

# Religious Education Session Planning Form

## PRELIMINARIES

**Session Date and Title:** Tuesday, September 17, 2013 - "God Keeps NO Secrets"

**Session Theme/"Big Idea" and Chapter:** God reveals himself to us through Scripture

**Scripture for this session:** Dt 30:11-14 ("it is something very near to you...")

### Materials Needed:

- Name tents
- CD player
- CD instrumental music
- Prayer intention slips
- Pens
- Prayer center objects
- Bowl of holy water
- Nicene Creed board
- Prayer candle
- "Reveal the Hidden Message" slips
- Foam ball
- Assignment sheet
- Folders
- Name labels
- Bibles
- Finding God books
- Bookmarked Bible
- small "prizes"

### Notes:

- Name tents at places (boy/girl as much as possible)
- Instrumental music in background (CD/player)
- Prayer intention slips and pens at places
- Prayer center objects on side table
- Hold bowl of holy water at the door
- Greet students at door with holy water – bless selves
- Students are seated and write out prayer intentions
- Take attendance – introduce self

**ENGAGE** (10 – 15 MINUTES) – “Enter through *THEIR* door...” In this step, seek to capture the imagination of your participants with an image or idea from their lived experience. Use this to introduce the focus of your session. Also, use this time to establish a prayerful climate.

1. **Welcome and “housekeeping” details**
2. **Ritual setting up of prayer table/center** (*procession, Bible enthronement, etc*)
  - a. Tell young people that there’s something very important that needs to be set up each week in the center of our table...the prayer center.
  - b. Have volunteers line up to carry the green cloth, prayer candle, cross, holy water, and Bible while the rest line up behind them.
  - c. Play instrumental music and have them walk around the room, coming to the spot where you are standing to place the items on the table. Those that have no items pause and bow to the Bible.
  - d. Explain that next week they are to bring in their own symbol to add to the prayer center.
3. **Opening Prayer experience** (*Sign of Cross, ritual greeting, threefold Sign of Cross, intentions, etc.*)
  - a. Stand – Sign of the Cross
  - b. Ritual greeting – (Preface Dialogue)
  - c. Threefold sign of the cross (forehead, lips, heart)
  - d. Pass the candle – share prayer intentions

4. **Engage Activity/Introduction of theme/topic/big idea** (*a brief activity that introduces the theme/big idea through the life experience of the learners*)
- a. It's very hot today so we brought you some water...something necessary for our physical health. BUT...you have to reveal the hidden message.
  - b. Distribute "Reveal the Hidden Message" slips of paper and allow 2 minutes to solve, rewarding winners with a cold bottle of water.
  - c. Explain how frustrating it would be if we had to solve a secret code to get what we need for our physical health.
  - d. Thankfully, when it comes to our spiritual health, we don't have to solve any secret codes: God has already REVEALED his message to us.
  - e. Ask, "Where is God's message revealed to us?" (The Bible)
  - f. Show a Bible – explain that we are so blessed to know that the way to live for eternity with God is not a secret but it is revealed in the Bible. Explain that this year, we will be getting to know the Bible much better.
  - g. Point out that we are going to each have a Bible to use this year along with a textbook that will guide us. Invite young people to come forward one at a time to be presented with their Bible and Finding God textbook.
  - h. Call forward one at a time, present Bible and FG textbook, and say, "the Word of the Lord" to which they should respond, "Thanks be to God"
  - i. Play instrumental music in background
  - j. invite them to turn to the inside cover and fill in their name
  - k. invite all to say the "as I open this book..." prayer on the first page

**EXPLORE (30 – 40 MINUTES)** – *In this step, present the content of our faith – the Good News – that "fixes" (repairs, heals, restores, redeems) the problem exposed in the Engage step.*

1. **Moment of silent prayer** (*open minds and hearts to hear God's Word*)
2. **Scripture reading:** (*invite a participant to come forward, bow before the Bible, and proclaim*

*the Scripture reading for the session)*

**Dt 30:11-14**

- 3. Delivery of Content** *(reading of textbook or other method of delivery)*
  - a. Introduce foam ball “Jerome” and explain that you will toss it to the student who is to read.
  - b. Have students take turns (toss ball) reading aloud pages 4-5.
  - c. Have students highlight the following words: inspired, Old Testament and New Testament, Magisterium, Interpretation
  - d. Summarize again that the Bible is one of the ways that God reveals his plan of salvation to us.
  - e. Write the word REVELATION on the board – explain that revelation simply means to reveal something....the opposite of keeping a secret and that this year, as we learn about the Bible, we will be learning about what God has revealed to us about what we need to be spiritually healthy
  
- 4. Reinforcement Activity** *(discuss or do an activity that further clarifies, fleshes out, or reinforces the content; the “big idea”)*
  - a. invite young people to brainstorm a list of all the Bible characters they can think of without looking in the bible for help. Have them work in groups of 3 at the board and give them 3 minutes.
  - b. compare lists and award the winners
  - c. next, invite them to find a Bible story (David and Goliath) in the Bible in under 60 seconds and award any who do.
  - d. Explain that we have some work to do getting to know the Bible!
  
- 5. Prayerful Segue** *(Play a song on CD or sing a hymn that flows from/reinforces the “big idea”)*  
**Play "Lord, You Have the Words" (FG CD 2 Track 3)**

**REFLECT (10 - 15 MINUTES)** – *In this step, invite participants to spend time with Jesus in prayerful reflection related to the theme of the session.*

- 1. Invitation to Prayer** *(invite participants to transition to prayer: comfortable posture, quiet, deep breathing, background music)*

2. **Lead a Guided Reflection** (*invite participants to use their imaginations to encounter Jesus and to spend time in conversation with him*)
  - a. Ask if someone can explain what the word sacred means (holy, special, set apart)
  - b. Introduce the notion of sacred space. Tell the young people that each week, we are going to have a prayer experience that begins with each of the going to a spot in the room that they have claimed as their own sacred space.
  - c. Put on instrumental music and call young people forward one at a time to pick up a tea light candle (as a reminder of the light of Christ they received in Baptism) from the table and to go to a spot they claim as their sacred space and to sit there quietly...no laying down.
  - d. After all are in their places, lead them in some deep breathing, telling them that it helps them to slow down and to pay attention to God's presence.
  - e. Explain that the same Holy Spirit that inspired the writers of the Bible is within them, ready to inspire them this year to know God through the Bible.
  - f. Slowly read the words of this prayer: O Lord Jesus Christ, open the eyes of my heart, that I may hear your word and understand and do your will on my journey of faith. Thank you for revealing your law of love to me. Open mine eyes, that I may recognize the wonders of your love. Speak to me the message of your wisdom. On you, O Lord, I set my hope. Enlighten my mind and understanding with the light of your knowledge, not only to respect your Word in the Bible but also to put your Words into action. Lord, you have the words of everlasting life. Amen.
  - g. Allow quiet and silence the music
  - h. Gently and gradually call them back to their places.
3. **Allow a minute of silence at the end of the reflection before inviting participants "back"**

**RESPOND (10 MINUTES)** – “...but be sure to leave through YOUR door!” in this step, prepare participants to go forth armed with a new “behavior” – a new way of looking at and living life.

1. **Assessment** (whether formally or informally, assess the extent to which participants have grasped the “big idea” and the content of the session)
  - a. Distribute quiz and read the items aloud
  - b. have students exchange papers and correct
2. **Assignment** (give the participants some “homework” – an assignment; a practice – that invites/challenges them to put into practice what has been learned. Tip: this is most effective when printed and sent home for parents to sign and return the following week)
  - a. Distribute binders
  - b. Distribute Homework sheet and explain that students are to bring in a symbol for the prayer table and are to do something that reveals God's love to others.
3. **Closing Prayer** (invite participants to a brief closing prayer: tradition prayer, a hymn, a decade of the Rosary, a Mass part, a Sign of Peace)
  - a. Sign of the Cross
  - b. Pray the prayer on the back of the Finding God book
  - c. Sign of Peace
4. **Blessing with Holy Water** (have participants bless themselves with Holy Water as they leave)

## FOLLOW-UP

Evaluation, Comments, Notes: