



Belonging

NEVER ALONE: LIFE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT SESSION 1

Overview:

Teenagers are in a period of trying to develop their own identity. They naturally do so through their sense of belonging with different groups and people. As we begin this series on the Holy Spirit, we want to frame our approach to the third Person of the Trinity as the one who illuminates our identity and belonging as God's sons and daughters. In this opening session we will be introduced to the series' two presenters, Nic and Sarah.

As you discuss belonging and identity, keep in mind the power of belonging in your small group itself. Bonding and building trust are essential to a thriving small group.

Theme Scripture

JOHN 16:7

"But I tell you the truth, it is better for you that I go. For if I do not go, the Advocate will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you."

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- **REGULAR FONT:** To be shared aloud with the group.
- **LEADER TIPS:** Check out the “Leader Tip” boxes in the margins for helpful hints.

Connect

1. Check-In

It is always good to check-in and ask, “How was your week?” demonstrating that you care about what is going on beyond your small group. You can ask generally or have them share “Highs and Lows.” (High - best part of your week; Low - worst part)

2. Accountability

In the last session of The Invitation, your group was introduced to the concept of “The 5 S’s of Accountability.” These are 5 things that a disciple should be striving toward. Check-in each time you meet to see how everyone is progressing.

The 5 S’s of Accountability: Service, Praying with Scripture, Sacraments, Overcoming Sin, Sharing Jesus with Others

Which of the S’s have you been working on? What have been your ‘wins’? Have you struggled with any?

3. Optional Activity

TRIBES

Supplies: Paper, pen

On a piece of paper, write down all of the groups you are a part of - big and small, significant and seemingly insignificant, formal groups like teams and informal ones like who you sit with at lunch. Some ideas are: your family, teams, clubs, activities, classmates, groups you game with online. Try to list as many as you can think of.

Ask them to share aloud what groups they wrote down.

Ask: What group are you most yourself with?

They may identify that they feel most comfortable with groups of people they don’t interact with in “real life”. It is often a temptation of adults to criticize this. Don’t. If you lead with criticizing their tribe, you can damage your ability to build trust with the group. Instead, get curious. Prompt them further with statements like: “Tell me about these people.” Ask questions like “What do you like about them?” “What about this group makes it easier to connect?” and “Why is it sometimes easier to connect with people virtually?”

LEADER TIP

Accountability is meant to help motivate, not shame. To review this concept, rewatch The Invitation, Session 4 “You are Not Alone”, scene 4.

LEADER TIP

The provided activities are always optional. Try simply playing a sport or sharing a meal together.

4. Opening Prayer

Read the theme verse, John 16:7 (found on the first page of this guide) and then lead them in a prayer thanking God for the opportunity to be together and the opportunity to grow in faith. Invite the Holy Spirit to open everyone up to hear Jesus' invitation to follow him. Conclude with a prayer together such as the Our Father, Glory Be, or Hail Mary.

Discuss

Watch Video Segment #1: Nic's Story

In this first segment, we are introduced to our first presenter, Nic Gutierrez. He will tell us his personal testimony, his story of how he came to follow Jesus.

- **HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER THE QUESTION AT THE END OF THE VIDEO: WHAT THINGS IN YOUR LIFE DO YOU USE TO IDENTIFY YOURSELF?** *Answers will range from athletics to school to family. Allow them to answer freely. This is not the time to correct them to thinking they should take their identity in Christ.*
- **WHAT IS ONE THING THAT STOOD OUT TO YOU IN NIC'S STORY?**

In this next scene we will be taking a closer look at a scripture verse, John 16:7. Let's take some time to read it now so we can understand what Nic is talking about.

Ask one person to read John 16:5-7 out loud.

- **WHO IS SAYING THESE WORDS?** *Jesus*
- **FLIP THROUGH THE PAGES LEADING UP TO THIS VERSE AND THE PAGES AFTER. WHAT IS THE CONTEXT IN WHICH JESUS IS TALKING?** *After the Last Supper, before he is arrested.*
- **WHO IS HE TALKING TO?** *His 12 disciples*
- **HAVE THEY BEEN FOLLOWING JESUS FOR A SHORT TIME OR A LONG TIME AT THIS POINT?** *A long time. Biblical scholars suggest it has been three years since Jesus' public ministry began.*
- **WHAT WORD DOES YOUR BIBLE USE FOR THE ONE HE IS SENDING? DIFFERENT TRANSLATIONS WILL USE DIFFERENT WORDS.** *[Advocate, Paraclete, Comforter, Helper]*
- **WHY DOES JESUS SAY IT IS GOOD THAT HE IS GOING?** *So he can send his Holy Spirit to them.*
- **WHAT DOES JESUS TELLING HIS FRIENDS HE IS LEAVING MAKE THEM FEEL?** *Sad (verse 6)*
- **WHY DO YOU THINK THEY FEEL SAD?** *Answers will vary.*

LEADER TIP

Always bring a real Bible and read verses from it directly instead of from this guide. You will demonstrate the importance of scripture.

LEADER TIP

All YDisciple videos start with a story. Stories are powerful. Jesus told 30 unique parables, stories, in the gospels. Stories build empathy and open us up to the truth that will be later shared.

LEADER TIP

Encourage your students to bring a real Bible every time you meet and read scripture directly from it.

LEADER TIP

The questions that follow may seem simplistic, but they are designed to help students understand the context of this scripture. When they understand the context, they can better grasp the content.

Watch Video Segment #2

- **WHAT IS ONE THING THAT STOOD OUT TO YOU IN THE VIDEO?**
- **AT THE BEGINNING, HE REFERENCED A QUOTE FROM THE ACTOR ROBIN WILLIAMS, "I USED TO THINK THE WORST THING IN LIFE WAS BEING ALONE. IT ISN'T. THE WORST THING IN LIFE IS BEING WITH PEOPLE WHO MAKE YOU FEEL ALL ALONE." HAVE YOU EVER HAD AN EXPERIENCE LIKE THIS? IS ANYONE WILLING TO SHARE?**
- **TO BEST UNDERSTAND THE HOLY SPIRIT, WE HAVE TO UNDERSTAND AN ESSENTIAL WORD IN OUR FAITH, TRINITY. CAN ANYONE TELL ME WHAT THE TRINITY IS?** *God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*
- **DOES THIS MEAN WE BELIEVE IN THREE GODS?** *No, the Holy Trinity is three persons in one God.*



A simple way to describe it is: WHAT the Father is is the same as WHAT the Son is and WHAT the Spirit is. That WHAT is God. But WHO the Father is is not the same as WHO the Holy Spirit is nor the same as WHO the Son is. The WHO is the distinct persons.

The Catechism describes the Trinity as:

- The Trinity is One (CCC #253)
- The divine persons are really distinct from one another (#254)
- The divine persons are relative to one another (#255)

The Trinity is a great mystery, difficult to wrap our human minds around. When we use the word "mystery" in Christianity we don't mean that it's a puzzle to be solved nor do we mean that it is something completely unknowable that you are expected to blindly believe. Instead, think of it this way, you can understand the Trinity on a scale of 0 to infinity. You may have some basic understanding from your family or a class you took, so give yourself a 2. People like St. Thomas Aquinas or St. Augustine were something closer to a 12. Yes, they knew more than you and I probably ever will, but there is still infinity to go! (The numbers are totally arbitrary, but simply meant to illustrate a point.)

Let's make a list as a group of everything we know about the Holy Spirit. It can be a big theological concept or an image that is associated with him.

The Holy Spirit can be difficult to understand and we can get caught up in abstract things about him like images of doves. But let's keep coming back to this as we go through this series: The Holy Spirit is a real, divine person - God - and God is pursuing us to be in a real relationship with him.

Go back and reread John 16:7.

- **WHY DOES JESUS SAY IT IS BETTER THAT HE GOES?** *Jesus tells his friends that it is better for them that he leaves and sends his Spirit.*

LEADER TIP

You can bring a Catechism along and teach them to look up these paragraphs.

LEADER TIP

Consider looking up and share the story of St. Augustine contemplating the Trinity on the seashore!

LEADER TIP

This is a helpful exercise to help YOU gauge where they are as well as unearth any misconceptions they have.

Watch Video Segment #3

LEADER TIP

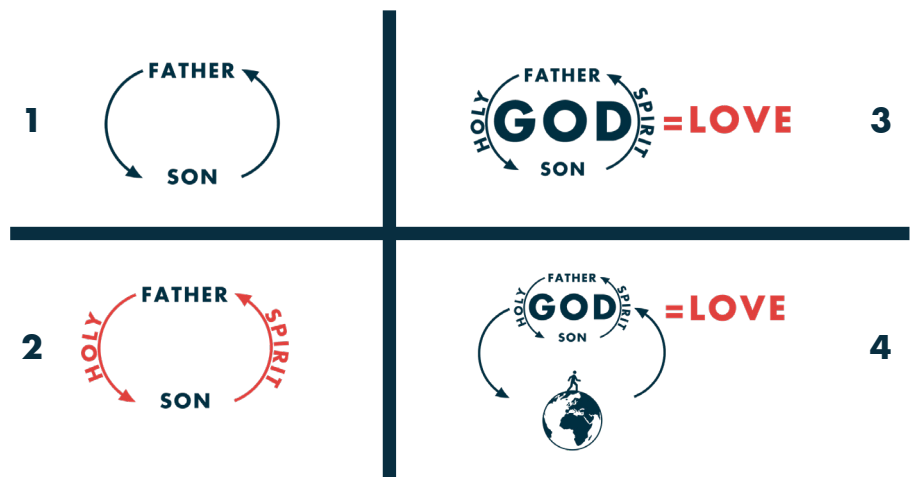
If conversation is going well, don't stop it in order to move to the next video. Consider splitting this session up over two weeks instead of one.

- **WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT STOOD OUT TO YOU IN THIS SCENE?**
- **HOW HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED GOD'S LOVE?**

Remember the Holy Spirit is the love of God. When we experience God's love, we are experiencing the Holy Spirit.

Here is a way to visualize this concept that is so deep:

1. The Father loves the Son and the Son loves the Father.
2. The love between the Father and Son is so real that it is a Person, the Holy Spirit.
3. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are the three persons of the Trinity. The Trinity is God. And this is how we can claim "God IS love."
4. "God, infinitely perfect and blessed in himself, in a plan of sheer goodness freely created man to share in his own blessed life." CCC 1.



- **THINK BACK TO THE EXAMPLE OF ADOPTION IN ANCIENT ROME THAT NIC USED. WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER THAT HE SAID?** *In ancient Rome, parents had the option to give away their own child and not be responsible for him or her anymore. But if you adopted a child, you absolutely could not give them away. The adoptive parents were bound to the child. The child would experience new life and the child would immediately become co-heirs to their inheritance.*

With that in mind, let's reread Romans 8:15.

- **WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR US THAT GOD HAS ADOPTED US AS HIS OWN CHILDREN?**

Watch Video Segment #4: Sarah's Story

In this last scene, we will meet the second presenter of this series, Sarah.

- **WHAT MAKES YOU HAPPY?**
- **WHAT ELSE STOOD OUT TO YOU IN THIS SCENE?**
- **IS IT EASY OR DIFFICULT FOR YOU TO BELIEVE THAT GOD CAN MAKE YOU HAPPY? WHY OR WHY NOT?**



Commit

1. Takeaways

I want to go around the circle starting with the person on my left, and I'd like each of us to share one "take-away" from this conversation. It could be something you heard in a video or something that stood out to you in discussion.

Give everyone time to share.

Your challenge for the week is to ask one person in your life what they think of when they think of the Holy Spirit. When we get back together, we are going to check-in and share your experiences.

THIS WEEK'S COMMITMENT: ASK ONE PERSON YOU KNOW WHAT THEY THINK OF WHEN THEY THINK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

2. Closing Prayer

Begin with the Sign of the Cross, then reread the theme verse (John 16:7). Invite them to share aloud anything they would like to pray for (people, circumstances, etc.). Conclude with a rote prayer such as the Our Father.

3. Follow Up

Either hand out or email the Participant Journal if you haven't already done so.

After every single meeting, send an email to parents. Thank them for helping make the group a priority. Always attach or copy and paste the Parent Sheet (available in English and Spanish). If you are using a streaming service, share the link to the videos.



Guided

NEVER ALONE: LIFE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT SESSION 2

Overview:

Many young people report experiencing tremendous pressure to have everything figured out. This session is designed to help them understand how and why the Holy Spirit can guide them in prayer and discernment. This session will discuss how to listen for the prompting of the Holy Spirit in prayer and discerning what we should do by the fruits of the Holy Spirit. With the Holy Spirit, no one is alone in making decisions.

Theme Scripture

JOHN 16:12-13

“I have much more to tell you, but you cannot bear it now. But when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth. He will not speak on his own, but he will speak what he hears, and will declare to you the things that are coming.”

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Connect

1. Check-In

It is always good to check-in and ask, “How was your week?” demonstrating that you care about what is going on beyond your small group. You can ask generally or have them share “Highs and Lows.” (High - best part of your week; Low - worst part)

2. Accountability

How was your experience with last week’s challenge? (Ask someone what they think of when they think of the Holy Spirit.)

The 5 S’s of Accountability: Service, Praying with Scripture, Sacraments, Overcoming Sin, Sharing Jesus with Others

Which of the S’s have you been working on? What have been your ‘wins’? Have you struggled with any?

3. Optional Activity

MINEFIELD

Supplies: 15 scraps of paper (1/2 sheets)

1. Set up the minefield by randomly placing 15 tiles on the floor within a designated area.
2. Depending on the size of your group, choose 2-3 people to participate with their eyes closed (or blindfolded).
3. Each participant will then choose a “guide” from the group.
4. Have the first volunteer stand on one side of the minefield with their eyes closed while their guide stands opposite them and observes the minefield. Send the remaining participants and guides away so they cannot see or hear what is happening.
5. Have your remaining small group members gather where they can see.
6. **For the first round**, instruct the guide to give clear and detailed directions to help the blindfolded (or eyes closed) participant get through the minefield (e.g. “Take 2 normal steps forward,” “there’s a mine about 3 inches from your left foot,” or “take a step with your right foot but don’t move your left until I tell you.” etc.) Everyone else must remain silent for this round. The guide may not enter the minefield. If their participant steps on a mine then they have to start again.
7. **For the second round**, the next participant should enter one side of the minefield as before with their guide opposite them. The guide attempts to help them navigate the minefield but this time everyone on the outside can shout, clap, and make as much noise as they possibly can so that the participant has trouble hearing the guide and the guide has to shout.
8. **Round three** continues with the third participant just as the first two rounds except the guide is able to walk next to the participant and speak instructions into their ear as they both navigate around the mines. If you only had enough for 2 pairs, have the first pair do this round.

LEADER TIP

The games and activities provided are always optional. Many groups are more than happy simply doing check-in and sharing a snack. Others need to play before they can focus. Know your group.

MINEFIELD (Cont.)

Debrief:

- To those blindfolded, what was your experience like?
- To the guides, what did you find easy or difficult in doing your job?
- What do you think this activity is meant to teach us?

Keep these things in mind as we dive into this session about how the Holy Spirit guides us.

4. Opening Prayer

Read the theme verse, John 16:12-13 (found on the first page of this guide) and then lead them in a prayer thanking God for the opportunity to be together and to grow in faith. Invite the Holy Spirit to open everyone up to hear his prompting. Conclude with a prayer together such as the Our Father, Glory Be, or Hail Mary.

Discuss

Watch Video Segment #1: Nic's Story

- **WHAT IS ONE THING THAT STOOD OUT TO YOU IN NIC'S STORY?**
- **WHERE DO YOU GO FOR GUIDANCE WHEN MAKING A DECISION?**
- **WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS IN LIFE? WHAT PROFESSION ARE YOU INTERESTED IN? COLLEGE? WHAT ABOUT HAVING A FAMILY WHEN YOU ARE AN ADULT?**

Keep these things in mind as we watch the next segment.

Watch Video Segment #2

- **WHAT IS ONE THING THAT STOOD OUT TO YOU IN THAT SEGMENT?**
- **WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT YOUR FUTURE, HOW DO YOU FEEL? EXCITED? ANXIOUS? UNCERTAIN?**
- **LAST TIME WE MET WE TALKED ABOUT THE GROUPS WE BELONG TO. WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO GET ACCEPTED INTO ANY ONE OF THOSE GROUPS?** *Example: To get on a team, you try out; To get in with some groups of peers, you have to prove yourself somehow.*
- **WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BE ACCEPTED INTO GOD'S FAMILY?** *In one sense, nothing. Grace is free. "Grace is the free and undeserved help that God gives us to respond to his call to become children of God" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, #1996) That said, we are still required to respond to this grace.*

It's like what Nic said about how we often feel like we have to be good enough for God and have everything figured out. Nic also talks about how we don't have to have everything figured out by ourselves, that we have access to the Holy Spirit who guides us.

LEADER TIP

Questions like this can feel superficial, but they actually get teens talking. Getting them talking about anything gets them ready to talk about deeper things. This question in particular will help lay the groundwork for the next discussion.

- **CAN SOMEONE REITERATE WHAT NIC SAID ABOUT HOW IT WOULD HAVE BEEN HARDER TO ACCESS JESUS IF HE HAD STAYED ON EARTH?**

From the script: Jesus is God. [In him] the infinite God chose to take up finite space. That the eternal God, who exists outside of time, chose to enter a real time in history. This is mind-blowing. But here's the thing, if he, Jesus had stayed on earth, we would have to travel all the way to Jerusalem or wherever he was to be with him. To ask his advice. Jesus acknowledged this himself: "But I tell you the truth, it is better for you that I go. For if I do not go, the Advocate will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you." (John 16:7) Jesus does not stay behind after his resurrection. He ascends to heaven and sends his Holy Spirit so we can access him, God, anywhere and anytime.



- **CAN ANYONE DEFINE THE WORD "DISCERNMENT"? THIS WILL BE AN IMPORTANT WORD FOR OUR NEXT SEGMENT.** *Asking God's help and guidance in making decisions.*

Watch Video Segment #3

- **WHAT IS ONE THING THAT STOOD OUT TO YOU IN THAT SEGMENT?**
- **WHAT ARE SOME DECISIONS YOU ARE MAKING RIGHT NOW?** *It can be anything from what classes to take to what college to go to.*
- **HOW DO YOU USUALLY MAKE DECISIONS?**
- **HOW WOULD IT LOOK DIFFERENT IF YOU INVITED GOD INTO MAKING THAT DECISION? KEEP IN MIND, THERE IS NO DECISION TOO BIG OR TOO SMALL.**

The 3 things that Fr. Cizek talks about in discerning where God is guiding us are conviction (or confidence), joy, and peace.

- **THINK ABOUT THE LAST TIME YOU MADE AN IMPORTANT DECISION. WHERE DO YOU SEE CONVICTION/CONFIDENCE, JOY, AND PEACE IN YOUR DECISION-MAKING PROCESS?** *It is important to keep in mind that these experiences of conviction, joy and peace don't mean there is no nervousness or even fear. They can exist together. Can you imagine Fr. Cizek going behind enemy lines flippantly? No!*

Watch Video Segment #4

- **WHAT IS ONE THING THAT STOOD OUT TO YOU IN THAT SEGMENT?**
- **NOW LET'S TALK ABOUT HOW WE ACCESS THE HOLY SPIRIT. LET'S THINK ABOUT IT THIS WAY: IN THIS ROOM WE ARE IN RIGHT NOW, WHERE IS THE WIFI? NOT THE ROUTER, THE WIFI ITSELF?**
- **IT IS ALL AROUND US, BUT WE CAN'T SEE IT. AND WE NEED THE RIGHT TOOLS (A PHONE, COMPUTER, ETC.) TO ACCESS IT. IT IS THE SAME WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT. HE IS EVERYWHERE, BUT WE NEED THE RIGHT TOOLS TO ACCESS HIS GUIDANCE. WHAT WERE THE TOOLS NIC MENTIONED?** *The Church, other people of faith, and prayer.*

LEADER TIP

This discussion is essential in understanding the rest. Don't cut this segment out. If needed, come back to it at your next meeting.

- **THE FIRST WAY IS IN THE CHURCH. HOW DO WE ACCESS THE HOLY SPIRIT'S GUIDANCE THROUGH THE CHURCH?** *The grace of the sacraments, tradition and the magisterium - the teaching of the Church.*
- **THE SECOND WAY IS THROUGH OTHER PEOPLE. WHO IS SOMEBODY YOU TRUST THE MOST TO GIVE YOU GOOD ADVICE? WHY?**
- **WHO IS SOMEBODY YOU WOULD NEVER ASK FOR ADVICE? WHY NOT?**
- **HAVE YOU HAD THE EXPERIENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT WORKING THROUGH SOMEONE ELSE IN YOUR LIFE?** *Leaders, this is a great time for you to share your own experiences.*

The last way was in prayer. Remember, we need the proper device to be connected to WiFi and we also need that device to be connected to that network. Prayer is how we are connected to the Holy Spirit individually.

Read John 10:27

- **WHAT DOES THIS VERSE HAVE TO DO WITH PRAYER?** *Because the sheep have spent time with the Shepherd, his voice is familiar. In prayer we spend time with Jesus, the Good Shepherd, becoming familiar with the ways he speaks. That way, when it comes time to make decisions, we better know what his "voice" sounds like, rather than just hearing what we want to hear.*
- **DO YOU FIND IT EASY OR DIFFICULT TO PRAY?**

Commit

One of the last things Nic says is, "The best time to pray for guidance is *after* you give yourself to the Lord for the day."

This week's challenge is often called "The Heroic Minute." As soon as you wake up in the morning, before you even get out of bed, simply pray: **"I love you, Jesus. What do you want of me today?"**

We can often fixate on big decisions, but we need to become aware of his voice in the little, everyday things first. Then, keep an eye out for how you become more aware of God's presence in your day. Write them down and we will share them next time we gather.

1. Closing Prayer

Begin with the Sign of the Cross, then reread the theme verse (John 16:12-13). Invite them to share aloud anything they would like to pray for (people, circumstances, etc.). Conclude with a rote prayer such as the Glory Be.

2. Follow Up

Either hand out or email the Participant Journal if you haven't already done so.

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LEADER TIP

"It is this Magisterium's task to preserve God's people from deviations and defections and to guarantee them the objective possibility of professing the true faith without error. Thus, the pastoral duty of the Magisterium is aimed at seeing to it that the People of God abides in the truth that liberates. To fulfill this service, Christ endowed the Church's shepherds with the charism of infallibility in matters of faith and morals."

- CCC 890

LEADER TIP

Learning how to pray takes time. This will not be the only time you discuss it. If you want to go deeper on this subject, consider doing the YDisciple series on prayer after this series is finished.



Empowered

NEVER ALONE: LIFE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT SESSION 3

Overview:

Too often we can relegate the miraculous stories in the Bible to the same category as fairy tales or science fiction. The reality is that not only is the power of the Holy Spirit we see in the Bible real, but it is available to each one of us still today. We will dive into the story of Pentecost and learn how the Holy Spirit empowers us, particularly in our witness of the faith.

Theme Scripture

ACTS 1:8

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

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2. Accountability

How was your experience with last week’s challenge? (“The Heroic Minute”: Pray every morning before you get out of bed, “Jesus I love you. What do you want from me today?”)

The 5 S’s of Accountability: Service, Praying with Scripture, Sacraments, Overcoming Sin, Sharing Jesus with Others

Which of the S’s have you been working on? What have been your ‘wins’? Have you struggled with any?

3. Optional Activity

SUPERPOWERS

Just for fun, ask everyone to share:

If you could have one superpower, what would you choose and why?

OR

What is your favorite superhero movie? Why?

A lot of times we equate power with fairy tales or fiction. But in this discussion, we are going to dive into how the Holy Spirit gives us real power in our real lives.

4. Opening Prayer

Read the theme verse, Acts 1:8 (found on the first page of this guide) and then lead them in a prayer thanking God for the opportunity to be together and the opportunity to grow in faith. Invite the Holy Spirit to open everyone up to hear Jesus’ invitation to follow him. Conclude with a prayer together such as the Our Father, Glory Be, or Hail Mary.

Discuss

Watch Video Segment #1: Sarah's Story

- **HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER THE QUESTION SARAH ASKED AT THE END: WHAT IN YOUR LIFE MIGHT CHANGE IF YOU SAID 'YES' TO THE HOLY SPIRIT?**
- **IS THE THOUGHT OF CHANGE EXCITING OR SCARY TO YOU? (OR MAYBE BOTH!) WHY?**
- **WHAT ELSE STOOD OUT TO YOU IN HER STORY?**

Watch Video Segment #2: What If It's Real?

- **WHAT IS ONE THING THAT STOOD OUT TO YOU IN THAT SEGMENT?**
- **SARAH QUOTES ST. POPE JOHN PAUL II WHO SAID WE CAN LIVE LIKE "PRACTICAL ATHEISTS" - BELIEVING IN GOD, GOING TO CHURCH, BUT THAT BELIEF HAVING LITTLE OR NO IMPACT ON THE WAY WE LIVE. HOW HAVE YOU SEEN THIS TO BE TRUE?**

Open your Bibles to Acts 2.

Ask for volunteers to **read aloud Acts 2:1-8 plus verses 12-13** (you can skip verses 9-11 in the read aloud simply because they might get lost in trying to pronounce all of these names).

Emphasize to them that while this may be a familiar story to some, to listen to it as if they are hearing it for the first time.

- **WHAT WORDS OR PHRASES STAND OUT TO YOU?**
- **IS THERE ANYTHING YOU NOTICED IN THIS READING THAT YOU HAVE NOT NOTICED BEFORE?**

BACKGROUND INFO

Pentecost comes from the word 50. This Jewish feast came 50 days after passover. It has also been 50 days since Jesus was arrested. The feast of Pentecost was one of the 3 most important Jewish feasts. It was to celebrate the "first fruits" of the harvest. Consider asking the youth why they think this might be important to why the Holy Spirit came on this day of all days. (Hint: This is considered the birth of the Church. The people who began following that day are "first fruits" of the work of evangelization.

Watch Video Segment #3: The Power of the Spirit

- **HAVE YOU EVER HAD A PARENT OR TEACHER ASK YOU TO COOPERATE WITH THEM? WHAT DOES THAT LOOK LIKE?** *The word "cooperate" comes from the Latin "work with" (co = with, operati = to work)*



- **HOW MIGHT THIS TRANSLATE INTO COOPERATING WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT?** *It is important to note that most people will report not “feeling anything different” after something like Confirmation. Some people, however, don’t feel different but they later notice a difference when they begin to cooperate with it. This could be an opportunity for YOU, the leader, to share your experience with cooperating with the Spirit or recognizing some fruit of their Confirmation later on.*
- **SARAH TELLS A STORY OF SOMEONE BEING ACTUALLY HEALED WHEN SHE PRAYED OVER THEM. HAVE YOU EVER HEARD A STORY OF A MIRACLE IN MODERN, EVERYDAY LIFE? IT COULD BE SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED TO YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW. SHARE IT.** *(Some may argue that praying for healing isn’t Catholic, but The Catechism teaches: “The Holy Spirit gives to some a special charism of healing so as to make manifest the power of the grace of the risen Lord. But even the most intense prayers do not always obtain the healing of all illnesses. Thus, St. Paul must learn from the Lord that ‘my grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness,’ and that the sufferings to be endured can mean that ‘in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions for the sake of his Body, that is, the Church.” [CCC 1508].)*
- **IF WE REALLY HAVE ACCESS TO THE SAME POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT THAT WAS GIVEN TO THE APOSTLES, WHY DO YOU THINK WE DON’T SEE MORE THINGS LIKE SARAH WAS TALKING ABOUT?** *Encourage them to think back to the analogy of the Dead Sea: “It is the same with us, we have been given something incredible with the Holy Spirit, but if we just sit on that gift, if we don’t do something with it, we will be like the Dead Sea.”*
- **SHE ALSO TALKED ABOUT HOW OFTEN THE BIGGER MIRACLE IS HAVING THE COURAGE TO LIVE OUR FAITH IN OUR SCHOOL OR FAMILY. WHAT IS AN “ORDINARY” AREA OF YOUR LIFE WHERE YOU NEED A MIRACLE? WHERE DO YOU NEED THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?**

Watch Video Segment #4: Empowered to Witness

- **WHAT IS ONE THING THAT STOOD OUT TO YOU IN THAT VIDEO?**
- **SARAH QUOTES C.S. LEWIS: “CHRISTIANITY, IF FALSE, IS OF NO IMPORTANCE, AND IF TRUE, OF INFINITE IMPORTANCE. THE ONLY THING IT CANNOT BE IS OF MODERATE IMPORTANCE.” HOW WOULD YOU EXPLAIN THIS IN YOUR OWN WORDS?**
- **IN THE FIRST SERIES, THE INVITATION, WE DISCUSSED WHAT WE MEAN BY “THE GOSPEL”. CAN ANYONE REMEMBER HOW TO SHARE WITH ME IN A MINUTE OR LESS THE FOUR STEPS OF THE GOSPEL MESSAGE?**
 1. God loves us.
 2. We live divided from this love.
 3. Jesus bridges that divide?
 4. How will you respond?

LEADER TIP

Review “The Invitation” Session 2 or check out our resources page: YDisciple.com/how-to-share-the-gospel/

- **WHO IN YOUR LIFE MIGHT THE HOLY SPIRIT BE NUDGING YOU TO SHARE YOUR FAITH WITH?**
- **CREATE A LIST TOGETHER OF WAYS YOU CAN CONCRETELY SHARE YOUR FAITH.**

LEADER TIP

On one hand, your group will need reassurance that this doesn't mean throwing Bibles at their friends. On the other hand, you may need to encourage them to do more than something passive. Recall the St. Francis story at the beginning of the video.

LEADER TIP

For a deeper discussion on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, consider doing the companion bible study to this series.

Commit

This week, do something to reach out to the person we just discussed sharing your faith with. Before you do, ask the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom to know what to say and do and courage to actually do it. (By the way, wisdom and courage are two of the seven gifts of the Spirit.)

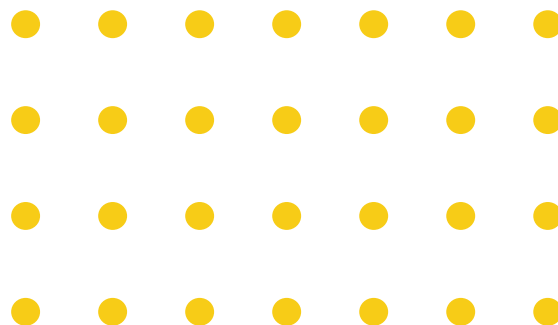
1. Closing Prayer

Begin with the Sign of the Cross, then reread the theme verse (Acts 1:8). Invite them to share aloud anything they would like to pray for (people, circumstances, etc.). Conclude with a rote prayer such as the Our Father.

2. Follow Up

Either hand out or email the Participant Journal if you haven't already done so.

After every single meeting, send an email to parents. Thank them for helping make the group a priority. Always attach or copy and paste the Parent Sheet (available in English and Spanish). If you are using a streaming service, share the link to the videos.





Alive

NEVER ALONE: LIFE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT SESSION 4

Overview:

In this session, you will discuss how the Holy Spirit plays into daily life including overcoming sin and accessing grace in ordinary moments.

Theme Scripture

JOHN 7:37-39

“On the last and greatest day of the feast, Jesus stood up and exclaimed, “Let anyone who thirsts come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me as scripture says, ‘Rivers of living water will flow from within him.’” He said this in reference to the Spirit that those who came to believe in him were to receive. There was, of course, no Spirit yet, because Jesus had not yet been glorified.”

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Writers: Annie Grandell; Nic Gutierrez; Sarah Kaczmarek | Theological/Catechetical Advisors: Fr. Brian Park; Mark Berchem, MTS, MSW; David Rinaldi, MTS | Youth Ministry Advisors: Manuel Huerta; Molly Gallagher; Jared Cunio; Gwen Bartlett; Jennifer Boran; Becca O'Hara; Jake DeBolt; James Forina; Mariah Mulderink

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Connect

1. Check-In

Check-in and simply ask, “How was your week?” demonstrating that you care about what is going on beyond your small group. You can ask generally or have them share “Highs and Lows.” (High - best part of your week; Low - worst part)

2. Accountability

How was your experience with last week’s challenge? (Ask the Holy Spirit for wisdom and courage. Then, reach out to someone in your life to share your faith with them.)

The 5 S’s of Accountability: Service, Praying with Scripture, Sacraments, Overcoming Sin, Sharing Jesus with Others

Have you seen any of these areas of your life change since we started this series on the Holy Spirit. If so, how?

3. Optional Activity

RED-HANDED

This game is simply to have a light-hearted, energetic start to your time together. This session is very full, so don’t spend more than 5-7 minutes playing the game.

1. *The group sits in a circle. One volunteer sits in the middle. The volunteer closes their eyes and counts slowly to 10. While the volunteer is counting to 10...*
2. *Everyone pretends to be passing a small object to each other, with only one person really passing something. The object could be a coin, a pencil or any other small object. They continue passing even after the volunteer has finished counting to 10.*
3. *When the person sitting in the middle of the circle thinks they know who has the coin or pencil, he/she points to the person. If he/she is right, the person caught red-handed (whomever was the passer in the transaction) moves to the middle, the center person takes their place, and the game continues.*

4. Opening Prayer

Read the theme verse, John 7:37-39 (found on the first page of this guide) and then lead them in a prayer thanking God for the opportunity to be together and the opportunity to grow in faith. Invite the Holy Spirit to open everyone up to hear Jesus’ invitation to follow him. Conclude with a prayer together such as the Our Father, Glory Be, or Hail Mary.



LEADER TIP

There is a lot going on in this session. Consider breaking it up over 2 weeks.

Discuss

Let's make a list of everything we can recall we have talked about so far.

You can have them write these ideas down or you can list them aloud.

We have talked a lot about how the Holy Spirit is mysterious. Because of this, he is depicted in art as a variety of symbols. What symbols for the Holy Spirit do you know of? What does that symbol of the Spirit tell us about him?

- *Fire: At Pentecost, the Spirit came as fire (Acts 2:3) and is reminiscent of the burning bush on Mount Sinai from which God spoke to Moses (Exodus 3:2). It reminds us of the power of the Spirit.*
- *Wind or breath: The Hebrew and Greek (the languages the scriptures were written in) words for 'spirit' are the same as 'wind' or 'breath'. This can be seen in Genesis 1:2. It reminds us that the Holy Spirit breathes life into us and into the Church.*
- *Water: Water signifies birth and life. From a faith perspective, it represents the cleansing and life-giving action of the Holy Spirit at Baptism. (Matthew 3:11; John 3:5)*
- *Cloud: Many times in the Bible when the Holy Spirit shows up it uses the word "over shadowed" such as when Mary conceives Jesus by the Holy Spirit. A cloud can symbolize God's mysteriousness.*
- *Dove: It comes from the story of Jesus' baptism, when Jesus saw "the Spirit, like a dove, descending upon him." (Mark 1:10)*

Watch Video Segment #1: What Are You Thirsting For? (Part 1)

Keeping in mind the background that Sarah shared about the Feast of Tabernacles, read John 7:37-39.

- **THE GOSPEL READING SAYS THAT JESUS SPOKE TO THE PEOPLE ON "THE LAST AND GREATEST DAY OF THE FEAST." WHY DO YOU THINK JESUS MADE HIS PROCLAMATION ABOUT GIVING "LIVING WATER" ON THIS PARTICULAR DAY?**
- **HOW IS THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT LIKE "RIVERS OF LIVING WATER" INSIDE OF US?**
- **DO YOU FEEL LIKE THE HOLY SPIRIT IS "FLOWING" FROM INSIDE YOUR HEART? WHY OR WHY NOT?**

LEADER TIP

Notice that Jesus doesn't simply "say" this but he "cried out." This infers that Jesus is eager to give us his Spirit.

Watch Video Segment #2: What Are You Thirsting For? (Part 2)

- **WHAT IS ONE THING THAT STOOD OUT TO YOU IN THAT VIDEO?**
- **WHAT ARE YOU "THIRSTING" FOR IN YOUR LIFE? WHAT IS THAT DEEP DESIRE OF YOUR HEART?**
- **WHAT MIGHT "ABUNDANT LIFE" LOOK LIKE?**
- **ARE YOU LIVING AN "ABUNDANT LIFE" RIGHT NOW OR ARE YOU MERELY SURVIVING? HOW SO?**

LEADER TIP

This reference comes from John 10:10 "I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly."

Watch Video Segment #3: Refined by Fire

- **WHAT IS ONE THING THAT STOOD OUT TO YOU?**
- **SARAH BROUGHT UP THE DEVIL. DO YOU FIND IT EASY OR DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE IN THE DEVIL?**

Make sure to share with your group: There are 2 major “myths” about Satan we need to be clear about.

MYTH #1: The Devil doesn’t exist. Some will say the devil is just a literary device to symbolize evil. But the Church teaches that the devil is a real being. The Church teaches that Satan was at first a good angel, made by God: “The devil and the other demons were indeed created naturally good by God, but they became evil by their own doing.” (CCC 391)

MYTH #2: The Devil is the opposite of God. The truth is that Satan isn’t that powerful. God is infinitely powerful and infinitely stronger than the devil. If we choose Christ, we are on the winning team! “The power of Satan is, nonetheless, not infinite. He is only a creature, powerful from the fact that he is pure spirit, but still a creature. He cannot prevent the building up of God’s reign. Although Satan may act in the world out of hatred for God and his kingdom in Christ Jesus, and although his action may cause grave injuries - of a spiritual nature and, indirectly, even of a physical nature- to each man and to society, the action is permitted by divine providence which, with strength and gentleness, guides human and cosmic history.” (CCC 395)

- **WHAT IS ONE LIE THAT YOU SOMETIMES ARE TEMPTED TO BELIEVE ABOUT YOURSELF?**
- **WHAT CAN YOU DO IN THAT MOMENT TO ASK FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT’S HELP, RATHER THAN GIVING INTO THE LIE?**
- **HAVE YOU EVER EXPERIENCED THAT STRUGGLE THAT ST. PAUL DESCRIBED ABOUT WANTING TO DO GOOD THINGS BUT CONSTANTLY DOING THE WRONG THING INSTEAD?**
- **SARAH TALKED ABOUT HOW THE HOLY SPIRIT ENLIGHTENS US TO OUR SIN AND HELPS US OVERCOME IT. HAVE YOU EVER HAD THE EXPERIENCE OF REALIZING YOU WERE WRONG ABOUT SOMETHING?**

LEADER TIP

This is becoming increasingly more common. 30% of practicing Catholics don’t even believe in Satan (Gallup Poll, 2003). That number is likely higher among young people.

LEADER TIP

This is a great chance for you to share your own testimony.

Watch Video Segment #4: Life in the Holy Spirit

- **DO YOU THINK MOST CATHOLIC CHRISTIANS ARE LIVING WITH THE GRACE OF THEIR BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION “TIED” UP OR NOT?**

- **WHO IN YOUR LIFE DO YOU KNOW SEEMS TO HAVE THE HOLY SPIRIT “UNTIED”?**
- **WHERE IN YOUR LIFE DO YOU WANT A GREATER OUTPOURING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT? ANOTHER WAY TO SAY THIS IS: WHERE IN YOUR LIFE DO YOU NEED MORE OF GOD’S POWER? OVERCOMING SOME SIN? HEALING (PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL OR A WOUND OF SIN)? GUIDANCE IN A BIG DECISION YOU NEED TO MAKE?**

LEADER TIP

This can be a vulnerable thing to articulate. Remind them that they are meant to keep things confidential amongst themselves.

Commit

This week, we have 2 commitments we are asking you to make:

1. Pray “Come, Holy Spirit” multiple times throughout your day, every day.
2. Think more about where in your life you want a greater outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Next time we meet we will be praying specifically for these things.

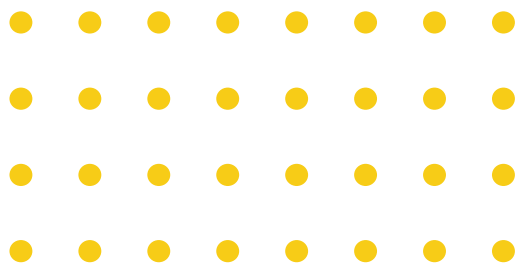
1. Closing Prayer

Begin with the Sign of the Cross, then reread the theme verse (John 7:37-39). Invite them to share aloud anything they would like to pray for (people, circumstances, etc.). Conclude with a rote prayer such as the Our Father.

2. Follow Up

Either hand out or email the Participant Journal if you haven’t already done so.

After every single meeting, send an email to parents. Thank them for helping make the group a priority. Always attach or copy and paste the Parent Sheet (available in English and Spanish). If you are using a streaming service, share the link to the videos.





Prayer for the Release of the Holy Spirit

NEVER ALONE: LIFE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT SESSION 5

Overview:

This final session is not an add-on, but is the culminating point of the entire series. It does little good to merely talk about the Holy Spirit if we do not intentionally, consciously invite his action in our lives. Therefore, you will take time to pray over each member of your group for a release of the Holy Spirit.

Make sure to hand out the Participant Guide before you start this session as they will need to read from it during prayer.

[Do not do this without watching the leader training video on this topic.](https://ydisciple.tv/programs/prayer-leader-training)
ydisciple.tv/programs/prayer-leader-training

Theme Scripture

2 TIMOTHY 1:6-7

“For this reason, I remind you to stir into flame the gift of God that you have through the imposition of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice but rather of power and love and self-control.”

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Connect

Share a meal together

We recommend that you start this gathering by sharing a meal. Study after study shows that people are more likely to share verbally when sharing a meal for many reasons, not the least of which is eating causes the body to relax. It also promotes prosocial behaviors such as listening, sharing, and fairness.

During dinner, check in with your group members. Ask about their week and be sure to check in on anything you are holding one another accountable for.

Discuss

Consider rewatching Sarah’s story from Session 1 (12:37)

In our first session of this series, Sarah talks about asking friends to pray with her that she would receive the Holy Spirit. That is what we are going to do in this time together. It is easy for us to say, “I’ll pray for you” then move on. Instead, we are going to take action on this. We are going to pray with each other, not just for each other.

- **THE WORD “DORMANT” LITERALLY MEANS “ASLEEP.” WHAT WERE THE TWO THINGS THAT FR. KILLIAN SAYS HELP “WAKE UP” GRACE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR LIVES?** *Leader, if you have a story you can share, do it!*

Fr. Killian McDonnell says, “The grace of these sacraments, although given directly within the sacramental celebration, lie dormant, as it were, in a person until activated through personal commitment and prayer, then they come forth into consciousness overwhelming a person’s life with faith in and commitment to Jesus.”

- **THE WORD “DORMANT” LITERALLY MEANS “ASLEEP.” WHAT WERE THE TWO THINGS THAT FR. KILLIAN SAYS HELP “WAKE UP” GRACE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR LIVES?** *Personal commitment and prayer.*

Have a volunteer read aloud the theme verse, 2 Timothy 1:6-7.

Remember we aren't "playing" sacraments - this doesn't replace a sacrament. This is meant to "fan into flame" the gift you have already received.

We can think about it like chocolate milk. Imagine you have a glass with milk and add a bunch of chocolate syrup. Unless you stir it up, the chocolate will settle on the bottom of the glass and the milk will barely taste like chocolate. It is similar with the Holy Spirit in the sacraments. We receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit at our baptism and confirmation, but unless we stir up that grace it will remain dormant, barely noticeable in our lives.

LEADER TIP

We strongly recommend doing this with actual milk and chocolate syrup! They will never forget it!

- **LAST TIME WE MET, YOUR CHALLENGE WAS TO THINK AND PRAY ABOUT "WHERE IN YOUR LIFE DO YOU WANT A GREATER OUTPOURING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT? ANOTHER WAY TO SAY THIS IS WHERE IN YOUR LIFE DO YOU NEED MORE OF GOD'S POWER? OVERCOMING SOME SIN? HEALING (PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL OR A WOUND OF SIN)? GUIDANCE IN A BIG DECISION YOU NEED TO MAKE?"**
- **WHAT DID YOU DECIDE TO ASK FOR PRAYERS FOR?**

Now we are going to do those two things- make a personal commitment and pray.

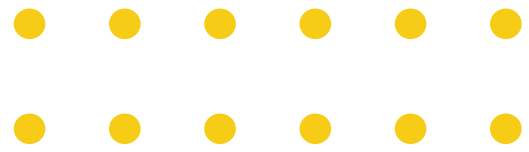
Pray Over Your Group

- *Ask who would like to go first.*
- *Have them stand or sit in the middle of your circle.*
- *Ask if they are comfortable with you all putting a hand on their shoulder, back, or arm.*
- *Ask them to articulate what they want prayers for.*
- *Tell the group to intercede for the person being prayed over by praying "Come, Holy Spirit" over and over in their heart or out loud, but very quietly.*
- *You, the leader, should begin the prayer out loud with the Sign of the Cross.*
- *Pray aloud with a simple formula:*
 - *Thank God for the individual, mention something specific about them.*
 - *Ask the Holy Spirit to come and [mention what they have asked].*
 - *Invite them to pray the Prayer for the Release of the Holy Spirit on their Participant Guide.*
 - » *Merciful Father, free me from the Enemy. I reject Satan, his works, and his empty promises. Jesus Christ, I offer my life to you and truly desire to obey you as Lord. Spirit of God, I open myself to you. Release all of the graces, gifts and power to help me live as a firm, committed follower of Jesus.*
 - *Thank God for the gift of the Holy Spirit.*
 - *End with a prayer that everyone can pray together such as the Hail Mary or Glory Be.*
- *Repeat this with every member of your group*

Once everyone has been prayed for, the leader should pray aloud in thanksgiving for the gift of the Holy Spirit they just received. If your group is musically inclined, a song of praise would be very appropriate.

Process after everyone has been prayed with:

- **WHAT WAS IT LIKE TO BE PRAYED OVER?**
- **DO ANY OF YOU HAVE AN EXPERIENCE THAT YOU WANT TO SHARE WITH THE GROUP?**



Commit

Challenge for the Week: Look for the fruit of the Holy Spirit in your life this week since we prayed for you. Galatians 5:22-23 outlines the fruit of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

You may experience something really powerful or you may not. Look for the fruit in your life. Remember, Sarah didn't experience much in that car, but the joy the next day was real.

1. Closing Prayer

Begin with the Sign of the Cross, then reread the theme verse (2 Timothy 1:6-7). Invite them to share aloud anything they would like to pray for (people, circumstances, etc.). Conclude with a rote prayer such as the Glory Be.

2. Follow Up

Either hand out or email the Participant Journal if you haven't already done so.

After every single meeting, send an email to parents. Thank them for helping make the group a priority. Always attach or copy and paste the Parent Sheet (available in English and Spanish). If you are using a streaming service, share the link to the videos.

What's Next?

Congrats! You have finished Never Alone: Life with the Holy Spirit.

Next, we recommend not watching videos for at least one week. Instead, do an activity together - go out to dinner, do a service project, go to Mass together, etc.

Before you start another study, ask your group what they want to discuss. This will help them take ownership of the group.

Are you using this series as a part of Confirmation prep? Consider using our supplemental bible study to talk more in-depth about the sacrament of Confirmation itself. Available only on YDisciple.com