

SAMPLE: ODDWALK RETREATS

DESCRIPTION

Oddwalk retreats focus on encouraging participants to be willing to take one more step towards Jesus in their journey with Jesus. Through music, games, talks, discussion, and prayer, participants are presented with multiple opportunities to engage in their own spiritual growth.

Since many of the retreat participants we encounter did not choose to be there, and some would rather be anywhere else, our retreats begin with a significant block of time that includes icebreaker games and fun music aimed at helping them be open to the experience ahead.

Then, after assessing who they are and where they are on their Christian journey, retreatants participate in a series of activities aimed at exploring different aspects of their life with Jesus and the Church. These activities change based on the age of the participant and the nature of the retreat. For instance, a Confirmation retreat might focus on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit where a retreat with adults might reflect on daily life, work, and family.

The retreats almost always end similarly to other Oddwalk activities, with an encouragement for all to live Christ's call in their own lives and in the world.

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SAMPLE "ALL PURPOSE" RETREAT

12:00 – Orin and Shannon arrive at retreat location /begin set-up.

1:00 – Icebreaker music and games/Retreat Introduction

Through the use of interactive music and games like "The Mail Game," "Pull-ups," and "Would You Rather," we introduce ourselves and try to help retreat participants feel comfortable with the space and each other. This block also uses a personal story to introduce participants to the retreat and challenge them to look for God everywhere, particularly within themselves.

1:45 – "My Life" Worksheet

This activity asks participants to take stock of their own blessings, challenges, fears, and hopes. They are then asked to share these assessments with another person.

2:00 - Break

2:10 - Road Signs

In this activity, participants are asked to use road/highway signs as metaphors, a way to get them thinking/talking about their own Christian journey. This activity includes a small group discussion and group poster activity.

2:50 – "40" Video

Through the use of a video depicting Jesus's time in the desert, participants are asked to consider that Jesus is calling them to discipleship, in part so they can be "disciplined" enough to recognize sin when they see it and choose to reject it.

3:20 - Break

3:30 – Dignity of the Human Person

Using the pervasiveness of bullying among teens and pre-teens as an introduction, this block explores the importance and difficulty of seeing ourselves and others as worthy and dignified simply because we are made in the image and likeness of God. Through the use of videos, small group discussions, and the creation of a pledge to action, participants develop simple but concrete ways to live our Catholic belief in the dignity of the human person.

4:15 - Break

4:25 - Four Friends/Super Sam

Several teams of five persons compete in a race in which one person sits in the middle of a blanket, while four others grab a corner of the blanket and walk with them to a finish line. This game is just a fun way of talking about the story from Mark where four friends lowered the paralytic man through a roof whereby Jesus healed him. This is all a way to explore the need for all of us to work within community to bring people to Jesus.

This segment then transitions into a story of a young boy in Shannon's community who died after a year-long battle with cancer, and how. This story features many examples of choices that were made to bring people to Jesus. The segment ends with a group singing of the Oddwalk song "His Light."

5:05 – Yes/No Game and Closing Prayer

The Yes/No Game focuses on the importance of saying yes to Jesus. Typically, the closing prayer is a song the participants are invited to be part of.

5:30 – End of Retreat

SAMPLE CONFIRMATION RETREAT

12:00 – Orin and Shannon arrive at retreat location /begin set-up.

1:00 – Icebreaker music and games/Retreat Introduction

Through the use of interactive music and games like “The Mail Game,” “Pull-ups,” and “Would You Rather,” we introduce ourselves and try to help retreat participants feel comfortable with the space and each other. This block also uses a personal story to introduce participants to the retreat and challenge them to look for God everywhere, particularly within themselves.

1:45 – Worksheet

This activity asks participants to take stock of their own blessings, challenges, fears, and hopes. They are then asked to share these assessments with another person.

2:00 - Break

2:10 - Road Signs

In this activity, participants are asked to use road/highway signs as metaphors, a way to get them thinking/talking about their own spiritual journey and their “road” to the Sacrament of Confirmation. This activity includes a small group discussion and group poster activity.

2:50 – “40” Video

Through the use of a video depicting Jesus’s time in the desert, teens are asked to consider that Jesus is calling them to discipleship, in part so they can be “disciplined” enough to recognize sin when they see it and choose to reject it.

3:20 - Break

3:30 – Dignity of the Human Person

Using the pervasiveness of bullying among teens and pre-teens as an introduction, this block explores the importance and difficulty of seeing ourselves and others as worthy and dignified simply because we are made in the image and likeness of God. Through the use of videos, small group discussions, and the creation of a pledge to action, participants develop simple but concrete ways to live our Catholic belief in the dignity of the human person.

4:15 - Break

4:25 - Gifts of the Holy Spirit - SuperHero

Participants are reintroduced to the Gifts of the Holy Spirit through a personal story and a short definition of each gift. Then, small groups are asked to develop a “superhero” based on one of the seven gifts, depict that hero on a poster and present it to the whole group.

5:05 – Yes/No Game and Closing Prayer

The Yes/No Game focuses on the importance of saying yes to Jesus. Typically, the closing prayer is a song the participants are invited to be part of.

5:30 – End of Retreat