

# *St. Rita Catholic Parish Confirmation Preparation*

## **Packet #3 - “The Great Commission”**



Distributed: \_\_\_\_\_

Due: \_\_\_\_\_



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**Create the Perfect Environment**

1. Make sure you have adequate time to get through the packet, or the portion of the packet you wish to accomplish today. Please note that each packet takes approximately 2 hours to complete and a good chunk of that time may be used for things PRIOR to the meeting. So schedule your time accordingly.
2. Make sure you have a comfortable environment; comfortable seating, a table to write on, minimal distractions.
3. Have with you, the following items:
  - a. A bible and a catechism
  - b. Your session outline
  - c. Your worksheet
  - d. Pen/Pencil/Paper
  - e. A positive, open attitude
  - f. A computer/notepad or phone with access to the internet
4. Provide a snack/meal to share. Take turns, if you wish, providing a snack to share.

**Theme**

This meeting will discuss our call to be disciples of Christ. We will look at the Church's missionary mandate, our call to evangelize and our responsibility to serve others.

**Preparation (to be completed before the meeting)**

1. **Read** through the entire packet.
2. In several spots, you are asked to answer questions, share an experience, a story or an opinion. **Prepare for these BEFORE your meeting with your mentor.**
3. As part of this session, you will be asked to perform a service project WITH your mentor. Give some thought to what kind of service project you would like to do. Contact the youth office, if you need assistance or suggestions.

**Missionary Mandate**

The Church (and its members) has a responsibility to continue the work of Christ on earth through the Holy Spirit in the following manner:

- She (the Church) is entrusted to proclaim the fullness of the Gospel of Christ to all people. The Church is Christ continuing presence in the world, and through the Sacraments, provides the full means of salvation to all mankind.
- We share in this mission through our baptism and the Sacrament of Confirmation gives us strength to spread the Gospel as witnesses.
- We are called to love God and to love our neighbor, sharing the Good News (the Gospel) and helping those who are poor and marginalized.

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**The Meeting**

1. **Opening prayer:** Make the sign of the Cross and read aloud the passage from Matthew 28:16-20.
2. **The Great Commission:** God calls us to go out and spread the Good News to all. "Co" – meaning many or multiple, and "mission" means to be sent. This is what is said at the end of every Mass, to go forth and tell others. Read and discuss the section of this packet titled "**The Gift**".
3. **Read and Discuss:** St. Therese of Lisieux was a great natural evangelizer. She lived her life in honor of God and through her small actions and words she brought many people to faith. Go to [www.catholic.org](http://www.catholic.org) and read about St. Therese. Note the ways she performed small acts to demonstrate Gods love for us. After reading and discussing her, pray this prayer together.  
*St. Therese, you desired only to bring souls to Jesus to glorify Him. It was in the small acts of love that you witnessed to the Gospel. You made bold requests of God, pray therefore, on our behalf, the bold request that we may have the grace and courage from God to share the Gospel with those around us. As our Lord Jesus Christ, to sent us the Holy Spirit that we may know how to speak Truth into the hearts of those we meet, and grant us the ability to imitate your "little way" of love in selfless acts to those around us, that by your words and actions, they may come to know the Lord.*
4. **LIVE your faith:** God wants us to be fulfilled, plain and simple. Read and discuss the section of this packet titled "The Be-Attitudes".
5. **Snack:** If you haven't already done so, share your snack. You are encouraged to work and discuss and eat.
6. **Closing Prayer:** Pray the prayer of St. Francis together.

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,  
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light;  
where there is sadness, joy;

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;  
to be understood as to understand;  
to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive;  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;  
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen

## The Gift

When we have something we love, cherish or are proud of we want to show it off. It could be a driver's license, a new pair of shoes, a cell phone app, a defining muscle, a special outfit – the list goes on and on. When we receive a gift we are excited about, we do the same thing. We can't WAIT to share it with others. When it comes to our faith, and as we approach receiving the gifts of the Holy Spirit, we reflect on the gift that God, our Father, first gave the world: the gift of His son, Jesus.

At World Youth Day 2011 in Spain, Pope Benedict said the following during his homily. "Faith is a gift of God, faith is a relationship with Jesus Christ and following Jesus, in faith, means walking at His side in the communion of the Church. Growing in friendship with Christ necessarily means recognizing the importance of joyful participation in the life of your parishes, communities and movements, as well as the celebration of Sunday Mass. Frequent reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and the cultivation of personal prayer and meditation on God's word. Friendship with Jesus will lead you to bear witness to the faith wherever you are, even when it's met with rejection or opposition".

As each of us chooses to move forward in becoming a fully initiated member of the Catholic Church, we must realize the gift of our faith in Jesus and share that faith with the rest of the world. As you read in the great commission (Matt 28:16-20) you see that Jesus did not ask his apostles to stay in the upper room and wait for people to come to them and ask questions. He said "GO", go out into the world and make disciples of all men. Be missionary. Proclaim Jesus in the cities, in the towns, on the road, in the store, the schools, the playgrounds. The same is true for us. Our faith shouldn't be confined to one hour on Sunday here at St. Andrew. We can't limit ourselves to talking about our faith only at Mass or during youth group. We must share it with everyone.

Just as we speak reverently about our favorite item, gift, or accomplishment, we must share our faith with others. This is what we are called to do. By living our faith in both actions and in words, we demonstrate the power of that faith to others. We can help others learn about the faith by bringing them, when they are ready, into the life of the Church. If you love our gift of faith in Christ so much, you will WANT to share it with everyone.

As baptized Christians, the Holy Spirit is with us always. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to empower us, give us confidence, and to speak for us. It is our duty in turn, to ask for strength and courage when we are fearful. Saint Mother Teresa told us we are called to bring the light to the darkness. Christ is that light. Those in darkness are waiting to be brightened by the radiant joy of your love for Christ. So what are we waiting for....GO!

### Discussion

- Why is the missionary mandate important for the Church? Do you think it is important for the Church to spread the Gospel? Why or why not?
- How do YOU share your gift of faith with others?
- What scares you about sharing your faith with others? What makes it difficult? What would make it easier?
- What is one thing you can begin doing that will help you grow in love for God?

## **The Be-Attitudes**

He gives us the recipe for happiness; it only requires us to trust in His words from the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:3-12). These teachings are called the "beatitudes". Each one of these statements sheds light on what it means to live a Christian life. The beatitudes lead to more than happiness, they lead to blessing. The beatitudes are radical teachings, and if we follow them, we will find ourselves become less concerned with material things, and more concerned in those around us. We live out the beatitudes when we serve others. The Church lists several ways we can do this called the "corporal works of mercy". Corporal comes from the Latin word that means "bodily". We are called to do the works of mercy that tend to the physical needs of our brothers and sisters. The Catholic Church identifies seven corporal works of mercy. Read Matthew 25:35-45 and refer to the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC2447) and list them on your worksheet.

As Jesus walked on the earth, he not only spoke the truth, he lived it. We find countless moments in Scripture where Jesus not only helped turn people away from sin and helped them spiritually, but also cured them of their temporal needs. Jesus was constantly serving, curing, healing, feeding, and uniting the least of our brothers and sisters. Discuss one instance.

The early Church acted boldly when she proclaimed, "faith without works is dead". If we love God so much, how can we not turn and love the creation He made? It's in our very nature to want to please those whom we love, and God is pleased when we care for our neighbors. We find in the book of Acts (Acts 2:45) that is a duty as a Christian to share with the community by contributing to the needs of the hungry and poor.

If we want to grow closer to God, we need to be more like God. It's not enough to just pray, but we must LIVE our faith in our actions. And it must be done with love and respect, and not out of obligation. Part of the confirmation program is about service. It is not geared to chalk up good deeds but to expose you to opportunities to use your faith in action. Hopefully, through these opportunities, you will come to love the feeling you get when serving others and want to do it more and more. Becoming selfless in your daily actions is truly acting as Christ-like. Saint Mother Teresa once said "It is not how much we give, but how much love we put into giving".

It is time to put your faith into action. Pick a service project that you and your mentor can do together. You can get suggestions from the parish office, or come up with your own. The project must meet one of the corporal works of mercy. Record your project on your worksheet.



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e.

f.

6. There are many examples in Scripture where Jesus met the PHYSICAL needs of others. List one (with Scriptural notation) here.

7. My mentor and I performed the following service project. Please include a photo of you working together at the location.

a. Project:

i. Location: \_\_\_\_\_

ii. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

iii. Activity:

b. Act of Corporal Mercy: \_\_\_\_\_

c. What I enjoyed most about the project.

8. Something I learned about myself is during this session is:

9. Something new I learned about my mentor is: