

Value the Church: *Sacraments*

LESSON AT A GLANCE	
<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In preparation for this discussion, the facilitator may also find benefit in these supporting articles. 	<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is a sacrament? ➤ Why are the three sacraments important? ➤ What are the four elements of a sacrament? <p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sacraments are fundamental acts of grace bestowed by God on a human being; sacraments are essential for salvation, at least until the day of the Lord. (Catechism Q&A question 472) ➤ Receiving Holy Baptism and Holy Sealing are the first steps in preparing a soul for Christ's return, and Holy Communion provides continuous strengthening in our striving. (Catechism Q&A question 491, 505, 528) ➤ The four elements of sacraments are the sign, the content, the dispenser, and faith. (Catechism Q&A question 474) <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ IGNITE Bible ➤ Catechism Q&A ➤ Printout of road signs <p>References:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bible: Matthew 26:26-29 ➤ Catechism Q&A questions: 377-378, 472, 475-478, 481, 490-491, 505, 512, 515, 530 ➤ 6th, 7th, 8th Articles of Faith
PRE DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS AND STUDENT (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)	
	<p>Do you know what a sacrament really is? This week we will be discussing the importance of sacraments in the life of a believer. Join us tomorrow for small group at _____.</p>
POST DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)	
<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please keep the main message intact, but feel free to add local information as necessary. 	<p>Dear Parents,</p> <p>This week the "I Wonder..." questions were about sacraments, what they are and why they're important. If your student was baptized and sealed as a baby, talk with them about what it was like to make those vows on their behalf. You can also talk with them about Holy Communion. Since this sacrament is dispensed regularly, brainstorm some ideas with your student about how to make sure celebrating communion does not just become something that is done out of habit. As always, if you have questions about the topic, please feel free to contact us.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Your Youth Leaders</p>

SUNDAY SERMON REFLECTIONS (up to 10 minutes)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow 2-3 students to share their reflections. For larger groups, vary who shares from week to week. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What Bible verse was used for the basis of last Sunday’s sermon? ➤ What were some of the main takeaways? What did you learn? ➤ So far this week, how have you applied what you learned from the sermon last Sunday? ➤ Going forward, how will you apply what you learned from the sermon last Sunday?
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HOOK (up to 10 minutes)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow 2-3 students to share their reflections. For larger groups, vary who shares from week to week. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How are you and how are you feeling today? ➤ Who would like to share their point to ponder or call to action from last week? <p>Show the students your printout of road signs. Ask them what each one means.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Stop sign = stop your car ➤ Pedestrian crossing sign = this is a place where people cross the street, so vehicles need to be on the lookout ➤ No parking sign = vehicles cannot park here ➤ Lane merging sign = this lane is going to end soon, so vehicles will have to merge into the other lane <p>Make sure your students understand that they knew what the signs meant even though a description wasn’t given of the sign. The signs are just a representation of what they know and understand needs to happen in these traffic situations.</p> <p>Tell the students: When we witness sacraments in the congregation, we are seeing the sign (or the visible representation) of what is really happening. We’ll talk more about this later in the lesson.</p>
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SET THE STAGE (1 minute)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Preview the “I wonder” questions with the students. 	<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is a sacrament? ➤ Why are the three sacraments important? ➤ What are the four elements of a sacrament?
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LESSON (up to 25 minutes)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p>	<p>Student Question #1 What is a sacrament?</p> <p>Read Catechism Q&A question 472 together as a group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Q&A describes a sacrament as a fundamental act of God’s grace.
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- If the students have trouble defining grace, consider watching [Episode 38 of For Your Journey | Grace](#)
 - For Your Journey episodes can be found on the [NAC USA YouTube channel](#) and in the [NAC USA mobile app](#).

- The New Apostolic Church is a church of sacraments

- **While it is important for the students to know what the sacraments are, it is equally important to emphasize the effects of the sacraments.**

- The Articles of Faith can be found on page 251 of the Catechism Q&A.

- Remind students that, when they were (or will be) confirmed, they are making a proclamation of faith that they believe in the creed of the New Apostolic Church (the 10 Articles of Faith). Because of this, it is important to learn them, and refresh our understanding from time to time.

Student Question #2 What is grace?

- In addition to the sacraments, how have you experienced God’s grace in your life?

Tell the students: As an act of grace, God reaches out to us in our lives, even though we are sinful. The sacraments can also be seen as moments when God reaches out to us in His grace to establish and strengthen our relationship with Him.

Ask the students: What are the three sacraments in our church?

- Holy Baptism
- Holy Sealing
- Holy Communion

Student Question #3 Why are the three sacraments important?

Tell the students: Sacraments are fundamental acts of God’s grace. They are holy acts that are performed upon a human being in order to allow him to attain salvation, be adopted into the fellowship of life with God, and be preserved in it. Receiving the three sacraments opens up the possibility for being united with the Lord at the return of Christ. (Catechism 8)

Holy Baptism

- Read Catechism Q&A question 481 together as a group.
- Have the students define Holy Baptism in their own words.
- Ask the students: Now that we’ve talked about what Holy Baptism is, why do you think it’s important?
 - Some possible answers are: the baptized person becomes a Christian, they enter into a relationship with God that can never be broken, they enter into the church of Christ and belong to a body of people who all profess Christ.
 - You can refer to Catechism Q&A question 490 for other answers.
- Summarize Holy Baptism by reading, or having a student read, the 6th Article of Faith

Holy Sealing

- Read Catechism Q&A question 515 together as a group.
- Ask the students: What two things happen in Holy Sealing?
 - The believer receives the gift of the Holy Spirit.
 - The believer becomes a child of God.
- Read Catechism Q&A question 530 to get a better understanding of what it means to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit and become a child of God.
 - Tell the students: Because the Holy Spirit indwells and is active within us, we are able to call God, “Abba, Father.” What does it mean to you that you can address God, the Creator of heaven and earth, as “Father”?
- Summarize Holy Sealing by reading, or having a student read, the 8th Article of Faith

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matthew 26:26-29: <i>And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."</i> 	<p>Holy Communion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Tell the students: Jesus instituted Holy Communion, also known as the Lord's Supper, right before He was arrested and crucified. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Read Matthew 26:26-29 together. ○ Ask the students: Knowing what He was about to go through, what do you think Jesus was trying to establish in these verses with His disciples? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Read Catechism Q&A question 512 to help answer this question (specifically the first sentence). ➤ Holy Communion is the one sacrament that we celebrate repeatedly. Read Catechism Q&A question 505 to understand why. ➤ Summarize Holy Communion by reading, or having a student read, the 7th Article of Faith
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visible: The person presses the brake, the car stops. • Invisible: The person saw the sign and interpreted it as the command to "Stop." 	<p><u>Student Question #4</u> What are the four elements of a sacrament?</p> <p>Tell the students: Have you ever heard of Jesus described as both true Man and true God? He had a dual nature. This duality is seen throughout Christianity. Often it is described as both the visible and invisible. For example, there's the visible church of Christ and the invisible church of Christ. The visible side includes things like celebrating divine services and prayer (ref. Catechism Q&A question 378), and the invisible side includes things like God's forgiveness of sins and the blessing God gives at the time of Confirmation (ref. Catechism Q&A question 377). The sacraments also have this dual nature – something visible and invisible is happening when each sacrament is celebrated.</p> <p>Tell the students: For the sacraments, there are four elements that make up the visible and the invisible (sign, dispenser, content, faith).</p> <p>Visible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The sign – Read Catechism Q&A question 475 together. ➤ The dispenser – Reach Catechism Q&A question 477 together. <p>Invisible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The content – Read Catechism Q&A question 476 together. ➤ The faith – Read Catechism Q&A question 478 together. <p>Ask the students: Think back to the activity we did at the beginning of the lesson with the road signs. Imagine you're driving and you come to a stop sign. What are the visible and invisible elements of this situation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ While this is a somewhat silly example when compared to the sacraments, it can help the students to understand this dual nature.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME? (up to 10 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

Wrap up the lesson with why the sacraments are important in the life of a believer.

Close with the "I Wonder...." questions

- Ask a student to read an "I Wonder..." question, and invite another student to answer with an "I Believe..." statement or an "I Believe..." statement in their own words.
- As you review each question and answer, stop and check in with the group to be sure there are no misunderstandings or misconceptions.
- Remind the students that on their Confirmation day, they will or have already confirmed the vow their parents made on their behalf at Holy Baptism.

I wonder...

- What is a sacrament?
- Why are the three sacraments important?
- What are the four elements of a sacrament?

I believe...

- Sacraments are fundamental acts of grace bestowed by God on a human being; sacraments are essential for salvation, at least until the day of the Lord. (Catechism Q&A question 472)
- Receiving Holy Baptism and Holy Sealing are the first steps in preparing a soul for Christ's return, and Holy Communion provides continuous strengthening in our striving. (Catechism Q&A question 491, 505, 528)
The four elements of sacraments are the sign, the content, the dispenser, and faith. (Catechism Q&A question 474)

Point to Ponder....

- The sacraments are fundamental to our relationship with God. He is present in the celebration of each sacrament.

A Call to Action....

- Since Holy Communion is the sacrament that we celebrate repeatedly, it can easily become a mindless routine. Next time you have the opportunity to celebrate Holy Communion, be fully present and focus on this celebration. Realize that the Lord is fully present in Holy Communion, as if He is sitting across the table from you. Record your experience in a journal.

Weekly Reflections

What Bible verse was used for the basis of last Sunday's sermon?

What were some of the main takeaways? What did you learn?

So far this week, how have you applied what you learned from the sermon last Sunday?

Going forward, how will you apply what you learned from the sermon last Sunday?

Point to Ponder...

Call to Action...

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<p>References: Matthew 26:26-29, Catechism Q&A questions: 377-378, 472, 475-478, 481, 490-491, 505, 512, 515, 530, 6th, 7th, 8th Articles of Faith</p>	

1. What is a sacrament?

2. What is grace?

3. Why are the three sacraments important?

4. What are the four elements of a sacrament?

Point to Ponder: The sacraments are fundamental to our relationship with God. He is present in the celebration of each sacrament.

Call to Action: Since Holy Communion is the sacrament that we celebrate repeatedly, it can easily become an automated routine. Next time you have the opportunity to celebrate Holy Communion, be fully present and focus on this celebration. Realize that the Lord is fully present in Holy Communion, as if He is sitting across the table from you. Record your experience in a journal.