



Family + Faith Session

Leader's Guide

MISSIONARY DISCIPLESHIP

Overview of the Topic

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. (Matt 28:19)

By virtue of being baptized Christians, we are called to be disciples who go forth to make other disciples. To be Christian is to have an identity with a mission to change the world by sharing Christ's love. Being loved by God, we are called to give that love to others. We come to know Jesus from the Gospels and through our prayer. We are compelled to share our knowledge and understanding with others so they, too, can know the joy of a relationship with Jesus Christ. Being a follower of Jesus is something we become and something we do.

Having experienced God's saving love, we become missionary disciples proclaiming the love of God in Jesus Christ and bringing others to the Father through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. It is out of joy we walk with others on their journey of faith to lead them to Christ.

From Scripture we learn Salvation History and how to act like Jesus. The Church helps us, through the sacraments, to grow in God's grace. As we participate in Mass, we gradually learn more about God. The Eucharist gives us strength to live our faith and sends us out to be Christ to others.

We can use our gifts and talents to share the Good News of Jesus. We show our love for God and others when we follow the Ten Commandments, live the Beatitudes and when we participate Works of Mercy, caring for others as Jesus would. Doing this, we follow our Baptismal call and grow in virtue by serving others. The lives of the saints model faith for us and inspire us to trust in God. Others can see Jesus in us when we respect the dignity of everyone and treat others with love. We are sent to live a Christian life and glorify God.

Overview of the Session

This plan offers options for you to do with families depending on your time, resources and purpose of your family session(s).

There is opportunity to read and reflect about Jesus and his family by sharing the

Scripture account of Jesus as a child and discussing meaning and purpose in life.

There will be additional Scripture passages to read and reflect upon by doing the *Live Like Jesus* page together as a family.

There is an activity to consider how by listening to the Liturgy of the Word at Mass we can learn more about our faith and Salvation history.

Families will have an opportunity to talk about faith in action by playing a family game to consider how we can live the Corporal Works of Mercy.

The session will conclude by offering families a Mass Reflection resource to enhance their spiritual experience at Mass and to help focus on the beauty and gift of the Mass.

Hospitality / Fellowship

Invite families to take seats at tables and enjoy simple refreshments. This is a good time to invite families to share a table with another family and enjoy getting to know one another during this fellowship time.

INVITE: Missionary Discipleship

Welcome

Say: *[Personalize your “Welcome” using these or similar words]* Welcome, missionary disciples! What, you didn’t know you are missionary disciples? Well, if you have experienced God’s love and you want to follow Jesus by sharing that love with others, that is exactly what you are! We hope that some of the things we will do together and talk about will be an opportunity to strengthen your identity as disciples of Jesus, who are joyful to bring Christ’s love to the world. Worshipping at Mass and listening to the Scripture readings and receiving Eucharist will strengthen your faith. With strong faith we are more able to follow the Commandments, live the Beatitudes and serve others through acts of mercy and kindness. We have been given the gift of God’s Son, Jesus, to show us how to live. The more we know Jesus through the Gospels and prayer the more we live through and for Christ.

Icebreaker

Say: *[using these or similar words]* Imagine a new neighbor is moving in next door to you. They have kids about the same ages as your family. They ask you what church you go to and what’s good about it? What will you say? Talk together and decide which things you would be sure to tell them. **(3-5 minutes)**

Opening Prayer

Today we are going to talk about how Christ's love changes our life.

Pope Francis said, "Let us not forget the great prayer: the one that Jesus taught us, and which is the prayer with which he prayed to the Father. This prayer prepares us for Communion."

(Pope Francis, General Audience — March 14, 2018)

So, let's begin, with that prayer, Jesus Christ gave us, The Lord's Prayer, also called The Our Father.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

DISCOVER

Encountering God in His Word

Say: *[using these or similar words]* We are called as Christians to carry the Good News Jesus taught us out to the world. Let's begin by opening our Bibles to Luke 2: 41-52, where we read about young Jesus in his family. One adult, please read this passage aloud to your family. **(4-6 minutes)**

It sounds from this account like Jesus and his parents had not communicated clearly. Has this ever happened in your family? Talk about a time when communicating with each other would have been helpful for your family and shown respect to each other. **(2-3 minutes)**

Jesus was coming to understand his purpose in life. God created each of us to have purpose and meaning in life. Helping and caring for other people is a great way to create purpose and meaning in your life. This could be in your family, church, school and community. Talk about some ways you each help, serve, or care for others in ways that give your life meaning. **(2-3 minutes)**

Lectio Divina Activity

Say: *[using these or similar words]* We are called to live like Jesus did, proclaiming the things he taught and sharing the stories of his life.

Take the page called *Live Like Jesus* and choose one of the passages to read with your family.

Then read it aloud again, this time listening for details about Jesus' life, the key points to remember. Feel free to jot down a phrase that stands out to you or an idea this brings to mind- in the box. Then share the things you have written down or been thinking about. **(5-6 minutes)**

Turn the paper over and find the same passage you read. Read and discuss the ideas in the box. **(4-5 minutes)**

Reading the Bible is wonderful way to learn more about Jesus, so we can know him better and also to live our lives more like he did.

LIVING OUR FAITH

Mass

Say: *[using these or similar words]* Another great way to keep learning about Jesus and growing in our faith is to pray and worship at Mass. At Mass, we hear from Scripture in the Liturgy of the Word, learning more about Jesus and our faith story. During the Liturgy of the Eucharist, we share in Jesus' Body and Blood in Holy Communion.

There are many reasons to attend Mass regularly. Discuss in your family why you attend Mass or why you think Mass is important or beautiful? Invite each person to tell one or two things. **(4-5 minutes)**

Please share aloud to the group one thing your family mentioned. **(Allow time for sharing and discussion, about 5 minutes)**

What great reasons I heard! And remember, at the end of Mass, we are sent forth to be like Jesus for others. That is discipleship.

Faith in Action

Corporal Works of Mercy

Say: *[using these or similar words]* The Corporal Works of Mercy are acts of love that address the physical and material needs of others. The Corporal Works of Mercy are:

- Feed the hungry.
- Give drink to the thirsty.
- Clothe the naked.
- Visit the imprisoned.
- Shelter the homeless.
- Visit the sick.
- Bury the dead.

Take a copy of the gameboard and a *[paper clip]* marker. Starting with the youngest person

in your family, take turns taking the top card from the pile and reading the question. If you answer correctly, move forward two spaces. If you need help from your team, move ahead one space. Can your family be a winner? Take some time now to play. (8-10 minutes)

Wrap-up

Say: *[these or similar words]* As Christians, we proclaim Christ to others. Think about your Christian life and your family life. Are the two the same? Which parts of your family life are especially Christian? These are the things we want to embrace and continue because they carry the Good News to everyone we interact with.

Extend the reflection

Say: *[using these or similar words]* We know that going to Mass helps us to keep learning about Jesus and his teachings. We also know that when we reflect on the words of Scripture, the lyrics of the music (especially in the Psalm), and the homily, we build our understanding and grow in faith.

Some people find that writing down their thoughts during Mass helps them be more attentive and responsive to the Mass. We have a Mass reflection booklet for each person to take home. We invite you to bring it with you when you go to Mass. We think you'll find, as you fill it in during Mass, that you deepen your understanding and feel a connection to Mass and the community. Give it a try, would you?

Closing Prayer

Say: Let's pray the closing prayer together.

Loving God, Creator and Father, you gave us the gift of your Son, to redeem and save us. Let us listen to the words you give us in Scripture to remind us how to live as your disciples.

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. (Philippians 4:8)

The Word of the Lord.

Sending Forth

Say: *[using these or similar words]* We began this session together praying the Lord's Prayer. Each time we pray the Lord's Prayer, we place our trust completely in God as Jesus taught us to do. Jesus teaches us so many things, how to pray, how to love, how to forgive, how to serve, how to find happiness and meaning in life. As we learn from and listen in God's Word and in prayer, we grow in understanding of the way of life Jesus Christ came to show us. The joy that comes from our life in Christ engenders a generosity to share this Good News with others. Hopefully, this time together was an opportunity to think about this with your family. May we all go out to love and serve others as Jesus has loved and taught us.