For Jesus ...

Politics in Jesus' time: Politics were controlled by the Romans

Geographic sites where Jesus lived: The Temple in Palestine

Religious influences in Jesus' culture: Jewish and Roman belief

Secular ideas in Jesus' culture: Ideas probably came from the Roman influence

Economic factors affecting Jesus: One parent as a full-time worker

Race of Jesus: Jewish

Ethnic heritage for Jesus: Mother and Father were Jewish

2. Discuss how these factors have shaped you. Speculate about how these factors may have influenced Jesus.

These factors have an influence on the people I have in my family, my home, and my religion. They also influence how I view other people's culture. This may have influenced Jesus in the same way. But, I think he may have been more influenced by the Roman's culture than his own. Economics seem to

Jackie Alcala
Religion - A
2-10-98

Your History... Jesus' History

1. Fill in the following personal facts about yourself and Jesus:

For you ...

Politics in your time: We live in a democratic society where people have the right to vote, speak, and freedom.

Geographic sites in your area: We have the Tower of America, the Alamo, the San Jose Missions, the zoo, malls, Sea World, Fiesta Texas, and the riverwalk.

Religious influences in your culture: 1) Church 2) education + 3) family 4) teachers 5) St. Mary Theresa.

Secular ideas in your culture:

- 1.) news 4.) friends/other teens
- 2.) music 5.) movie stars
- 3.) media

Educational background:

Went to private school since kindergarten.
Catholic education my whole life.

Economic factors: My mom is a teacher, and my dad does landscaping. They both work full-time.

Race: Hispanic

Ethnic heritage: Spanish + Mexican

For Jesus ...

Politics in Jesus' time: Under the rule of the oppressive Romans.

Geographic sites where Jesus lived: Villages with a temple and synagogues. A palace for the king. Palestine, Jordan River,

Religious influences in Jesus' culture: (God the Father (Jesus)), the Romans, Jesus

Secular ideas in Jesus' culture: They worshipped false gods and were greedy. Romans.

Economic factors affecting Jesus:

His father was a carpenter, and his mother stayed home and took care of the house.

Race of Jesus: Jewish

Ethnic heritage for Jesus: Jewish

2. Discuss how these factors have shaped you. Speculate about how these factors may have influenced Jesus.

These factors have shaped who I am because I have more freedom and rights, my parents both work and have a stable income to support me, and the religious influences in my life shaped me. They may have influenced Jesus a lot and the way he would go about preaching.

Esmeralda Rodriguez

Your History... Jesus' History

1. Fill in the following personal facts about yourself and Jesus.

For you ...

Politics in your time: yes, politics is in my life because my cousin is the ~~Congressman~~ United States Congressman & I am very involved in ~~politics~~ ^{politics}.

Geographic sites in your area: Alamo, ~~Valley~~ ^{Valley} of Americas, San Jose mission, mission Espada.

Religious influences in your culture: my school and CCO at church are ~~very~~ part of my culture, I'm a practicing catholic.

Secular ideas in your culture: my daughter's birthday is coming up so I am planning a ~~very~~ big party for her 1st birthday.

Educational background: I am a A student at my school, I am in 10th grade.

Economic factors: two full time workers, one owns a couple of businesses, & my mom is a teacher for self satisfaction. Economically we are ~~above~~ in the top 20% in the city.

Race: I am ~~part~~ ~~part~~ part hispanic, indian, french, royal blood (royalty), and spanish.

Ethnic heritage: I was born in a hispanic mexican way. I was talked to in Spanish all the time & visited Mexico ~~a lot~~ a lot, so I am pretty much like a mexican, but not totally.

For Jesus ...

Politics in Jesus' time: Yes, there were political things. Everybody thought that many of the 1st people who heard Jesus, understood a political message about an earthly Jewish Kingdom.

Geographic sites where Jesus lived:

There was Roman Palestine: Galilee, Judea, Samaria, Nazareth, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Cana, Capernaum, Bethany, Jericho, Temple.

Religious influences in Jesus' culture:

The people at the temple, the Rabbis influenced in.

Secular ideas in Jesus' culture:

Political controversies, Roman influence

Economic factors affecting Jesus:

He had a one income family. His father was a carpenter.

Race of Jesus:

He was Jewish.

Ethnic heritage for Jesus:

He was born Jewish & had all the beliefs of a Jew

2. Discuss how these factors have shaped you. Speculate about how these factors may have influenced Jesus.

If Jesus came from a wealthy family I don't think that he would even care about the poor. Growing up with the poor helped him understand how the poor feel.

Bertha mendoza
Religion II - E-1
August 22, 1997

Journal Writing

Write about the evidence for believing in God.

I'm not too sure about the evidence for believing in God. I do know that I believe in God because I have learned about God in my past 12 yrs. of going to a Catholic school. When I learn about him I believe everything about him and what he did for others. He has also do a lot for me and my family. My family and I have gone through many difficulties, but were still together hoping that God will always be there. I love God and I know he loves everybody!

God is always
with us even
in the hard times, we
need to believe it helps
us grow as a person.

Bertha mendoza
Religion II - 8
Sept. 8, 1997

Journal : How is God Calling you?

God is calling me by giving me guidance through everything I do in life.

Whenever I play basketball he helps me to have confidence in myself that I can do it no matter what.

If we believe in ourselves God will believe in us too. God is always with me making sure I make the right

choices. God strengthens me whenever the devil tries to take over.

Whenever I think about my future and education God is calling to me

I hope to go to college and become a doctor, but I'm still not sure of what kind of doctor. But when

I decide what to do God will be happy with it.

✓
good

Victoria Kypsa Nurino
Religion II 1-A
2/21/98

Jesus Activity Sharing Questions:

Which is your favorite image of Jesus?

What are some of the hardest things to believe about Jesus?

What are some things about Jesus that you wonder about?

What are some things that make it hard to follow Jesus?

Can you picture Jesus laughing, teasing others, crying, being angry, feeling lonely, full of joy?

My favorite image of Jesus is the one where he is gathered with the children, playing with them, talking to them, and listening to them. It reminds me that God has time for me even if He may have other things to worry about. Some things that make it hard to believe are that no one knows about Jesus' childhood. It's hard to relate to someone who was never a child. I also find it hard to believe that so many people ganged up ~~on~~ on one man and killed him. I don't understand ~~how~~ how fear and anger can be carried to such degrees & to the number of people it reached. It's also hard to believe that Jesus rose from the dead because it is so unimaginable. It's beyond my comprehension, as well, why Jesus had to suffer and die. I often wonder about all these questions and can never find a suitable answer. The Bible does not often depict Jesus as showing much emotion but I can picture him doing so because he was human and we all have feelings.

Monica Garcia
Religion - H period
February 23, 1998

Jesus Activity Sharing Questions:

Which is your favorite image of Jesus?

What are some of the hardest things to believe about Jesus?

What are some things about Jesus that you wonder about?

What are some things that make it hard to follow Jesus?

Can you picture Jesus laughing, teasing others, crying, being angry, feeling lonely, full of joy?

My favorite image of Jesus is Jesus as a brother. Someone you can go to when you need a friend or you have a problem. Someone to go to when you need advice. The hardest thing to believe about Jesus is that he was nice to his enemies or people that didn't like him even if they were mean to him. I wonder what Jesus was like as a teenager. How did he handle life. I also wonder what he looked like. Some things that make it hard to follow Jesus are when he wants us to be good and loving to everyone even if we don't like them. I can picture Jesus laughing, crying and full of joy but not teasing others, being angry or feeling angry.

Anna Marie Hols
February 23, 1998
Religion 2-E

Jesus Activity Sharing Questions

Which is your favorite image of Jesus?

What are some of the hardest things to believe about Jesus?

What are some things about Jesus that you wonder about?

What are some things that make it hard to follow Jesus?

Can you picture Jesus laughing, teasing others, crying, being angry, feeling lonely, full of joy?

my favorite image of Jesus is being a friend, one who cares for others and who is always there to listen and forgive. Some of the hardest things to believe is that one ~~who~~ could be absolutely perfect. I also can't believe how much he suffered for us. I wonder how Jesus could live his life without sinning and hurting others. There are a lot of temptations that get in the way of one being free from sin. Besides no one but God is perfect. I can picture Jesus laughing, crying when one of his children has went against him, being angry because of all the hate and violence, feeling lonely and being full of joy when one has done great deeds.

Kimberly Escalante
Religion CG
Feb. 24, 1998

Jesus Activity Sharing Questions:

Which is your favorite image of Jesus?

What are some of the hardest things to believe about Jesus?

What are some things about Jesus that you wonder about?

What are some things that make it hard to follow Jesus?

Can you picture Jesus laughing, teasing others, crying, being angry, feeling lonely, full of joy?

* good thoughts

My favorite image of Jesus is how we see him as a caring friend. This is my favorite because I know he is always there for me and I can talk to him just as I would as a friend. Some of the hardest things to believe about Jesus is how he came back from the dead. Coming back three days after his death is so hard to accept because it seems so impossible. I wonder about how Jesus' was when he was a teen like me, and if he went through the same things I did. I wonder if he was smart, or what he was interested in, and if he liked girls. Some things that make it hard to follow are the commandments and encouragement of following one's own beliefs, because there is so much peer pressure with teens. I can picture Jesus being happy, laughing, crying, full of joy, but not being angry, feeling lonely or teasing others.

Renee DeHoyos
2-24-98
CG

Jesus Activity Sharing Questions:

Which is your favorite image of Jesus?

What are some of the hardest things to believe about Jesus?

What are some things about Jesus that you wonder about?

What are some things that make it hard to follow Jesus?

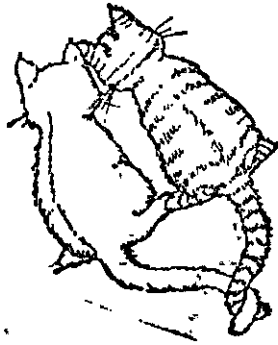
Can you picture Jesus laughing, teasing others, crying, being angry, feeling lonely, full of joy?

✓ *good thoughts*

My favorite image of Jesus is a picture of the earth, planets, and the solar system because looking at it makes me realize that he created ~~all~~ all of this. The hardest things to believe about Jesus is that he died for us even though some of the people at that time didn't believe fully in him or even bother to seek him, but he did it anyway out of love & suffering. Some of the things I wonder about Jesus is if he had regular everyday ~~things~~ problems and faced pressures like teenagers today.

Some of the things that it ~~made~~ make it hard to follow Jesus are the facts & sayings that there is no God and the pressure that leads into it.

I can picture Jesus doing all of these things because he is a person just like we are who has feelings and emotions and experiences pain & suffering.



Melissa Hernandez
Religion - H
September 17, 1997
Essay


The three commandments that I can most closely be related to fall in order. They are 3, 4, and 5.

First I'll start with the third, Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day. In the video the priest said that we go to church to gain support from other people who love God and believe in God. I don't totally agree with him though because I don't go to church and I'm still around people who believe in God, like my family.

Now I'll start with the fourth, Honor your father and Mother. The priest said that we need to share our love with each other. I agree with him but love can also be very painful which can sometimes distract you from giving people the respect they deserve. I do honor my elders but I don't honor all of them. I have a bad habit and I want to show respect to everyone young and old.

Finally there is the fifth, You shall not kill. Not until the video did I realize that our actions and words can also kill. I have a tendency to sometimes make fun of people but I don't mean to hurt their feelings. When somebody falls on the stairs

+ good
thought



I laugh when I fall on the stairs I
laugh, I knew that it was not very
nice but I didn't realize that it
could have such a negative effect on a
person.

I know that in all of these I seem to
be very negative, but I'm slowly changing.
It's just that I never think in a
positive way I always think negative.

Bertha mendoza
Religion II- E
Sept-23, 1997

Journal Writing

What is my image of a good person?
Do I make it a point of telling people
I know that I appreciate their goodness.

My image of a good (image) person
is someone who treats others equally.
They show them love, care for them and
share and help out others in need.
They are never greedy or argue about
any little thing. If there is a problem
or disagreement they try to settle
it out in a well-mannered way. They
are followers of Jesus who teach
and preach to others to become
good people. I often try to make it
a point that I'm grateful for the
goodness that they give me. Whenever
someone helps me out or tells me
something nice I always try to do
that in return. The good people that
show me good are role models for
me. I thank God for good people and
thank God for helping me be good
to others.

Bertha Mendoza
Religion II-E
Sept 30, 1997

Journal Writing

Who or what helps you to be a truthful person?

God most of the time is someone who encourages me to be truthful. My grandparents and parents also teach me to do what is right and that I should live a truthful life because it will get me through a happy life. When I go to church to pray to God he always tells me to be truthful to myself but mainly to others. The more truthful I am to myself and others the better of life I will live. If I ever get tempted to do something wrong I always think first about the consequences. If I believe it is truly wrong I will fight to do what is right so that God will see that I try. No matter what the most truthful you are the better the world we live in.

✓ good thoughts!

✓ ✕
Melissa Hernandez

Religion - H

November 8, 1997

Journal

4. The last time that I thought that I would be happy was when I turned 15. I was so wrong I hate being 15, there are way too many stresses and pressures and responsibilities that come with age. The way I see it the older I get the more *Just do the best you can already, that's all you can do* twisted and confusing life becomes.

5. This was very ~~recently~~ recently, during halloween. My friends and I had planned to go out and have a great time. This didn't happen because of family problems and other obligations that they had. I was not going to let this bother me because I was going to have fun even if I was by myself. It just so happened that I remembered about another friend and called her up. We went ~~back~~ ~~or~~ ~~meeting~~ together and had a great time.

Journal Entry Nov 4

A. Can I recall a time when I thought something would bring me happiness, but it didn't? explain.

I thought that spending a day with my "friends" would be the greatness. I thought that we could get caught up on how everyone was doing. However, it turned out for the worst. I realized how different we had become. We all had different beliefs and values. We had no common interests and thoughts. It turned out that we had changed a lot since we had gone out. It turned out to bring me sadness.

This is a real learning time for you in knowing that relationships will always change -

B. When was the last time I prepared for happiness and worked towards it.

The last time I prepared for happiness was on my best friend's birthday. I planned her a surprise party. At first it was hard because I didn't know who she got along with. I didn't want to invite someone whom she didn't like. However, my friend Robert helped me get all the other's names. The party turned out to be a success. She had a smile on her face the whole time. I felt happy because I had done it somewhat on my own.

Briana Muñoz
Religion 4-14
11-5-97

Journal Entry

Can I recall a time when I thought something would bring me happiness but it didn't? (Explain)

When I was in middle school and below I was always picked on because my parents spoiled me rotten. I was raised by my grandparents but in my eyes they were my parents, so they were very protective of me and wanted to give me the best life possible which they were able to and did give me. The other kids would tease me about my grandparents and would tell me that I was a spoiled brat, mostly because I had the life that they would have liked to ~~had~~ have had. I thought that if I lived with my father that my life would be different in that I wouldn't be teased as much and he could do more things with me. I stayed a week with my father and did not enjoy it. My father is a great person and I love him dearly but I was his only child ~~with~~ which he did not have much experience in raising a daughter that my grandmother had. With my father I also did not ~~had~~ ~~the~~ have the well to do life style.

Give heart
to yourself

that my grandparents brought me up in, the life style that fits ~~me~~ me perfectly

③ When was the last time I prepared for happiness and worked towards it

Every day of my life I prepare and pray for happiness. God has given me so many things to be happy and grateful for that I try not to let the bad or stressful things bother me.

Bertha Mendoza
Religion II - E
Dec. 2, 1997

Journal Entry

One time I remember really well was when I went back to my middle school during the summer.

I attended St. John Bosco and this summer I worked at the summer camp that they have there. All of the kids and sisters remembered me and welcomed me back. They were really glad that I had come to help with the children. I felt like I still attended that school because I knew everyone there and knew where everything was. With the people I knew before graduating from 8th grade I was able to talk to them and ask how things were going. I think this summer was one of the bests because I spent it at St. John Bosco.

December 2, 1997

Journal

After leaving my swim team to swim for Providence, I decided that I would go back to my old team as soon as the season was over. When I went back everyone plus some new people ~~that~~ were there. It was strange at first and it took me a while to adjust to the atmosphere and the people. Eventually I got used to it and it felt like I never left.

Journal Entry
December 3, 1995

About two years ago I saw my mother for the first time in about two years. I had no anger or sadness towards her, but I felt a lot of pity for her. She kept making up excuses in why she had not seen ~~to~~ me or called me for so long but there is no excuse to not seeing your first and only daughter. It made me feel good after I saw her, not because I missed her but because it made me realize what a great life that I have without my grandparents and my life without her.

Briana Munn
Religion 4-H
December 10
1997

Journal Entry

At the ceremony of the temple the Jewish people rededicated themselves to God—What would you like to change in your life in order to be closer to God?

I already go to church every Sunday and I try to follow all of the commandments but what I try to work on every day is finding all the good possible in others even though it can be a difficult task.

I also try to put God before all of the other every day distractions and complications in life. Some times we feel that because He allows us to do things that we were not able to do before it doesn't mean that it is okay with God and his wishes for us.

good thoughts

What you know about

Jesús -

- born Dec. 25.
- he was smart
- was kind
- strong
- had faith
- suffered for us
- knew who his mother was
- knew he was wanted (to be killed?)
- was very strong & believed.
- didn't give up
- was born in a manger
- everyone wanted to at least see him.
- was brave man
- John Baptized Jesus in the Jordan.
- Carried a cross for us died for us.
- was crucified.

- why Jesus? why him?
- why was he chosen?
- what gave him motivation?
- what color was his hair?
- was he tall?
- what went on during his childhood?
- his teenage life?
- Did he have urges to do bad?
- Was he scared to die?
- ~~was he scared to die?~~
- did he ever want to give up?
- was he scared to be crucified?
- why were people

Chall

Things we know! Things we want to know

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">- performed miracles.- helped spread the word of the Lord.- resurrected Lazarus.- died when he was 33. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- why would he want to to ^{to} suffer for <u>us</u>?- was there really a big star when he was born.- did he know he was the Messiah. |
|---|---|

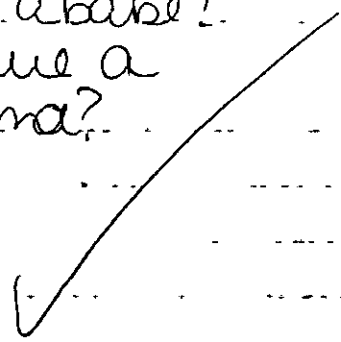
Unonice
DiJaro
(-22-94)

What I
know about
Jesus?

- that Mary & Joseph are his parents
- He was betrayed by Judas
- he is God's son
- he was nailed to the cross
- he resurrected
- he was baptized by John
- he resurrected Lazarus
- he turned water into wine
- he gave up his life for us
- he was born in Bethlehem.

What I would
like to know?

- was he smart?
- Did he ever make Joseph & Mary upset?
- Did he want to give up his life for us?
- Did he ever believe that God was his ~~son~~ father?
- Did he fear that a healing would not work?
- Did he ever get into a fight w/ anyone?
- What race was Jesus?
- What was he a babe?
- Did he have a girlfriend?



SOPHOMORE RETREAT:

The Sophomore Retreat brought together everything that the students had experienced throughout the year. Our goal was to reinforce many of the prayer activities that they had developed up to this point. The retreat was offered on a volunteer basis, with 120 students in the sophomore class, we had 108 students sign up to attend. The theme was "I Love You This Much". We wanted to deepen their relationship with God and to better understand where each student was spiritually within themselves. We wanted the students to see God as a friend, a support, and to see God in others. The hope was that they would grow within themselves and also within the community of Providence High School. The day away from familiar surroundings would hopefully bring about a cleansing experience within each student.

We had ten adults who assisted us with the activities for the day. This enabled us to put the students in small groups of ten. This gave the students the freedom, to share and to interact with each other. The students worked well in small groups sharing about themselves and about their faith. They were also given the opportunity to reflect, to have quiet time, and to read passages from the Bible. I created the booklets to develop different prayer experiences that they had already been exposed to throughout the year. Each student received a booklet which gave them the opportunity to read from the Bible, journal and reflect and prepare for reconciliation. We were very fortunate to end the afternoon with reconciliation and a liturgy in which all the students participated.

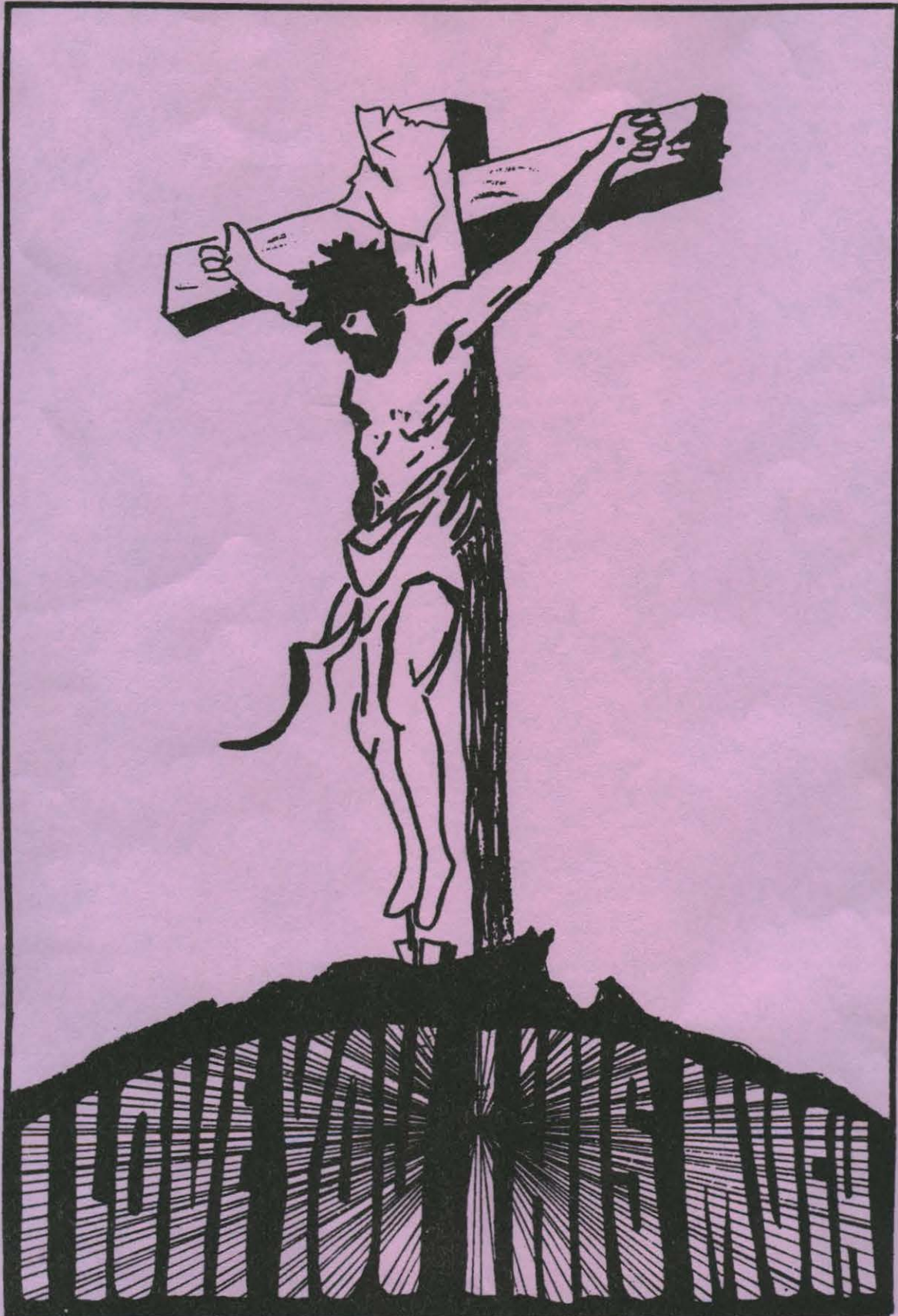
The adult leaders received a "leader booklet", which had special instructions to help them encourage small group sharing and to bring out other activities. We also met with the leaders prior to the day of the retreat. The campus minister and I worked closely together. She realized that I was trying to reinforce the faith development process that I had started with the students at the beginning of the school year. She helped in the liturgy planning and with the reconciliation service.

Enclosed is a copy of the leaders booklet and one that the students received. On the following pages are some student evaluations from the retreat. The evaluations were all very positive. In fact, some of the students indicated that they wanted the day to be longer and even asked for more sharing activities. It seemed that by exposing the students to the various activities throughout the year they felt comfortable and at ease with sharing

about their faith and love of God. It was very rewarding to see how open the girls were in their groups.

For many students, this was their first experience of retreat. It was truly rewarding to see that so many students seem to grow in their love of God, themselves and each other. It also opened the door for them to participate in retreats with their parishes and next year when they are juniors at Providence.

Leader Packet



SOPHOMORE RETREAT AGENDA

9:00 - 9:15	Opening prayer service (total group, Sacred Heart Chapel)
9:15 - 10:00	Getting to Know Self and Each Other (large rooms, small groups sharing)
10:00 - 10:30	How Do I See Myself? (large rooms, small group sharing)
10:30 - 10:50	Jesus Activity, Sharing About Jesus (large rooms, small groups)
10:50 - 11:15	Beatitude scripture Meditation and Sharing (large rooms, group sharing)
11:15 - 12:00	lunch
12:00 - 1:00	Quiet Reflection Time, Sacrament of Reconciliation
1:00 - 2:00	Mass (total group, Sacred Heart Chapel)
2:00 -2:30	Closing Prayer: Help From Jesus (large rooms, small groups)
2:30	Depart for PHS

OPENING PRAYER SERVICE: LISTENING TO GOD

Leader: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit...

All: ... as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Reader One (adapted from Psalm 139): My God, you know the whole of my journey...you walk in front of me and behind me; sometimes I feel your hand resting on my shoulder. Your loving presence seems too good to be true.

Reader Two: You always understand my spirit; you know each cell of my body. You have been with me in all that I have done, and will be with me until the end.

Reader One: If I flew on the wings of the dawn, if I sailed to the far limits of the sea, your hand would still be upon me, guiding me and holding me safe.

Reader Two: Your plan is wonderful, more than I can grasp. I rest in you in faith and live in your love.

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Leader: If we can believe the words of the psalm, God is always with us. This includes the times that we teach and prepare to teach. God is always guiding us. Our problem is that we do not *attend* to the presence of God. We do not ask for God's help and listen to God's response. I invite you now to silently reflect on this. Is it true in your life? When and how do you attend to God? How might you improve?

(Allow three to five minutes for personal reflection.)

Reader Three: When we pray, we lift our minds and hearts to God, who is already with us. We do not have to search the wings of dawn or the limits of the sea, we simply have to look into our own hearts and quietly listen.

Reader Four: Why is it so hard for us to do this? Why is it so

difficult to sit still, to be quiet, to attend to God? Is it really that we don't have time? Or are we afraid of what God might ask?

Reader Five: Let us resolve during this Lent—and all year through—to begin anew to listen to God. Let us allow God

to lead us, to speak to us, and to change us. And let us introduce those we teach to this God who dwells with us.

God, you know the whole of our journey

You walk in front of us and behind us.

Reader Six: Sometimes we feel your hand resting on our shoulders.

Your loving presence seems too good to be true.

You always understand us.

You know each cell of our bodies.

You have been with us in all that we have done.

And you will be with us until the end.

Reader Seven: If we fly on the wings of the dawn, or sail to the far limits of the sea,

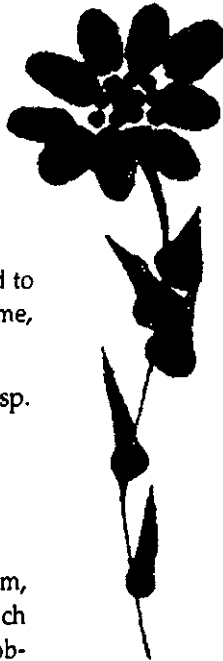
Your hand will still be upon us, guiding us and holding us safe.

Leader: Your plan is wonderful, more than we can grasp.

We rest in you in faith and live in your love.

Leader: Gracious God, please open our hearts and minds and strengthen our faith that we might experience your presence. Help us to share this faith with those we teach. We ask these things in Jesus' name.

All: Amen.



I prefer (circle your choice in each category):

1. Fancy restaurantcasual places
2. Going steady.....playing the field
3. Staying up late.....getting up early
4. To be a big frog
in a little pond.....to be a little frog in a big pond
5. A blind date.....a second choice
6. Getting a B in a
tough course.....an easy course
7. Playing touch football.....watching pro football
8. Total honesty.....insincere praise
9. To be second
string varsity.....to be first string JV
10. Playing it safe.....going for broke

For me, the toughest thing about school is (circle two)

getting up in the morning
studying
monotony
homework
getting along with teachers
staying awake in class
grades
tests
math
friends
hassles from parents
other _____

After a tough day at school, I like to relax by (circle two)

napping
watching TV
goofing off
snacking
talking on the phone
playing with little kids
reading
taking a walk
going somewhere with a friend

When it comes to doing something new,
I am (circle two)

just plain scared
very cautious
daring
afraid someone will laugh
willing to try anything once
afraid of failing
a follower, not a leader

If I could compare my own Christian life to
a sports game, I would be right now

suiting up
waiting for the game to start
sitting on the bench
playing "catch up"
at half-time
on the injured list
worn out
giving it all I've got

To me, Jesus is

my friend
an embarrassment
the most important person
in my life
love
savior
someone I want to know
a mystery
don't know

My biggest fear in going further in my
Christian commitment is the fear of being:

laughed at by my friends
considered uncool
cramped in my lifestyle
a failure
"too emotional"
asked to give up something important

Five goals that are important to me now are (choose 5 and rank 1, 2, 3, 4, 5):

_____ have a good time
_____ discipline myself
_____ learn more about God
_____ meet some new friends
_____ discover myself
_____ get my feet on the ground
_____ settle down in school
_____ develop a prayer life

_____ improve my personal habits
_____ learn to love
_____ belong to a group of people who
are really serious about God
_____ develop deep friendships
_____ learn about God's will for me
_____ deal with my boredom
_____ improve my family relationships

OTHER QUESTIONS:

1. Where do you want to be 5 years from now?
2. What scary thing would you like to try?
3. What do you feel God is telling you to do?
4. How is my faith being tested and strengthened?

Before a BIG test, I (circle two or three)

am nervous/shaky
talk a lot
get very quiet
munch constantly
forget about it
cram
get a headache
can't sleep
get worried
pray a lot
can't eat

I look upon school as
(choose 3 and rank 1, 2, 3)

_____ prison
_____ good times
_____ getting me ready for life
_____ wasted time
_____ a chance to make friends
_____ a refuge from home
_____ mind building
_____ a chance to prove myself
_____ part of growing up
_____ unnecessary
_____ something I have to do
_____ the best days of my life

The most exciting thing that is happening in my life at the moment is (circle one)

being in love
getting to know God personally
discovering who I am
being on a team at school
getting along with my family
making new friends
starting a new venture
running around with my friends
studying the Bible for myself
making good grades
other _____

The best way for my parents to bring out the best in me is to (choose 3 and rank 1, 2, 3)

_____ trust me
_____ leave me alone
_____ lay it on me
_____ encourage me
_____ ask my opinion about something
_____ let me know I'm important
_____ try to understand me
_____ love me
_____ work out expectations with me
_____ tell me they're proud of me

Getting to Know Self and Each Other Closing Prayer for Small Groups:

When the group has finished this section, have them form a close, tight circle. Each student will receive a lighted tea-light candle. Each student will then pray in her own words, thanking Jesus for something in her life. (Have one volunteer to go first and then go around the circle.) After each student has prayed, she should place her tea-light candle in the center of the group, to form a growing cluster of candles in the center.

After all have finished, go around the circle a second time, this time thanking God for the person sitting on your right. "Lord, I thank you for _____"

Close with a "Glory be to the Father" or spontaneous closing prayer.

HOW DO I SEE MYSELF?

MAKE A SYMBOL OF YOURSELF USING THE PIPE CLEANERS. THE SYMBOL CAN REPRESENT ONE ASPECT OF YOURSELF, OR YOUR SPIRITUAL LIFE, OR SOME WAY THAT GOD HAS TOUCHED YOU.

TAKE A LOOK AT YOUR SELF-IMAGE TO SEE WHERE YOU STAND. ARE YOU SATISFIED WITH WHO YOU ARE AT THIS POINT IN YOUR LIFE? _____ LIST 5 STRONG POINTS AND 5 WEAKNESSES YOU SEE IN YOURSELF.

STRONG POINTS

WEAKNESSES

WHICH LIST OF CHARACTERISTICS TOOK YOU LONGER TO IDENTIFY?

CAN YOU HONESTLY THANK GOD FOR MAKING YOU THE WAY YOU ARE?

WRITE A PRAYER EXPRESSING THANKS TO GOD, TO THE DEGREE THAT YOU ARE ABLE, FOR MAKING YOU WHO YOU ARE.

Beatitudes

Matthew 5: 3-10

DIRECTIONS: After each sentence, use the following symbols...

- * If you understand it clearly
- ? If you have a question about the meaning
- + If you get special help from this verse everytime you read it
- ! If this makes you want to go out and really do something or be some way

(Use more than one symbol for each if necessary)

1. Happy are those who know they are spiritually poor; the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them!
2. Happy are those who mourn; God will comfort them!
3. Happy are the meek; they will receive what God has promised!
4. Happy are those whose greatest desire is to do what God requires: God will satisfy them fully!
5. Happy are those who show mercy to others; God will show mercy to them!
6. Happy are the pure in heart; they will see God!
7. Happy are those who work for peace among men; God will call them his sons!
8. Happy are those who suffer persecution because they do what God requires; the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them!

READ THIS NOW:

(Put a plus by the beatitude..from the Latin word for happy...you feel strong in and a minus by those you feel weaker in)

1. Spiritually poor...to admit you need God, to be open to Him, to realize you don't have it all, not living for things but for people and values OPPOSITE: PRIDE (JAMES 4:6)
2. Mourn...to feel for the hurt of others, to talk and share your experiences with sad people because you've been there, to be sad about the things that make God unhappy. OPPOSITE: No seriousness about spiritual goals for your life..Not taking time to pray.
3. Meek...to dedicate everything you have to God and then look at all as being loaned to you by God for His work and glory. OPPOSITE: Anger, greed..(PSALM 25:9)
4. Spiritual hunger...to truly desire to be right with God..to please Him in everything you do..to receive Him in the Eucharist, get to know Him better by reading His word and to pray. (JAMES 5:1) OPPOSITE: Lack of spiritual interest, irregular prayer.
5. Show mercy..to fully forgive others and return understanding.. OPPOSITE: Bitterness and resentment (HEBREWS 4:16)
6. Pure in heart..to be honest with God, yourself and others..to make a conscious effort to please God in your thoughts, desires and motives. OPPOSITE: Moral impurity (JOHN 15:2)
7. Peacemaker..to make things right with everyone you wrong, and by your example lead others to do the same..to help people understand each other. OPPOSITE: condemnation of others Guilty conscience (JAMES 3:1)
8. Endurance... to be able to stand alone in your beliefs despite obstacles and pressures..to be willing to pay the price for what you know is right, OPPOSITE: Fear of witnessing. Compromising your own standards. (JAMES 5:11)

Group Work: Tell what you think is the Beatitude each girl in the group is strongest in. Include yourself. Each one do this.

AMAZING UNITY
THROUGH
COOPERATION

AN ACTIVITY FOR 3-5 PERSONS

GOAL: TO FIND ONES WAY THROUGH THE MAZE

GUIDELINES:

PERSON #1 HOLDS THE PEN/PENCIL (BUT MAY NOT SEE THE PAPER)

PERSON #2 GUIDES PERSON #1'S HAND (BUT MAY NOT TOUCH THE PEN/PENCIL)
(IF THERE ARE 4 OR 5 PERSONS, PERSON #2 MAY NOT TALK)

PERSONS #3-5 OFFER SUGGESTIONS (BUT MAY NOT TOUCH PEN/PENCIL/PAPER
OR THE PERSON HOLDING THE PEN/PENCIL)

AS IN ALL MAZES, DO NOT CROSS OR TOUCH ANY LINES ... AND IN THE MAZE IS A
CLUE TO HELP FIND THE SOLUTION MORE QUICKLY.

(NOTE: REPEAT THE ACTIVITY, CHANGING ROLES IF TIME ALLOWS)

PRIVATE REFLECTION:

WHAT HAPPENED? WHAT WAS MY ROLE? WHAT LIMITATIONS DID I FEEL? How did I
NEED OTHERS TO HELP ME? WAS I OF ANY HELP TO THE OTHERS? DID I COMPLICATE
MATTERS - IF SO, WHY? How could I HAVE BEEN OF MORE HELP?

Just Lunch

The boy shuffled timidly forward, clutching the knotted cloth sack that held his lunch. The two men with him, each with a hand on his shoulders, urged him forward.

"Master, we've found five loaves and two fishes," one of the men said to a third man. "But it isn't enough."

The boy shivered a little, though the evening breeze was still warm. He could hardly force himself to look into the Master's face.

Jesus smiled at the nervous youth and held out His hand. "It is enough," He answered gently. "Give them to me."

Jesus fed five thousand men--plus uncounted women and children--with that tiny lunch. It was a boy's lunch; it was not meant to feed a crowd. But Jesus was not put off by the smallness of the offering. He knew the potential it had.

Lord, I carry on many activities day by day. I'm happy if I do even a few of them well. Sometimes, as a Christian, I think I have very little to offer You, Jesus. I find it hard to witness to my classmates and friends. My sincere, intense prayers last only minutes before my attention drifts or my thoughts are interrupted. It's not easy to be a consistent, dedicated Christian day after day after day.

But, Jesus, I know You don't ask me to do anything I'm not capable of. You are only asking me to be faithful now--this minute, this hour, this day--in the things You give me to do. You are strong and powerful, and You know I'm not. I know You are willing to multiply the effects of my small efforts if only I will let You. If I say one kind word, You will see that it touches the right heart. If I will spend a few minutes in Your Word each day, You will teach me about Yourself. If I will pray one sentence to request help for a friend, You will hear and answer me.

Jesus, I know You are not asking me to feed the five thousand. All You ask is that I give You my lunch.

Prayer ... Meditation

My Covenant With the Lord

Lord Jesus, I make this covenant with you this day, to accept you as my Lord and Savior all the days of my life, to belong to you, to love you, and to follow you.

I believe that your love for me will never fail, that you will always forgive me when I come to you, and that you will always be there when I need you--to lift me up and support me.

Lord Jesus, I pray that each day our friendship for each other will grow and deepen--as I share my life with you and as you share your life with me. Lord Jesus, teach me how to love others, especially those closest to me--in the family you have given me.

Name _____

Date _____

A Prayer from a Teen-Ager

God in heaven, I am young and don't understand what it is like to be a parent, but it must be very hard because so many people are failing at it these days.

I pray for Mom and Dad, God, that you will help them to be good parents....strong in the ways you want them to be, so I can look up to them with admiration and feel confident that their instruction is right.

Help me, dear Lord, to understand my parents. Remind me that when I don't get my way it is because they love me and not because they want to be mean or deprive me of a good time.

Help me, God, when I become stubborn and refuse to listen, to accept the fact that they have wisdom and experience because they were once teen-agers, but I have never been a parent.

Put in my heart the respect and consideration they deserve for their years of hard work and sacrifice. They raised me as best they could. Let me not repay them with grief or shame. Rather help me to give them obedience, respect, forgiveness and love. Most of all, God, while I still have my parents here on earth, help me to appreciate them and let them know I do.

The Dallas Morning News
Ann Landers

"Prayer should accompany the reading of Sacred Scripture so that God and man may talk together; for we speak to Him when we pray; we hear Him when we read the divine saying." Second Vatican Council: Dogmatic Constitution On Divine Revelation

Lord, Teach us to Pray.....

Put Christ in the center of your life.

Receive His forgiveness.

Accept His unconditional Love.

Yield to the power of the Holy Spirit.

Enter into a new relationship with Jesus.

Reach out to others.

"For ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ"...Second Vatican Council: Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation

If we want to grow to be like Him, we must spend time with Him each day. Jesus said: "My words are spirit and life." John 6:63

Where to find help, when.....

AFRAID

Psalms 34:4
Matt. 10:18
2 Tim. 1:7
Heb. 13:5,6

ANXIOUS

Psalms 46
Matt. 6:19-34
Phil. 4:6
1 Peter 5:6,7

BEREAVED

Matt. 5:4
2 Cor. 1:3,4

BITTER OR CRITICAL

1 Cor. 13

CONSCIOUS OF SIN

Proverbs 28:13

DEFEATED

Romans 8:31-39

DEPRESSED

Psalms 34

DISASTER THREATENS

Psalms 91
Psalms 118:5,6
Luke 8:22-25

DISCOURAGED

Psalms 23
Psalms 42:6-11
Psalms 55:22
Matt. 5:11,12
2 Cor. 4:8-18
Phil. 4:4-7

DOUBTING

Matt. 8:26
Heb. 11

FACING A CRISIS

Psalms 121
Matt. 6:25-34
Heb. 4:16

FAITH FAILS

Psalms 42:5
Heb. 11

FALLING AWAY

Psalms 51
1 John 1:4-9

FRIENDS FAIL

Psalms 41:9-13
Luke 17:3,4
Rom. 12:14,17,19,21
2 Tim. 4:16-18

LEAVING HOME

Psalms 121
Matt. 10:16-20

LONELY

Psalms 23
Hebrews 13:5,6

NEEDING GOD'S PROTECTION

Psalms 27:1-6
Psalms 91
Phil. 4:19

NEEDING GOD'S GUIDANCE

Psalms 32:8
Proverbs 3:5,6

NEEDING PEACE

John 14:1-4
John 16:33
Romans 5:1-5
Phil. 4:6,7

NEEDING RULES FOR LIVING

Romans 12

OVERCOME

Psalms 6
Romans 8:31-39
1 John 1:4-9

PRAYERFUL

Psalms 4, Psalms 42
Luke 11:1-13
John 17

PROTECTED

Psalms 18:1-3
Psalms 34:7

SICK OR IN PAIN

Psalms 38
Matt. 26:39
Romans 5:3-5
2 Cor. 12:9,10,11
1 Peter 4:12,13,19

SORROWFUL

Matt. 5:4
John 14
2 Cor. 1:3,4
1 Thess. 4:13-18

TEMPTED

Psalms 1
Psalms 139:23,24
Matt. 26:41
1 Cor. 10:12-14
Phil. 4:8
James 4:7
2 Peter 2:9

THANKFUL

Psalms 100

WEARY

Psalms 90

WORRIED

Matt. 6:19-34
1 Peter 5:6,7

Christian Virtues and Character

Ephesians 4:22-24; 2 Peter 3:18

ABUNDANT LIFE

John 10:10

CITIZENSHIP

Romans 13:1-7

CLEANLINESS

2 Cor. 7:1

CONSECRATION

Romans 12:1,2

CONTENTMENT

1 Tim. 6:6

COURAGE

Psalms 27:14

HAPPINESS

Matt. 5:3-12

HOLINESS

1 Peter 1:13-16

HONESTY

2 Cor. 8:12

HOPE

1 Peter 1:13

JOY

Luke 10:20

KINDNESS

John 15:11

KINDNESS

Col. 3:12,13

PATIENCE

Heb. 10:36

PURE THINKING

Phil. 4:8

RIGHTEOUSNESS

Matt. 6:33

TRUTH

Eph. 4:14-15

WORSHIP

John 4:23,24

Mountains and Valleys

CHRIST IN MY EYES

Six days later Jesus took Peter, James, and John with him, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. As they looked on, a change came over him, and his clothes became shining white, whiter than anyone in the world could wash them. Then the three disciples saw Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus. Peter spoke up and said to Jesus, "Teacher, it is a good thing that we are here. We will make three tents, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." He and the others were so frightened that he did not know what to say.

A cloud appeared and covered them with its shadow, and a voice came from the cloud, "This is my own dear Son--listen to him!" They took a quick look around but did not see anyone else; only Jesus was with them.

As they came down the mountain Jesus ordered them, "Don't tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has risen from death."

Mark 9:2-9

We have been climbing all morning and have finally reached a flat, windy space near the top of a mountain. The view is spectacular. On all sides the horizon stretches off into the distance, and to the south we can make out the Sea of Galilee and the Jordan valley beyond. Jesus withdraws a short distance to pray, while the three apostles and I begin to doze after our exhausting climb.

Suddenly, we are jolted awake by a strange event. Jesus' appearance has changed--his face glows and the brightness of his clothes hurts our eyes. Two ghostly figures, Moses and Elijah, appear beside him. At first we tremble with fright, but this soon gives way to an overwhelming feeling of happiness and peace. Life's problems seem so far removed from this mountain that the apostles and I could pitch tents here and stay forever. "Teacher," we blurt out, hardly knowing what to say, "it is a good thing that we are here!"

CHRIST IN MY HEART

Jesus, with the pressures and tensions
of life's daily trials,
I guess it is only natural
to feel so overwhelmed
by the happiness and joy
I experience with you on this mountaintop.
I think of the peak experiences in my own life---
a really good confession
the fellowship of a prayer group
a school retreat,
or just some special moment
with my friends.

It was good for me to be here.
And I thank you
for such special moments of grace...
all those times
when I felt close to you
on my very own mountain.

But you wouldn't let the apostles
stay on their mountain.
You led them down

into the valleys of life.
Lord, I am grateful for my mountaintop days,
but they are special gifts,
rare tokens of your love for me.

Help me to persevere
in the ordinary ways.....among the shadows in the valley,
where love is shown,
not by great bursts of reeling, but by fidelity
in the daily tasks of living.

CHRIST IN MY HANDS

I will be contented with the routine of my life today.

REFLECT

"This is my own dear Son----listen to him!"

A Month With Christ
J. Murray Elwood

Prayer ... Meditation ... for back home

CLOSING PRAYER: "ASKING JESUS TO HELP US ON OUR WAY"

Students sit small groups with a Christ candle in center of the circle.

Adult leader reads introduction:

Introduction:

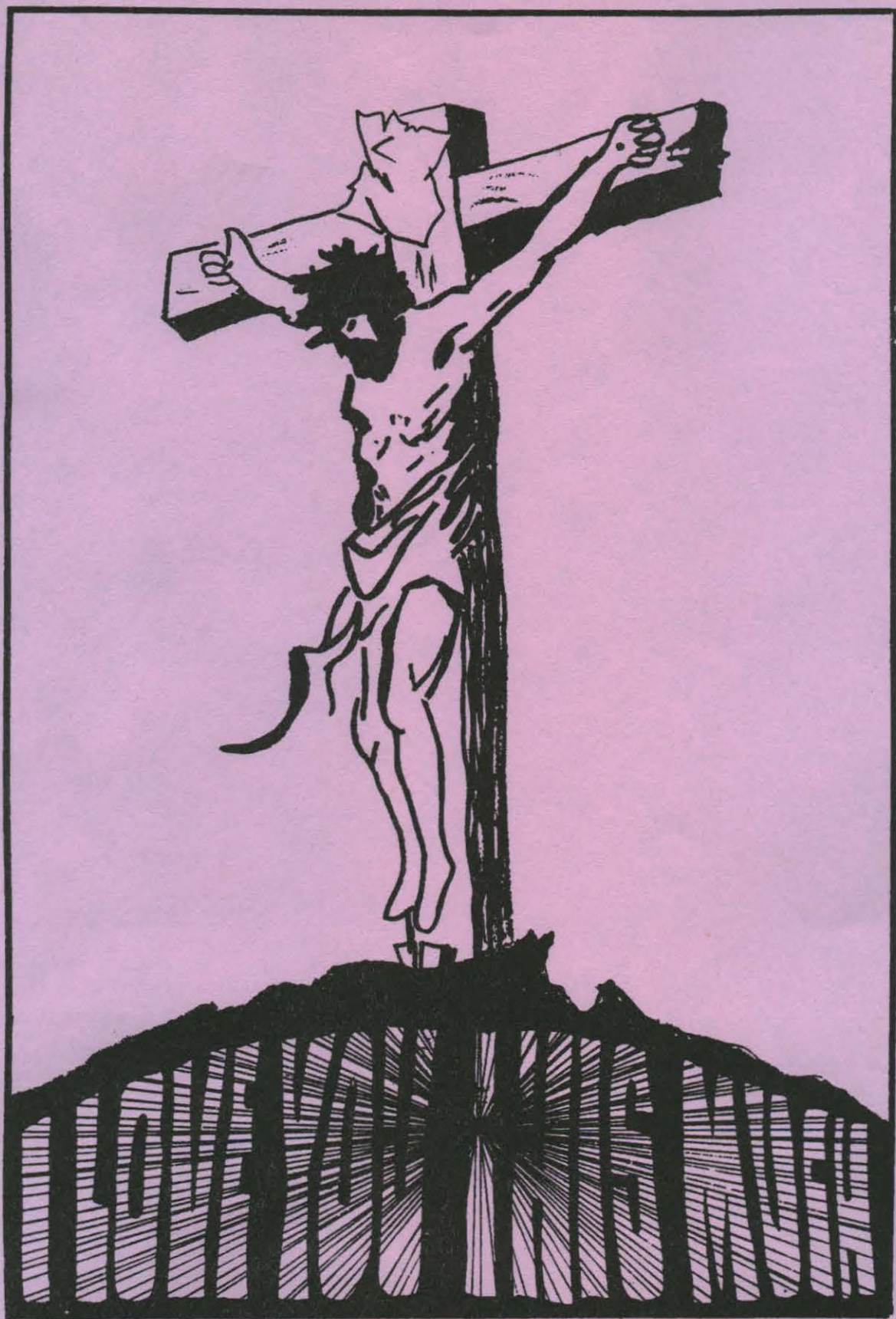
Lord, does it honor you when I take even one small step not knowing where I go, except that I am following you?

I ask no blazing path of miracles to lead me on.

In the dark, knowing you are both ahead and close behind is light enough for me. Yet, Lord, I still need your help. And so this afternoon I ask for the grace of ...(silence while each reflects on what she needs at this time).....Help me, Lord, to be your daughter, your disciple, to follow your way.

After introduction, each girl sits in the middle and holds the candle while others pray for her. Others can put their hand on her shoulder, back, etc. After short quiet time of praying for the girl in the center, go around circle each student praying out loud for that girl. (She can tell the group ahead of time what her needs, intentions are.)

After all have finished, close with "Glory be to the Father" or spontaneous closing prayer.



SOPHOMORE RETREAT AGENDA

9:00 - 9:15	Opening prayer service (total group, Sacred Heart Chapel)
9:15 - 10:00	Getting to Know Self and Each Other (large rooms, small groups sharing)
10:00 - 10:30	How Do I See Myself? (large rooms, small group sharing)
10:30 - 10:50	Jesus Activity, Sharing About Jesus (large rooms, small groups)
10:50 - 11:15	Beatitude scripture Meditation and Sharing (large rooms, group sharing)
11:15 - 12:00	lunch
12:00 - 1:00	Quiet Reflection Time, Sacrament of Reconciliation
1:00 - 2:00	Mass (total group, Sacred Heart Chapel)
2:00 -2:30	Closing Prayer: Help From Jesus (large rooms, small groups)
2:30	Depart for PHS

I prefer (circle your choice in each category):

1. Fancy restaurantcasual places
2. Going steady.....playing the field
3. Staying up late.....getting up early
4. To be a big frog
in a little pond.....to be a little frog in a big pond
5. A blind date.....a second choice
6. Getting a B in a
tough course.....an easy course
7. Playing touch football.....watching pro football
8. Total honesty.....insincere praise
9. To be second
string varsity.....to be first string JV
10. Playing it safe.....going for broke

For me, the toughest thing about school is (circle two)

getting up in the morning
studying
monotony
homework
getting along with teachers
staying awake in class
grades
tests
math
friends
hassles from parents
other _____

After a tough day at school, I like to relax by (circle two)

napping
watching TV
goofing off
snacking
talking on the phone
playing with little kids
reading
taking a walk
going somewhere with a friend

When it comes to doing something new,
I am (circle two)

just plain scared
very cautious
daring
afraid someone will laugh
willing to try anything once
afraid of failing
a follower, not a leader

If I could compare my own Christian life to
a sports game, I would be right now

suiting up
waiting for the game to start
sitting on the bench
playing "catch up"
at half-time
on the injured list
worn out
giving it all I've got

To me, Jesus is

my friend
an embarrassment
the most important person
in my life
love
savior
someone I want to know
a mystery
don't know

My biggest fear in going further in my
Christian commitment is the fear of being:

laughed at by my friends
considered uncool
cramped in my lifestyle
a failure
"too emotional"
asked to give up something important

Five goals that are important to me now are (choose 5 and rank 1, 2, 3, 4, 5):

_____ have a good time
_____ discipline myself
_____ learn more about God
_____ meet some new friends
_____ discover myself
_____ get my feet on the ground
_____ settle down in school
_____ develop a prayer life

_____ improve my personal habits
_____ learn to love
_____ belong to a group of people who
are really serious about God
_____ develop deep friendships
_____ learn about God's will for me
_____ deal with my boredom
_____ improve my family relationships

OTHER QUESTIONS:

1. Where do you want to be 5 years from now?
2. What scary thing would you like to try?
3. What do you feel God is telling you to do?
4. How is my faith being tested and strengthened?

Before a BIG test, I (circle two or three)

am nervous shaky
talk a lot
get very quiet
munch constantly
forget about it
cram
get a headache
can't sleep
get worried
pray a lot
can't eat

I look upon school as
(choose 3 and rank 1, 2, 3)

_____ prison
_____ good times
_____ getting me ready for life
_____ wasted time
_____ a chance to make friends
_____ a refuge from home
_____ mind building
_____ a chance to prove myself
_____ part of growing up
_____ unnecessary
_____ something I have to do
_____ the best days of my life

The most exciting thing that is happening in my life at the moment is (circle one)

being in love
getting to know God personally
discovering who I am
being on a team at school
getting along with my family
making new friends
starting a new venture
running around with my friends
studying the Bible for myself
making good grades
other _____

The best way for my parents to bring out the best in me is to (choose 3 and rank 1, 2, 3)

_____ trust me
_____ leave me alone
_____ lay it on me
_____ encourage me
_____ ask my opinion about something
_____ let me know I'm important
_____ try to understand me
_____ love me
_____ work out expectations with me
_____ tell me they're proud of me

HOW DO I SEE MYSELF?

MAKE A SYMBOL OF YOURSELF USING THE PIPE CLEANERS. THE SYMBOL CAN REPRESENT ONE ASPECT OF YOURSELF, OR YOUR SPIRITUAL LIFE, OR SOME WAY THAT GOD HAS TOUCHED YOU.

TAKE A LOOK AT YOUR SELF-IMAGE TO SEE WHERE YOU STAND. ARE YOU SATISFIED WITH WHO YOU ARE AT THIS POINT IN YOUR LIFE? _____ LIST 5 STRONG POINTS AND 5 WEAKNESSES YOU SEE IN YOURSELF.

STRONG POINTS

WEAKNESSES

WHICH LIST OF CHARACTERISTICS TOOK YOU LONGER TO IDENTIFY?

CAN YOU HONESTLY THANK GOD FOR MAKING YOU THE WAY YOU ARE?

WRITE A PRAYER EXPRESSING THANKS TO GOD, TO THE DEGREE THAT YOU ARE ABLE, FOR MAKING YOU WHO YOU ARE.

Beatitudes

Matthew 5: 3-10

DIRECTIONS: After each sentence, use the following symbols...

- * If you understand it clearly
- ? If you have a question about the meaning
- + If you get special help from this verse everytime you read it
- ! If this makes you want to go out and really do something or be some way

(Use more than one symbol for each if necessary)

1. Happy are those who know they are spiritually poor; the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them!
2. Happy are those who mourn; God will comfort them!
3. Happy are the meek; they will receive what God has promised!
4. Happy are those whose greatest desire is to do what God requires: God will satisfy them fully!
5. Happy are those who show mercy to others; God will show mercy to them!
6. Happy are the pure in heart; they will see God!
7. Happy are those who work for peace among men; God will call them his sons!
8. Happy are those who suffer persecution because they do what God requires; the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them!

READ THIS NOW:

(Put a plus by the beatitude..from the Latin word for happy...you feel strong in and a minus by those you feel weaker in)

1. Spiritually poor...to admit you need God, to be open to Him, to realize you don't have it all, not living for things but for people and values OPPOSITE: PRIDE (JAMES 4:6)
2. Mourn...to feel for the hurt of others, to talk and share your experiences with sad people because you've been there, to be sad about the things that make God unhappy. OPPOSITE: No seriousness about spiritual goals for your life..Not taking time to pray.
3. Meek...to dedicate everything you have to God and then look at all as being loaned to you by God for His work and glory. OPPOSITE: Anger, greed..(PSALM 25:9)
4. Spiritual hunger...to truly desire to be right with God..to please Him in everything you do..to receive Him in the Eucharist, get to know Him better by reading His word and to pray. (JAMES 3:1) OPPOSITE: Lack of spiritual interest, irregular prayer.
5. Show mercy..to fully forgive others and return understanding.. OPPOSITE: Bitterness and resentment (HEBREWS 4:16)
6. Pure in heart..to be honest with God, yourself and others..to make a conscious effort to please God in your thoughts, desires and motives. OPPOSITE: Moral impurity (JOHN 15:2)
7. Peacemaker..to make things right with everyone you wrong, and by your example lead others to do the same..to help people understand each other. OPPOSITE: condemnation of others Guilty consciences (JAMES 3:1)
8. Endurance... to be able to stand alone in your beliefs despite obstacles and pressures..to be willing to pay the price for what you know is right, OPPOSITE: Fear of witnessing. Compromising your own standards. (JAMES 5:11)

Group Work: Tell what you think is the Beatitude each girl in the group is strongest in. Include yourself. Each one do this.

Just Lunch

The boy shuffled timidly forward, clutching the knotted cloth sack that held his lunch. The two men with him, each with a hand on his shoulders, urged him forward.

"Master, we've found five loaves and two fishes," one of the men said to a third man. "But it isn't enough."

The boy shivered a little, though the evening breeze was still warm. He could hardly force himself to look into the Master's face.

Jesus smiled at the nervous youth and held out His hand. "It is enough," He answered gently. "Give them to me."

Jesus fed five thousand men--plus uncounted women and children--with that tiny lunch. It was a boy's lunch; it was not meant to feed a crowd. But Jesus was not put off by the smallness of the offering. He knew the potential it had.

Lord, I carry on many activities day by day. I'm happy if I do even a few of them well. Sometimes, as a Christian, I think I have very little to offer You, Jesus. I find it hard to witness to my classmates and friends. My sincere, intense prayers last only minutes before my attention drifts or my thoughts are interrupted. It's not easy to be a consistent, dedicated Christian day after day after day.

But, Jesus, I know You don't ask me to do anything I'm not capable of. You are only asking me to be faithful now--this minute, this hour, this day--in the things You give me to do. You are strong and powerful, and You know I'm not. I know You are willing to multiply the effects of my small efforts if only I will let You. If I say one kind word, You will see that it touches the right heart. If I will spend a few minutes in Your Word each day, You will teach me about Yourself. If I will pray one sentence to request help for a friend, You will hear and answer me.

Jesus, I know You are not asking me to feed the five thousand. All You ask is that I give You my lunch.

Prayer ... Meditation

My Covenant With the Lord

Lord Jesus, I make this covenant with you this day, to accept you as my Lord and Savior all the days of my life, to belong to you, to love you, and to follow you.

I believe that your love for me will never fail, that you will always forgive me when I come to you, and that you will always be there when I need you--to lift me up and support me.

Lord Jesus, I pray that each day our friendship for each other will grow and deepen--as I share my life with you and as you share your life with me. Lord Jesus, teach me how to love others, especially those closest to me--in the family you have given me.

Name _____

Date _____

A Prayer from a Teen-Ager

God in heaven, I am young and don't understand what it is like to be a parent, but it must be very hard because so many people are failing at it these days.

I pray for Mom and Dad, God, that you will help them to be good parents....strong in the ways you want them to be, so I can look up to them with admiration and feel confident that their instruction is right.

Help me, dear Lord, to understand my parents. Remind me that when I don't get my way it is because they love me and not because they want to be mean or deprive me of a good time.

Help me, God, when I become stubborn and refuse to listen, to accept the fact that they have wisdom and experience because they were once teen-agers, but I have never been a parent.

Put in my heart the respect and consideration they deserve for their years of hard work and sacrifice. They raised me as best they could. Let me not repay them with grief or shame. Rather help me to give them obedience, respect, forgiveness and love. Most of all, God, while I still have my parents here on earth, help me to appreciate them and let them know I do.

The Dallas Morning News
Ann Landers

"Prayer should accompany the reading of Sacred Scripture so that God and man may talk together; for we speak to Him when we pray; we hear Him when we read the divine saying." Second Vatican Council: Dogmatic Constitution On Divine Revelation

Lord, Teach us to Pray.....

Put Christ in the center of your life.

Receive His forgiveness.

Accept His unconditional Love.

Yield to the power of the Holy Spirit.

Enter into a new relationship with Jesus.

Reach out to others.

Mountains and Valleys

CHRIST IN MY EYES

Six days later Jesus took Peter, James, and John with him, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. As they looked on, a change came over him, and his clothes became shining white, whiter than anyone in the world could wash them. Then the three disciples saw Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus. Peter spoke up and said to Jesus, "Teacher, it is a good thing that we are here. We will make three tents, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." He and the others were so frightened that he did not know what to say.

A cloud appeared and covered them with its shadow, and a voice came from the cloud, "This is my own dear Son--listen to him!" They took a quick look around but did not see anyone else; only Jesus was with them.

As they came down the mountain Jesus ordered them, "Don't tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has risen from death."

Mark 9:2-9

We have been climbing all morning and have finally reached a flat, windy space near the top of a mountain. The view is spectacular. On all sides the horizon stretches off into the distance, and to the south we can make out the Sea of Galilee and the Jordan valley beyond. Jesus withdraws a short distance to pray, while the three apostles and I begin to doze after our exhausting climb.

Suddenly, we are jolted awake by a strange event. Jesus' appearance has changed--his face glows and the brightness of his clothes hurts our eyes. Two ghostly figures, Moses and Elijah, appear beside him. At first we tremble with fright, but this soon gives way to an overwhelming feeling of happiness and peace. Life's problems seem so far removed from this mountain that the apostles and I could pitch tents here and stay forever. "Teacher," we blurt out, hardly knowing what to say, "it is a good thing that we are here!"

CHRIST IN MY HEART

Jesus, with the pressures and tensions
of life's daily trials,
I guess it is only natural
to feel so overwhelmed
by the happiness and joy
I experience with you on this mountaintop.
I think of the peak experiences in my own life---
a really good confession
the fellowship of a prayer group
a school retreat,
or just some special moment
with my friends.

It was good for me to be here.

And I thank you
for such special moments of grace...
all those times
when I felt close to you
on my very own mountain.

But you wouldn't let the apostles
stay on their mountain.

You led them down
into the valleys of life.

Lord, I am grateful for my mountaintop days,
but they are special gifts,
rare tokens of your love for me.

Help me to persevere
in the ordinary ways.....among the shadows in the valley,
where love is shown,
not by great bursts of reeling, but by fidelity
in the daily tasks of living.

CHRIST IN MY HANDS

I will be contented with the routine of my life today.

REFLECT

"This is my own dear Son----listen to him!"

A Month With Christ
J. Murray Elwood

Prayer ... Meditation ... for back home

"For ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ"...Second Vatican Council: Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation

If we want to grow to be like Him, we must spend time with Him each day. Jesus said: "My words are spirit and life." John 6:63

Where to find help, when.....

AFRAID

Psalms 34:4
Matt. 10:18
2 Tim. 1:7
Heb. 13:5,6

ANXIOUS

Psalms 46
Matt. 6:19-34
Phil. 4:6
1 Peter 5:6,7

BEREAVED

Matt. 5:4
2 Cor. 1:3,4

BITTER OR CRITICAL

1 Cor. 13

CONSCIOUS OF SIN

Proverbs 28:13

DEFEATED

Romans 8:31-39

DEPRESSED

Psalms 34

DISASTER THREATENS

Psalms 91
Psalms 118:5,6
Luke 8:22-25

DISCOURAGED

Psalms 23
Psalms 42:6-11
Psalms 55:22
Matt. 5:11,12
2 Cor. 4:8-18
Phil. 4:4-7

DOUBTING

Matt. 8:26
Heb. 11

FACING A CRISIS

Psalms 121
Matt. 6:25-34
Heb. 4:16

FAITH FAILS

Psalms 42:5
Heb. 11

FALLING AWAY

Psalms 51
1 John 1:4-9

FRIENDS FAIL

Psalms 41:9-13
Luke 17:3,4
Rom. 12:14,17,19,21
2 Tim. 4:16-18

LEAVING HOME

Psalms 121
Matt. 10:16-20

LONELY

Psalms 23
Hebrews 13:5,6

NEEDING GOD'S PROTECTION

Psalms 27:1-6
Psalms 91
Phil. 4:19

NEEDING GOD'S GUIDANCE

Psalms 32:8
Proverbs 3:5,6

NEEDING PEACE

John 14:1-4
John 16:33
Romans 5:1-5
Phil. 4:6,7

NEEDING RULES FOR LIVING

Romans 12

OVERCOME

Psalms 6
Romans 8:31-39
1 John 1:4-9

PRAYERFUL

Psalms 4, Psalms 42
Luke 11:1-13
John 17

PROTECTED

Psalms 18:1-3
Psalms 34:7

SICK OR IN PAIN

Psalms 38
Matt. 26:39
Romans 5:3-5
2 Cor. 12:9,10,11
1 Peter 4:12,13,19

SORROWFUL

Matt. 5:4
John 14
2 Cor. 1:3,4
1 Thess. 4:13-18

TEMPTED

Psalms 1
Psalms 139:23,24
Matt. 26:41
1 Cor. 10:12-14
Phil. 4:8
James 4:7
2 Peter 2:9

THANKFUL

Psalms 100

WEARY

Psalms 90

WORRIED

Matt. 6:19-34
1 Peter 5:6,7

Christian Virtues and Character

Ephesians 4:22-24; 2 Peter 3:18

ABUNDANT LIFE

John 10:10

CITIZENSHIP

Romans 13:1-7

CLEANLINESS

2 Cor. 7:1

CONSECRATION

Romans 12:1,2

CONTENTMENT

1 Tim. 6:6

COURAGE

Psalms 27:14

HAPPINESS

Matt. 5:3-12

HOLINESS

1 Peter 1:13-16

HONESTY

2 Cor. 8:12

HOPE

1 Peter 1:13

JOY

Luke 10:20
John 15:11

KINDNESS

Col. 3:12,13

PATIENCE

Heb. 10:36

PURE THINKING

Phil. 4:8

RIGHTEOUSNESS

Matt. 6:33

TRUTH

Eph. 4:14-15

WORSHIP

John 4:23,24

Feedback

From Maria Valle

THE MOST MEANINGFUL THING ABOUT RETREAT FOR ME
was all the prayer time.

ACTIVITIES THAT HELPED ME MOST...HOW?

confession and group activities.
I got a chance to tell God I
was sorry and to let everyone
know how I really am.

HOW GOD FIT INTO THIS RETREAT FOR ME

God was a big part of this retreat.
He fit in with a lot of our activities.

ADVICE I'D GIVE TO SOMEONE BEFORE SHE COMES ON RETREAT

Be prepared to spend the day with
friends, including God.

HOW MY EXPECTATIONS WERE MET ON RETREAT

We had some group discussions
that helped others. We also were
turned to God.

11 SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING RETREAT/MY GENERAL COMMENTS

The retreat was wonderful. I enjoyed
all the time I was able to spend
time with God and myself. I reflected
a lot on the changes I've gone through
since last year.

SOMETHING I LEARNED ABOUT MYSELF AND OTHERS WITH ME ON RETREAT

I learned that I don't need to
be afraid to be myself around others.

Feedback

From Jennifer Moreno

THE MOST MEANINGFUL THING ABOUT RETREAT FOR ME

The packet we had to fill out meant a lot to me because I answered question I never thought about before.

ACTIVITIES THAT HELPED ME MOST...HOW?

Candles - helped me to believe that God was really listening to what I was thankful for

Confession - I felt relaxed and worryless.

HOW GOD FIT INTO THIS RETREAT FOR ME

The whole retreat was God and being with him and talking to him.

ADVICE I'D GIVE TO SOMEONE BEFORE SHE COMES ON RETREAT

Be open to everything don't hold yourself back from telling other people how you feel about situations

HOW MY EXPECTATIONS WERE MET ON RETREAT

The retreat was everything I expected. It was fun, spiritual and sharing.

MY SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING RETREAT/MY GENERAL COMMENTS

I thought we should of had more outside activities and do more things in a larger group not just on little group.

SOMETHING I LEARNED ABOUT MYSELF AND OTHERS WITH ME ON RETREAT

I learned more about my feelings toward things I have never shared with anyone else and I learned that some other people had the same opinion as I did.

Feedback

From Misti Fischnar

THE MOST MEANINGFUL THING ABOUT RETREAT FOR ME

When our group had a prayer service & we went in a circle and prayed for one another.

ACTIVITIES THAT HELPED ME MOST...HOW?

The reflection at the very beginning which we answered the questions about ourselves. It made me contemplate about myself which I rarely do.

HOW GOD FIT INTO THIS RETREAT FOR ME

He made me realize how lucky I was to have family, friends, and teachers that love me and want me to profess my faith.

ADVICE I'D GIVE TO SOMEONE BEFORE SHE COMES ON RETREAT

You will have fun but not just with your regular friends but when you get to get closer to the others you don't really know.

HOW MY EXPECTATIONS WERE MET ON RETREAT

Became closer with the entire Providence family, Church at the end of the day topped it off I had a blast.

MY SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING RETREAT/MY GENERAL COMMENTS

Nothing.... I loved everything.

SOMETHING I LEARNED ABOUT MYSELF AND OTHERS WITH ME ON RETREAT

I can get along with everyone no matter who they are.

Feedback

From _____

THE MOST MEANINGFUL THING ABOUT RETREAT FOR ME

was the silent time. I gave me
time to think out things I have and
haven't done

ACTIVITIES THAT HELPED ME MOST...HOW?

when we first got into
groups and did the worksheets
and shared our answers.

HOW GOD FIT INTO THIS RETREAT FOR ME

This retreat gave me time to
think about the relationship I have
with God and how to make it better

ADVICE I'D GIVE TO SOMEONE BEFORE SHE COMES ON RETREAT

to try to forget about the non-important
things and worry about God.

HOW MY EXPECTATIONS WERE MET ON RETREAT

At first I thought it would
be boring, but I was wrong all together.
it was actually fun.

MY SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING RETREAT/MY GENERAL COMMENTS

It was serious, but also fun. We weren't
restricted so that gave you free chose of
what you wanted and needed to do.

Don't change anything.

SOMETHING I LEARNED ABOUT MYSELF AND OTHERS WITH ME ON RETREAT

that most of the people in my group feels
the same about most things disguised.

Feedback

From _____

THE MOST MEANINGFUL THING ABOUT RETREAT FOR ME

the church was the most meaningful thing about the retreat.

ACTIVITIES THAT HELPED ME MOST...HOW?

When we had quiet time, b/c it made me want to think more about myself & understand my own feelings.

HOW GOD FIT INTO THIS RETREAT FOR ME

God fit into this retreat for me b/c it helped me realize that God is always w/ me no matter what & that he will take care of me.

ADVICE I'D GIVE TO SOMEONE BEFORE SHE COMES ON RETREAT

Be prepared for questions that make you think about yourself.

HOW MY EXPECTATIONS WERE MET ON RETREAT

I felt better about myself!

MY SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING RETREAT/MY GENERAL COMMENTS

To have more quiet time & to have more fun activities.

SOMETHING I LEARNED ABOUT MYSELF AND OTHERS WITH ME ON RETREAT

To respect others & that others have feelings too & not to disrespect them.

Feedback

From Renee DeHayos

THE MOST MEANINGFUL THING ABOUT RETREAT FOR ME

Is we got to talk to God in our own way and we got to be together.

ACTIVITIES THAT HELPED ME MOST...HOW?

that helped me most are the surveys about what we like & prefer and the weak and strong points of ourselves. It helped me because it made me think what I really prefer and it made me realize that I'm a stronger person than what I thought.

HOW GOD FIT INTO THIS RETREAT FOR ME God fit in when I talked to him personally & mentally and when I went to confession.

ADVICE I'D GIVE TO SOMEONE BEFORE SHE COMES ON RETREAT Go to confession because afterward you feel much better about yourself.

HOW MY EXPECTATIONS WERE MET ON RETREAT They were met by learning more about myself and what I'm really like.

MY SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING RETREAT/MY GENERAL COMMENTS I thought the retreat was a lot fun and it gave me a sense of security and it taught me to be my own person and to realize what I have.

SOMETHING I LEARNED ABOUT MYSELF AND OTHERS WITH ME ON RETREAT I learned that I'm a stronger person than I really thought.

Feedback

From Angela Btello

THE MOST MEANINGFUL THING ABOUT RETREAT FOR ME

was when we did the ~~retreat~~ thing where we had to say why we were ~~thankful~~ thankful for

ACTIVITIES THAT HELPED ME MOST...HOW?

When we made those symbols the person next to us w/ the pipe cleaners and when we had to answer all those questions about our

HOW GOD FIT INTO THIS RETREAT FOR ME

self. I learned a lot! When we went to about who I really am!

Reconciliation & received the Eucharist at mass.

ADVICE I'D GIVE TO SOMEONE BEFORE SHE COMES ON RETREAT

Be honest and true to yourself and others when you are asked a question about yourself.

HOW MY EXPECTATIONS WERE MET ON RETREAT

I think ~~we~~ that were in groups too much. I think we should have done at least one activity as a group.

MY SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING RETREAT/MY GENERAL COMMENTS

I think it was a good retreat but we need to be together as a whole more.

SOMETHING I LEARNED ABOUT MYSELF AND OTHERS WITH ME ON RETREAT

I learned how important God is to me and how I feel about myself. I learned that some of my friends have it hard and I should be there for them more often.

Feedback

From Johnne

THE MOST MEANINGFUL THING ABOUT RETREAT FOR ME

I discovered things about myself & others

ACTIVITIES THAT HELPED ME MOST...HOW?

When we discussed what we preferred & why. - I learned more about what I want out of life, & relationships w/ people. Also what I can give back.

HOW GOD FIT INTO THIS RETREAT FOR ME

He's always there for me. - No matter what I do. & if I lose everything, I still have God.

ADVICE I'D GIVE TO SOMEONE BEFORE SHE COMES ON RETREAT

Don't expect so much or too little. Be ready to expect Anything. Also go in w/ an open heart & mind. Put all your differences about people aside for one day.

HOW MY EXPECTATIONS WERE MET ON RETREAT

I was able to admit to myself that no matter what happens, I love my mother unconditionally. She can hurt my feelings again & again, but I still love her.

MY SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING RETREAT/MY GENERAL COMMENTS

To me, it was difficult to discuss personal things with a group of girls that you talk to, but ^{you} don't share private things w/ them, and to girls that you don't talk to at all. I would ^{to} opened up more if w/ people I'm close

SOMETHING I LEARNED ABOUT MYSELF AND OTHERS WITH ME ON RETREAT

I learned that I have some problems that I thought other girls ~~at~~ would not have because they're nothings like me (personality wise)

SENIOR RETREAT

In the senior retreat, I was involved in the prayer sessions that we created for the students. The head of the Religion Department was aware of the different prayer activities that I was developing for the sophomore students and she wanted the seniors to experience some of these activities while they were on their retreat. I developed some of the meditation sessions. The students really seemed to benefit from the worksheet dealing with "time". In a large group we asked the students to look at a clock silently for three minutes. We then took them through a reflection on the three minutes that they had just experienced. The students were given the worksheet on "God's Time" and asked to fill them out quietly. After they had the time to fill out the worksheet, we put the students into groups of four to share their responses.

Another meditation that was effective for the students was asking them to admit and write down the three most important things in their lives. They were then asked which one they would give up first, and which would be the last one that they would give up. It was a topic that they had never thought of before and it seemed to bring about deep thought.

The retreat for the seniors was three days and the meditation prayer services seemed very effective. Enclosed in the evaluation section of this folder is an evaluation form from one of the senior students. I felt fortunate that I was able to participate on the senior retreat. The activities that I shared with the students I hope to use again and expand on in the future in my teaching ministry.

SENIOR RETREAT

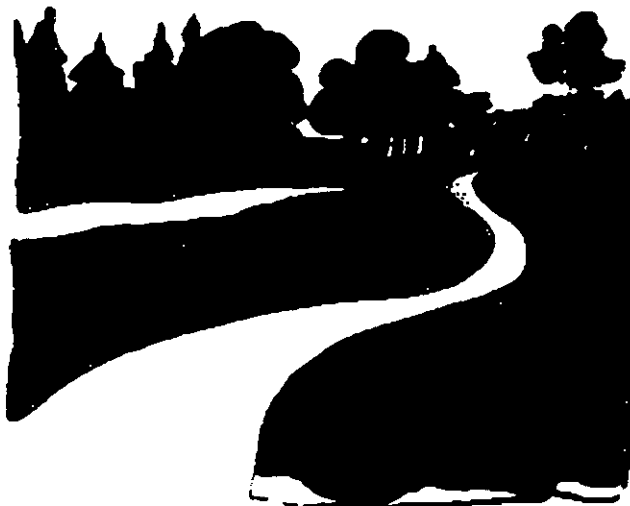
HEB CAMP, LEAKEY, TEXAS

October 15-17, 1997

Singing Hills (210) 232-5629 - six cabins of 20 beds (bunks) each. Each bed has a mattress. Cabins have restroom facilities.

What you need to bring:

- linens (or sleeping bags)
- toiletries
- towels
- flashlight
- insect repellent
- camera/film
- comfortable clothes (shorts and/or jeans)
- light jacket or sweater
- bible
- a snack to share (cookies or chips)



ALL THE ABOVE WILL BE PACKED IN ONE, REPEAT, ONE BAG

DO NOT BRING BOOKS, RADIOS, OR WALKMANS. THEY WILL BE CONFISCATED.

Some important camp rules:

- Long distance phone calls cannot be made.
- Paper towels, sanitary napkins, tampons, kitchen food waste, grease and similar substances must be put in wastebaskets, **NOT** down the commodes or drains.
- Stay out of other campsites.
- **ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, DRUGS, SMOKING ARE PROHIBITED.**
- Use the "buddy system" when walking around the grounds.
- Shortly after our arrival at the campsite, a camp ranger will give us a brief orientation.

\$35.00 is asked of each participant to help cover the cost of buses, food, and materials needed. The cost of a retreat T-shirt is included in the fee.

Let's all work together to make this an enriching and memorable event.

Mrs. Angela Gokelman

Religion Department Chair

SENIOR RETREAT

Wednesday - October 15, 1997

3:30 p.m. Leave PHS (Times are approximate)
5:30 p.m. Arrive at HEB Camp, unpack and get settled
6:30 p.m. Camp Orientation
7:00 p.m. Dinner
8:00 p.m. Opening Session: Name Game
Expectations
Theme of Retreat: "Daring to Begin"
"Time Out" Meditation
Mail Bag Activity/Stretch Break
Cozy Corner (small groups)
Snack Break
Evening Prayer: "Daring to Begin"
Bedtime

Thursday - October 16, 1997

8:30 a.m. Breakfast
9:15 a.m. Morning Praise
Who Am I?
Values/Who is Jesus for me?
Video: "Survival Run" - Discussion
11:45 p.m. Lunch
1:00 p.m. Reconciliation
Eucharistic Celebration
2:30 p.m. Free Time - enjoy nature, reflection
4:30 p.m. Letters to God
6:00 p.m. Dinner
7:00 p.m. Clock/"Turn, Turn, Turn" - Meditation/slides
God's Time (small groups)
Break
Evening Prayer - "Be Not Afraid" Meditations/slides, followed by
Cozy Corners
Entertainment
Bedtime



Friday - October 17, 1997

8:30 a.m. Breakfast
Morning Praise
Evaluation
Closing Session: Review Expectations/Evaluation
Mailbags Delivered
Cleanup
Departure

Guidelines for Small-Group Leaders

1. Familiarize yourself with the retreat so that you will be better able to clarify directions given by the retreat coordinator and other team members.
2. Help with giving out supplies and setting up for activities.
3. Participate in all activities and discussions on the retreat.
4. Lead, encourage, affirm, support, and befriend the retreatants.
5. Make the retreatants feel welcome and comfortable.
6. Help each person in your small group get to know the others better.
7. Be aware of the shy persons (who need more encouragement) and the rowdy ones (who need some calming down). It also helps to know if a young person is struggling with a loss or going through personal problems.
8. Keep to a given activity's topic and guide the discussion.
9. Contribute to, but do not dominate, the discussion.
10. If you have trouble getting things started, you could always begin with the person who, for example, has the next birthday, has the most letters on her or his T-shirt, is wearing blue, has the most brothers, or has the longest last name.
11. Ask open-ended questions:
 - How do you feel?
 - What is your reaction to the talk?
 - What did you write down for that question?
 - What do you think?
12. Make sure each person has a chance to contribute to the discussion; stress that each person's contribution is valuable.
13. Do a lot of listening.
14. Thank each person for her or his contribution.
15. Share your own responses, experiences, and ideas honestly and openly.

God's Time

There is a season for everything,
a time for every occupation
under heaven:
A time for giving birth,
a time for dying;
a time for planting,
a time for uprooting what has been planted.
A time for killing,
a time for healing;
a time for knocking down,
a time for building.
A time for tears,
a time for laughter,
a time for mourning,
a time for dancing.
A time for throwing stones away,
a time for gathering them up;
a time for embracing,
a time to refrain from embracing
A time for searching,
a time for losing,
a time for keeping,
a time for throwing away
A time for tearing,
a time for sewing;
a time for keeping silent,
a time for speaking
A time for loving, a time for hating;
a time for war,
a time for peace.

- Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 (JB)

1. Slowly re-read the scripture passage from Ecclesiastes and pick out at least five lines that tell of times that seem to fit what's happening in your life now. List them.
2. Which phrases in the passage remind you of your recent past?
3. Which phrases name some times that you hope for in the future?
4. Are there any times that you are afraid of facing?
5. Look again at the times you listed above. Can you find God in any of those times? Mark each phrase to show to what degree that time was, is, or could be, an experience of God for you.
V Very much
S Somewhat
N Not at all
6. Put a star next to the time that has been your most powerful experience of God.

Does God have a Space in Your Time?



Taking Off the Masks

Complete these statements and then respond to the reflection questions that follow them:

The masks I wear when I am with others are . . .

The real me is . . .



For Reflection ~~~~~

- Why is it sometimes hard to take off our masks and allow our true self to come through?
- Are there situations when it seems appropriate to put on a mask? If you think so, name several such situations and discuss why a mask is appropriate for them. If you think masks are never appropriate, explain why.

ARE YOU THERE GOD?

Leader:

Prayer is the lifting of our minds and hearts to God. We go to God in good times and in bad times. Sometimes we feel the strong presence of God in our lives. Think of the special times that you have felt the closeness of God. *(Pause)*

Sometimes we ask: Are you there God?

Think about what is happening in your lives now. What troubles you? What delights you? Where do you find peace and comfort? What are you looking for in your life? *(Pause)*

Finish these statements.

Are you there God when....

Are you there God for....

Are you there God if...



Reader:

St. Matthew captures a most important promise that Jesus made to His followers in the very last line of his Gospel writings.

Jesus said: "And know that I am with you always; yes, even to the end of time." (Mt. 28)

We must remember this promise all the days of our lives, in good times and in bad times, in happy times and in sad times. We must share the memory of this promise with those we love when hope seems lost. Jesus' words are meant for all of us. These are the words of love and of hope. All we need is faith in them.

Leader:

We pray... *personal intentions*

All:

Lord, Jesus, be with us always. May your presence in our lives make a difference in how we act, in what we do, and in what we hope for in the future. Grant each of us a strong faith in the power of Your presence. Be there for us that we may become Your faithful followers. Amen.

Leader:

Lord, Jesus, we know that You are with us always, even until the end of time. We thank You for Your Divine presence in our lives. We ask You to stay by our sides as we go about our daily lives. Teach us to live each day in Your love. Help us to cherish each moment that You have given us as a precious gift of Your love. Amen.

Value Prayer

All: Lord, it is good for us to be here together. It is together that we live out the values in our lives.

Right: We value time. Make us aware of the importance of taking time with you and with one another. We seem to be so busy doing that often we forget simply to "be."

Left: We value our sight. Clear our eyes so that we might break the stereotypes we have of people, which keep them in chains instead of leading them to freedom.

Right: We value listening. Help us to listen not only with our ears but also with our hearts so that we might heal the wounds that have separated us.

Left: We value ourselves. Let us discover once again the unique qualities that have been given to us through our creation. Let us live out these qualities so that we can help create a new world: a world of peace, a world of truth, and a world of justice.

All: We are your instruments, Lord. We are the hope of a better world if we live out the values of a Christian life. We ask your blessing and your abiding presence during this retreat as we rethink and re-create values that will help us to love one another as we love you.



IN CELEBRATION OF FRIENDSHIP

Leader:

We pray together with our friends
and those we hope will become our
friends. Look down upon us God,
as we come before You, asking You
to bless us as we begin sharing the
joys of friendship with one another.

Reader:

This is an old Arabian proverb :
A friend is one
To whom one may pour out all the
contents of one's heart,
Chaff and grain together
Knowing that the
Gentlest of hands
Will take it and sift it,
Keep what is worth keeping
And with a breath of kindness,
Blow the rest away.

All:

Jesus, Friend, teach us the ways of
friendship.
Jesus, Friend, show us Your gentle-
ness and kindness.

Reader:

Stories in the New Testament tell
us many things about Jesus and His
friends. Jesus did not choose His
friends because they were in high
places or had good connections.
Nor did Jesus pick friends because
they were rich or because they
owned nice things. Jesus did not
try to fit in with the "IN" group,
the popular crowd. Jesus selected

His friends for who they were,
ordinary people who had the ex-
traordinary gift of being opened to
Him!

All:

Jesus, Friend, teach us the ways of
friendship.

Jesus, Friend, show us how to be
opened to You and to others.

Leader:

Jesus, we ask You for the gift of
friendship. Make us worthy of being
Your friend. And in loving You,
may we learn to love others. Let us
pray:

(Please respond to each petition:
*Jesus, Friend, teach us the ways of
friendship.*)

- that we may be opened to friend-
ship...
- that we may be honest and sin-
cere in all our relationships...
- that we may accept people as they
are, not trying to make them into the
people we want them to be...
- that we may learn to be generous-
sharing our time, our talents , our
treasures...
- that we may be loyal and faithful
friends...
- that we learn to live our lives in
true friendship and love...
- that we may become worthy of
the name "friend" ...

Leader:

Let Us Pray

Loving God, keep watch over us as
we share our days in friendship and
love. Bless our efforts in making and
keeping friends. Give us the quali-
ties and gifts of the Holy Spirit that
will not only serve to make us good
Christians, but will make us good
friends. This we ask in the name of
Jesus, our Friend. Amen.



Guess Who? Inventory Sheet

Instructions: Answer the following questions, but do not reveal your answers to anyone! Fold the paper in half and give it to your group leader.

1. What is your favorite color? Green
2. What style of music do you listen to? Country
3. What is your favorite food? Mexican
4. If you could live anywhere in the world, where would it be?
Quincy or Densel Hills
5. What is your favorite television show? Frasier
6. If you could transport yourself in time, what time period would you go? Victorian Period
7. Do you believe in life on other planets? No
8. What is your favorite sports team? Astros Baseball
9. If you could ask God any question, what would it be?
Will I see everyone I love again?
10. Who is your role model/hero? Mother & Mark
11. What is your name? Dione



Feedback

From April Amador

THE MOST MEANINGFUL THING ABOUT RETREAT FOR ME
was writing a letter to God

ACTIVITIES THAT HELPED ME MOST...HOW?

Discussing my fears helped me the most

HOW GOD FIT INTO THIS RETREAT FOR ME

God gave me strength during this retreat.

ADVICE I'D GIVE TO SOMEONE BEFORE SHE COMES ON RETREAT

Open your heart to God's voice, and put aside your differences.

HOW MY EXPECTATIONS WERE MET ON RETREAT

I expected to know my friends & God & I did

MY SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING RETREAT/ MY GENERAL COMMENTS

more free time. on during free we could have stations for games, like volleyball, basketball

SOMETHING I LEARNED ABOUT MYSELF AND OTHERS WITH ME ON RETREAT

People have masks & who I thought they were their not.

TIME WITH JESUS

Leader:

Lord, have mercy.

All:

Christ, have mercy.

Leader:

Lord, have mercy. God, our loving Parent...

All:

Have mercy on us.

Leader:

Please respond: *Jesus, help us.*

- That we may never grow too old to respect our parents and grandparents, we pray to the Lord...
- That our words and actions are always worthy of respect from others, we pray to the Lord...
- That we may be trustworthy and honest in all our interactions, we pray to the Lord...
- That we may become less concerned with outward appearances and more concerned about people themselves, we pray to the Lord...
- That we keep our materialism and consumerism in check at all times, we pray to the Lord...
- That we may always be faithful to our promises to family and friends, we pray to the Lord...
- That we have the courage to put a stop to gossip, we pray to the Lord...
- That we learn to accept people of all races, nationalities and creeds as brothers and sisters in Christ, we pray to the Lord...
- That we may be pure in heart and mind and learn to respect our bodies and the bodies of others, we pray to the Lord...
- That we have the courage to make the commandments and the beatitudes our code of morality, we pray to the Lord...
- That we may grow in faith and live out our lives as faithful Christians, we pray to the Lord...
- That we may have patience and perseverance with our studies and all things that are difficult in life, we pray to the Lord...

- That we may be good friends, honest, loving and loyal, we pray to the Lord...
- That we may use our energy and enthusiasm to do good and to avoid evil, we pray to the Lord...
- That we have the wisdom to stay away from alcohol and drugs and the ability to influence our friends to do the same, we pray to the Lord...
- That we may learn to laugh with people and not at them, we pray to the Lord...
- That we may always walk in truth and integrity, we pray to the Lord...
- That teenagers all over the world may mature as responsible citizens of this universe, we pray to the Lord...
- That we may serve the needs of the poor, the sick and the lonely, we pray to the Lord...
- That we may think less of our own needs and wants and more of others, making Christ the center of our universe, we pray to the Lord...

Leader:

Let us pray for these and all our intentions. God, our loving Parent, help us to grow in wisdom and grace just as Jesus did when He was a teenager. May we grow as Christians faithful to our baptismal commitments. This we ask in the name of Jesus, Who was a teenager once Himself.

All:

Amen.

EVALUATIONS:

This section contains evaluations from the groups that the project was involved with. It begins with my own self evaluation, teachers and co-workers and finally the students themselves. It was the students themselves who were directly involved and participated in the project that submitted their evaluations. I instructed the students that they could include their name or leave it blank. I was impressed with their responses, the students seemed very honest and opened in their comments.

SELF EVALUATION:

My effectiveness in this project, student development of their relationship with God through prayer activities seemed to be successful. Although this is not a formal evaluation of the process, it does evaluate the activities that we built on and developed to some degree.

If we can use student reaction, comments and questions to the daily classes in religion as an evaluation tool, then the process effectiveness seemed to be more than adequate. When some of our group activities in prayer were over, many students continued to share, and the sharing grew as the year passed. Students felt opened to share in their faith life and in their relationships. It also seemed that friendships among themselves grew and developed. In setting aside time in class for various forms of prayer, the students grew more than just in the academics from their textbook.

In a more formal way of evaluation especially with the other sophomore religion teacher we both agree that the prayer activities were of great benefit to all seven sophomore classes. We both met on almost a daily bases in developing prayer activities that extended beyond their textbook. All the classes were evaluated and benefits were observed by the majority of students.

Personally I have truly enjoyed my ministry in teaching religion. This is my first year to teach high school religion. Prior to this I have served at two other parishes as DRE. The opportunities that I have been able to share with the students in their faith development has allowed me to gain a knowledge in the needs of students prayer life. This project has also given me the knowledge of being able to communicate the faith feelings of students of this age. It was relatively easy to tie the textbook on scripture with the prayer activities and with the extended classes this year, everything was able to be completed. Ministering to these students requires a commitment. Often times I had difficulty in limiting the activities so the students could focus well on one or two activities at a time. Another area that was a challenge for me is learning to be flexible when needed. For example, when we were celebrating the "Day of the Dead", the discussion and prayer service lead to four students discussing and sharing the death of their fathers who had all died in the last few years. It was obvious that discussions and sharing was needed in order for them to realize that God's love was present with them even at times of tragedy.

Kateri Martinez, the other sophomore religion teacher and I would have informal meetings to debrief on the daily happenings. Early in the school year we became aware of some of the needs of the students at this age level and I began to revise some of the activities that were planned. I feel we did complement one another in what we were able to project to the sophomore students. We discovered the students seemed more relaxed in a free flowing type of prayer setting. This helped them to know, understand and develop what they are searching for in their faith life.

My goal is to continue to grow and develop new skills in my teaching ministry, as I come in contact each year with new students. It is my desire that the students will take with them at the end of the year a deeper belief in their love of God and ways to help it to continue to grow long after they have graduated from Providence High School.

FOCUS GROUP EVALUATION:

The focus group of the Religious Education Department gave an enormous amount of support throughout this Pastoral Project. All six of the teachers had quite a few years of experience in teaching religion. This was very helpful when I was implementing prayer activities with the sophomore class. Kateri Maritnez, the other sophomore religion teacher, was willing to use some of the prayer activities in her religion classes and in this way we were able to compare the results that were obtained from both groups. It was also a way for the entire sophomore class to participate in the prayer activities.

All of the religion teachers in the focus group had the same ultimate goal in mind, to extend the students faith beyond the students years at Providence High School. I can honestly say that the Religion Department acting as my focus group gave me a tremendous amount of self-confidence as I began my Pastoral Project and it continued throughout the year. It was an obvious choice to choose the Religion Department at Providence as my focus group because we already had regular meetings scheduled. Some of us met on a daily basis. All of us in the focus group were willing to share ideas, materials and past experiences in order for the students at Providence to obtain the best faith development that we could offer as a Religion Department.

As I complete the Pastoral Project it would be hard to imagine a successful outcome without the benefit of the focus group that I was involved with. I was able to confide and share my thoughts and plans with each person. A project such as this which demands a long period of time to complete is important to have a group to encourage and give support. My hope would be that some day I could give this gift to someone completing their Pastoral Project.

TEACHER EVALUATION:

Diane Brown has been working on her Pastoral Project since August of 1997 of this school year. The goal has been to develop the students relationship with God through prayer and other spiritual activities. I have observed these areas that have been extended to the Sophomore Class at Providence High School.

JOURNALING ... As part of her class, Mrs. Brown sets aside time so that her students may reflect upon the Scripture studied that day. The students are free to write whatever they think or feel knowing that they will not be judged.

MEDITATION Mrs. Brown has introduced her students to various types of prayer. Meditation was often done in conjunction with Journaling.

GROUP PRAYER ... Students were invited to join in different types of prayer services as a class & later to prepare prayer services for the class.

STUDENT SHARING ... Mrs. Brown provides a safe setting in which students feel comfortable voicing their opinions & stating intentions for which they want to pray.

COMMENTS ... Mrs. Brown is always well-prepared for class & her students seem to enjoy the variety of activities she has used.

NAME Patricia Martinez

POSITION Teacher

TEACHER EVALUATION:

Diane Brown has been working on her Pastoral Project since August of 1997 of this school year. The goal has been to develop the students relationship with God through prayer and other spiritual activities. I have observed these areas that have been extended to the Sophomore Class at Providence High School.

JOURNALING ... Diane assisted me with journal exercises for our retreat program. She also engages her students with thought provoking journal questions on a regular basis.

MEDITATION ... Diane volunteered to lead the group meditation for our Sophomore retreat. She designed her own guided meditation and helped make our Sophomore retreat successful.

GROUP PRAYER ... Diane led group prayer on the Sophomore and Senior retreats. She always maintains a prayerful, Christ-Centered Spirit, and she is very skilled at bringing students into that same prayerful mode to insure that prayer-time is sacred time.

STUDENT SHARING ...

Diane did an excellent job of facilitating student sharing on our retreats. Diane has a non-threatening manner that enables students to be open and honest.

COMMENTS ...

Diane has been very helpful in our Campus Ministry program not only with our retreats, but also in our school liturgies. She volunteered to work with lectors for our school masses. There has been much improvement in the quality of our lectors and their presentations.

NAME Martha Wolf

POSITION Campus Minister

TEACHER EVALUATION:

Diane Brown has been working on her Pastoral Project since August 1997 of this school year. The goal has been to develop the students relationship with God through prayer and other spiritual activities. I have observed these areas that have been extended to the Sophomore Class at Providence High School.

Journaling, Meditation, Group Prayer and Student Sharing have always been a part of a catholic education and have been taught in the religion classes. However, I have observed Diane's students exhibiting these traits in my own Spanish I class. I teach only sophomore students.

Journaling: In discussions, students have shared their pleasure at being able to share their ideas and feelings in writing with Diane and have her respond without sounding "preachy" or making judgments. Journal writing sometimes acts as a catharsis for the students and an avenue for Diane to help guide them. I think she has her hands full in this area alone, but she does an excellent job in responding to each and every student.

Meditation is used in my class prior to a quiz or a test. It allows the student to focus and calm themselves. This skill, I found out, was taught by Diane to her students. I observed this at our Sophomore retreat. The students were told to reflect on their own lives and their path with God. To my surprise, they did not feel uncomfortable with this request, they did it! There was no silliness, laughing or other disruptive behavior that occurs when students feel uncomfortable with a situation. I credit Diane for the students' ability to do this.

Group prayer evoked the same response at the meditation exercises. Each student sat in a circle and asked for a prayer for themselves or a loved one. Many times, the students asked for each other. There was a sincerity in their prayers and petition.

Student Sharing has never been a problem among teenagers, but listening, being sympathetic and empathic sometimes has eluded them. I was pleasantly surprised when I saw the students moderating themselves, being sympathetic and empathic to each other. They listened well and when no clear solution was possible, they admitted that and prayed for guidance with the student who had the problem. Again, I felt the students were comfortable in this exercise.

Overall, I have been very impressed with Diane's teaching of what I feel are very difficult subjects. Especially because she deals with such an emotional group. She has showed sincerity, compassion and prayer with her students. As a result, I saw this reflection of herself in her own students behavior at our retreat. She is to be commended for her excellent work.

Name Grace Edwards
Position Spanish I Sophomore
teacher and Advisor

STUDENT FEEDBACK:

Jeanette R. Cesantes

Throughout the year we expanded on our lessons in a variety of ways. We would like to hear from you in which activities helped you to grow and develop in your faith.

The one activity that I liked best was ...being able to sit down with my classmates and discussing our problems at the retreat. We all were able to relate to each other and to offer some advice. I enjoyed that time because I was able to talk to my friends about my concerns and I was able to offer a listening heart and shoulder to cry on. I felt about journaling ... that I was able to express my feelings and my opinion on my faith. I didn't have to worry about holding back. I was able to share my attitude, my strengths and my weakness about my faith.

Group prayer ... gets ^{me} ~~good~~ more closer to my fellow classmates because we all have problems and it's easier to pray with someone your own age who knows what you're going through.

Students leading class prayer each day ... shows me that we can all be leaders in our prayer to God. It's like our own special time to shine toward the cross.

The Reconciliation prayer service was ... comforting. At that time I felt close to God and my classmates.

STUDENT FEEDBACK:

Throughout the year we expanded on our lessons in a variety of ways. We would like to hear from you in which activities helped you to grow and develop in your faith.

The one activity that I liked best was ...

drawings (illustrating) what God meant to us.

I felt about journaling ...

I like journaling because I realized that I had feelings inside about certain things (ex.-my father's death) that I never thought I had.

Group prayer ...

group prayer is good, but in the bible activities so 4, not all participate so the response is from 1 or two people, not the actual input to the group.

Students leading class prayer each day ...

-good - we learn more about the bible and morality - ex: Trust in God, love your enemies

The Reconciliation prayer service was ...

I thought it was good, it gave a little encouragement before finals & took about 5 lbs. off my shoulders knowing that my sins were being forgiven

STUDENT FEEDBACK:

Throughout the year we expanded on our lessons in a variety of ways. We would like to hear from you in which activities helped you to grow and develop in your faith.

The one activity that I liked best was ...

The Reconciliation/Prayer Service.

This gave me a chance to reflect on the things
around me & the way I was leading my life

I felt about journaling ...

was that it gave me the time & chance
to express and speak about my feelings & and
emotions; the ups & downs of my life

Group prayer ...

gave me a chance to see attitudes and characteristics
of my fellow classmates.

Share & reflect together as one

Students leading class prayer each day ...

was, I thought, that it gave me a chance
to realize that we each are individuals

The Reconciliation prayer service was ...

beautiful. The mood & tone was just right.
And I felt comfortable contemplating on my faith.

STUDENT FEEDBACK:

Jackie Ramirez

Throughout the year we expanded on our lessons in a variety of ways. We would like to hear from you in which activities helped you to grow and develop in your faith.

The one activity that I liked best was

going into groups and writing things familiar in our family and meditation.

I felt about journaling ...

it helps us get out feelings and express what we truthfully want to say.

Group prayer ...

Helps us pray if we don't get a chance in the morning and helps us start off the day well.

Students leading class prayer each day ...

Gives everyone a chance to pick out special prayers with a different theme.

The Reconciliation prayer service was ...

good. it helps us have reconciliation without having to be embarrassed saying it in front of the priest. It was fun and spiritual.

STUDENT FEEDBACK:

Jackie Alcala
3-4-98

Throughout the year we expanded on our lessons in a variety of ways. We would like to hear from you in which activities helped you to grow and develop in your faith.

The one activity that I liked best was ... the sophomore retreat.
I liked reconciliation, the group prayer services, and the evaluation questions of ourselves.

I felt about journaling ... I like journaling because it helps me to get my thoughts out on paper. It helps me express them better.

Group prayer ... I like group prayer because it makes me feel like we are more united and face the same problems together. I enjoy it a lot.

Students leading class prayer each day ... I like the daily prayer because we are all doing it together, but I think we should be able to follow any format that we wish. There are some other good types of prayer services.
The Reconciliation prayer service was ... It feels to sometimes like we need more good. I really liked the way it was held. It helped me a lot. a variety

PROJECT EVALUATION:

As this project comes to an end I can relate now to what was stated by the Whiteheads when they speak in their book that there is Christian community breaking through the stereotype. The book states that "Here a Christian community is pictured as a center of faith: it is a place where Christ's best hopes shine out - or, at least, flicker attractively now and again. It comprises a group of people who; are not only needy but gifted. These gifts appear in all parts of the group" (p.22). This truly describes my experience with the group of students, their light shines out in different ways through the different activities that I introduced to them through various forms of prayer.

In looking back over the months that this Pastoral Project took place there was one main realization for me. It relates to the different levels of faith that I encountered with the students. I came to realize that there are many levels of faith in the students that I teach. No one can be packaged into one definition. Flexibility is definitely a must when trying to expose young adults to a deeper relationship with God. Also, variety is needed in order for each student to find areas that they are comfortable with. I realized that there was not one area that all students were totally comfortable with. Of course some activities were well received by the majority of students, for example the reconciliation prayer service and the journaling.

I am affirmed to my teaching ministry. I feel this project has given me the foundation that I need to develop the students faith beyond the academic religion program at Providence High School. I was challenged when I discovered that many students do not practice their faith on a regular basis. As the Whiteheads suggest, that in ministering the faith is in "seeing" more than the "solving". I have always felt the seed is planted. We just do not always see when it grows. I grew to accept the idea that it was my obligation to minister to these students the different ways that they can develop their relationship with God through prayer. I realized I could only show them different varieties. It was up to them to put the ones they felt comfortable with into practice.

It was very challenging to know that as I begin each year with a new group of students I can continue to share these activities or develop new ones. This seems to be what we are called to from our Baptism. The students seemed to realize this year that religion was more than just another academic class, it came to be that they also discovered their relationship with God and themselves. The students felt comfortable to share their intentions

at the beginning of the class, which always set the tone for the rest of class. As the year progressed, students came to pray openly for themselves, their family and their friends. This in itself makes the project a success. I have seen many adults who had never been able to come to this level of prayer.

In closing, I am reminded of what Pope John Paul II said in The Splendor of Truth when he stated that "Through the gift of new life, Jesus makes us sharers in his love and leads us to the Father in Spirit. Such is the consoling certainty of Christian faith"(p.32). This summarizes what I feel as I complete this project, the thankfulness of being able to share some of my faith with my students, the future of our church.