

Saint Katharine Drexel Youth Group

Lesson Plan for June 28, 2015

Reacting to Change

Overview

Through a chaotic team game and role-playing small groups, teens will explore their reactions to change. In large group, we will discuss the inevitability of change, the reasons that change is often met with negative reactions, and ways to prepare ourselves for change in our own lives.

Objectives

Mind – Teens will engage their minds by quickly adapting to the changing rules of the team game, by imagining their reactions to challenging situations in small group, and by discussing the topic of change in detail in large group.

Body – Teens will engage their bodies by competing in an active, goal-oriented contest between two teams which will require not only physical participation, but will also elicit their nature reactions to change which will be later discussed.

Soul – Teens will engage their souls by reflecting on how they have previously reacted to change and by learning ways in which we can accept change in light of Christian teachings.

Growth

This is primarily an **ESTEEM** lesson.

Esteem – Teens will grow in esteem by understanding why we often react negatively to change and by learning strategies by which we can prepare ourselves to cope with change.

Community – Teens will grow in community by competing in a friendly team game, by sharing personal answers to questions in small groups of their peers, and by engaging in a large group discussion whereby adults and teens will be able to gain wisdom and understanding from one another.

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Faith – Teens will grow in faith by recognizing the stability that the Church provides amidst changes in our personal and public lives and the graces from the Holy Spirit that enable us to retain hope and trust in God.

Agenda

5:00 – 6:00: SET-UP (*prior to arrival of teens*)

Set up game area:

- Place hula hoops or other goal in their appropriate area
- Put tape markings on the ground (only 5-ft line)
- Ensure that divider is accessible
- Gather pool noodles and hide out of sight
- Divide newspaper into two stacks for use by teams

Prepare for small group:

- Place scenarios sheets in accessible place for dispensing to groups

6:00 – 6:30: FREE TIME – Unstructured socializing time.

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6:30 – 7:00: ICEBREAKER: News of the Day

Teens will be divided into two teams. Each team will be given a stack of old newspaper and a goal. The teams will compete by throwing newspaper balls into the goal. The team that has the most number of newspaper balls in their bucket at the end of the game wins.

As the game progresses, however, the rules will be changed without warning.

Rules to begin:

- Newspaper pile cannot leave the tile area
- Each person can only carry one newspaper ball at a time
- All throws must come from behind the 5-ft line
- Time limit is set at 10-15 minutes

Rule changes:

1. All team members must be on their knees or sitting
2. All throws must come from behind the 10-ft line
3. Teams may designate one person to retrieve missed shots, but that person cannot score in the goal
4. Each team can designate a swatter to interfere with the other team by swinging a pool noodle. Movement restricted by ground markings (hula hoop)
5. Swatter is gone and teams can move back to the 5-ft line
6. All team members are allowed to stand again but you cannot move while holding newspaper
7. A large divider is placed in front of the goals to obstruct the view
8. Teams must switch sides and play with what had been their opponent's goal
9. Divider is removed and teams are given 30 seconds to finish

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7:00 – 7:50: SMALL GROUP: Reactions

(7:00 – 7:15) Teens will be split into three or four groups and sent to separate classrooms. Each group will be given at least two scenarios to discuss.

Group 1

- How would you react if tomorrow you inherited one million dollars?
- How would you react if tomorrow your parents had another child?
- How would you react if tomorrow everyone else only spoke French?
- How would you react if tomorrow your house was burglarized?

Group 2

- How would you react if tomorrow you got your driver's license and a brand new car?
- How would you react if tomorrow your parents took away your smart phone?
- How would you react if tomorrow your best friend turned into a giant lizard?
- How would you react if tomorrow your house burned down?

Group 3

- How would you react if tomorrow you won a full scholarship to the college of your choice?
- How would you react if tomorrow your family moved to another state?
- How would you react if tomorrow everyone was legally required to shave their heads?
- How would you react if tomorrow the United States was invaded by another country's military?

Each group will be instructed to spend a few minutes to think about each situation and describe their reaction to each. What feelings would this provoke? What action would you take?

(7:15 – 7:35) After spending about 15 minutes in small group, the teens will reassemble in the youth room and we will spend another 20 minutes discussing their results.

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7:35 – 8:45: LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

Change is inevitable

- We will be faced with change our entire lives and there is nothing we can do to prevent it
- Sometimes we initiate change to bring about improvements in our lives and others
- More often, however, we think of change as something imposed on us that often elicits a negative reaction
- Here are a few personal stories about imposed change:
 - Sometimes I will make weekend plans but then the weather will change and a sunny day becomes rainy, or the friends who had agreed to come suddenly are unavailable. It is frustrating and makes me angry.
 - When Ann told me that she and Ernie were leaving, I gained a lot more responsibilities, but also lost two great sources of wisdom and experience. I felt a little abandoned since I was the only one left after so many years.
 - During the attacks of September 11th, everyone's world changed. I remember wondering if my college years would be spent fighting Al-Qaeda in the middle east, and there was a heightened sense of anxiety when gathering in large groups, because now major terrorist activity could happen in our country, too.
- Does anyone have any personal testimonies they would like to share regarding negative reactions to imposed change?

Hostility towards imposed change

- How do we react to imposed change and why is it so often negative?
- Anger
 - Disenchantment because our once sacred traditions are no more
 - Discomfort by removing a comfort or creating a discomfort
 - We are too proud to accept that others have made a decision that affect us
 - We have invested time and energy into something that is now no longer wanted or accepted

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- The change may require us to expend energy
- We stop loving and being patient
- We begin to badmouth, sabotage, be rude
- We focus on what is lost and not what might be gained
- We disengage from the situation so as to avoid dealing with it; become apathetic (“I’m over it”)
- Fear
 - Loss of security and stability
 - We no longer know where we are
 - We no longer know where we are going (disorientation)
 - We no longer know who we are (disidentification)
 - We may have to reconsider our decisions in life
 - We may fit awkwardly into the new situation, such as with puberty
 - *“Better the devil you know than the one you don’t”*
 - We lose power and control and act like we’re in a corner
 - We may react with hyperbolic disaster scenarios
 - We stop trusting and hoping
 - We begin questioning, doubting

Preparing for change

- How are we as Christians to react to change?
 - It depends on what the change is, of course
 - If good, we should be thankful and share our joy with others
 - If bad, we should be patient and steadfast
 - If evil, we should respond lovingly to ensure that we return to the proper course
 - We must prepare ourselves since change is inevitable
 - Virtue of temperance allows us to keep a level head
 - Virtue of fortitude allows us to keep on the right path
 - Virtue of prudence allows us to make right decisions
 - Virtue of justice allows us to keep things in perspective
- We must constantly be learning new things
 - Build a life that values the quest for knowledge
 - Stay engaged with your community and the world around you

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- Reflect on your experiences to gain wisdom
- Listen to the experiences of others to maintain perspective
- Understand what options are available to you
- Be willing to explore new ideas, topics, and opinions
- Study history to better understand our current situations
- We should learn about ourselves and our emotions
- Knowledge is power so we need not feel powerless
- Focus not on what is lost but what can be gained
 - Businessmen do this all the time to create prosperity
 - The past cannot be changed but the future can
- Remember that everything comes from God
 - Do not become too attached to this world because it is fleeting
 - Material possessions cannot satisfy our longings; only God can complete our lives
 - Be thankful for what we have to recognize that we could lose them
 - Practice patience and humility and do not become too proud
- We are to trust in the Lord and hope for His Kingdom
 - We are made for Heaven and must keep focused on that goal
 - God is a loving Father who will care for us and hear our prayers
 - Everyone faces difficulties in this world, including the Lord
 - God promised to stay with us until the end of time
 - Ask and you shall receive, knock and it shall be opened
- We can rely on friends, family, and the Church for stability
 - Having a source of stability is a great help when encountering change
 - Friends can empathize with difficulties
 - Family can provide wisdom on how to deal with situations
 - Faith provides the eternal joy of Heaven
- We can rely on the Lord and His Peace and Joy (John 14:27)

John 14:27 -- Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give it to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid.

- The Holy Spirit gives us the graces to deal with change
 - Wisdom, Fortitude, Counsel, Prudence, Patience, Peace, Self-Control, Humility

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- The Lord has conquered the world: John 16:31

John 16:33 -- In the world you will have trouble, but take courage, I have conquered the world.

- The Lord has even conquered the great change: death
 - We practice dying by going to sleep
 - Beforehand, we place our soul in God's hands
- We exchange peace with one another at mass
- Let His peace envelope your life so that you do not becoming too frightened or worried or angry or upset.
- "Faith tells me that no matter what lies ahead of me, God is already there"

8:45 – 9:00: FREE TIME – Unstructured socializing time, if applicable.

Announcements

1. All teens are encouraged to join our Facebook group and follow our Twitter account. We will post upcoming events, photos, and other bits of news and information.
2. We will not be meeting on July 5th because it is Independence weekend.
3. Our next meeting will be on July 12th. We will discuss initiating change in our life.
4. July 19th is movie night.
5. We will also meet on July 26th but then not again until August 23rd.
6. In the spirit of Pope Francis, please help us clean up the youth room.