

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...

Value the Church: *The Church of Christ*

I wonder... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What are the identifying features of the Church of Christ? ➤ What is the function of the Church of Christ? ➤ Who belongs to the Church of Christ? 	I believe... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The identifying features of the Church of Christ are oneness, holiness, universality, and apostolicity. (Catechism Q&A question 381) ➤ The function of the Church of Christ is to make salvation and eternal fellowship with God available to human beings and to bring worship to God. (Catechism Q&A question 370) ➤ Those who are baptized, believe in Christ, and profess Him as their Lord belong to the Church of Christ. (Catechism Q&A question 375)
References: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bible: John 13:34; John 17:20-23; Romans 12:4-5; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 ➤ Articles of Faith 4 and 6 ➤ Catechism 6, 6.2.3, 6.4 ➤ Catechism Q&A questions: 365-410 	

1. What is the Church of Christ?

2. What are the identifying features of the church of Christ?

3. What is the purpose of Christ's church?

4. Who is a part of the church of Christ?

5. How do demonstrate that you value the church?

Point to Ponder: What does being a part of the church of Christ mean to me?

A Call to Action: Take some time for prayerful reflection and introspection, and ask God why He has called you to be a part of His family? Write down what you feel God is calling you to do as a part of the body of Christ. Memorize the 6th Article of Faith.

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Point to Ponder...

Call to Action...

Value the Church: *My Church*

I wonder... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Why is fellowship essential for the church? ➤ How does prayer value the church? ➤ Why should I share my faith with others? 	I believe... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ God created us to live, worship, and grow in faith as a community of believers. ➤ Praying for others demonstrates our commitment to love and serve others. ➤ Christians have a responsibility to profess their faith.
References: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bible: Acts 2:42-47, 1 Corinthians 12:25-27, 1 John 1:3, Hebrews 10:25 ➤ Catechism Q & A questions: 365- 367, 472, 473, 618, 619, 724, 727, 728 	

1. When we gather together at church we have the opportunity to contribute to and experience fellowship. Why is fellowship essential for the church?

2. When we gather together at church we have the opportunity to worship God together. Why do you think worship is a vital element of both the early church and of congregational life today?

3. As a body of believers, we have a responsibility to pray and pray for one another. What are the effects of prayer on the church/congregation?

4. Why should I share my faith with others?

Point to Ponder: In addition to seeking fellowship, worshipping God, and praying, how else can my attitude and actions demonstrate that I value the church?

A Call to Action: Watch either Episode 5 | What is true Christian fellowship? Or Episode 7 | Why go to church? With someone from your family. Discuss which point stood out the most to you.

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Point to Ponder...

Call to Action...

Value the Church: *The Apostolate – Part 1*

<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Why did Jesus establish the Apostle ministry? ➤ How did Jesus establish the Apostle ministry? ➤ Where were the first Apostles active? 	<p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Apostle ministry was established by Jesus Christ in order to grant human beings access to the sacrifice brought by Him and the salvation resulting from it. By preaching the gospel, proclaiming the forgiveness of sins in Jesus' name, and dispensing the sacraments, Apostles prepare believers for His return. (Catechism Q&A question 421,424) ➤ The Apostles are ambassadors of Jesus Christ. The Apostle ministry is the only ministry Jesus directly gave to His church. He authorized, blessed, and sanctified the Apostles and equipped them with the Holy Spirit: "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." And when He had said this He breathed on them, and said to them, 'Receive the Holy spirit...' (Catechism Q&A question 421, 425) ➤ In fulfillment of the Great Commission given them by Jesus Christ, the Apostles spread the gospel throughout present day Europe, Asia, and Africa. (Catechism Q&A question 392)
<p>References: Matthew 10:1-4; 28:16-20, Mark 3:13-19, Luke 6:12-16, John 20:21-23, 2 Corinthians 1:24 Catechism Q&A questions: 392, 400, 421-459, 4th Article of Faith</p>	

1. What does the word 'Apostle' mean?

2. Why did Jesus establish the Apostle ministry?

3. How did Jesus establish the Apostle ministry?

4. What is the fourth Article of Faith?

5. Where were the first Apostles active?

Point to Ponder: "In 2 Corinthians 1:14, Apostle Paul writes, 'Not that we have dominion over your faith, but we are fellow workers for your joy; for by faith you stand.' Paul describes the members of the congregation in Corinth as 'fellow workers'. With respect to the Great Commission and the NAC Mission Statement, in what ways is the work of Apostle Paul the same as the members of the congregation? In what ways is it different?"

Call to Action: Over the next month, consider memorizing the Great Commission that Jesus gave the Apostles, found in Matthew 28:18-20.

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Point to Ponder...

Call to Action...

Value the Church: *The Apostolate – Part 2*

<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How was the Apostle ministry re-occupied after the death of the first Apostles? ➤ What is special about the Chief Apostle ministry? ➤ How is the Apostolate active today? 	<p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Believers of various confessions (denominations) prayed and hoped that the Holy Spirit would once again become active. As of 1832, the Apostle ministry was once again personally occupied in accordance with God's will, for the preparation of the bridal congregation. The re-occupation of the apostle ministry was a gift to the church of Christ – the new Apostles did not intend to start a new denomination (Catechism Q&A question 400, 403, 452) ➤ In his spiritual authority, the Chief Apostle promotes oneness among the church and the Apostolate. (Catechism Q&A question 457, 459) ➤ The Apostle ministry properly proclaims the gospel throughout the world, proclaims the forgiveness of sins in Jesus' name, dispenses sacraments for the living and the dead, and ordains ministers. The bridal congregation is prepared for the return of Christ through the activity of the Apostles (Catechism Q&A question 402)
<p>References: Bible: Matthew 6:26, 16:18-19, Luke 22:32, John 21:15-17, Romans 8:32, Philippians 4:19, Hebrews 11:6, Revelation 19:6-7 Catechism Q&A questions: 392, 404, 421-459, 4th Article of Faith</p>	

1. How was the Apostle ministry re-occupied after the death of the first Apostles?

2. What is special about the Chief Apostle ministry?

3. How is the Apostolate active today?

Point to Ponder: The Apostles of today proclaim (preach) the same message of salvation that Jesus proclaimed thousands of years ago. How cool is that?

Call to Action: Memorize the 4th Article of Faith (found on page 251 of the Catechism Q&A).

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Point to Ponder...

Call to Action...

Value the Church: *The Apostolate – Part 2*

<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What are the tasks of a deacon? ➤ What are the tasks of a priest? ➤ What are the tasks of an apostle? 	<p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A deacon's tasks are to properly proclaim (preach) the word of God in the divine service, dispense the Trinitarian blessing, offer support, and pastoral care. (Catechism Q&A question 470) ➤ In addition to the tasks of a deacon, the priest can dispense Holy Baptism, Holy Communion, and proclaim forgiveness of sins. (Catechism Q&A question 469) ➤ An Apostle can dispense the gift of the Holy Spirit in Holy Sealing and ordain ministers, in addition to the deacon and priestly tasks. (Catechism Q&A question 424)
<p>Bible: Exodus 3:12, 1 Samuel 16:7, 12, Matthew 16:18-19, Luke 22:32, John 21:15-17, Acts 6:6, 1 Corinthians 12:4-6, 12-17 Catechism Q&A questions: 411-418, 424, 443-444, 469, 470, 644, 647 Article of Faith 5</p>	

1. What does the term 'ministry' mean?

2. What is the difference between a ministry and an ordained ministry?

3. How are ministers selected?

4. What are the tasks of a deacon?

5. What are the tasks of a priest?

6. What are the tasks fo an apostle?

7. Are ordained ministers the only ones called to serve God?

Point to Ponder: The ministers that we see in our church aren't seeking fame or higher status. Ponder that they have accepted a call to serve the Lord with unique responsibilities.

Call to Action: Memorize the 5th Article of Faith (found on page 251 of the Catechism Q&A).

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Point to Ponder...

Call to Action...

Value the Church: *Sacraments*

I wonder... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is a sacrament? ➤ Why are the three sacraments important? ➤ What are the four elements of a sacrament? 	I believe... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sacraments are fundamental acts of grace bestowed by God on a human being; sacraments are essential for salvation, at least until the day of the Lord. (Catechism Q&A question 472) ➤ Receiving Holy Baptism and Holy Sealing are the first steps in preparing a soul for Christ's return, and Holy Communion provides continuous strengthening in our striving. (Catechism Q&A question 491, 505, 528) ➤ The four elements of sacraments are the sign, the content, the dispenser, and faith. (Catechism Q&A question 474)
References: Matthew 26:26-29, Catechism Q&A questions: 377-378, 472, 475-478, 481, 490-491, 505, 512, 515, 530, 6 th , 7 th , 8 th Articles of Faith	

1. What is a sacrament?

2. What is grace?

3. Why are the three sacraments important?

4. What are the four elements of a sacrament?

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

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

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Point to Ponder...

Call to Action...

Value the Church: *Preparation and Responsibility*

I wonder... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What are we preparing for? ➤ What are my social and civic responsibilities? 	I believe... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We are preparing for the return of Christ with the goal of being accepted by Him when He returns. (Q&A question 550) ➤ I am obligated to contribute to the benefit of society and to obey the laws provided no godly laws are violated. (Q&A question 745, 750)
References: John 14:1-4, Romans 13:1-7, Catechism Q&A questions: 550, 745-748, 750, Catechism 2.4.10, 9 th and 10 th Articles of Faith	

1. What are we preparing for?

2. So we know that we are preparing for Jesus' return, it is what we're looking forward to, but what does this really mean?

3. What are my social and civic responsibilities?

4. How can you contribute to the benefit of society and help promote the common good?

Point to Ponder: Jesus says to His disciples: *Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know* (John 14:1-4). What do these verses mean to you? How do they give you strength and hope?

Call to Action: In this lesson, we talked a lot about our actions today in connection with preparing for the future. It may be overwhelming to you to think about all the things you should or can do in order to prepare for your future with God. Write a prayer to God asking for His help, patience, and the Spirit's guidance in your preparation. Learn the 9th Article of Faith.

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Point to Ponder...

Call to Action...

Value the Church: *Confirmation*

I wonder... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is confirmation? ➤ What am I vowing to? ➤ Why is a confirmation blessing important? 	I believe... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I am taking on the responsibility that my parents/guardians took on at my baptism and sealing. (Catechism Q&A question 663) ➤ I am vowing to renounce Satan and to be faithful to God. (Catechism Q&A question 667) ➤ The blessing strengthens me in my effort to keep my vow and to profess Jesus in word and deed. (Catechism Q&A question 666)
References: Galatians 5:22-23, Catechism Q&A question: 472, 661, 663, 675	

1. What is confirmation?

2. Why is it necessary/important for you to take responsibility for your faith?

3. What am I vowing to?

4. Why is a confirmation blessing important?

Point to Ponder: A vow taken before God has greater significance than any other promise we will ever make. This vow may never be questioned, we often think about it, we endeavor to keep it, and we live our life in accordance with it. The resolution to remain faithful to God until our end needs to be deeply rooted in our hearts.

Call to Action: Speak with three members in the congregation about their confirmation and what it meant to them. Ask them how the blessing they received from God on their confirmation has helped them in their life to remain faithful to Him.

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Call to Action...

Value the church: *Stewardship*

I wonder... <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ What am I a steward of?➤ How do I become a responsible steward?	I believe... <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ I am a steward of all God has given me.➤ By becoming increasingly aware that what God has given me is intended to accomplish His purpose.
References: Psalm 24:1; Matthew 25:14-30; 1 Peter 4:10-11	

1. Who is a steward?

2. What has God given to us?

3. Why does God provide us with and put us in charge of all these things?

4. How do I become a responsible steward?

Point to Ponder: What has God given you to be a steward of?

Call to Action: Pick one of the items you've listed from the 'Point to Ponder' and make a plan of how to be a better steward of that item/relationship over the next 6 months. What is the next level of responsibility for that area of your life?

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Call to Action...

Value the Church: *Sacrifice*

<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What was the significance of sacrifice in the old covenant? ➤ What was the significance of sacrifice in the new covenant? ➤ How should a Christian view sacrifice? 	<p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Through their sacrifices, the people in the old covenant sought to express gratitude, turn away the punishment of God, and/or bring about reconciliation. (Catechism Q&A question 732) ➤ In the sense of the New Testament, sacrifice implies leading a life in accordance with the gospel. (Catechism Q&A question 733) ➤ A sacrifice in the Christian sense should not be considered an enforced obligation. Neither should it be made in expectation or reward. Rather, the willingness to sacrifice should spring forth from faith, gratitude, and love for God. (Catechism Q&A question 735)
<p>References: Genesis 14:18-20, 28:20-22, Leviticus 23:35-41, Malachi 3:9-10, Matthew 10:8, Luke 3:11, 6:30,38, 11:42, Acts 20:35, Hebrews 11:4; Catechism Q&A questions 729-738; Catechism section 13.</p>	

1. What was the significance of sacrifice in the old covenant?

2. What was the significance of sacrifice in the new covenant?

3. How should a Christian view sacrifice?

4. What comes to your mind when "Christian giving" is mentioned?

Point to Ponder: Jesus exemplified a life of giving out of love for God and compassion for the needs of others. He gave beyond the law. He gave what was needed, even His life.

Call to Action: Answer in your notebook: how have your understandings of 'sacrifice' and 'giving' evolved since you were 5 years old, 10 years old?

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Point to Ponder...

Call to Action...

Value the Church: *Giving is...*

I wonder... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are some characteristics of giving? 	I believe... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Giving is love, faith, joy, mission, sacrifice, secret, and worship.
References: Matthew 6:1-4, Matthew 22:37-39, Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 12:41-44, John 4:23, John 13:34, 2 Corinthians 8:9	

1. How is giving a sacrifice?

2. How is giving an example of love?

3. How is giving an example of worship?

4. How is giving an example of faith?

5. How does giving contribute to the mission of Christ?

6. How does giving bring joy?

7. Why should I give secretly?

Point to Ponder: The concept of Christian giving is integrated within the broader concept of discipleship. Christian giving is more than money: it is our offering of time, spiritual giftedness, and financial support.

Call to Action: Read "**Flashpoint: Money**" on page 1024 of the IGNITE Bible with a parent or someone else in your family.

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Point to Ponder...

Call to Action...

Value the Church: *IGNITE*

How is giving of our time and resources connected to how we value the Church?

What does it mean to be a steward of what God has given us?

Read 1 Timothy 6:17-19. Consider what God has given you. Do you feel that you are rich enough to live your life according to the command in verse 18?

After spending a semester learning and discussing how to Value the Church, how will you approach the divine service experience differently?

A Point to Ponder...

- What does value come from? What makes something valuable?

A Call to Action...

- As a youth group, work with your youth leader(s) to brainstorm a way to value the church by engaging in intentional community with others in the congregation. Consider organizing a prayer evening or some other activity at church or at someone's home to create a time and space to share life together.