

Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

POVERTY IN SPIRIT

"Go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven." (Mk. 10:21)

AREAS OF EXPLORATION

This meeting invites young people to reflect on the following questions:

- What does it mean to be poor in spirit?
- How does materialism affect our relationships with God and our neighbour?
- How can a person become poor in spirit?

providing them with this realization, proceed to the next section of this resource.

WELCOME

(20 minutes)

- Greeting
- Icebreaker
- Opening Prayer
- Theme Introduction

ENGAGE

(25 minutes)

PRIZED POSSESSIONS

Purpose: To have youth reflect on the number of possessions they have and their attachment to them

Materials needed: chart paper, markers

Facilitator Preparations: None

Instructions:

1. Divide youth into small groups and provide each with a sheet of chart paper and a marker.
2. Have each group create a list of 20 personal items or services that all group members (or their families) have or own. For example, these may include things such as cell phones, washing machine, gym membership or cable TV.
3. Have each group present their list. While groups present, take note of repeated items.
4. After all have presented, share with them the items most common to all the lists and ask them if they could personally live without those things. Example: "Could you see yourself permanently living without access to TV or the internet? Why or why not?" Pose this question for several items, particularly those that youth may have a difficult time parting with.
5. Next, note to the group the abundance of possessions we seem to have and how strongly attached we are to many of them. After

TEACH (10 minutes)

Instructions: Using the points below as guidelines, talk to the young people about poverty in spirit. Make connections between the youth's personal experiences, the Sunday readings and the teachings of the Church.

Facilitator Preparations: To effectively prepare for the talk, read the Mass readings for the Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time and sections 2544 – 2550 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church

Key Points for Talk:

- We own many possessions to which we often become attached. Some are basic necessities for living, while others are merely for luxury, entertainment or convenience.
- God calls us to adopt a spirit of poverty
 - This Sunday's readings from the Book of Wisdom, Psalms and the letter to the Hebrews remind us that eternal life cannot be attained through riches or power, but only through God who sustains and upholds life
 - In the Gospel, Jesus tells us that we must detach ourselves from our possessions in order to truly follow him as his disciples and to enter the Kingdom of God
- To be poor in spirit means to have a spirit of detachment from the material world and dependence and trust in God's providence
- Misplaced affections towards worldly things can hinder our pursuit of perfect charity (the same love God gives us and invites us to offer to others)
- True joy can only be found in God. Properly directing our affections to the pursuit of the Kingdom frees a person from worldly attachment

APPLY (20 minutes)

PART : DISCUSSION

Instructions: Have the youth return to their groups and discuss the questions below. Upon completion, have the groups return to the large group and share some of what they discussed

- In what ways can material possessions negatively affect our relationships with other people?
- What are some reasons why it is difficult to detach ourselves from worldly things?
- How can you practice being poor in spirit in a materialistic world?

PART II: CHALLENGE

Instructions: To further reflect on and apply the concept of poverty of spirit, challenge youth to try detaching themselves from some of their own possessions by doing one of the suggestions below. Invite them to substituting the time normally spent using those products with personal prayer.

- Temporarily deactivate or avoid logging onto your favourite website or online messenger service for several days.
- Do not bring your cell (or at least, shut it off completely) when at church for Mass.
- When traveling alone, do not use your iPod, mp3 player or play with your portable gaming system or cell phone.

CONCLUDE (5 minutes)

Instructions: Invite the youth to enter into silence and take a moment to reflect on their relationship with God and how well they have responded God's call to be poor in spirit. Then, lead the group in the intercessions and concluding prayer.

Intercessions

Leader:

Having come together united in Christ and with a desire to continue to grow in faith, we now offer our petitions to God:

R./ Lord, hear our prayer

- For the poor, that they may be sustained by God's providence and the support of our community, we pray to the Lord. *R./*
- For those who work with the marginalized of society, that the Holy Spirit may guide and strengthen them in their ministries, we pray to the Lord. *R./*
- For all young people, that they may always generously offer their time, talents and treasures in their pursuit of the Kingdom, we pray to the Lord. *R./*
- (Any intentions individuals would like to offer), we pray to the Lord. *R./*

Our Father...

Concluding Prayer

*Lord,
our help and guide,
make your love the foundation of our lives.
May our love for you express itself
in our eagerness to do good for others.
Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one
God for ever and ever.*

Amen.