

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *Me and God*

LESSON AT A GLANCE	
<p>Facilitator Notes:</p>	<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Why is a relationship with God, the Father; God, the Son; God, the Holy Spirit important? ➤ How do I develop this relationship? ➤ How will I benefit from this relationship with the Trinity? <p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ God, the Father is my creator and sustainer; God, the Son is my redeemer; and God, the Holy Spirit is my comforter and helper, who leads into all truth. (Catechism Q&A question 5) ➤ Through prayer, experiencing God’s word and sacraments in the divine services, and applying His wisdom, my relationship with God will grow. (Catechism Q&A question 613, 715) ➤ By being in a relationship with God, we become who God intended us to be. (Catechism Q&A question 178, 247) <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ IGNITE Bible ➤ Catechism Q&A <p>References:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bible: Exodus 29:45, Matthew 1:22-23, Romans 5:11 ➤ Catechism Q&A questions: 5, 25-36, 178, 247, 613, 624, 715 ➤ Articles of Faith 1, 2, 3 (Articles of Faith are found on page 251 of the Catechism Q&A)
PRE DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS AND STUDENT (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)	
	<p>Is it really possible to have a relationship with the triune God? What does that even mean? Join us tomorrow for small group at _____ where we’ll be talking about our relationship with God.</p>
MESSAGE TO PARENTS (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)	
<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please feel free to add local information and customize as necessary. 	<p>Dear Parents,</p> <p>This week the “I Wonder....” questions ask why our relationship with God, the Father, God, the Son, and God, the Holy Spirit is important. Ask your son/daughter about a relationship they have that is very important to them, and what benefits they receive from the relationship. Share with your son/daughter a relationship that you treasure, and why.</p> <p>As always, if you have questions about the topic, please feel free to contact your Youth Leaders.</p> <p>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 15 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. • Write the following on chart paper: <i>Parent/Relative, Friend/Peer, Mentor/Coach.</i> • Be sensitive to students who may not have one or both parents in their life, and to students who struggle with their relationship with their parents. Ask them to think about another relative/guardian with whom they have a relationship. • Allow 2-3 students to share 1 of the important relationships they have in their life. Categorize the relationship into one of the 3 categories. • Romans 5:11 <i>And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How are you and how are you feeling today? <p>Ask the students to write down the name of 1 person whom they have a good relationship with and is very important to them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ask them what benefits they receive from this relationship. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Parents/Relative</i> -unconditional love and support, financial support, food, clothing, shelter, boundaries ○ <i>Friend/Peer</i> - companionship, have fun together, someone to talk to, discuss problems with, cry together, laugh together ○ <i>Minister/Teacher/Coach</i> - Guidance, knowledge, advice, problem solving, helps me to understand ➤ Most relationships fall into one of these 3 categories <i>italicized</i> above. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Emphasize 1 good relationship in your life can be a great blessing. ○ Having all 3 of these types of relationships, would be AWESOME. <p>Then ask the students to categorize God, the Father; God, the Son; and God, the Holy Spirit into one of the 3 categories mentioned above and why they chose that category.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ God, the Father - Parent / Relative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ He created us and provides unconditional love. He is the sustainer of our life ➤ God, the Son - Friend <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We can share all our joys and sorrows with Him and He will help us carry our burdens ➤ God, the Holy Spirit – Counselor / Comforter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ He gives us wisdom, clarity, guidance ➤ Emphasize, though 3 different types of relationships, we know they make up the Holy Trinity and that we are blessed that God has chosen us to have a relationship with Him. Read Romans 5:11.
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SET THE STAGE (up to 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"> ➤ Why is a relationship with God, the Father; God, the Son; God, the Holy Spirit important? ➤ How do I develop this relationship? ➤ How will I benefit from this relationship with the Trinity?
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LESSON (up to 25 minutes)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If any of the students were a part of the previous semester, "Embrace the promise of Christ's return", the facilitator can briefly touch on the Trinity discussions from that semester (E1, E2, E3, E4) as review. • The facilitator can determine how much time to spend on each section if it is clear the students have a solid understanding of the material covered in this discussion guide. • It is important to note to the students that the word "relationship" is not being restricted to a romantic relationship. • For background information on the Apostolicum Creed, see Catechism Q&A questions 29-36. • T8, T9, and T10 discussions will focus on sin, grace, and forgiveness. 	<p>Ask a student to read Exodus 29:45 then Ask a student to read the "Flashpoint: Relationships" on page 102 of the IGNITE Bible.</p> <p>"God wanted to have a good relationship with His people, the Israelites. He'd rescued them from slavery and delivered them to the Promised Land. However, God's people then-like us today-sinned and often forgot about God, His protection, and His great gifts. Throughout the Old Testament, God created traditions and practices to help the Israelites remember to not take their relationship with Him for granted. In the New Testament, Jesus provided the bridge for relationship with God. Do you ever take your relationship with God for granted? God constantly desires a relationship with you and wants to live every day with you!"</p> <p>Ask the students:</p> <p><u>Student Question #1</u> What is required in order to have a relationship with someone?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ In order to have a relationship with someone, we first must know that they exist. ➤ The first 3 Articles of Faith define what we believe about God, the Father; God, the Son; God, the Holy Spirit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The basis for these Articles of Faith is called the Apostolicum (Sometimes also referred to as the "Apostles' Creed" or "Apostolic Creed"). <p><u>Student Question #2</u> How does Christ make our relationship with God possible?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Read Matthew 1:22-23 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ God become man in Jesus Christ (Immanuel: God with us!) ➤ He demonstrated what a perfect relationship with God the Father looks like. ➤ He wiped away our sin when He died on the cross. Christ bridged the gap between us and God that was created by sin.
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Student Question #3 What can we do to keep our relationship with God, the Father; God, the Son; God, the Holy Spirit strong; what do you do to keep your relationship with your friends strong?

- Communicate often – prayer
- Get to know each other – know the Word / study Scripture, spend time in divine services and small groups
- Do things together – apply His Word

Student Question #4 How will I benefit from this relationship with the Trinity?

- By being in a relationship with God, we become who God intended us to be.

Close the discussion by reiterating the 3 Persons of the Trinity and how our relationship with God, the Father; God, the Son; God, the Holy Spirit will provide everything we need in every situation or interaction.

- Our relationship with the Father – He is our creator, loves us unconditionally and can make all things possible, according to His will.
- Our relationship with Jesus – He is our redeemer, makes our relationship with God possible, grants us grace and forgiveness when we truly seek it, demonstrated how to live in a way that God intended.
- Our relationship with the Holy Spirit – He is our Comforter/Counselor and will provide clarity and understanding.

Remind the students that they must continuously develop this relationship by:

- Communicating often – PRAY
- Getting to know God – STUDY the Bible, BE PRESENT and ATTENTIVE when God speaks in divine services
 - Attendance is different than being present and actively listening.
 - As you are listening, think about how you can apply what you're hearing to your life
- Doing the Word – APPLY what you learn to your life

- The word STUDY is intentionally being used rather than READ. Explain to the students, we can't just read the Bible for the sake of saying we read the Bible. Reading the Bible should be an active process rather than passive. STUDY the Bible means we take apart the word, research the meaning of passages, and ponder how it applies to you and me.
- Encourage the use of the IGNITE Bible as it will assist students in their study of Holy Scripture. Point out the features of this Bible.
- You can find an explanation of the features at the front of the Bible on page 15-A.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME? (up to 15 minutes)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p>	<p>Close with the "I Believe..." statements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ As you review each statement, stop and check in with the group to be sure there are no misunderstandings or misconceptions. ➤ Allow the students to state an "I Believe..." statement for each of the "I Wonder..." questions in their own words. ➤ Remind the students that on their Confirmation day, they will or have already promised and committed to "renounce Satan and all his work and ways" / "and the earnest resolution to remain faithful to You until my end. Amen". <p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ God, the Father is my creator and sustainer; God, the Son is my redeemer; and God, the Holy Spirit is my comforter and helper, who leads into all truth. (Catechism Q&A question 5) ➤ Through prayer, experiencing God's word and sacraments in the divine services, and applying His wisdom, my relationship with God will grow. (Catechism Q&A question 613, 715) ➤ By being in a relationship with God, we become who God intended us to be. (Catechism Q&A question 178, 247) <p>A Point to Ponder....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What do you want out of a relationship with God? How has your relationship with God grown so far in your life? <p>A Call to Action...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identify challenges (actions, behaviors, attitudes) that are preventing your relationship with God from growing to a level that you want it to be at. Make a plan to address 1 of the challenges this semester. Feel free to ask a fellow student or a youth leader to help hold you accountable to the plan.
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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.....

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *Me and God*

<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Why is a relationship with God, the Father; God, the Son; God, the Holy Spirit important? ➤ How do I develop this relationship? ➤ How will I benefit from this relationship with the Trinity? 	<p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ God, the Father is my creator and sustainer; God, the Son is my redeemer; and God, the Holy Spirit is my comforter and helper, who leads into all truth. (Catechism Q&A question 5) ➤ Through prayer, experiencing God's word and sacraments in the divine services, and applying His wisdom, my relationship with God will grow. (Catechism Q&A question 613) ➤ By being in a relationship with God, we become who God intended us to be. (Catechism Q&A questions 178, 247)
<p>Bible: Exodus 29:45, Matthew 1:22-23, Romans 5:11; Catechism Q&A questions 5, 29-36, 178, 247, 613, 715. Catechism Q&A page 251 (Articles of Faith 1, 2, 3).</p>	

1. What is required in order to have a relationship with someone?

2. How does Christ make our relationship with God possible?

3. What can we do to keep our relationship with God, the Father; God, the Son; God, the Holy Spirit strong; what do you do to keep your relationship with your friends strong?

4. How will I benefit from this relationship with the Trinity?

Point to Ponder: What do you want out of a relationship with God? How has your relationship with God grown so far in your life?

Call to Action: Identify challenges (actions, behaviors, attitudes) that are preventing your relationship with God from growing to a level that you want it to be at. Make a plan to address 1 of the challenges this semester. Feel free to ask a fellow student or a youth leader to help hold you accountable to the plan.

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *Prayer*

LESSON AT A GLANCE	
<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For Your Journey episodes can be found on the NAC USA YouTube channel <i>and</i> in the NAC USA mobile app Sermon clips can only be found in the NAC USA mobile app 	<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is prayer? ➤ What should a prayer consist of? ➤ What does prayer do for us as Christians and why is it necessary? <p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Prayer is an opportunity given by God for human beings to have a connection with Him. (Catechism Q&A question 715) ➤ Prayer should come from the heart and should consist of adoration, thanksgiving, intercessions, and pleas. (Catechism Q&A question 723) ➤ Prayer is described as the “breathing of the soul” and allows us to connect to God through conversation. (Catechism Q&A question 716) <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ IGNITE Bible ➤ Catechism Q&A ➤ District Apostle sermon clip 29 - Did you think to pray? http://subsplash.com/nacusa/v/g8f6cff ➤ Poster/chart paper, markers ➤ Dictionaries or dictionaries on phones ➤ For Your Journey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Episode 16 – Can God Be Influenced By Our Prayers? <p>References:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bible verses: Matthew 6:6-13, Philippians 4:6-7 ➤ Catechism Q&A questions 622, 715-728 ➤ Catechism Q&A page 254 (Lord’s Prayer)
PRE DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS AND STUDENT (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)	
	<p>Think of a friend that you talk with a lot. What method to you use to talk? Phone call? Text? In person? God gave us prayer as a way for us to talk with Him and for Him to talk with us. Join us tomorrow for small group at _____ where we’ll be talking about prayer .</p>
MESSAGE TO PARENTS (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)	
<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please feel free to add local information and customize as necessary Consider including a link to one of the For Your Journey episodes listed in the “References” section above. 	<p>Dear Parents,</p> <p>This week the “I Wonder....” questions focus on prayer. We discussed what prayer is, what it consists of, why it is necessary, and the effects that our prayers have. The students were given time to not only look at the way they currently pray, but were also given the opportunity to discover ways to strengthen their prayers. This week, share your experiences with your student of how you learned to pray and take time to pray aloud together.</p> <p>As always, if you have questions about the topic, please feel free to contact 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 15 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. • Be sure not to read too fast, as this is an activity that should allow the prayer to sink in. • Remind the students to read together and not read it as fast as they can. Sometimes starting them off by saying the first few words with them will allow them to follow the tempo. • If a smaller group is present, you may also have students do this individually. 	<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>The Lord's Prayer is Jesus' example to us of how to pray. We pray it in every divine service before Holy Communion, but because we pray it so much, it could become habit for us. To keep our prayers from becoming habitual, sometimes we need to examine them.</p> <p>Read the Lord's Prayer aloud to the students while they follow along from the student copy of the lesson. Then read it aloud as a group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Prayers that include adoration and worship, thanks, intercessions, and petitions do not need to be long to be meaningful. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ While the Lord's prayer is not very long, it includes many components for a sincere prayer. ○ Have the students identify the different components of the Lord's Prayer, line by line. Identifying these components will potentially help in the next activity. ➤ Form the students into groups of two or three. Have them rewrite the Lord's Prayer using language that makes sense to them. Explain to the students that the meaning of the prayer should stay the same, but it can be rewritten in everyday language. Some of the words may be tricky for the students. It may be helpful to have dictionaries for them to look up words and find synonyms. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If the group seems open to it, share some of the rewritten prayers.
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SET THE STAGE (up to 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 prayer? ➤ What should a prayer consist of? ➤ What does prayer do for us as Christians and why is it necessary?
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LESSON (up to 25 minutes)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student groups can be chosen in several ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Counting off by 4's. ○ Allow students to choose their own groups. ○ Split the class into 4 even groups. ○ Choose them ahead of time. • If time allows, have the groups present and explain their posters to the rest of the class. 	<p>The Lord's Prayer was given to us by the Lord Jesus as an example of a sincere prayer. Every time we pray, we should be having a deep and meaningful conversation with God. It is our chance to connect with God and feel that He is there with us. Chances are our prayers do not sound like the Lord's Prayer every time. However, each time we pray, we should try to have four main components.</p> <p><u>Student Question #1</u> What are the main components of prayer?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Adoration and Worship ➤ Thankfulness ➤ Intercession ➤ Pleas and Petitions <p>While our prayers may not always contain all four components, we should try to incorporate as many as we can when talking with God.</p> <p>Divide the class into four groups to discover more about each of the four components of prayer. After the groups have been created, hand each group a dictionary, the Catechism Q&A, and a poster board or chart paper. Assign each group one component to research and learn more about.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Tell each group to create a poster that has the following information on it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The component of prayer that they were assigned (Adoration and Worship, Thankfulness, Intercession, or Pleas and Petitions). ○ The definition of the component. ○ The Catechism Question reference number. ○ Ways we can incorporate the component into our prayers including words, phrases, times, etc. ➤ Once the posters are finished, display them at the front of the room so the whole class can see and reference them throughout the lesson. <p>Prayer is sometimes described as the "breathing of our soul".</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We cannot go through our day without breathing, so why is it sometimes possible that we go through an entire day without praying? ➤ Another reference the students will understand is going an entire day without talking to their friends. God should be our best friend and we should always want to talk with Him.
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the sake of preparing for the discussion, the full Bible passage is included in the facilitator guide. However, in the actual discussion with the students, it is encouraged that the facilitator look up the passages in a physical Bible along with the students to reinforce the importance of using one's Bible and Bible literacy. • Ask students to share their thoughts if they are willing and remind students to be respectful of others who are sharing. • The students should understand that our prayers strengthen our relationship with God when we pray with thoughtfulness and purpose, and that while we may not always receive an answer right away or ever, God listens to each and every prayer. 	<p>As Christians, we enter into prayer as a way to know that God is present, that God hears us, and that God answers. Time spent praying is when we can be most honest with God and truly open our hearts and our souls to Him.</p> <p><u>Student Question #2</u> What are the effects of prayer on us and those around us?</p> <p>When we speak with Him in prayer, some of the effects are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Strength for the future ➤ A stronger belief in Him ➤ A stronger relationship with Him ➤ Comfort in knowing God is there ➤ A better understanding of ourselves as a result of opening up to God <p>When we go through trials and obstacles in our lives, prayer can bring us the assurance of God's presence and peace.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ask a student to read Philippians 4:6-7 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.</i> ➤ Prayer connects us to God and can strengthen us from the inside out. ➤ No matter what we bring to God, He will listen to us. This is the best way to talk with Him. <p><u>Student Question #3</u> How can or should or prayers change over time?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ When we first learned how to pray, we may have prayed for small and earthly things. As we grow older and more mature, our faith should inspire different and deeper prayers. ➤ While it is okay to pray for earthly things, such as health and safety, we should also pray for spiritual things, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Our personal growth and faith in God ○ Opportunities to help and pray for others ○ Seeing the Holy Spirit in our lives ○ Loving Jesus more and allowing His love to change us ○ The Lord's return as He has promised <p>When we pray openly and sincerely, amazing things can happen. Have a conversation with the students about times in their lives where their prayers have been answered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How were you sure your prayer was answered? ➤ How old were you and was it your prayer or someone else's? ➤ What happened in those moments? ➤ Have you ever prayed for something and your prayer was not answered in the way you would have liked? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Did this make you lose faith in God? ○ Remind the students that God answers prayers when the time is right – not right when we WANT an answer. ○ Remind the students that sometimes God's answer to our prayers is "No" or "not now."
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	<p>Ask the students about some ways that we can strengthen our prayers. Possible answers are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Include the four components. ➤ Pray with only one component (i.e. all adoration and worship). ➤ Try to pray differently each time and not fall into a routine of what and who we pray for. For example, we could easily form a habit in our mealtime prayers because we are praying for one particular thing in these prayers. ➤ It isn't necessarily about praying MORE, but about praying more DEEPLY and HONESTLY to connect our hearts with God's. ➤ Ask a student to read Matthew 6:6-7 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathens do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.</i>
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WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME? (up to 15 minutes)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Your Journey episodes can be found on the NAC USA YouTube channel <i>and</i> in the NAC USA mobile app • Sermon clips can only be found in the NAC USA mobile app 	<p>Wrap up the lesson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If time allows, watch one or both of the videos <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. District Apostle sermon clip 29 - Did you think to pray? http://subsplash.com/nacusa/v/g8f6cff b. For Your Journey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Episode 16 – Can God Be Influenced By Our Prayers? <p>Close with the "I Believe..." statements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ As you review each statement, stop and check in with the group to be sure there are no misunderstandings or misconceptions. ➤ Allow the students to state an "I Believe..." statement for each of the "I Wonder..." questions in their own words. ➤ Remind the students that on their Confirmation day, they will or have already promised and committed to "surrender myself to you in belief". <p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Prayer is an opportunity given by God for human beings to have a connection with Him. (Q&A question 715) ➤ Prayer should come from the heart and should consist of adoration, thanksgiving, intercessions, and pleas. (Q&A question 723) ➤ Prayer is described as the "breathing of the soul" and allows us to connect to God through conversation. (Q&A question 716) <p>A Point to Ponder....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How much time do you spend in prayer compared to other activities in your life? What adjustments can you make to your schedule to give prayer a more prominent focus? Or, how can you incorporate prayer into what you're already doing? <p>A Call to Action...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Research 'vigorous verbs' online. Find one to incorporate into your prayers this week. Write that phrase out and bring it to the next small group.
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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.....

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *Prayer*

<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is prayer? ➤ What should a prayer consist of? ➤ What does prayer do for us as Christians and why is it necessary? 	<p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Prayer is an opportunity given by God for human beings to have a connection with Him. (Q&A question 715) ➤ Prayer should come from the heart and should consist of adoration, thanksgiving, intercessions, and pleas. (Q&A question 723) ➤ Prayer is described as the "breathing of the soul" and allows us to connect to God through conversation. (Q&A question 716)
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References: Matthew 6:6-13, Philippians 4:6; Catechism Q&A questions 622, 715-728; Q&A page 254 (Lord's Prayer)

Read the Lord's prayer and write it using your own words:

<p>From the gospel of Matthew: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.</p>	<p>Your own words:</p> <hr/>
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1. What are the main components of prayer?

2. What are the effects of prayer on us and those around us?

3. How can or should our prayers change over time?

Point to Ponder: How much time do you spend in prayer compared to other activities in your life? What adjustments can you make to your schedule to give prayer a more prominent focus?

Call to Action: Research 'vigorous verbs' online. Find one to incorporate into your prayers this week. Write that phrase out and bring it to the next small group.

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *Why do I need to be like Jesus?*

LESSON AT A GLANCE

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Your Journey episodes can be found on the NAC USA YouTube channel <i>and</i> in the NAC USA mobile app • Sermon clips can be found in the NAC USA mobile app, or at the link to the right 	<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Who is Jesus? ➤ How do we know what Jesus Christ was like? ➤ Why do I need to be like Jesus? ➤ How will my character impact those around me? <p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Jesus is God, the Son. He is true Man and true God. He has two natures – human and divine. Jesus is like other human beings but without sin. (Catechism Q&A questions 94, 103, 104) ➤ I learn what Jesus was like through the written word (Holy Scripture) and preached word (divine service) as well as experiencing Him in Holy Communion. (Catechism Q&A questions 25, 120, 512, 624, 626) ➤ Jesus Christ is the example and teacher of perfection for which mankind is to strive. (Catechism 3.1.8) (Catechism Q&A question 60) ➤ Living like Jesus in word and deed will help me to spread the gospel. (John 13:34-35) <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ IGNITE Bible ➤ Catechism ➤ Catechism Q&A ➤ For Your Journey – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Episode 26 - Practice and Profession ➤ Chief Apostle sermon clip - 25 Jesus Shines through us http://subsplash.com/nacusa/v/5ce64d3 ➤ Pieces of paper and pen/pencil for each participant ➤ Dry Erase board/Chart paper and markers <p>References:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bible verses: John 13:13-17, John 13:34-35 , 1 Corinthians 11:1, Ephesians 5:1-2, Colossians 3:17, Hebrews 12:2, ➤ Catechism Q&A questions 25, 60, 93, 94, 103, 104, 120, 512, 565, 624,626, ➤ Catechism 3.1.8
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PRE DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS AND STUDENT (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)

	<p>Have you ever had to follow a template? Whether you were building a Lego set or cooking a recipe, when we're trying to figure out what to do in order to obtain a certain outcome, it helps to have an example and instructions to follow. Join us for small group _____(place and/or time) to discuss our ultimate example, Jesus.</p>
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MESSAGE TO PARENTS (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please feel free to add local information as necessary. 	<p>Dear Parents,</p> <p>This week the “I Wonder....” questions are about who Jesus is, how to develop a relationship with him, why we should be like Him, and how others are impacted when we demonstrate Jesus’s traits. The students discussed why we want to be like Jesus and how it will impact others. In the coming week, take time to discuss qualities of Jesus that you see in each other and why they are important.</p> <p>As always, if you have questions about the topic, please feel free to contact your Youth Leaders.</p> <p>Your Youth Leaders</p>
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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 15 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? ➤ Have each participant write down a list of 3-5 physical characteristics and/or personality traits he/she demonstrates. Put all the lists into a container & pick one out. The facilitator reads each list & participants guess who the list is about. If the group doesn’t have enough students to do this activity of identifying each other, have them write down characteristics of a famous person that everyone in the group would know. ➤ Ask the students how they were able to guess who was being described. ➤ Today we are going to discuss Jesus – some of His characteristics and why we want to demonstrate them.
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SET THE STAGE (up to 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"> ➤ Who is Jesus? ➤ How do we know what Jesus Christ was like? ➤ Why do I need to be like Jesus? ➤ How will my character impact those around me?
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LESSON (up to 25 minutes)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a list of responses on dry erase board or chart paper. 	<p><u>Student Question #1</u> What do we know about Jesus already?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Allow for a variety of answers. Summarize with something like: <i>Jesus is true Man and true God. He was perfect. He experienced hunger, thirst, joy, sadness, and pain just as we do. He was obedient to God until His death. He is different from us because He never sinned.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a student says they haven't made any friends recently or says they do not have friends, ask how the participants think a friendship could develop. Be sure to follow-up in a one-on-one setting later about this situation. • Sacramentally, our relationship with God started at our baptism. There will be an entire discussion on baptism in the "E" semester. For those that are already Confirmed, they have Confirmed the baptismal vow that their parents made on their behalf when they were a child. 	<p><u>Student Question #2</u> Think about a friendship you've made in the past year or so. How did that friendship develop?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ You learned something about that person ➤ You found out you had something in common ➤ You admired something about that person <p><u>Student Question #3</u> Now think about a friendship you've had for a long time – Why have you maintained that relationship? How did you keep it going?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ You still find that you have some things in common ➤ You continue to learn about that person – likes/dislikes, etc. <p><u>Student Question #4</u> How did you start your relationship with Jesus? (open discussion)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Maybe because your parents brought you to church as a child ➤ Maybe a Sunday School teacher/mentor taught you something special ➤ Maybe you had an experience of faith ➤ Maybe you're not even sure when or how it all started, just like with a friendship <p>How can you develop/maintain your relationship with Jesus?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To continue developing a relationship with someone, you need to spend time together and learn about each other. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We learn what Jesus was like through the written word (Holy Scripture) and preached word (divine service) as well as experiencing Him in Holy Communion. (Catechism Q&A questions 25, 120, 512, 624, 626) <p>If you really love soccer and want to be a professional soccer player, what steps might you take?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Exercise ➤ Practice every day for hours ➤ Imitate a professional soccer player
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you know the students have a specific sport, activity, or career they are interested in, please use it as an example. 	

- Sermon clips can be found in the [NAC USA mobile app, or at the link to the right](#)

Student Question #5 Why do we want to be like Jesus?

- God’s perfection can be directly experienced in Jesus Christ, “the author and finisher of our faith” (Hebrews 12:2) because He is perfect in His speech and conduct. ***Jesus Christ is the example and teacher of that perfection for which mankind is to strive*** (Catechism 3.1.8)
- Students can take turns reading the following Bible verses to answer this question:
 - John 13:13-17
 - 1 Corinthians 11:1
 - Ephesians 5:1-2

How will my character impact those around me?

- Watch Chief Apostle sermon clip 25 [Jesus Shines through Us](http://subsplash.com/nacusa/v/5ce64d3)

- Facilitator can refer to THRIVE Membership Expectation Booklet page 13 –“H” Help spread the Gospel. The entire next semester of Youth THRIVE small group discussions will focus on the expectation to Help spread the Gospel.
- The Articles of Faith can be found on page 251 of the Catechism Questions and Answers book.

Read Colossians 3:17 and discuss.

- As was discussed earlier, we can recognize other people by their physical characteristics, personality traits, and actions. Those who are around us notice not only our physical characteristics, but also the way we act. We want our actions to represent Jesus. It demonstrates our thankfulness and glorifies our Father.
- When I live like Jesus in word and deed, I will help to spread the gospel. Our actions are a testimony of who we are. When we emulate Jesus, our actions are a testimony of who He is. We can help others to follow Jesus when they see His traits in us.
- If I become a firstfruit, I will reign with Him as part of a royal priesthood in His kingdom of peace. I need to demonstrate these characteristics on earth today, so that I’ll be prepared during the kingdom of peace. (9th Article of Faith)
 - Refer to Catechism Q&A question 565: The term “firstfruits” describes those whom Christ will take to Himself at His return. These will be the first to receive complete salvation.
 - Others will receive complete salvation later, at the Last Judgment, for example.

When you are dedicated to trying to become a professional soccer player, can you just train for a day or is more training needed? With what intensity do you train?

- As we strive to be more like Jesus, what type of intensity do we need to emulate Him?
 - It’s a continuous process/striving

- We'll never be perfect – maybe we won't become a professional soccer player, but we may just want to be the best we can be. We want to do the best we can as we strive to be like Jesus.

- Have the students break into small groups to discuss :
 - A characteristic of Jesus they admire most.
 - A characteristic of Jesus they would like to develop.
 - Come up with 1 way they can work on growing in that characteristic in the next week.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME? (up to 15 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

- For Your Journey episodes can be found on the NAC USA YouTube channel and in the NAC USA mobile app

Wrap up the lesson with why we want to develop a relationship with Jesus and why we want to be like Jesus.

- If time allows, watch For Your Journey - Episode 26 Practice and Profession

Close with the "I Believe..." statements

- As you review each statement, stop and check in with the group to be sure there are no misunderstandings or misconceptions.
- Allow the students to state an "I Believe..." statement for each of the "I Wonder..." questions in their own words.
- Remind the students that on their Confirmation day, they will or have already promised and committed to "surrender myself to You".

I believe...

- Jesus is God, the Son. He is true Man and true God. He has two natures – human and divine. Jesus is like other human beings but without sin. (Catechism Q&A questions 94, 103, 104)
- I learn what Jesus was like through the written word (Holy Scripture) and preached word (divine service) as well as experiencing Him in Holy Communion. (Catechism Q&A questions 25, 120, 512, 624, 626)
- Jesus Christ is the example and teacher of perfection for which mankind is to strive. (Catechism 3.1.8) (Catechism Q&A question 60)
- Living like Jesus in word and deed will help me to spread the gospel. (John 13:35)

A Point to Ponder....

- Now that you've identified the characteristic of Jesus that you would like to work on, what does it mean to demonstrate that characteristic in your family, in your congregation, and in your community?

A Call to Action...

- This week, identify and affirm a characteristic of Jesus that you see in someone from your congregation. Share with them that you see that characteristic of Jesus and thank them for being an example.

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.....

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *Why do I need to be like Jesus?*

<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Who is Jesus? ➤ How do we know what Jesus Christ was like? ➤ Why do I need to be like Jesus? ➤ How will my character impact those around me? 	<p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Jesus is God, the Son. He is true Man and true God. He has two natures – human and divine. Jesus is like other human beings but without sin. (Catechism Q&A questions 94, 103, 104) ➤ I learn what Jesus was like through the written word (Holy Scripture) and preached word (divine service) as well as experiencing Him in Holy Communion. (Catechism Q&A questions 25, 120, 512, 624, 626) ➤ Jesus Christ is the example and teacher of perfection for which mankind is to strive. (Catechism 3.1.8) (Catechism Q&A question 60) ➤ Living like Jesus in word and deed will help me to spread the gospel. (John 13:34-35)
<p>References: John 13:13-17, Hebrews 12:2, 1 Corinthians 11:1, Ephesians 5:1-2, Colossians 3:17; John 13:34-35. Catechism Q&A questions 25, 60, 93, 94, 103, 104, 120, 512, 565, 624, 626 Catechism 3.1.8</p>	

1. **What do you know about Jesus already?**

2. **Think about a friendship you've made in the past year or so. How did that friendship develop?**

3. **Now think about a friendship you've had for a long time. Why have you maintained that relationship? How did you keep it going?**

4. **How did you start your relationship with Jesus? How can you develop/maintain your relationship with Jesus?**

5. **Why do we want to be like Jesus?**

Point to Ponder: Now that you've identified the characteristic of Jesus that you would like to work on, what does it mean to demonstrate that characteristic?

Call to Action: This week, identify and affirm a characteristic of Jesus that you see in someone from your congregation. Share with them that you see that characteristic of Jesus and thank them for being an example.

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *Faith*

LESSON AT A GLANCE	
<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sermon clips can only be found in the NAC USA mobile app and in the link to the right. 	<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is faith? ➤ Why do we need faith? ➤ What can strengthen my faith? <p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Faith is an act of God’s grace upon a human being, in other words, a gift. (Catechism Q&A question 10). Faith is granted and reinforced by the Holy Spirit, and comes about through the preaching of the gospel on the foundation of Holy Scripture. (Catechism Q&A question 11) ➤ Faith leads human beings to recognize God, trust in God, and lead a life in accordance with the will of God. (Catechism Q&A question 10) ➤ The fear of God and sincere prayer for the correct understanding of Holy Scripture are principles for strengthening faith through the study of the Bible. (Catechism Q&A question 27) <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ IGNITE Bible ➤ Catechism Q&A ➤ Obstacles and blindfold for Faith activity ➤ Whiteboard/easel ➤ Dictionary (or phone to look up a definition) ➤ Something to play a video clip with (computer, TV, tablet, phone, etc.) ➤ Picture of a mustard seed and mustard tree (or phone to look up pictures) <p>References:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bible verses: Matthew 17:14-21, Hebrews 11:1 ➤ Catechism Q&A questions 1-11, 27-28, 33-36, 239-242, 279, 716 ➤ District Apostle sermon clip 5, Faith with a Pure Heart: http://subsplash.com/nacusa/v/c57bc37
PRE DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS AND STUDENT (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)	
	<p>What do you think of when you hear the word “faith”? Join us for small group _____(time and/or location) to dig deeper into this topic.</p>
POST DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)	
<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please feel free to customize as necessary. 	<p>Dear Parents,</p> <p>This week the “I Wonder....” questions are about faith, what it is, how we can strengthen it, and why we need it. The students were asked to read Jesus’ words about the mustard seed found in Matthew 17 and reflect on their own faith. In the upcoming week, consider sharing an experience with your student that had a positive impact on you and helped you grow in your faith.</p> <p>As always, if you have questions about the topic, please feel free to contact your Youth Leaders.</p> <p>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 15 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. • Place various obstacles around the room (not in a straight line) using chairs, books, tables, etc. • Some examples would be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A table to crawl under ○ A chair to step over ○ Books on the ground to weave through. 	<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? ➤ Choose one student to be the leader and one student to wear the blindfold (make sure they cannot see through the blindfold). The rest of the students will set up the obstacle course. Explain to the student leader that they will need to lead the blindfolded student through the course using <i>only</i> verbal directions. Before the activity begins, explain to the blindfolded student that they will be asked to walk under, over, and around various objects to get to the end of the course. Be sure to remind the students that there is not just one correct way to get through the course. ➤ Before the leader starts to give directions and guidance, have them say the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hi (insert other students' name). I want to lead you through the obstacle course safely. I need you to trust in me and my guidance. Will you trust me? ➤ After the blindfolded student responds with their yes, they may begin the obstacle course, with the leader directing them through it and the rest of the students watching the activity. ➤ After the blindfolded student finishes the obstacle course, ask them to share how they felt while they were going through the course. Write down the blindfolded student's feelings on the board. ➤ <i>Alternate approach to the activity:</i> Instead of just one leader and blindfolded student, you could have 3 leaders direct one blindfolded student through the obstacle course, telling the blindfolded student to choose only one leader to listen to for the entire obstacle. The 3 leaders give their directions at the same time, making it hard for the blindfolded student to hear the one leading them. The 2 leaders not chosen by the blindfolded student could also possibly give wrong directions, trying to misdirect the blindfolded student.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you did the alternate approach to the activity, ask these questions in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ask students the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Did you follow the directions of your leader? If you didn't, why did you choose your own path? ○ Did you feel your leader had your best interest in mind?

<p>addition to the ones to the right:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Was it hard to hear the directions of the leader who you chose to lead you? Why? ○ Besides God, are there other people or things in our lives that we allow to guide us? Do we sometimes listen to these things more than God? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Did you trust your partner as you went through the course? Would you trust them with bigger obstacles in your life now, such as choosing a college? (The second question is rhetorical. The answer would be no.) ○ If this person guided you every day, would your trust increase? ○ What made it difficult to follow the directions of your leader? ○ Did you do anything throughout the course that made you feel uncomfortable? ○ As you went through the course, did it become easier or more difficult to follow the directions? Why do you think that is?
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SET THE STAGE (1 minute)

Facilitator Notes:

- Preview the “I wonder” questions with the students.

I wonder...

- What is faith?
- Why do we need faith?
- What can strengthen my faith?

LESSON (up to 25 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

- Emphasize to the students that blindfolded student needed to trust in their leader to guide them through the obstacle course.

Give students time to think about their situation. Ask students to share their experiences if they are comfortable.

Student Question #1 How is our life like the obstacle course?

- In life, there are many obstacles that we will need to overcome.
- We need God’s guidance to help get us through life’s obstacles.
- When we have faith in God, we can recognize the Holy Spirit’s voice and put our trust in Him to guide us.
- There are many paths that we can take through life. God is the only one we can have full faith in to help us get through life because He created the plan for our lives and He sees the bigger picture.

Student Question #2 Would the blindfolded student have gotten through the obstacle course without the leader? How would it have been different?

- They might have gotten through, but...
 - It would have taken longer
 - We might have gotten hurt
 - It would have been very frustrating
- They might not have made it through at all.

Student Question #3 Think of another time in your life where you have felt like you were blindfolded (not literally) and had to follow the guidance or directions of someone else to get through a situation. What happened in that situation?

- Let the students look up the definition on their own before going over the questions together.

- You may want to discuss the attributes of a mustard seed. It is considered one of the smallest seeds in the Middle East. Sharing a picture of the seed might help visual learners and will give more meaning to the verses. Then, show a picture of the mustard tree after it is fully grown.

- Be sure to have students elaborate on their answers as they give them so that they stay away from obvious answers.

Look up the definition of faith in a dictionary or online [and a Bible Dictionary, if available].

- How does the Bible define faith?
 - Read, or ask a student to read, Hebrews 11:1
 - *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*
 - Ask a student to read the **Spotlight: Great Heroes Of The Faith** on page 1293 of the IGNITE Bible.
- Think of a person in your life who you consider having great faith.
 - Where did their faith come from?
 - What are some characteristics of that person and their faith?
 - Have you ever compared your faith to another person's faith?
 - Does the size of our faith matter to God?

Open your Bibles and read the story of the mustard seed (Matthew 17:14-21).

- In pairs, the students should discuss the importance of the story. After coming back to the full group, allow students to share their ideas before sharing the following bullet points with them:
 - Even with a small amount of faith, God can make great things happen.
 - A small seed doesn't stay small for long; it can grow to great heights.
 - The size of the seed does not matter, what matters is that we progress in our faith and grow over time.

Student Question #4 Where does our faith come from?

- Our faith comes from our Heavenly Father.
- Our faith is a precious gift.
 - How do we show people we love a gift they have given us? We put it to use!

While it is okay for our faith to start out as the size of the mustard seed, God ultimately wants our faith to grow over time.

Student Question #5 Why is it important for us to have faith and for it to grow and not stay small?

- Faith is our way of showing we trust God.
- Since faith is a gift from God, exercising our faith is how we can truly show we love Him.
- When we have faith in God, it allows us to recognize, see, and hear Him while we are going through obstacles.
- Having faith in God and His promises helps guide us so that we can begin to live our lives according to His will.
- We must believe and have faith in God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
 - The greater our faith becomes in the Trinity, the closer and stronger our relationship with God becomes.

- See Catechism Q&A questions 33-36 for more information about the early church creeds

- These, and other spiritual disciplines, will be explored more fully in the “Invest in your spiritual health” semester of discussions.

- The Articles of Faith articulate what the New Apostolic Church believes about those core elements of doctrine. The first three Articles of Faith are of particular interest because they are based on early church creeds.
 - *Despite the differences between the individual denominations, these professions constitute a binding element among Christians.* (Catechism Q&A question 36)

We know we don’t always recognize God when He is talking to us, but there are many ways we can strengthen and grow our faith. What are some ways we can grow our faith?

- Reading scripture and trusting that God will fulfill His promises just as He did in the Bible will help us to learn more about Him.
- If we pray sincerely, God will reveal Himself to us in ways that we may have never thought possible.
- We can earnestly seek Him in divine service, through Word and sacrament.
- When we worship God, we open ourselves to understanding and expressing His greatness.

WHAT’S IN IT FOR ME? (up to 15 minutes)

- Facilitator Notes:**
- Sermon clips can only be found in the [NAC USA mobile app](#) and in the [link to the right](#).
 - Relate the video back to the comments the students made regarding ways they can strengthen their faith. Emphasize the aspect of having faith with a pure heart.

- Wrap up the lesson**
- If time allows, watch District Apostle sermon clip 5, Faith with a Pure Heart <http://subsplash.com/nacusa/v/c57bc37>
- Close with the “I Believe...” statements**
- As you review each statement, stop and check in with the group to be sure there are no misunderstandings or misconceptions.
 - Allow the students to state an “I Believe...” statement for each of the “I Wonder...” questions in their own words.
 - Remind the students that on their Confirmation day, they will or have already promised and committed to remaining faithful.
- I believe...**
- Faith is an act of God’s grace upon a human being, in other words, a gift. (Catechism Q&A question 10). Faith is granted and reinforced by the Holy Spirit, and comes about through the preaching of the gospel on the foundation of Holy Scripture. (Catechism Q&A question 11)
 - Faith leads human beings to recognize God, trust in God, and lead a life in accordance with the will of God. (Catechism Q&A question 10)
 - The fear of God and sincere prayer for the correct understanding of Holy Scripture are principles for strengthening faith through the study of the Bible. (Catechism Q&A question 27)
- A Point to Ponder....**
- What would our lives truly be like without faith? How would our lives be different? How would they be the same?
- A Call to Action...**
- This week, create a realistic list of things you want to work on to strengthen your faith going forward. Be ready to share at least one thing from your list next week.

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.....

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *Faith*

<p>Have you ever wondered...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is faith? ➤ Why do we need faith? ➤ What can strengthen my faith? 	<p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Faith is an act of God’s grace upon a human being, in other words, a gift. (Catechism Q&A question 10). Faith is granted and reinforced by the Holy Spirit, and comes about through the preaching of the gospel on the foundation of Holy Scripture. (Catechism Q&A question 11) ➤ Faith leads human beings to recognize God, trust in God, and lead a life in accordance with the will of God. (Catechism Q&A question 10) ➤ The fear of God and sincere prayer for the correct understanding of Holy Scripture are principles for strengthening faith through the study of the Bible. (Catechism Q&A question 27)
<p>References: Matthew 17:14-21; Hebrews 11:1; Catechism Q&A questions: 1-11, 27-28, 33-36, 239-242, 279, 716</p>	

1. How is our life like the obstacle course?

2. Would the blindfolded student have gotten through the obstacle course without the leader? How would it have been different?

3. Think of another time in your life where you have felt like you were blindfolded (not literally) and had to follow the guidance or directions of someone else to get through a situation. What happened in that situation?

4. Where does our faith come from?

5. Why is it important for us to have faith and for it to grow and not stay small? What are some ways we can grow our faith?

Point to Ponder: What would our lives truly be like without faith? How would our lives be different?

Call to Action: This week create a realistic list of things you want to work on to strengthen your faith going forward. Be ready to share at least one thing from your list next week.

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *Hope*

LESSON AT A GLANCE	
<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sermon clips can only be found in the NAC USA mobile app and in the link to the right. 	<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is Christian hope? ➤ What do we hope for? ➤ What do Christians base their hope on? <p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Christian hope is our confident expectation that God will fulfill His promises for our future. (Catechism Q&A question 40) ➤ Our hope is for the return of the Lord Jesus and that we will be taken with Him. (Catechism Q&A question 555) ➤ Our hope is founded in the offer of salvation and the offer of eternal fellowship with God. (Catechism Q&A question 247) <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ IGNITE Bible ➤ Catechism Q&A ➤ Chief Apostle sermon clip 37, Christian Hope http://subspla.sh/mefanmd ➤ Dry erase board or chart paper, markers <p>References:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bible verses: Luke 8:40-48, Romans 5:1-5, Romans 8:38-39, 1 Corinthians 13:13, Hebrews 6:18-19, 1 Peter 3:15 ➤ Catechism Q&A questions 40, 247, 549, 550, 555 ➤ Catechism Q&A page 252 (9th Article of Faith)
PRE DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS AND STUDENT (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)	
	<p>How are a hope and a wish the same? How are they different?. Join us tomorrow for small group at _____ when we'll have a discussion about hope.</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 are focused on the importance of hope in the Lord and our future with Him. The students referenced the story of the woman that touched the hem of Jesus' garment, found in Luke 8. The discussion focused on not only the woman's faith in Jesus' ability, but also her hope that He would heal her. In the upcoming week, please discuss with your students what you hope for in your own life.</p> <p>As always, if you have questions about the topic, please feel free to contact your Youth Leaders.</p> <p>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 15 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. • Write the definitions on different whiteboards / poster boards if possible to allow for longer lists. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Wish: to have a desire for something ○ Hope: to expect with confidence • Make sure the definitions are large enough for the students to see. • Give the students enough time to read and reflect on the two. 	<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? ➤ Write both definitions for “hope” and “wish” on the board. Have the students read the definitions to themselves and try to come up with the differences and similarities between the two. After the students have read the definitions and come up with their answers, allow the students to shift into groups of two or three and share the differences and similarities between the two. ➤ As a group, have students create lists of things they wish for in their lives. Some examples might include: winning the lottery, getting a pony, etc. ➤ Once you have created the “wish list,” create a list of things the students hope for. Some examples might be: that my friend’s surgery goes well, that dad gets a new job, etc. ➤ Discuss with the students the differences between the things they wish for and the things they hope for. Make note that both lists are compiled of future things. These two words are often used interchangeably so, the students might not see the differences between the two lists. Explain to them how their “hope list” contains things that are usually deeper desires and have a good probability/expectation of happening.
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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 Christian hope? ➤ What do we hope for? ➤ What do Christians base their hope on?
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LESSON (up to 25 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

- 9th Article of faith (portion): *I believe that the Lord Jesus will return as surely as He ascended into heaven and that He will take to Himself the firstfruits of the dead and living who have hoped for and were prepared for His coming;*

- For the sake of preparing for the discussion, some full Bible passages are included in the facilitator guide. However, in the actual discussion with the students, it is encouraged that the facilitator look up the passages in a physical Bible along with the students to reinforce the importance of using one's Bible and Bible literacy.

Student Question #1 What is the difference between regular hope and Christian hope?

Wishing and hoping for things are often difficult to separate. As Christians, our main hope for the future is for the Lord to return. We can have hope in this because the Lord has promised He will return. Our hope in this comes from a firmly rooted belief and expectation in His promise.

Sometimes when we hope for something, there might be uncertainty in what we are hoping for because of the likelihood for it to actually happen. When we discuss spiritual and Christian hope, we have a certainty in that hope. We have hope in what we confidently expect for our future.

Read, or ask a student to read, 1 Peter 3:15

- *Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you...*

According to 1 Peter 3:15, we're expected, as Christians, to be able to speak about our hope in God's promises.

Have the students read, individually or as a group, the following:

- Ask a student, or multiple students, to read Luke 8:40-48 (not included due to length)
- To get more context on the passage that was just read, ask a student to read the "**Flashpoint – Hope in the hem**" on page 1058 of the IGNITE Bible
 - Ask the students:
 - How did the woman demonstrate hope?
 - What do you remember about faith from the previous discussion (T4)? What is the difference between 'hope' and 'faith'?
 - While 'hope' and 'faith' are similar, they are indeed different.
 - In 1 Corinthians 13:13, Apostle Paul lists them separately to indicate that they are different.
 - *And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.*
 - Hope is future-oriented, you can't hope for something you already have.
 - Faith and hope are complementary. Faith is grounded in the reality of the past; hope is looking to the reality of the future. Without faith, there is no hope, and without hope there is no true faith.
- Read Romans 5:1-5 (not included due to length)
- Continue by reading the "**Flashpoint – Hope**" on page 1176 of the IGNITE Bible

- Ask the students:
 - Have there been times where the situation started to feel hopeless, but you wrestled to find hope that God would get you through your situation?

Student Question #2 What are some concrete actions we can do if we, or a friend of ours, starts to feel hopeless?

- Pray
 - That God reveal Himself more clearly
 - That we are open and aware of His presence and His promises
 - To calm our anxious hearts
- Read
 - The promises in scripture
- Reflect
 - How God has been consistently faithful and true over the course of history
- Know
 - Nothing can separate us from the love of God (ref. Romans 8:38-39)

- When asking about our future, the students will naturally come up with answers such as the Lord's return. To deepen their understanding of hope, share a few examples to get ideas started. An example could be:
 - I hope the Lord will return *during my lifetime* and that I will not have to suffer physical death.

Student Question #3 How can strong hope keep us motivated in our lives?

- What are things that we spiritually hope for in our lives and for our futures?
- Now that we have a better understanding of spiritual and Christian hope, are there things we originally said we hoped for that could be changed to just a wish?
- Having hope in the Lord gives us strength to overcome our obstacles in life. We defined Christian hope as having a strong expectation in our future with the Lord. How does it strengthen our hope in the Lord knowing He will always fulfill His promises?

As Christians, our main hope for the future is that the Lord will return during our lifetime and that we will join Him when He returns.

- In the 9th article of faith, we focus on the importance of our hope for our future. We hope that we will have eternal life with our Lord and that we can partake in the wedding feast together. What are some ways we can strengthen our hope in our future?
 - After the students have contributed some answers, summarize and/or clarify by saying something like:
 - *Spiritual disciplines (prayer, worship, scripture, silence, and solitude) help us stay connected to God and through them, He can strengthen our hope.*
- One of the reasons we can have such a confident expectation is that God is not able to lie.
 - Hebrews 6:18
...it is impossible for God to lie...

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME? (up to 15 minutes)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sermon clips can only be found in the NAC USA mobile app and in the link to the right. 	<p>Wrap up the lesson with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If time allows, watch Chief Apostle sermon clip 37, Christian Hope. http://subspla.sh/mefanmd. <p>Close with the "I Believe..." statements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ As you review each statement, stop and check in with the group to be sure there are no misunderstandings or misconceptions. ➤ Allow the students to state an "I Believe..." statement for each of the "I Wonder..." questions in their own words. ➤ Remind the students that on their Confirmation day, they will or have already promised and committed to "remain faithful to You until my End". <p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Christian hope is our confident expectation that God will fulfill His promises for our future. (Catechism Q&A question 40) ➤ Our hope is for the return of the Lord Jesus and that we will be taken with Him. (Catechism Q&A question 555) ➤ Our hope is founded in the offer of salvation and eternal fellowship with God. (Catechism Q&A question 247) <p>A Point to Ponder....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How are 'hope' and 'faith' similar? How are 'hope' and 'faith' different? <p>A Call to Action...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ This week, think how you would respond if someone asked about the hope in your heart and you had to explain/defend it (as referenced in 1 Peter 3:15). Actually articulate and right down a sentence, or a few, explaining your hope in Jesus Christ. Consider asking someone in the congregation to help articulate it with you if you need assistance.
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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.....

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *Hope*

<p>Have you ever wondered...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is Christian hope? ➤ What do we hope for? ➤ What do Christians base their hope on? 	<p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Christian hope is our confident expectation that God will fulfill his promises for our future. (Catechism Q&A question 40) ➤ Our hope is for the return of the Lord Jesus and that we will be taken with Him. (Catechism Q&A question 555) ➤ Our hope is founded in the offer of salvation and eternal fellowship with God. (Catechism Q&A question 247)
<p>References:</p> <p>Bible verses: Luke 8:40-48, Romans 5:1-5, Romans 8:38-39, 1 Corinthians 13:13, Hebrews 6:18-19, 1 Peter 3:15; Catechism Q&A questions 40, 247, 549, 550, 555; Catechism Q&A page 252 (9th Article of Faith)</p>	

1. What is the difference between “regular” hope and Christian hope?

2. What are some concrete actions we can do if we, or a friend of ours, starts to feel hopeless?

3. How can strong hope keep us motivated in our lives?

Point to Ponder: How are ‘hope’ and ‘faith’ similar? How are ‘hope’ and ‘faith’ different?

Call to Action: This week, think how you would respond if someone asked about the hope in your heart and you had to explain/defend it (as referenced in 1 Peter 3:15). Actually articulate and right down a sentence, or a few, explaining your hope in Jesus Christ. Consider asking someone in the congregation to help articulate it with you if you need assistance.

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *Love*

LESSON AT A GLANCE

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sermon clips can only be found in the NAC USA mobile app and in the link to the right. 	<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Why do I love God? ➤ Why should I love my neighbor? ➤ How do I show love to my neighbor? ➤ Why and how should I love my enemies? <p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We love God because He first loved us. (Catechism Q&A question 290) ➤ One of the greatest of the commandments is to love your neighbor. (Catechism Q&A question 155, 287) ➤ We must not close our eyes to the distress of others, but rather provide help. (Catechism Q&A question 155) ➤ Jesus commanded us to love our enemies and fulfilled this command in unparalleled fashion when He was on the cross. (Catechism Q&A question 174; Matthew 5:44) <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ IGNITE Bible ➤ Catechism Q&A ➤ Chief Apostle sermon clip 17, Love like Jesus loves http://subsplash.com/nacusa/v/93b3406 ➤ Paper hearts (2 per student-to write on), pens/pencils, dry erase board or chart paper, markers <p>References:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bible verses: Matthew 5:44, Matthew 22:37-40, Mark 12:30-31, Luke 10:25-29, Luke 10:30-37, John 3:16 ➤ Catechism Q&A questions 57, 155, 174, 285 - 288, 290, 291
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PRE DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS AND STUDENT (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)

	<p>Do you remember the song 'Jesus loves me this I know'? How has your understanding of His love evolved as you know more about Him? Join us tomorrow for small group at _____ when we'll have a discussion about love.</p>
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POST DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please feel free to customize and add local information as necessary. • Consider including the Chief Apostle sermon clip if you didn't have time to watch it in youth group. 	<p>Dear Parents,</p> <p>This week the "I Wonder...." questions are about why I love God, why I should love my neighbor, how I show love to my neighbor, and why I should love my enemies. The students discussed how we want to love just as Jesus loved. At home, you can discuss a time when someone showed you love and how you felt as a result. .As always, please feel free to let me know if you have any questions.</p> <p>Your Youth Leaders</p>
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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 15 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. • Write down the shared answers that relate to love on the left side of the board/chart paper, keeping room on the right for a separate listing during the lesson. 	<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? ➤ Give everyone one paper heart and a pen or pencil. Tell them they have 60 seconds to write as many words as they can that relate to love. When the 60 seconds are up, have the participants name 8-10 words, and write them on the board/chart paper.
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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"> ➤ Why do I love God? ➤ Why should I love my neighbor? ➤ How do I show love to my neighbor? ➤ Why and how should I love my enemies?
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LESSON(up to 25 minutes)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write down the answers the students shared in the section on the right side of the board/chart paper for easy reference and comparison. 	<p>Today we are going to talk about God’s love for us, which results in us loving Him. When we love God, then we will also love our neighbor, including our enemies. Discuss the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Not including God – who are some of the most loving people that you know? ➤ How do those people show that they care? Write these characteristics on the right side of the board/chart paper. ➤ Would you say that the words on the right are the same or different from the words that we wrote down earlier (on the hearts/left side of the board)? Allow the students to compare/contrast the words they shared on the right side of the board/chart paper with the ones from the hearts.
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- If students don't have specific examples, be prepared to share a specific example of how you know that God loves you (ex. you could see His hand in your life during a difficult circumstance).

- For the sake of preparing for the discussion, some full Bible passages are included in the facilitator guide. However, in the actual discussion with the students, it is encouraged that the facilitator look up the passages in a physical Bible along with the students to reinforce the importance of using one's Bible and Bible literacy.

Student Question #1 Why does God love us? How do we know? Discuss with the students.

- Make sure that participants are aware that God revealed Himself as the Loving One by sending His son for the salvation of all human beings. Read Catechism Q&A question 57 together & discuss.

Student Question #2 If God loves us that much, how do we respond? Discuss and make sure the points below are covered.

- We love Him back because of His love for us.
 - It is similar to the love parents have for their children. As they care for and raise their children, the children's love the parents in return.
 - We know Jesus loves us because He gave His life for us.

What are the 2 most important commandments?

- Ask a student, or multiple students, to read Mark 12:30-31
- *"And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment. And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."*

Jesus taught us much about love. He is our example of HOW to love others.

It is easy to love our friends or family though. Jesus taught to love those in need.

Ask a student, or multiple students, to read the Parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-37 (not included due to length).

What was Jesus asking the people to do? Discuss and make sure to cover the following points:

- Take **notice** of those in need around us.
- **Act** on the need of those around us.

Who was the neighbor to the man attacked by bandits in this parable?

- The one who showed him mercy.

Who is our neighbor? Discuss and make sure the points below are covered:

- Anyone we come in contact with.
- Anyone who is in need. (Catechism Q&A question 287)

Read Catechism Q&A question 286 together. Is it easy to show mercy to all of the people around us? What do we need to do in order to be merciful/help our neighbor?

- Be aware that there is a need.
- Stop to help.

Student Question #3 How can we show our love for our neighbor within the congregation? What is our responsibility? (Catechism Q&A question 290)

- Being present and listening to them
- Ask them if there is something they would like you to pray for

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Memorize some Bible verses that may be used to comfort or offer hope when in conversation with them ➤ Share with them what you're learning in the divine services and small groups ➤ Our willingness to help those in need should be especially evident.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the students to contemplate both those who are easy to love (family and friends) and those who are more difficult to love (difficult people or even enemies). • Encourage the students to think about how they would show love to both the "easy" and "difficult" people in their lives. 	<p><u>Student Question #4</u> What happens when we "love one another" in the congregation? (Catechism Q&A question 291)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Love for one another enables us to accept our brother and sister as they are and protects against irreconcilability, prejudices, and contempt. ➤ Love is a power that strengthens the cohesion in the congregation, awakens empathy and understanding for one another, and promotes willingness to help one another. ➤ Jesus even wants us to love our enemies, and when we have love in the congregation, we are able to love those we may not have liked so much. ➤ Ask a student to read Matthew 5:44 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>"But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you."</i> <p>We must always keep this in mind: When Jesus was on the cross, He interceded for all those who had brought Him to the cross, fulfilling the commandment to the greatest extent. We also want to love all to the fullest extent possible, those who are a part of our congregation and those who are not. (ref. Catechism Q&A question 174)</p> <p>Break into small groups (2-3 people) and discuss a time when someone showed love to you. Answer these questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What did they do? ➤ Did you recognize their love for you right away? ➤ How did you feel when you knew you were loved? ➤ Are you good at demonstrating love for others or is it an area that needs growth in your life? ➤ How can you demonstrate love for your neighbor this week? Whom will you love? ➤ How is love more than just doing things or buying stuff for each other?

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?(up to 15 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

- Sermon clips can only be found in the [NAC USA mobile app](#) and in the [link to the right](#).

Wrap up the lesson

If time allows, watch the Chief Apostle sermon clip 17, Love like Jesus loves.

Close with the "I Believe..." statements

- As you review each statement, stop and check in with the group to be sure there are no misunderstandings or misconceptions.
- Allow the students to state an "I Believe..." statement for each of the "I Wonder..." questions in their own words.
- Remind the students that on their Confirmation day, they will or have already promised and committed to surrender themselves to the Triune God.

I believe...

- We love God because He first loved us. (Catechism Q&A question 290)
- One of the greatest of the commandments is to love your neighbor. (Catechism Q&A question 155, 287)
- We must not close our eyes to the distress of others, but rather provide help. (Catechism Q&A question 155)
- Jesus commanded us to love our enemies and fulfilled this command in unparalleled fashion when He was on the cross. (Catechism Q&A question 174; Matthew 5:44)

A Point to Ponder....

- Jesus is our example. We want to transform our nature to be loving like He was, selflessly and without judgement.

A Call to Action...

- This week, look for a specific way you will show love to someone. Whom are you going to show that love to? How are you going to show that love? Be prepared to share an experience of how you showed love to someone and what happened as a result. How did you feel? How did the other person feel? Do you feel like you loved like Jesus loves? Was the task difficult or easy?

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.....

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *Love*

<p>Have you ever wondered...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Why do I love God? ➤ Why should I love my neighbor? ➤ How do I show love to my neighbor? ➤ Why and how should I love my enemies? 	<p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We love God because He first loved us. (Catechism Q&A question 290) ➤ One of the greatest of the commandments is to love your neighbor. (Catechism Q&A question 155, 287) ➤ We must not close our eyes to the distress of others, but rather provide help. (Catechism Q&A question 155) ➤ Jesus commanded us to love our enemies and fulfilled this command in unparalleled fashion when He was on the cross. (Catechism Q&A question 174; Matthew 5:44)
<p>References: Bible verses: Matthew 5:44, Matthew 22:37-40, Mark 12:30-31, Luke 10:25-29, Luke 10:30-37, John 3:16; Catechism Q&A questions 57, 155, 174, 285 - 288, 290, 291</p>	

1. Why does God love us? How do we know?

2. If God loves us that much, how do we respond?

3. How can we show our love for our neighbor within the congregation? What is our responsibility?

4. What happens when we "love one another" in the congregation?

Point to Ponder: Jesus is our example. We want to transform our nature to be loving like He was, selflessly and without judgement.

Call to Action: This week, look for a specific way you will show love to someone. Whom are you going to show that love to? How are you going to show that love? Be prepared to share an experience of how you showed love to someone and what happened as a result. How did you feel? How did the other person feel? Do you feel like you loved like Jesus loves? Was the task difficult or easy?

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *The Fruit of the Spirit*

LESSON AT A GLANCE	
<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Midweek Experience videos can be found on the NAC USA YouTube channel <i>and</i> in the NAC USA mobile app 	<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is the fruit of the Spirit? ➤ How do I get it? ➤ Why do I need it or want it? <p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The fruit of the Spirit are 9 divine attributes and personality qualities described in Galatians 5:22-23 - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, and self-control. (Catechism Q&A question 530) ➤ These 9 qualities come directly from the Holy Spirit and not from ourselves. (Catechism Q&A question 530) ➤ God is sharing part of His divine nature with us, and His nature will shine through us and draw others to Him. (Catechism Q&A question 530) <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ IGNITE Bible ➤ Catechism Q&A ➤ Midweek Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ August 2017, Session 1 – "Do You Bear Fruit?" ➤ Chart paper, markers <p>References:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bible verses: Matthew 11:25-30, Matthew 14:28-32, Matthew 26:47-54, Matthew 27:45-53, Luke 22:49-51, Luke 23:32-34, John 10:7-16, John 12:27-28, John 14:25-31, John 15:5-8, John 16:19-24, Galatians 5:22-23 ➤ Catechism Q&A question 530
PRE DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS AND STUDENT (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)	
	<p>What is your favorite fruit to eat? What is your favorite fruit of the Spirit, as listed in Galatians 5:22-23? Join us tomorrow for small group at _____ when we'll have a discussion about fruit.</p>
POST DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)	
<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please feel free to customize and add local information as necessary. • Consider including the video link above if you didn't have time to watch it in youth group. 	<p>Dear Parents,</p> <p>This week the "I Wonder...." questions are about the fruit of the Spirit. Ask your student if they can name all 9 divine attributes from Galatians 5:22-23. Tell your student which attribute you think they demonstrate best and how it impacts others. Ask them to tell you what fruit of the Spirit they think you demonstrate and how it impacts others. Remind each other every day this week about the attributes you both demonstrate well and about the ones you both need to work into your nature. As always, if you have questions about the topic, please feel free to contact me/us. Your Youth Leaders</p>

SUNDAY SERMON REFLECTIONS (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 (15 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? ➤ Ask the students to write down 5 characteristics that they would want in a roommate. ➤ Have students share a characteristic and why they chose it. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Most responses will be people with characteristics that demonstrate they are a good person or that are most like the student (i.e. trustworthy, friendly, honest, funny). ○ God wants us to transform our nature using Jesus as our example. As our example, we want to look at His characteristics and how He demonstrated what a life filled with the Spirit can look like.
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SET THE STAGE (1 minute)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <p>Preview the "I wonder" questions with the students.</p>	<p>"I wonder..."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is the fruit of the Spirit? ➤ How do I get it? ➤ Why do I need it or want it?
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LESSON (25 minutes)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a 2 column chart with the headings Fruit – under which you should list the 9 fruit, and My Meaning – where you will write the students' definitions of each fruit. 	<p>Read the passage from John 15:5-8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Why does the branch need to remain connected to the vine? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If the branch is severed, the life is severed and no fruit will be produced. ○ The Holy Spirit provides the life out of which the fruit of the Spirit is produced. If we don't stay connected to God, we won't produce Godly fruit.
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- If the class is smaller, divide the students into less groups or stay together as one group.
- It's important to highlight that we're not talking about a transformation in the sense of Transformers, who change back and forth, but rather we're focusing on a transformation that is permanent and deeply rooted in transforming our nature.
- Depending on time, encourage the students to read, or take turns reading, the supporting Bible verses in this column for each of the fruit.
- An example of Jesus demonstrating **love** can be found in Matthew 27:45-53. As a group, try to come up with a few other examples of Jesus demonstrating love.
- An example of Jesus demonstrating **joy** can be found in John 16:19-24. As a group, try to come up with a few other examples of Jesus demonstrating joy.

Divide the students into 3 groups and assign each group 3 fruits. As a group, they will need to come up with a meaning for each of their fruits, and to write the definition on the student copy of the lesson, in the chart under the "My Definition" heading. When the groups are finished, have each group share one definition at a time. After each, read the descriptions below, taken from Bible dictionaries and commentaries, and discuss the differences.

- The students should recognize how much more deep, meaningful, and purposeful God's love, joy, peace....is, compared to our human definitions and understandings of each.
- Compare how we would demonstrate each of these using our human understanding, rather than the godly understanding.
 - Love: Humans – we like someone vs. God – gives His life for someone
 - Joy: Humans – feel happy vs. God – ever present rejoicing
- As you read the godly definitions, tell the students to add to their definitions something that stands out to them or something that gives a new understanding or new meaning to the attribute.

Godly Definitions:

We can recognize that Jesus, as both true Man and true God, demonstrated the fruit of the Spirit throughout His life and He can be our example so that the fruit may also be present in our lives.

Love

- Unselfish, benevolent concern for another; brotherly concern; the object of brotherly concern or affection
- The self-denying, self-sacrificing, Christ-like love which is the foundation of all other graces
- The high esteem which God has for His human children and the high regard which they, in turn, should have for Him and other people

Joy

- Great delight; gladness of heart
- The happy state that results from knowing and serving God
- That deep, abiding, inner rejoicing in the Lord
- To rejoice, to be glad

- An example of Jesus demonstrating **peace** can be found in John 14:25-31. As a group, try to come up with a few other examples of Jesus demonstrating peace.
- An example of Jesus demonstrating **patience** can be found in Luke 23:32-34. As a group, try to come up with a few other examples of Jesus demonstrating patience.
- An example of Jesus demonstrating **kindness** can be found in Luke 22:49-51. As a group, try to come up with a few other examples of Jesus demonstrating kindness.
- The word “beneficence” means the fact or quality of being kind or doing good.
- An example of Jesus demonstrating **goodness** can be found in John 10:7-16. As a group, try to come up with a few other examples of Jesus demonstrating goodness.
- An example of Jesus demonstrating **faith** can be found in John 12:27-28. As a group, try to come up with a few other examples of Jesus demonstrating faith.

Peace

- The presence and experience of right relationships
- The tranquility of soul
- Sense of well-being and fulfillment that comes from God and is dependent on His presence
- The inner tranquility and poise of the Christian whose trust is in God through Christ

Patience/Long-Suffering

- Forbearance, patience
- Patient endurance and steadfastness under provocation
- Forbearance under suffering and endurance in the face of adversity, with no thought of retaliation

Kindness

- The steadfast love that maintains relationships through gracious aid in times of need
- Goodness of heart, serviceable, gracious, pleasant
- Love for mankind, hospitality, acts of kindness, readiness to help, human friendship, benevolence, taking thought of others, all without ulterior motive
- The ability to act for the welfare of those taxing your patience

Goodness

- Beneficence, ready to do good, love in action
- Virtue equipped for action, a bountiful propensity both to will and to do what is good, intrinsic goodness producing a generosity and a Godlike state or being

Faith

- Fidelity which makes one true to his promise and faithful to his task
- Steadfast, dedicated, dependable and worthy of trust
- Unchanging and thoroughly grounded in relation to the other
- Dependability, loyalty and stability

- An example of Jesus demonstrating **gentleness** can be found in Matthew 11:25-30. As a group, try to come up with a few other examples of Jesus demonstrating gentleness
- An example of Jesus demonstrating **self-control** can be found in Matthew 26:47-54. As a group, try to come up with a few other examples of Jesus demonstrating self-control.

Gentleness

- Mildness combined with tenderness
- Gracious, kindly disposition, controlled strength
- A disposition that is even-tempered, tranquil, balanced in spirit,
- Power and strength under control

Self-Control

- Sober, temperate and calm
- Calls for a self-disciplined life following Christ's example of being in the world but not of the world
- Restraint or discipline exercised over one's behavior

(Information and references taken from: <http://www.bible-knowledge.com/fruits-of-the-holy-spirit>)

Read Matthew 14:28-32.

- Explain that Jesus gave Peter the power to walk on the water, but Peter had to get out of the boat and start walking in order for the power to manifest itself through Peter.
- God gives us the power, through His Holy Spirit, to transform our nature, but we have to be like Peter and be willing to live and walk in Christ's nature.
- When we do this, Christ's character will shine through us and draw others to Him. Remind students though, our kindness, goodness, patience, etc., is His character, not ours, and that all glory should be given to God.
- Yes, there will be times we fail, or sink like Peter did, but Christ will hold out His hand, and save us and encourage us to try again.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME? (15 minutes)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Midweek Experience videos can be found on the NAC USA YouTube channel <i>and</i> in the NAC USA mobile app 	<p>Wrap up the lesson with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If time allows, watch: ➤ Midweek Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ August 2017, Session 1 – "Do You Bear Fruit?" <p>Close with the "I Believe..." statements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ As you review each statement, stop and check in with the group to be sure there are no misunderstandings or misconceptions. ➤ Allow the students to state an "I Believe..." statement for each of the "I Wonder..." questions in their own words. ➤ Remind the students that on their Confirmation day, they will or have already promised and committed to "renounce Satan and all his work and ways". <p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The fruit of the Spirit are 9 divine attributes and personality qualities described in Galatians 5:22-23 - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, and self-control. (Catechism Q&A question 530) ➤ These 9 qualities come directly from the Holy Spirit and not from ourselves. (Catechism Q&A question 530) ➤ God is sharing part of His divine nature with us, and His nature will shine through us and draw others to Him. (Catechism Q&A question 530) <p>A Point to Ponder....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Which fruit of the Spirit do you feel you demonstrate well? Which one do you feel needs work? <p>A Call to Action...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Every day for the next 9 days, pick a fruit to intentionally live out and demonstrate it as God would want you to.
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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.....

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *The Fruit of the Spirit*

<p>Have you ever wondered...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is the fruit of the Spirit? ➤ How do I get it? ➤ Why do I need it or want it? 	<p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The fruit of the Spirit are 9 divine attributes and personality qualities described in Galatians 5:22-23 - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, and self-control. (Catechism Q&A question 530) ➤ These 9 qualities come directly from the Holy Spirit and not from ourselves. (Catechism Q&A question 530) ➤ God is sharing part of His divine nature with us, and His nature will shine through us and draw others to Him. (Catechism Q&A question 530)
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References: Bible verses: Matthew 11:25-30, Matthew 14:28-32, Matthew 26:47-54, Matthew 27:45-53, Luke 22:49-51, Luke 23:32-34, John 10:7-16, John 12:27-28, John 14:25-31, John 15:5-8, John 16:19-24, Galatians 5:22-23; Catechism Q&A question 530

Fruit	My meaning	Godly meaning
Love		
Joy		
Peace		
Patience		
Kindness		
Goodness		
Faith		
Gentleness		
Self-Control		

Point to Ponder: Which fruit of the Spirit do you feel you demonstrate well? Which one do you feel needs work?

Call to Action: Every day for the next 9 days, pick a fruit to intentionally live out and demonstrate it as God would want you to.

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *You Don't Win with Sin*

LESSON AT A GLANCE	
<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Your Journey episodes can be found on the NAC USA YouTube channel <i>and</i> in the NAC USA mobile app 	<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is sin? ➤ Why do we sin? ➤ Where does it come from? ➤ What is the consequence of sin? <p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sin is everything that is contrary to the will of God and is contrary to His being. (Catechism Q&A question 229) ➤ The origin of sin (fall into sin) is Adam and Eve's disobedience of God's commandment to not eat fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. (Catechism Q&A question 223) ➤ I am born with the inclination to sin (concupiscence). (Q&A question 227) ➤ Sin causes separation between God and me, though God continues to love me. (Catechism Q&A question 227) <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ IGNITE Bible ➤ Catechism Q&A ➤ Chart paper or whiteboard and markers (optional) ➤ For Your Journey – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Episode 23 – Aligning our lives <p>References:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bible verses: Genesis 3:1-6, Psalm 139:23-24, Matthew 16:22-24, Romans 6:23 ➤ Catechism Q&A questions 215-223, 227, 229, 232-237 ➤ Catechism Q&A page 253, The Ten Commandments
PRE DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS AND STUDENT (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)	
	<p>Part of growing up and maturing is realizing that choices have consequences. Join us tomorrow for small group at _____ when we'll discuss the consequences of sin.</p>
POST DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)	
<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please customize with local information as necessary. • Consider including a link to one of the referenced videos for this discussion. 	<p>Dear Parents,</p> <p>This week the "I Wonder...." questions are about sin, what it is, where it comes from, why we sin, and the result of sin. The students were asked to read a story about a righteous judge and to compare elements of the story to our lives as sinners. The students were then asked to watch "Aligning our Lives to the Gospel" (Ep. 23 - For Your Journey), to see how sin impacts our future with Christ. In the coming week, consider taking time to discuss sin with your son/daughter.</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 15 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. • Facilitator should not allow students to explain the ‘why’ for their behavior, or allow them to justify the behavior. • Refer to the Ten Commandments, Catechism Q&A page 253. • Facilitator may have to assist students in deciding if the sin is a direct or indirect violation of a commandment. It is important to develop an understanding that all sin falls under at least one of the commandments. The emphasis should not be if the sins are direct or indirect, but that either is a violation. 	<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? ➤ Ask a student to read, or encourage the students to read silently, Psalm 139:23-24 and reflect on it for a moment, then tell us about one thing you did today that you wish you didn’t, was a bad choice, was not very Christ-like, or was just plain rotten. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Make a list of the responses ➤ Listen to the following and decide if the action could be considered a sin? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ You stole a dollar out of someone’s backpack <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yes, it is in direct violation of a commandment ○ You embarrassed your friend in the hallway in front of a girl he has a crush on (stole his peace, dignity) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yes, it is an indirect violation of a commandment ➤ Refer to the list of responses from the Psalm 139 reading. Was anyone without sin? What made you sin? ➤ Have you ever used the phrase “The devil made me do it?” Read Matthew 16:22-24. Who is the devil in this passage? What made Peter sin? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lead the students to the idea that it was Peter’s self-serving or prideful heart that caused him to make this statement. Christ had to be very direct with Peter to make him understand that it was not Peter’s thoughts or ideas that would be fulfilled, but God the Father. Without Christ fulfilling His Father’s will, humankind would not have the ability to be saved from sin.
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SET THE STAGE (Up to 1 minute)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p>	<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is sin? ➤ Why do we sin? ➤ Where does it come from? ➤ What is the consequence of sin?
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LESSON (Up to 25 minutes)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Let the students read the story and answer the questions with a partner or in small groups before coming back together to share with the whole group. ➤ Any questions about her reasoning or justification should be responded to using the answers to Catechism Q&A questions 232-237. Avoid a debate about whether she was justified or not. Keep the focus on 'did she break the law or not?' At this point, we want the students to recognize humankind's inability to remain free from sin, the consequence of sin, and our inability to pay the price of sin. ➤ It may be tempting for the conversation to turn to forgiveness or grace, but that will be discussed in future lessons. Keep the focus of the discussion on sin. 	<p>Read the following story and think of how it parallels what sin is for us. Then answer the following questions (story is included in the student sheets):</p> <p>"A young woman was picked up for speeding. She was ticketed and taken before the judge. The judge read off the citation and said, "Guilty or not guilty?" The woman replied, "Guilty." The judge brought down the gavel and fined her \$100 or ten days. Then an amazing thing took place. The judge stood up, took off his robe, walked down around in front, took out his billfold, and paid the fine." (an excerpt from "He's More than a Carpenter, McDowell, 1977)</p> <p><u>Student Question #1</u> What part of the story demonstrates the problem?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The woman broke the law. ➤ There is a penalty for breaking the law. <p><u>Student Question #2</u> Why did this woman break the law?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ She may have chosen to ignore the law. ➤ She thought her circumstances were above the law (maybe she was late, maybe she had a new car and wanted to see how fast it could go, etc.). <p><u>Student Question #3</u> Where did the woman's inclination to break the law come from?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ She had free will to decide whether she was going to obey the law or to disobey the law. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ God gave us free will, because He loves us and wants us to love Him ➤ God created Adam and Eve in His image (they were perfect), and He gave them free will. God gave them the commandment to not eat of a certain tree, and they chose to disobey. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Have the students read Genesis 3:1-6 and ask them at what point did Adam & Eve sin (not when they ate the fruit, but when they doubted the Lord's command and decided to eat the fruit). ○ Emphasize from that day forward, people were separated from God, because their inclination to disobey God was forever imprinted on their hearts. ➤ Go back to the story of the woman and the judge, and have the students discuss at what point did the woman sin and how is it like the story of Adam and Eve's fall.
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<p>➤ The part of the story where the judge pays the woman's fine will be discussed next week, so keep the discussion focused on sin.</p>	<p><u>Student Question #4</u> What was the consequence of the woman's disobedience of the law?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ She had to pay the penalty (\$100) ➤ She could no longer stand before the judge as a law abiding citizen (a separation occurred). Her "position" before the judge had changed. <p><u>Student Question #5</u> Why couldn't the judge just have mercy on her and let her go?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ It is very important that the students understand that if the judge would just let her go, he would not be a righteous judge. Ask them what would happen to any judge that would just let everyone go? He would lose his position as judge, he would not be viewed as a righteous judge (or a judge who doesn't uphold the law). He would be accused of being dishonest, or lacking integrity. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Our God is a righteous God. ➤ Share the following scenario: My son broke my favorite coffee mug. I'm a loving and forgiving father/mother, so I put my son on my lap and hug him and say, "Don't cry, Daddy/Mommy loves you and forgives you." But who has to pay for the mug? I do. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There's always a price/consequence for sin. ➤ Go back to the list from the Hook activity and determine the "price" of the sin. (If you insult someone publicly, they forgive you, but they bear the price of the insult, which might be embarrassment in front of peers). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Therefore, the price/consequence of sin has to be paid by someone. <p>Divide the group into two groups and make the following statements:</p> <p>A) We are sinners because we sin.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>B) We sin because we are sinners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Let the two groups discuss statements A and B, and ask them to choose which one they think is most true. Have each group choose one person to report which statement they chose and why. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lead the discussions back to the origin of sin, and that we are born sinners which is why we sin (in other words, we are born with the inclination to sin, which is why we sin). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We sin because we are sinners. <p>Sin is an important element of the gospel narrative. God created everything perfectly, and because humankind sinned, that perfect relationship with God was severed. The gospel narrative will be explored in more detail in the "Help Spread the Gospel" semester. The consequence of sin is clear:</p> <p>Ask a student to read Romans 6:23</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.</i>
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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.....

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *You Don't Win with Sin*

<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is sin? ➤ Why do we sin? ➤ Where does it come from? ➤ What is the consequence of sin? 	<p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sin is everything that is contrary to the will of God and is contrary to His being (Catechism Q&A question 229) ➤ The origin of sin (fall into sin) is Adam and Eve's disobedience of God's commandment to not eat fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil (Catechism Q&A question 223) ➤ I am born with the inclination to sin (concupiscence) (Catechism Q&A question 227) ➤ Sin causes separation between God and me, though God continues to love me (Catechism Q&A question 227)
<p>References: Bible verses: Genesis 3:1-6, Psalm 139:23-24, Matthew 16:22-24, Romans 6:23 Catechism Q&A questions 215-223,227, 229, 232-237, page 253</p>	

Read the following story and think of how it parallels what sin is for us. Then answer the following questions:

"A young woman was picked up for speeding. She was ticketed and taken before the judge. The judge read off the citation and said, "Guilty or not guilty?" The woman replied, "Guilty." The judge brought down the gavel and fined her \$100 or ten days. Then an amazing thing took place. The judge stood up, took off his robe, walked down around in front, took out his billfold, and paid the fine." (An excerpt from "He's More than a Carpenter, McDowell, 1977)

1. What part of the story demonstrates the problem?

2. Why did this woman break the law?

3. Where did the woman's inclination to break the law come from?

4. What was the consequence of the woman's disobedience of the law?

5. Why couldn't the judge just have mercy on her and let her go?

Point to Ponder: Why did the judge come down and pay her fine?

Call to Action: This week, reflect on a sin you recently committed. Why was it a sin? Why did you do it? Was there a price to you had to pay? If yes, what was it? How does taking time to reflect on your sin help you transform your nature?

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *To Forgive is Divine*

LESSON AT A GLANCE

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Your Journey episodes can be found on the NAC USA YouTube channel <i>and</i> in the NAC USA mobile app 	<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How are sins forgiven? ➤ Who forgives sins? ➤ What must I do to be forgiven? ➤ What are the effects of the forgiveness of sins? <p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sins can be forgiven because God sent His Son to the earth. With Jesus' death on the cross, He brought the eternally valid sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins. (Catechism Q&A question 646) ➤ The triune God forgives my sins. (Catechism Q&A question 647) ➤ In order to obtain forgiveness, I must believe that Jesus Christ is my redeemer and that He commissioned the Apostles to proclaim forgiveness of sins. I must acknowledge and repent my sins, want to be reconciled with God, and strive to overcome my weaknesses and reconcile with others. (Catechism Q&A question 649) ➤ Forgiveness cleanses me, cancels out my guilt, so the peace of Jesus Christ fills me, and I no longer fear the consequence of sin. (Catechism Q&A question 652) <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ IGNITE Bible ➤ Catechism Q&A ➤ Chart paper or whiteboard and markers (optional) ➤ Stopwatch or clock with a seconds hand ➤ For Your Journey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Episode 47 - When are sins forgiven? ○ Episode 58 - Repentance ➤ NAC.today article 'Not the only way, but the sure way' http://nac.today/en/a/462906 <p>References:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Catechism Q&A questions 247, 644 – 652 ➤ Bible: Matthew 6:14-15, Romans 6:23, 1 John 1:9-10
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PRE DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS AND STUDENT (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)

	<p>Imagine carrying around a stone for every sin you've ever committed. The weight would be unbearable. This week in group, we'll be discussing forgiveness. Join us tomorrow at _____.</p>
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MESSAGE TO PARENTS (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please add local information and customize as necessary. Consider including a video or article link used in this discussion and encourage parents to discuss with their child. 	<p>Dear Parents,</p> <p>This week the “I Wonder...” questions are about forgiveness: how are sins forgiven, who forgives sins, what must I do to be forgiven, what are the effects of the forgiveness of sins. Last week the students were asked to read a story about a righteous judge. This week the story continues as the judge demonstrates forgiveness. Tell your student about a time when they were very little and they broke or damaged something valuable, that you had to pay to have it replaced or repaired. Ask them how this is like sin and forgiveness. As always, if you have questions about the topic, please feel free to contact your Youth Leaders.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Your Youth Leaders</p>
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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 15 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?
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SET THE STAGE (Up to 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"> ➤ How are sins forgiven? ➤ Who forgives sins? ➤ What must I do to be forgiven? ➤ What are the effects of the forgiveness of sins?
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LESSON (Up to 25 minutes)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p>	<p>Review the story of “The Righteous Judge” with the students and have them share their Point to Ponder from the previous discussion, T8 (Why do think the judge came down and paid the woman’s fine?) Then have the students read Part 2 of the story from their student guides and discuss what parts of the story demonstrate forgiveness and why. Then answer the following questions:</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let the students read the story and answer the questions with a partner or in small groups before coming back together to share with the whole group. • Remind students of Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." • Forgiveness cleanses me, cancels out my guilt, so the peace of Jesus Christ fills me, and I no longer fear the consequence of sin. (see Catechism Q&A question 652) 	<p>"The judge was her father. He loved his daughter, yet he was a just judge. His daughter had broken the law and he couldn't simply say to her, 'Because I love you so much, I forgive you. You may leave.' If he had done that, he wouldn't have been a righteous judge. He wouldn't have upheld the law. But he loved his daughter so much that he was willing to take off his judicial robe and come down in front and represent her as her father and pay the fine." (excerpt from "He's More than a Carpenter", McDowell, 1977)</p> <p>Student Question #1 How is this like what God did for us through Jesus Christ? How does this relate to the hook activity?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No matter how much God loves us "The wages of sin is death." He is a righteous and just God. ➤ Yet He is a loving God, He sacrificed His Son, Jesus Christ. This eternally valid sacrifice is the debt for our sins being reconciled. ➤ Only God can forgive our sins. <p>Student Question #2 Why can't the judge / God just forgive, why does the "fine" have to be paid? How does this relate to the hook activity ?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Remind the students that when we sin there is a consequence/debt and it needs to be paid by someone....THAT PAYMENT BY CHRIST IS A GIFT TO US! ➤ Even if the woman paid her own fine, it is the judge/God who wipes the record clean.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>If time allows:</u> Extend the discussion to include why the law is necessary (speeding is dangerous and could result in an accident, causing harm or death). • The law can, at times, reveal to us who we really are (she may have 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We are incapable of forgiving sins or being liberated from sin on our own because we cannot pay the debt/fine for sin. There is nothing we can do to earn or buy forgiveness. ➤ It is extremely important to note the last paragraph of the answer to Catechism Q&A question 652: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "Irrespective of the forgiveness of sins, a person remains accountable for the consequences and responsibilities that have come about through is sinful conduct, whether they are of a material or legal nature." <p>Student Question #3 What could have prevented the judge/woman's father from paying the fine?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If she did not believe (disrespected) that the authority of the judge/God includes the ability to forgive/pay the debt incurred by her sin. ➤ If she had argued and claimed "not guilty", and not recognized/acknowledged her breaking of the law. ➤ If she showed no remorse/regret or desire to change her ways. <p>Student Question #4 What emotions do you think the woman felt knowing her father/God was willing to do this for her? How does this relate to the hook activity?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ She felt overwhelming thankfulness as she recognized the love her father/God had for her. ➤ She felt humbleness as she acknowledged/recognized her shortcomings. ➤ She is now inspired/motivated to show this kind of love to others...SHE CAN NOW GIVE A GIFT!

considered herself a law-abiding citizen, but when she is late for work, she is inclined to ignore the law).

- We should not try to make excuses for breaking the law (she was late for work), but rather use the power of His Spirit to overcome the desire to break the law, which is strengthened by the knowledge that God loves us and we don't want to disappoint Him.

- If a student says the woman is not remorseful – remind students that part of forgiveness is repenting.

We are expected to obey the laws.

- Ask a student to recite or read the tenth Article of Faith (the Articles of Faith can be found on page 251 of the Catechism Q&A)
 - *I believe that I am obliged to obey the worldly authorities provided no godly laws are thereby transgressed.*
- God wants and expects us to follow the laws. It isn't up to us to determine whether a law is right or wrong. Even if we don't agree with a law, we are to follow it unless it goes against a godly law.

To be forgiven, we must acknowledge our sinfulness and seek forgiveness

- Ask a student to read 1 John 1:9-10
 - *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.*

While only God can forgive sins, we can transform our nature using Jesus as our example by having a forgiving attitude towards those that may offend us.

Ask a student to read Matthew 6:14-15:

- *For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*

Remind students that in the Lord's Prayer we pray:

- *Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.*

Student Question #5 What are situations that would require you to extend forgiveness to someone?

- Listen to the answers and supplement or summarize with situations similar to:
 - Someone said something unkind or untrue to you, or about you.
 - Sibling ate the last of a snack you were saving.
- Ask a student to read the **Flashpoint: Forgiveness** on page 1084 of the IGNITE Bible.
- When you forgive someone for something they did, you don't hold any resentment or grudges.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME? (up to 15 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

- Our Vision is to create a church in which people feel at home and, inspired by the Holy Spirit and their love for God, align their lives to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and thus prepare themselves for His return and eternal life.
- Our Mission is reaching out to all people in order to teach them the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to baptize them with water and the Holy Spirit. Providing soul care and cultivating a warm fellowship in which everyone shall experience the love of God and the joy of serving Him and others.
- For Your Journey episodes can be found on the [NAC USA YouTube channel](#) *and* in the [NAC USA mobile app](#)

Wrap up the lesson with why we must be forgiven, linking it to our mission and vision and our eternal future with God.

- The phrase “the Gospel of Jesus Christ” appears in both the vision and mission statements. The gospel is the “good news” that forgiveness and salvation are possible as a result of Jesus’ sacrificial death.
- If time allows, share the following article from NAC.today, ‘Not the only way, but the sure way’ <http://nac.today/en/a/462906>
- OR
- Watch For Your Journey - Episode 47, When are sins forgiven? <http://subsplash.com/nacusa/v/k48ftgu>
 - If there isn’t enough time to watch the For Your Journey episode during the discussion time, please assign as homework and/or send in the follow up parent email and encourage parents to watch with their students and discuss at home.

Close with the “I Believe...” questions

- As you review each statement, stop and check in with the group to be sure there are no misunderstandings or misconceptions.
- Allow the students to state an “I Believe...” statement for each of the “I Wonder...” questions in their own words.
- Remind the students that on their Confirmation day, they will or have already promised and committed to surrendering themselves to God.

I believe...

- Sins can be forgiven because God sent His Son to the earth. With Jesus’ death on the cross, He brought the eternally valid sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins. (Catechism Q&A question 646)
- The triune God forgives my sins. (Catechism Q&A question 647)
- In order to obtain forgiveness, I must believe that Jesus Christ is my redeemer and that He commissioned the Apostles to proclaim forgiveness of sins. I must acknowledge and repent my sins, want to be reconciled with God, and strive to overcome my weaknesses and reconcile with others.(Catechism Q&A question 649)
- Forgiveness cleanses me, cancels out my guilt, so the peace of Jesus Christ fills me, and I no longer fear the consequence of sin. (Catechism Q&A question 652)

Point to Ponder....

- God forgives our sins. The Absolution during the divine service may not be the exact moment our sin is forgiven. But rather, the Absolution is the proclamation that our sins have been if we’ve gone through the necessary steps of realizing our sin, repenting, and seeking reconciliation.

A Call to Action....

- The words of the Absolution are found in the Catechism Q&A question 644. This week, pick out a phrase from the Absolution that is the most meaningful to you. Explain to a family member or friend why this phrase means so much to you.

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...

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *To forgive is divine*

<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How are sins forgiven? ➤ Who forgives sins? ➤ What must I do to be forgiven? ➤ What are the effects of the forgiveness of sins? 	<p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sins can be forgiven because God sent His Son to the earth. With Jesus' death on the cross, He brought the eternally valid sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins. (Catechism Q&A question 646) ➤ The triune God forgives my sins. (Catechism Q&A question 647) ➤ In order to obtain forgiveness, I must believe that Jesus Christ is my redeemer and that He commissioned the Apostles to proclaim forgiveness of sins. I must acknowledge and repent my sins, want to be reconciled with God, and strive to overcome my weaknesses and reconcile with others. (Catechism Q&A question 649) ➤ Forgiveness cleanses me, cancels out my guilt, so the peace of Jesus Christ fills me, and I no longer fear the consequence of sin. (Catechism Q&A question 652)
<p>References: Bible verses: Matthew 6:14-15, Romans 6:23, 1 John 1:9-10 Catechism Q&A questions 247, 644 – 652</p>	

Read Part 2 of the story and discuss what parts of the story demonstrates forgiveness and why. Then answer the following questions:

“The judge was her father. He loved his daughter, yet he was a just judge. His daughter had broken the law and he couldn’t simply say to her, ‘Because I love you so much, I forgive you. You may leave.’ If he had done that, he wouldn’t have been a righteous judge. He wouldn’t have upheld the law. But he loved his daughter so much that he was willing to take off his judicial robe and come down in front and represent her as her father and pay the fine.” (excerpt from “He’s More than a Carpenter”, McDowell, 1977)

1. **How is this like what God did for us through Jesus Christ? How does this relate to the hook activity?**

2. **Why can’t the judge / God just forgive, why does the “fine” have to be paid? How does this relate to the hook activity?**

3. **What could have prevented the judge/woman’s father from paying the fine?**

4. **What emotions do you think the woman felt knowing her father/God was willing to do this for her? How does this relate to the hook activity?**

5. **What are situations that would require you to extend forgiveness to someone?**

Point to Ponder: God forgives our sins. The Absolution during the divine service may not be the exact moment our sin is forgiven. But rather, the Absolution is the proclamation that our sins have been if we’ve gone through the necessary steps of realizing our sin, repenting, and seeking reconciliation.

Call to Action: The words of the Absolution are found in the Catechism Q&A question 644. This week, pick out a phrase from the Absolution that is the most meaningful to you. Explain to a family member or friend why this phrase means so much to you.

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *Marvelous Grace*

LESSON AT A GLANCE	
<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Your Journey episodes can be found on the NAC USA YouTube channel <i>and</i> in the NAC USA mobile app 	<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is grace? ➤ How can I obtain grace? ➤ What effect will grace have upon me? <p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Grace is a gift from God, demonstrating that He accepts human beings, who are entangled in sin. (Catechism Q&A question 58) ➤ I must recognize that I am a sinner, and the only way I can be reconciled with God is through my belief in Jesus Christ. Only through His grace can stand righteous before God. (Catechism Q&A question 278) ➤ When I fully grasp how incredible the gift of grace is, it will create humble thankfulness in me, a desire to live a holy life demonstrated in part by my love for others, and in my good works. (Catechism Q&A questions 156, 279) <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ IGNITE Bible ➤ Catechism Q&A ➤ Chart paper or whiteboard and markers ➤ Search YouTube for "Chris Tomlin - Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)" or use the link: https://youtu.be/Y-4NFv15Ugw ➤ For Your Journey - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Episode 38 - Grace <p>References:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bible: Matthew 20:1-16, Luke 19:1-10, John 8:7, John 18:17, 25, 27, Acts 7:54-60 ➤ Catechism Q&A questions 58, 156, 277-279
PRE DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS AND STUDENT (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)	
	<p>Have you heard the song "Amazing Grace"? What do you think is so amazing about grace? Join us for small group _____(time and/or location) to dig deeper into this topic.</p>
MESSAGE TO PARENTS (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)	
<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please customize and add local information as necessary. • Consider including a video link from the "Materials" section above and encouraging families to watch/discuss together. 	<p>Dear Parents,</p> <p>This week the "I Wonder...." questions are about grace. What is grace, why is salvation only possible through grace, and what effect will grace have on me? This week the students listened to "Amazing Grace (My Chains are Gone)" and were asked to analyze each stanza of the song. Ask your student to share the key points they learned about grace from this song. If you can, listen to the song together. As always, if you have questions about the topic, please feel free to contact your Youth Leaders.</p> <p>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 15 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. • After reading the scenario, the students may ask why Taylor was absent. Explain that due to confidentiality, the teacher cannot tell you why. 	<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? ➤ Share the following scenario with the students and then ask them to discuss their thoughts and feelings with each other on this: <i>You've been working incredibly hard all semester. You've completed all homework assignments, projects, and studied for all tests and quizzes, and earned an A for the semester. You then learned that Taylor, who's been absent for 2 months for an unexplained reason, took the final exam, received an A on the exam, and also received an A for the semester.</i> ➤ Listen to the students' conversations and write down key responses/reactions on chart paper. ➤ These are examples of what the students might say: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Taylor did not earn the grade ○ Taylor did not do all of the work ○ Taylor was not worthy of the grade ○ Taylor knew the material, and didn't have to do all the work ○ Taylor was lucky, given a gift, teacher's pet etc. ➤ The purpose of this activity is so students can experience what grace is from God's perspective. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ God loves us, and despite what we deserve, have not earned, or lack, He is still willing to allow us to be near Him and with Him for eternity. ➤ Refer to the list of responses/reactions from the students and discuss how they differ from what the first "I believe..." statement says about grace. ➤ God, in His righteousness, could say similar things about us as the students did about Taylor. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This is why His grace is such a gift and so marvelous! ○
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SET THE STAGE (Up to 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 grace? ➤ How can I obtain grace? ➤ What effect will grace have upon me?
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LESSON (Up to 25 minutes)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the first 4 stanzas of the song written on a separate piece of chart paper • Search YouTube for "Chris Tomlin - Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)" or use the link: https://youtu.be/Y-4NFv15U9w <p>Lyrics – Chris Tomlin – Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)</p> <p>1. <i>Amazing grace how sweet the sound</i></p> <p><i>That saved a wretch like me</i></p> <p><i>I once was lost, but now I'm found</i></p> <p><i>Was blind, but now I see</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to John 8:7 	<p>Play the song "Amazing Grace – (My Chains are Gone)" and have the students follow along with the printed lyrics. After listening, divide the charts among the groups and tell them to answer the following questions about each stanza:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Give an example from the Bible or everyday life that supports the focus of the stanza. ➤ How does the focus of this stanza demonstrate that grace is marvelous? <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px; vertical-align: top;"> <p><i>Amazing grace how sweet the sound</i> <i>That saved a wretch like me</i> <i>I once was lost, but now I'm found</i> <i>Was blind, but now I see</i></p> <p><i>'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear</i> <i>And grace my fears relieved</i> <i>How precious did that grace appear</i> <i>The hour I first believed</i></p> <p><i>My chains are gone I've been set free</i> <i>My God, my Savior has ransomed me</i> <i>And like a flood His mercy rains</i> <i>Unending love, Amazing grace</i></p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px; vertical-align: top;"> <p><i>The Lord has promised good to me</i> <i>His word my hope secures</i> <i>He will my shield and portion be</i> <i>As long as life endures</i></p> <p><i>The earth shall soon dissolve like snow</i> <i>The sun forbear to shine</i> <i>But God, Who called me here below</i> <i>Will be forever mine</i> <i>Will be forever mine</i> <i>You are forever mine</i></p> </td> </tr> </table> <p>Have the groups come back together and share their answers. Keep the "I Wonder..." questions in mind to keep the conversation focused.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is the focus of stanza 1? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Grace is showing favor and/or kindness regardless of what we deserve. ➤ What would be an example of the stanza's meaning in the Bible and / or everyday life? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Jesus said to the crowd that had gathered around the adulteress, "Whoever is without sin can throw the first stone.", and her accusers left. Jesus then said to her "Go and sin no more." ➤ How does this demonstrate that grace is marvelous? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Jesus came for sinners. By grace we are forgiven and encouraged to go and do better. 	<p><i>Amazing grace how sweet the sound</i> <i>That saved a wretch like me</i> <i>I once was lost, but now I'm found</i> <i>Was blind, but now I see</i></p> <p><i>'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear</i> <i>And grace my fears relieved</i> <i>How precious did that grace appear</i> <i>The hour I first believed</i></p> <p><i>My chains are gone I've been set free</i> <i>My God, my Savior has ransomed me</i> <i>And like a flood His mercy rains</i> <i>Unending love, Amazing grace</i></p>	<p><i>The Lord has promised good to me</i> <i>His word my hope secures</i> <i>He will my shield and portion be</i> <i>As long as life endures</i></p> <p><i>The earth shall soon dissolve like snow</i> <i>The sun forbear to shine</i> <i>But God, Who called me here below</i> <i>Will be forever mine</i> <i>Will be forever mine</i> <i>You are forever mine</i></p>
<p><i>Amazing grace how sweet the sound</i> <i>That saved a wretch like me</i> <i>I once was lost, but now I'm found</i> <i>Was blind, but now I see</i></p> <p><i>'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear</i> <i>And grace my fears relieved</i> <i>How precious did that grace appear</i> <i>The hour I first believed</i></p> <p><i>My chains are gone I've been set free</i> <i>My God, my Savior has ransomed me</i> <i>And like a flood His mercy rains</i> <i>Unending love, Amazing grace</i></p>	<p><i>The Lord has promised good to me</i> <i>His word my hope secures</i> <i>He will my shield and portion be</i> <i>As long as life endures</i></p> <p><i>The earth shall soon dissolve like snow</i> <i>The sun forbear to shine</i> <i>But God, Who called me here below</i> <i>Will be forever mine</i> <i>Will be forever mine</i> <i>You are forever mine</i></p>		

2. *'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear*

And grace my fears relieved

How precious did that grace appear

The hour I first believed

- Refer to Luke 19:1-10

3. *My chains are gone*

I've been set free

My God, my Savior has ransomed me

And like a flood His mercy rains

Unending love, Amazing grace

- Refer to John 18:17, 25, 27

4. *The Lord has promised good to me*

His word my hope secures

He will my shield and portion be

As long as life endures

- Refer to Acts 7:54-60

➤ **What is the focus of stanza 2?**

- Grace shows us how powerful God is, and also how much he loves us, and how much we need His grace.

➤ **What would be an example of the stanza's meaning in the Bible and / or everyday life?**

- It was through Christ that Zacchaeus recognized he was a thief and a sinner. After Christ visited him, Zacchaeus was changed, and gave back what he stole.

➤ **How does this demonstrate that grace is marvelous?**

- Jesus demonstrated grace towards Zacchaeus and did not hold his sins against him. Zacchaeus was motivated to give back what he stole (how precious did that grace appear). Only Jesus Christ can offer this grace which is what ensures our salvation. Grace motivated this man to live a better life, and to show kindness to others (he gave back four times what he stole).

➤ **What is the focus of stanza 3?**

- Grace frees us from the consequence/penalty/debt of sin (which is separation from God) and this grace is made available to us through Christ's sacrifice on the cross.

➤ **What would be an example of the stanza's meaning in the Bible and / or everyday life?**

- Peter denied Christ 3 times, and yet after Christ's resurrection, Christ never accused Peter.

➤ **How does this demonstrate that grace is marvelous?**

- God's grace is unending, it covers everything, and everyone who believes.
- After we've been freed in forgiveness, Christ doesn't bring it up again.

➤ **What is the focus of stanza 4?**

- Christ has promised an eternal future with Him and our heavenly Father.
- In this promise, we should place all of our hope and trust.
- No matter what we have to endure on this earth, if we remain focused on our future we will be able to endure, knowing in everything that He is with us.

➤ **What would be an example of the stanza's meaning in the Bible and / or everyday life?**

- Deacon Stephen, during his stoning, kept his eye on heaven and saw Christ. This gave him the strength to never waiver in his faith, despite his tragic end.

➤ **How does this demonstrate that grace is marvelous?**

- Knowing that we've received God's grace gives us hope and security when faced with adversity.

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...

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *Marvelous Grace*

<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is grace? ➤ How can I obtain grace? ➤ What effect will grace have upon me? 	<p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Grace is a gift from God, demonstrated that He accepts human being, who are entangled in sin. (Catechism Q&A question 58) ➤ I must recognize that I am a sinner, and the only way I can be reconciled with God is through my belief in Jesus Christ. Only through His grace can stand righteous before God. (Catechism Q&A question 278) ➤ When I fully grasp how incredible the gift of grace is, it will create humble thankfulness in me, a desire to live a holy life demonstrated in part by my love for others, and in my good works. (Catechism Q&A questions 156, 279)
<p>References: Bible verses: Matthew 20:1-16, Luke 19:1-10, John 8:7, John 18:17, 25, 27, Acts 7:54-60 Catechism Q&A questions 58, 156, 277-279</p>	

Read and listen to “Amazing Grace (My chains are gone)” and then answer these questions for the first 4 stanzas: What is an example from the Bible or everyday life that supports the focus of the stanza? How does this demonstrate that grace is marvelous?

*Amazing grace how sweet the sound
 That saved a wretch like me
 I once was lost, but now I'm found
 Was blind, but now I see*

*My chains are gone I've been set free
 My God, my Savior has ransomed me
 And like a flood His mercy rains
 Unending love, Amazing grace*

*The earth shall soon dissolve like snow
 The sun forbear to shine
 But God, Who called me here below
 Will be forever mine
 Will be forever mine
 You are forever mine*

*'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear
 And grace my fears relieved
 How precious did that grace appear
 The hour I first believed*

*The Lord has promised good to me
 His word my hope secures
 He will my shield and portion be
 As long as life endures*

Stanza 1:

Stanza 2:

Stanza 3:

Stanza 4:

Stanza 5:

Point to Ponder: What is so amazing about grace? How would you describe God’s grace to a friend at school?

Call to Action: This week, pray for God to reveal how He’s been gracious to you so far this school year.

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *Holy Communion*

LESSON AT A GLANCE	
<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Your Journey episodes can be found on the NAC USA YouTube channel <i>and</i> in the NAC USA mobile app 	<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Why is Holy Communion an important part of my life? ➤ How did Holy Communion come into being? ➤ What happens during Holy Communion? <p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Holy Communion is celebrated in every divine service because it sustains human beings in their fellowship of life with Jesus Christ. (Catechism Q&A question 505) ➤ Jesus instituted Holy Communion with His Apostles on the eve of His crucifixion. (Catechism Q&A question 494) ➤ Those who partake in Holy Communion thereby profess their belief in the death, resurrection, and return of Jesus Christ. (Catechism Q&A question 500) <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ IGNITE Bible ➤ Catechism Q&A ➤ For Your Journey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Episode 49 - Holy Communion ➤ True / False cards (each student should have an index card that says True and a separate card that says False) ➤ Pillows/Blanket enough for the group to sit on comfortably on the floor <p>References:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bible verses: Matthew 26:17-30, 1 Corinthians 11:23-30 ➤ Catechism Q&A questions 494-514 ➤ Catechism Q&A page 252, 7th Article of Faith
PRE DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS AND STUDENT (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)	
	<p>We celebrate Holy Communion in every divine service. When you do something so often, it could run the risk of becoming routine and we lose sight of what we're actually doing. Join us for small group _____(time and/or location) to dig deeper into Holy Communion.</p>
MESSAGE TO PARENTS (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)	
<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please customize and add local information as necessary. • Consider including a video link from the "Materials" section above and encouraging families to watch/discuss together. 	<p>Dear Parents,</p> <p>This week the "I Wonder..." questions are about Holy Communion. The students explored the Last Supper between Christ and His Apostles. Ask about the experience and what they learned about Holy Communion that they did not know before. Share with your student the thoughts and emotions that you experience during Holy Communion, and how it impacts you as a Christian.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>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 15 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. • The purpose of holding the cards facing the outside of the circle, is so students cannot see their peers' responses. We want students to answer honestly, and not rely on the responses of the group to influence how they answer. 	<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? ➤ Arrange the group so the students are standing or sitting in a circle. ➤ Give each student a True card and a False card. ➤ Tell the students they are going to take a quiz about Holy Communion. ➤ Explain that you will make a statement about Holy Communion and if the statement is true they should hold up their True card above their head, with the card facing the outside of the circle, so no one in the circle can see the answer. If the statement is false, they are to hold up the False card the same way. ➤ The facilitator will walk around the circle and look at the answers to see how the students respond. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The responses are important so the facilitator has a good idea of the understandings or misunderstandings among the group. ○ The facilitator should adjust the time he/she spends on different parts of the lesson, based on the understandings or misunderstandings of the group. ➤ Make the following statements and walk around the circle to check answers before going on to the next statement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Holy Communion and the Jewish Passover celebration are related. (TRUE) ○ My sins are forgiven when I receive and eat a communion wafer. (FALSE) ○ I am in close fellowship with Jesus during Holy Communion. (TRUE) ○ If I am sorry/repentant for my sins, I don't need Holy Communion. (FALSE) ○ Holy Communion is meant to remind me about the debt Christ paid for my sins. (TRUE)
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SET THE STAGE (Up to 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"> ➤ Why is Holy Communion an important part of my life? ➤ How did Holy Communion come into being? ➤ What happens during Holy Communion?
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LESSON (Up to 25 minutes)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the facilitator, you will need to create an atmosphere of solemnness and sanctity. You want the students to take this activity seriously so they feel the full emotional and spiritual effect. • The wording for the consecration of Holy Communion is based on scripture. This discussion will break down some of those verses. The wording for the consecration is included in the student's sheet for this discussion. Consider reading it together. 	<p>Explain to the students that they will be reading from Matthew 26: 17-30, which is about the Last Supper Christ had with His disciples. Tell the students to sit in a circle on pillows/blankets which is how this "supper" would likely have taken place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ask the students to think about how Christ felt on this night. He knew Judas was going to betray Him. He knew that He would later be arrested, and He knew He was going to be crucified the next day. ➤ Begin reading Matthew 26:17-30, stop after the following verses and share the information below the verse and/or ask the questions. ➤ Verse 19: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Jesus instituted Holy Communion during the Passover meal with His Apostles. Like the Passover meal, which commemorates the Israelites liberation from Egyptian slavery, Holy Communion commemorates Jesus Christ's death, which liberated us from sin. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does partaking of Holy Communion forgive our sins, why or why not? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a good time to clearly define the relationship between Holy Communion and forgiveness of sins using Catechism Q&A question 507. ➤ Verse 25: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Holy Communion is a time of intimate fellowship with Christ. Jesus Christ instituted Holy Communion in the circle of the Apostles and also entrusted it to them. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Why do you think Jesus wants us to have fellowship with him every Sunday? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He wants us to remember the sacrifice He made for us out of His love for us. • Celebrating Holy Communion together promotes unity among believes because they develop together into the nature of Jesus Christ. ➤ Verse 27: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The elements of bread and wine are both required for the celebration of Holy Communion. Bread, like wine, represents human sustenance. In Israel, wine is also a symbol of joy and future salvation. Holy Communion provides spiritual sustenance and is necessary in our preparation for the return of Christ.
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- What strength do we receive in Holy Communion?
 - Unconditional love from the Lord Jesus, despite our sinful nature.
 - This love serves as strength for the trials ahead.

➤ **Verse 28:**

- This verse points to the consecration of elements that takes place during Holy Communion. During the consecration of elements, bread and wine are not changed in their substance, but the substance of the body and blood of Jesus is joined to the bread and wine. The bread and wine are not simply symbols for the body and blood of Jesus, but the body and blood of Jesus are truly present after the consecration.
 - Why do we need communion every Sunday?
 - Just like we need to eat every day to remain alive, our soul needs nourishment.
 - We take in the nature of Jesus with the wafer.

➤ **Verse 30:**

- The "once brought, eternally valid sacrifice of Jesus Christ" is present during Holy Communion. Holy Communion is a meal of remembrance. It calls to mind the death of Jesus Christ as a unique event that is valid for all times. Jesus commissioned the Apostles to celebrate Holy Communion with the words: "Do this in remembrance of Me."
 - Jesus commissioned the Apostles to go out and proclaim the forgiveness of sins. Do the Apostles forgive our sins?
 - No, it is the triune God who forgives sins.
- Ask the students to share what they thought about this experience. Did it clarify any misunderstandings for them? Did they learn something new about Holy Communion?
- Ask the students if there are additional questions, and provide clarification and answers that align with the Catechism Q&A questions 494-514.

Let the students choose a partner. Tell them to read the words of the consecration for Holy Communion from the student copy of the lesson, and then answer the questions that follow. When finished, bring the group back together to share their responses.

Student Question #1 Why do you think Jesus wants us to celebrate Holy Communion together each Sunday?

- To remind us of His sacrifice.
- To remind us that His sacrifice is still valid for us today.
- To experience fellowship with Him.
- To remind us that we don't have to be captive to our sin, which should inspire thanksgiving in our heart for what He did for us.
- To experience the strength and nature of Jesus together.
- To grow into the nature of Christ together.

- For the sake of preparing for the discussion, some full Bible passages are included in the facilitator guide. However, in the actual discussion with the students, it is encouraged that the facilitator look up the passages in a physical Bible along with the students to reinforce the importance of using one's Bible and Bible literacy.

Student Question #2 Why do you think the Absolution and Holy Communion are celebrated together?

- Both are based on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.
- Forgiveness of sins is necessary so that we can partake of Holy Communion worthily.
- We want to be in a "clean" state before we have such close fellowship with Jesus Christ.
- Ask a student, or multiple students, to read 1 Corinthians 11:27-30
 - *Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.*
 - "examine himself (yourselves)" refers to the need for repentance and forgiveness, prior to partaking of Holy Communion.
 - This is an opportunity to remind/reiterate the need for repentance from T10 and T9.
- Please reiterate that, while both are rooted in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, Holy Communion is not the forgiveness of sins. Only God forgives sins and He does so whenever He wants. The Absolution that is proclaimed in the divine service after the Lord's Prayer and prior to the celebration of Holy Communion is the *assurance* that God has forgiven our sins, if we've done the necessary work of:
 - realizing our sins
 - feeling remorse
 - repenting
 - seeking forgiveness
 - reconciling any broken relationship

Student Question #3 What else needs to happen before Holy Communion for us to partake worthily?

- We must believe in Jesus.
- We must believe in Jesus' sacrifice.

Student Question #4 What are the effects of Holy Communion?

- We have fellowship with Christ.
- It gives us the strength and nature of Christ.
- It promotes unity among the congregation as we all grow together into the nature of Christ.
- It is necessary for our preparation for the return of Christ.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME? (Up to 15 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

- For Your Journey episodes can be found on the [NAC USA YouTube](#) channel *and* in the [NAC USA mobile app](#)

Wrap up the lesson with

- If time allows, watch For Your Journey
 - Episode 49 - [Holy Communion](#).

Close with the "I Believe..." statements

- As you review each statement, stop and check in with the group to be sure there are no misunderstandings or misconceptions.
- Allow the students to state an "I Believe..." statement for each of the "I Wonder..." questions in their own words.
- Remind the students that on their Confirmation day, they will or have already promised and committed to "surrender myself to you O triune God....in belief.....earnest resolution to remain faithful to You".

I believe...

- Holy Communion is celebrated in every divine service because it sustains human beings in their fellowship of life with Jesus Christ. (Catechism Q&A question 505)
- Jesus instituted Holy Communion with His Apostles on the eve of His crucifixion. (Catechism Q&A question 494)
- Those who partake in Holy Communion thereby profess their belief in the death, resurrection, and return of Jesus Christ. (Catechism Q&A question 500)

A Point to Ponder....

- Why do you think Jesus chose a "meal" as the setting for celebrating Holy Communion?

A Call to Action...

- Next time you celebrate Holy Communion, when the minister says, "the body and blood of Jesus given for you", mentally say your name afterwards to emphasize that Holy Communion is the most intimate experience you can have with Jesus.

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.....

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *Holy Communion*

<p>Have you ever wondered...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Why is Holy Communion an important part of my life? ➤ How did Holy Communion come into being? ➤ What happens during Holy Communion? 	<p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Holy Communion is celebrated in every divine service because it sustains human beings in their fellowship of life with Jesus Christ. (Catechism Q&A question 505) ➤ Jesus instituted Holy Communion with His Apostles on the eve of His crucifixion. (Catechism Q&A question 494) ➤ Those who partake in Holy Communion thereby profess their belief in the death, resurrection, and return of Jesus Christ. (Catechism Q&A question 500)
<p>References: Bible verses: Matthew 26:17-30, 1 Corinthians 11:23-30 Catechism Q&A questions 494-514; Catechism Q&A page 252, 7th Article of Faith</p>	

Read the words of the consecration for Holy Communion: "In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, I consecrate bread and wine for Holy Communion and lay thereupon the once brought eternally valid sacrifice of Jesus Christ. For the Lord took bread and wine, gave thanks and said: 'This is My body which is broken for you. This is My blood of the new covenant given for many for the remission of sins. Eat and drink! Do this in remembrance of Me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink this wine, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes. Amen!"

1. Why do you think Jesus wants us to celebrate Holy Communion together each Sunday?

2. Why do you think the Absolution and Holy Communion are celebrated together?

3. What else needs to happen before Holy Communion for us to partake worthily?

4. What are the effects of Holy Communion?

Point to Ponder: Why do you think Jesus chose a "meal" as the setting for celebrating Holy Communion?

Call to Action: Next time you celebrate Holy Communion, when the minister says, "the body and blood of Jesus given for you", mentally say your name afterwards to emphasize that Holy Communion is the most intimate experience you can have with Jesus.

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *IGNITE*

LESSON AT A GLANCE	
<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunday Sermon Reflections, Point to Ponder and Call to Action should still be shared at the beginning of the lesson. • Since the format of this lesson is less structured, facilitators can incorporate a light meal or snack into the evening such as pizza or popcorn. Be sure to include this in your Message to Parents so they are aware and can contribute. • During these activities, the facilitator will need to assist when students struggle with answers or clarify when students misunderstand or have misconceptions. 	<p>This lesson is designed for review, reflection, re-teaching or application of the topics taught the past semester. Facilitators can decide what type of lesson is needed based on the learning outcomes the students experienced during the semester. Listed below are suggestions for the type of lesson that should be conducted based on the needs of the students. A descriptor for the type of lesson is provided to assist the facilitator in choosing the appropriate lesson. Suggested activities are listed below each type of lesson.</p> <p>If you have students that have gone through the THRIVE discussions before, consider asking them to share what they've learned differently the second time through, or how their perspective(s) on a certain topic have changed as a result of a couple of years of experience.</p> <p>When to use each type of lesson:</p> <p>Review Lesson: when a general understanding about a topic exists, rather than a solid, deep understanding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Choose 1 or both of the following activities depending on the needs of the group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pick a Card...Have the "I wonder..." questions on separate index cards and the corresponding "I believe..." statements on separate index cards. Shuffle all of the cards and have each student pick 1 or 2 cards (depending on the size of your group). Students should not show their cards to each other. Always start with someone reading an "I wonder..." question, and the person with the corresponding "I believe..." statement should respond. • Break it Down...Choose the "I wonder..." question that needs review and write it on chart paper. On a separate piece of chart paper write only the words "I believe...". Have each student come up and add something, change something, or delete something until the statement is complete and accurate. <p>Reflection Lesson: when students show real interest and excitement about a topic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Choose 1 or both of the following activities depending on the needs of the group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relive...Have students share their Call to Action experiences from the topic, and invite them to share more experiences related to that topic. • Dig Deep...Further investigate the topic by examining Bible verses or stories that further define or explain the topic. Let the students search for additional events in the Bible that demonstrate or provide examples of the topic.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It would be helpful to give any guest speakers the facilitator guides from previous topics so that know what has been discussed. • Because of safety for minors, any For Your Journey episodes that are made should not be posted online nor shared privately without the student's and parent's consent. 	<p>Re-teaching Lesson: when students do not understand or have misconceptions about the topic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Choose 1 or both of the following activities depending on the needs of the group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • True or False...Have the students sit in a circle and give each student a set of the True / False cards from the T11 lesson. Make 5-7 true or false statements about the topic and ask students to hold up either the True or False cards (have students face the cards to the outside of the circle). The facilitator should walk around the circle, review the answers, and choose students with the correct answer to explain their answer to the group • Be Our Guest...Invite an ordained minister to share their explanation about the topic and have them revisit the questions from the student lesson copy (from the corresponding lesson) with the students to ensure students have mastered the topic. <p>Application Lesson: when students have a good understanding of the topic and/ or great interest and excitement about the topic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Choose 1 or both of the following activities depending on the needs of the group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FYJ...Have the students pair up. Give each pair an "I wonder..." question to discuss. Then have them video tape a 1-2 minute "For Your Journey" episode to later share with the class. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ While the students can be fun and creative, they should still take the exercise seriously. This isn't to be a parody or skit, but rather a genuine exploration of the question(s) • Take Your Show on the Road...Take the students to visit a widow, to a nursing home, to a local restaurant and encourage them to share with others one of the "I believe..." statements and what it means <p>Have students work together to complete the questions on the student lesson copy. If time allows, come back together and let students share their responses.</p>
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MESSAGE TO PARENTS (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please feel free to customize and add local information as necessary. 	<p>Dear Parents,</p> <p>This week is the last semester of the "T" lessons of the THRIVE curriculum. This semester's lessons focused on "Transforming our nature, using Jesus as your example." It's our hope that this semester your student connected with one or more of the topics and is working on developing the Fruit of the Spirit, understanding the forgiveness of sins and becoming more willing to forgive, and/or has a greater appreciation for the celebration of Holy Communion. Ask your student to share with you what transforming this nature means to them. As always, if you have questions about the topic, please feel free to contact your Youth Leaders.</p> <p>Your Youth Leaders</p>
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SUNDAY SERMON REFLECTIONS (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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LESSON: CHOOSE THE APPROPRIATE ACTIVITY FOR THE GROUP

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME? (15 minutes)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p>	<p>Wrap up the lesson with the "T" message from THRIVE: Transform your nature, using Jesus as your example by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exemplifying the fruit of the Spirit as Jesus did. Use them to measure your spiritual maturity. (Galatians 5:22-23) • Forgiving as Jesus forgave, unconditionally and fully. (Matthew 6:12, 18:21-22, Luke 17:3) • Being engaged and present when celebrating Holy Communion to experience its transformational power. (1 Corinthians 11:24) • Remind the students that on their Confirmation day, they will or have already promised and committed to "surrender myself to you, O triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit". <p>A Point to Ponder....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ In what way do you feel you've spiritually grown or changed this semester? <p>A Call to Action...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ This week, write a letter/prayer to God about the thing that stuck with you the most from this "T" semester. You can thank Him for it, you can ask Him for help in growing in it- just talk with Him about it.
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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...

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *IGNITE*

Why is your relationship with God, the Father; God, the Son; and God, the Holy Spirit important to you?

How can prayer strengthen your relationship with God?

How do you demonstrate the characteristics of Christ at home, with friends, with strangers?

How has your faith in our heavenly Father changed or grown in the past semester?

Explain how our hope in our eternal future with God effects what we do today?

How have you helped someone in need in the past few weeks?

Which Fruit of the Spirit has improved within you and which one(s) stills needs some work?

What sins are you struggling with and what are you doing to overcome them?

Knowing what Christ sacrificed for you, how has this changed the way you respond when others hurt you?

What thoughts and feelings do you have during Holy Communion?

A Point to Ponder...

- In what way do you feel you've spiritually grown or changed this semester?

A Call to Action...

- This week, write a letter/prayer to God about the thing that stuck with you the most from this "T" semester. You can thank Him for it, you can ask Him for help in growing in it- just talk with Him about it.