

Kingdom Of God

3

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

REMEMBER

Each reflection point must cover at least one key text from 'The Good News' as well as allowing participants time to consider their own experience, so the reflection points have the following sections:

- The Good News (Sacred Scripture)
- Personal Story (The personal reflection of the participants based upon their experience)
- Each Reflection Point must conclude with a liturgy

This session should be a minimum of 60 minutes, but no more than 90 minutes.

An example on how you may want to lead the day as a leader is set out below, identifying the key objectives of the session, Explore, Understand and Reflect.

Time Sample Session Layout

0.00	<p>Group Arrives and Settle Down</p> <p>Icebreaker</p> <p><i>A quick game that will allow the young people to get aware of their surroundings and the individuals who they are going to be spending the next hour in session with. If you do not know any icebreakers there are examples scattered across the internet. Try http://www.thesource4ym.com/ or http://youthgroupgames.com.au/</i></p>
0.10	<p>Introduction of the theme (EXPLORE)</p> <p><i>As a leader it's important to introduce the theme 'Our active love builds the kingdom of God'. During this time it would be ideal to introduce 'The Good News' to explain in a more defined way of what the third reflection point means. The young people can add input on thoughts about the scripture and themes, exploring who is in God's kingdom and how we can build it.</i></p>
0.20	<p>Activity</p> <p><i>An activity to allow the young people to come to recognise the purpose of God's love and how we must take a role in actively building it. This could be delivered in any way you feel fitting as the leader. It might be ideal to allow the young people to move/ interact and have an input in this activity.</i></p>
0.35	<p>Feedback and Explanation (UNDERSTAND)</p> <p><i>As a leader the activity you pick the young people to take part in should have a link into the session's theme. This time now allows the young people to gain an understanding of why they have done the activity and an opportunity arises for discussion.</i></p> <p><i>This is also the time when the leader should try to elicit from the young people what work they have done recently toward the FIA award. For example, have they been preparing others in this season of Lent? The leader can then try to link this activity to the activity the young person has just done. It is vital that the young people reflect on the work they have done in the last few weeks. Why have they done it? What difference could it have made?</i></p>
0.40	<p>Liturgy (REFLECT)</p> <p><i>A time for the young people to welcome God into the session. You may feel the need to do a meditation, prayer stations or creative activity to invite the young people to think more on a personal reflection about the scripture and theme.</i></p>
0.55	<p>Closing Prayer : Faith in Action Prayer</p> <p><i>Invite the young people to participate in saying the prayer.</i></p>
0.60	<p>Session Ends</p>

Below is a sample session which can be used with the young people presenting the 3rd Reflection Point, Our Active Love Builds the Kingdom of God.

Time Sample Session Layout

0.00	<p>Group Arrives and Settle Down</p> <p>Icebreaker</p> <p><i>Balloon Bop –</i></p> <p><i>The young people stand in a circle and hold hands. The leader drops one balloon into the circle and the goal is to keep the balloon up in the air as long as possible without breaking the circle. The young people can use any part of their body but no feet must be used. In order for this game to work effectively the young people have to all move together, as a circle to make sure they don't lose connection.</i></p> <p><i>If the young people find this activity too hard you can allow them to use their feet.</i></p> <p><i>If the young people find this activity too easy you can add more balloons into the middle.</i></p>
0.10	<p>Introduction of the theme (EXPLORE)</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EWN299sB5nq – Parable of the Mustard Seed</p> <p><i>How something so insignificant can become something great.</i></p> <p><i>Have you ever seen a mustard seed? Look. See how tiny these seeds are? They are the smallest seeds I have ever seen. A mustard seed is so small that if you were holding one in your hand and dropped it on the ground, you might not be able to find it. Even though the mustard seed is one of the smallest of all seeds, when it is planted in the ground, it grows into a plant so large that birds can perch on its branches and can even build their nests in it. I have read that these tiny seeds can produce a plant that grows ten feet high or more!</i></p> <p><i>Jesus told a parable comparing the mustard seed to the kingdom of God. Jesus said, "How can I describe the Kingdom of God? What story should I use to illustrate it? It is like a mustard seed planted in the ground. It is the smallest of all seeds, but it becomes the largest of all garden plants; it grows long branches, and birds can make nests in its shade."</i></p> <p><i>How is that a picture of the kingdom of God? Well, when Jesus first began his earthly ministry, he had no followers. The Bible tells us that Jesus was walking along the shore of the sea of Galilee when he saw two fishermen, Peter and his brother Andrew, casting their nets. "Come, follow me," Jesus said to them. They immediately followed Jesus. As they continued on their way, they saw two other brothers, James and John, mending their nets. Jesus called them and they immediately left their nets and followed him. One by one, Jesus called his disciples until there were twelve of them. That is still a pretty small beginning, isn't it? Jesus sent out the twelve and they brought others to Jesus and the kingdom of God grew. From a very small beginning, the kingdom of God has grown and grown until it has spread over the entire earth.</i></p> <p><i>Jesus started growing the kingdom of God with a handful of disciples. Every follower of Jesus is a part of the kingdom and that means that you and I are a part of God's kingdom. Each time we tell someone about Jesus, we are helping to grow the kingdom. Isn't it great to know that we can have a part in growing God's kingdom?</i></p>
0.20	<p>Activity</p> <p><i>Tibetan Prayer Flags</i></p> <p><i>Tibetan prayer flags are traditionally used to promote peace, wisdom, compassion, and strength. It is commonly thought that prayer flags offer prayers to God. Tibetans believe the wind will blow the prayers and mantras in to the surroundings, spreading goodwill and compassion.</i></p> <p><i>It is natural that prayer flags fade and fray, indeed they are intentionally left un-hemmed for this to happen. This is symbolic of the inevitable passing of all things. New prayer flags can either be hung over the old ones, or the old ones can be taken down and burnt releasing the last of the blessings.</i></p> <p><i>Following this idea, prayer flags can be used to enhance this session by thinking about a prayer we would like to offer up to the Lord to help us build this Kingdom of God. Perhaps the young people can draw a symbol to represent a quality that they have been given which can be used for other people's benefits or the young people may have thought of an idea they can do within their community to help others enhance their faith journey.</i></p> <p><i>This is a creative task which will allow the young people on the FIA course to think more deeply on what it means to ACTIVELY build the Kingdom of God.</i></p>
0.35	<p>Feedback and Explanation (UNDERSTAND)</p> <p><i>After the activity is completed this might be a good time to ask the young people how they are actively going to take this theme and place it into action within their school, parish or community.</i></p> <p><i>After doing so, allow the young people to recognise all the different things the Lord gives to each one of them by making a display of the flags within the room. Realising that sometimes we can question how our faith can make a difference in the world, the mustard seed parable teaches us that it is possible to actively allow faith</i></p>

to grow in the people around us.

This is the time now to think about what people have done recently. Cafod Family Fast? Shoebox appeal? How does this work relate to the theme of this reflection point? By recognising that we are challenged within our faith to share and build the kingdom of God, how are we going to put this into action?

0.40 **Liturgy (REFLECT)**

One idea to close the session could be to allow the young people to create their own little plant pot. As the young people take care of this plant pot, feeding and nourishing it, this can be a reminder of how God sees us. God nourishes and takes care of us even though we might not see the potential we have. As our own plant pots grow, we remind ourselves of the challenge we have been given within our faith to actively build the kingdom of God.

A song can be played at this point to give the young people a focus when making their plant pots.

0.55 **Closing Prayer : Faith in Action Prayer**

As we look at the prayer flags we have created and the plant pots that we are going to take home with us, let us remember how we can transform and grow by the grace of God's help.

Invite the young people to participate in saying the prayer.

0.60 **Session Ends**

Flag Of Me Activity...

Ask the young people to design and create their own flag, a flag that outlines their interests, where they come from, what they enjoy doing etc. You may also want to use this time for the young people to reflect on the work which they are doing actively to help others in the world.

After the young people have created their own flag they can then go around the room writing on the back of other people's flags, affirming them. To affirm is to recognise the good points about someone else.

