

SEALED WITH GOD'S SPIRIT

TEEN DISCIPLESHIP



LEADER'S GUIDE

PLEASE NOTE: This leader's guide was originally written for those using this video program in its VHS format. Those now using this program on DVD may find some references that do not apply to their use (i.e., directions for locating segments, time notations, etc.). We trust that both VHS- and DVD-users will find this guide a valuable resource.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Catholic Update Video

The Use of Video in Faith Formation 3

Introduction to the Series 5

SEALED WITH GOD'S SPIRIT TEEN DISCIPLESHIP

Overview of the Program 8

Audience 9

Story Segment

Summary 10

Suggestions for Use 11

Questions for Sharing 11

Witness Segment

Summary 12

Suggestions for Use 13

Questions for Sharing 14

Teaching Segment

Summary 15

Suggestions for Use 16

Questions for Sharing 17

Musical Reflection Segment

Summary 17

Suggestions for Use 18

Resources for Further Study

Scripture 19

Catechism of the Catholic Church 19

St. Anthony Messenger Press 20

CATHOLIC UPDATE VIDEO

The Use of Video in Faith Formation

Jesus used the “media” of his day to teach. He was a master storyteller. His preaching is full of imagery. His parables are calculated to engage his audience. Through the ages, Christian teachers and preachers have followed Jesus in the creative proclamation of his message.

From the culture of Jesus’ time, heavily dependent on *oral* communication—to the advent of *print* communication—to our own time and its dependence on *electronic* media—Christian teachers have adapted their proclamation to each new medium and its particular demands.

Media scholars like Marshall McLuhan remind us of the impact of the medium on the message it carries. *How* we communicate affects *what* we communicate. Electronic media offer us new ways to tell the story of our faith. Father Pierre Babin points out (see *The New Era in Religious Communications*, Pierre Babin with Mercedes Iannone, Fortress Press, Minneapolis, 1991) that the message, as well as the sender and receiver, all will be re-shaped in the telling.

Catechesis, as a part of the total evangelization process, must touch the learners’ hearts and shine the light of faith on their lives. It must connect to the learners’ experience or risk being discarded as irrelevant. To be effective, catechists must learn how to make the best use of the electronic media available in our culture, aware of the particular medium’s strengths and weaknesses.

Video is a very popular, familiar and accessible part of our electronic culture. It draws us in, captures our imaginations and touches us on a deep, emotional level. As it speaks to our experience and utilizes several of our senses, its message is more likely to be heard and remembered. By integrating quality video programs into the catechetical process, catechists can share the message more effectively.

At the same time, as television becomes a more pervasive part of our lives, we can be lulled into thinking that it can do everything for us—inform, entertain, shop, even worship. The reality is that it can't and shouldn't do everything. As Pierre Babin emphasizes, electronic media function differently than print media. They appeal first to the emotional content of our faith rather than the intellectual content. Video cannot begin to convey the amount of information print can. It cannot replace the live presence and personal witness of the catechist. But in a catechetical setting, it can be a powerful part of the “mix of media” used in proclaiming the message.

How effectively video—or any electronic media—is used in the catechetical setting depends primarily on how prepared the catechist is to use it:

- A preview of the video is essential to determine the best use of the program with a particular group.
- The catechist should select a video program (or section of a video) based on the audience, the purpose, and the availability of competent teachers and other resources and activities to support the theme.
- Sufficient time should be available to introduce the video and to process the experience.

Catechists must realize that they control the use of video in their sessions. They might approach a video program in one of two ways: as a skeleton on which to

build a presentation or as a way to “enflesh” an existing skeleton.

A video program well-tailored to the needs of a group might be used in its entirety. At other times, catechists may creatively manipulate the video to fit their needs:

- An excerpt may be taken from a longer piece to illustrate a point.
- A video may be shown with the *sound off* to highlight an aspect of the program.
- The “pause” button can be used freely to interject explanations and examples or to elicit reactions.
- The program or excerpt may be repeated to emphasize a point.

The producers of this video program have attempted to craft both medium and message with an awareness of the power of the medium as well as its limitations. They encourage those who use it to study this guide and become familiar with ways to allow this program to supplement their own sharing of the Gospel message of Jesus Christ.

Introduction to the Series

Catholic Update Video is a video resource designed for use in the RCIA, catechist formation, sacrament programs for parents, faith-sharing groups, study groups, ministry training and high school religious education. *Catholic Update Video* draws from Catholic life and practice to present a single topic in a “video toolbox” format with four distinct segments—story, witness, teaching and musical reflection.

Catholic Update Video has been designed with today’s learner in mind. Its segments are short and can stand alone or be used with others in the program. The

format is flexible, making it useful in a variety of group settings as well as for individual viewing. The emphasis is on what video can do best, namely touch us through story (*story segment*), testimony (*witness segment*) and song (*musical reflection segment*) with images and the emotions they carry. But a more “didactic” approach (*teaching segment*) respects the need to convey a concise core of information.

The general model for catechetical process (life experience, message or doctrine, response) is respected by the order of the four segments, although at times a catechist may choose to use them alone or out of sequence:

- Each program begins with a **story segment** designed to draw viewers in and help them connect their life-experience to the faith-topic.
- The testimony of real-life Catholics in the **witness segment** helps viewers reflect on their own life experience and prepare for group sharing.
- Our teacher briefly highlights some aspects of the topic in the **teaching segment**. Relevant images help to illustrate the points being made. (*This segment is not intended to treat a topic exhaustively nor substitute for a more thorough presentation on the message or doctrine.*)
- Viewers are invited to respond in prayer using the **musical reflection segment**.

The program’s hosts provide a context for each segment. This is designed to help viewers who will see the program from beginning to end. Catechists who use segments individually or out of sequence should prepare their own lead-in.

This leader’s guide is an important tool for making the best use of this video program.

It includes the following features.

- **Summary and Suggestions for Use** for each segment.
- **Questions for Sharing** for the *story, witness and teaching segments*; facilitators can choose from them or use them as models for developing their own questions.
- **Suggestions for Use** for the *musical reflection segment* provide suggestions for using this segment in a prayer setting.
- **Resources for Further Study** are listed at the end of this guide.
- Approximate times are noted for where each segment begins. *(If the VCR is equipped with an “elapsed time” counter, reset the counter to 0:00:00 at the beginning of the tape and fast-forward to the time listed for the beginning of the desired segment. If the VCR does not have an “elapsed time” counter, the facilitator can fast-forward in the “review” mode [i.e., while the VCR is in “play”] to find the next time the host appears.*

SEALED WITH GOD'S SPIRIT **TEEN DISCIPLESHIP**

OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM

The “Sealed With God’s Spirit” programs are a “mini series” within the larger Catholic Update Video series. They are designed to assist catechetical leaders in the preparation of candidates of various ages and backgrounds for the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation; help in the formation of parents, sponsors and catechists; and be a resource for use in faith formation on broader issues of Christian initiation and discipleship.

The largest number of candidates for Confirmation in recent years has been teens. Some celebrate Confirmation as part of the RCIA or the process of being received into full communion. Most prepare to celebrate Confirmation many years after being baptized as infants.

The challenge in preparing this majority of young people for Confirmation is in attempting to define this sacrament: How is it significantly different than Baptism? Can we convince them that Confirmation is necessary, when many of them are naturally questioning their parents’ faith as they attempt to form their own identity?

In many cases, Confirmation *preparation* sends a message to teens that’s counter to what Confirmation is really about. For many, Confirmation has been turned into a Catholic “rite of passage” or a way to keep our youth coming to faith formation/youth ministry opportunities. Requirements for a certain number of class and service hours portray Confirmation as something to be earned rather than a gift from God to be recognized and celebrated. The “crash course in

Catholicism” approach of many programs gives teens the message that Confirmation is a graduation instead of a step in their initiation into the Church community.

Teens being confirmed need to see that Confirmation is very closely connected to Baptism and Eucharist. As a Sacrament of Initiation, Confirmation is a time to explore just what it means to live as disciples of Jesus today—in their own lives as teenagers.

This program, while part of our Confirmation series, also has uses beyond Confirmation preparation. Its presentation of discipleship in Christ makes it relevant whenever teens are exploring the call and commitments of Christian life. It captures for Catholic youth how their Christian baptismal commitment comes alive in service to others.

The *story segment* follows a group of Ohio teens on a mission trip to Chicago. We see them at work, play and prayer, and hear them react to the call to serve in the name of Jesus.

In the *witness segment*, we meet Rob Lorenz, a college student who has made Christian service a main focus of his life.

In the *teaching segment*, youth minister, Sister Patty McCulloch, M.H.S.H., answers teens’ questions about Christian service and the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

The program concludes with a *music video reflection*, “We Can Make a Difference,” by popular Christian recording artist Jaci Velasquez.

Audience

This program was designed for a teenage audience. It may include

- junior high and high school youth preparing to celebrate Confirmation,

- young people preparing for a mission trip or service experience,
- any group of young people exploring the topic of Christian discipleship.

This program may also be viewed by adults and elementary school-age children. While the style and participants featured were selected to appeal to a teen audience, the content is ageless.

Story Segment

(Begins approximately 3:13 into program.)

Summary

We accompany the St. Francis of Assisi youth group from Dayton, Ohio, on a mission trip to Chicago. While in Chicago, they participate in a program called Young Neighbors in Action, organized by the Center for Ministry Development. Young people from throughout the country come together for a week of service in the inner city of Chicago. We follow them as they work, play and pray, and hear their response to a challenge to serve in the name of Jesus.

Members of the Dayton group help at a daycare center, clothing closet for the poor and with cleaning and beautifying church property. We see them at work and hear them share what the experience is like for them—the new perspectives they are gaining about others and themselves.

The program includes large group gatherings at the end of each day of this week of service. These gatherings allow time for the participants to process the experience and relate it to their baptismal call to serve one another. This video segment reaches its climax as participants share the significance of the trip for them.

We hear how they expect things to be different for them. One young man gives touching testimony to a change of heart. He no longer sees his future as a pursuit of material wealth but now sees the significance of people over things.

Our story closes with the director of the experience issuing a challenge to the young participants and all viewers: There's a job to be done!

Suggestions for Use

This segment may be used in a variety of settings with young people who are exploring the call to discipleship and how this translates into service to others.

- The segment may be used with those preparing for their own mission trip or service activity. Viewing it in advance of their service experience may help them build enthusiasm about the upcoming event. It may also help them articulate some of their hopes and concerns about the experience.
- It may be used with any group of young people who are exploring the importance of service as an integral part of a Christian life.
- As part of Confirmation preparation, an emphasis on discipleship may support an exploration of how the Sacrament of Confirmation celebrates our incorporation into Christ, another moment when Christians affirm their commitment to model their life on his.

Questions for Sharing

1. When have you had an experience of helping someone else?
2. What experiences of service have been most meaningful to you? Why?

3. What can you do to reach out to the needy in your own community?
4. Does going on a mission experience appeal to you? Why or why not?
5. What difference do you hope to make with your life? What can you do now to work toward that goal?
6. How does serving others express our Christian identity?

Witness Segment

(Begins approximately 16:00 into program.)

Summary

Our witness is Rob Lorenz, a college student who has made a significant commitment to Christian service. At the time of the interview, he was a participant in a college “service scholarship” program that supported such a commitment within his day-to-day life as a student. Rob shares some of his experience and insights with our video program’s host, Lawrence, over a game of pool.

Rob’s experiences of service began at an early age. His parents took him with them to volunteer at soup kitchens and other service agencies. Rob made a personal commitment to service when he was confirmed in eighth grade. The instruction he received about the Holy Spirit helped him to see serving others as a response to the call of being a Christian. Rob’s experience of being loved unconditionally and Jesus’ example of reaching out to the poor and outcast inspire Rob to do the same for those in need.

Rob has served in soup kitchens, hospitals, hospices and orphanages. He’s found that he is often helped by those he serves, sometimes as much as he is helping

them. Seeing the difficulties of others helps him to put his own problems in perspective.

Rob's commitment to service is in response to his experience of God's love. He is confident of God's love and forgiveness and feels compelled to share this with others. He opens himself to being an instrument of God, providing a caring presence to others who are experiencing hard times.

Rob doesn't see himself as exceptional. He believes that everyone has the capacity and the call to serve others in some way. It can be as simple as being a friend to someone who's having a hard time. The life of Christ is part of each baptized Christian. This love is not for us alone; it naturally overflows to other people.

Rob finds joy in being able to help others. He says, "You're being Christ for somebody else, and they're being Christ for you. It's just really a great thing!"

Suggestions for Use

This segment may be used to invite members of a group to share about their own commitment to service as part of everyday living as disciples of Jesus. For many, service may be seen as something for *other* people to do—people who have special talents, lots of free time or a special religious call. Since a common perception of service is as something extra and beyond the ordinary, many young people may honestly wonder what they are capable of doing and when they would fit it into their already hectic lives. It's important that teens come to realize that Christian discipleship is as much about *how* you do something as *what* you do.

Rob comes across as an unassuming, low-key model of Christian service. He's not trying to impress others, nor does he lay claim to any unusual talents or specialized skills. His witness shows us that ordinary

people are called to live extraordinary lives.

Sharing concerns, reactions and ideas in a supportive group setting may help young people realize that they are not alone on the path of discipleship. (Note the group discussions presented in the *story segment*.) It isn't always easy for many teens to find the right forum for sharing their desire to help others, their experiences of a growing personal relationship with God or their dreams of making a difference. In some settings this type of sharing would never occur because of the likelihood of being ridiculed and rejected or, at the very least, not understood. Inviting sharing in a group that is supportive and accepting can bolster teens so that they may more confidently find ways to make their dreams of making a difference a reality.

Questions for Sharing

1. What is your reaction to Rob and his commitment to service? Does he make this seem like something everyone can/should do?
2. Which of the service experiences that Rob mentioned are interesting to you?
3. Rob's parents were important in modeling to him a commitment to Christian service. What about the adults in your life? How do they model Christian service to you? Has any adult's example or encouragement helped you reach out to others?
4. Rob talks about his experience of knowing that God loves him unconditionally as motivation for reaching out in service to others. What is your experience of God's love for you? How do you share God's love with others?
5. When has someone "been Christ" for you? How are you Christ for others?

6. When have you experienced joy in helping another?

Teaching Segment

(Begins approximately 19:23 into program.)

Summary

Sister Patty McCulloch, M.H.S.H., is the teacher for this segment. She is an experienced parish youth minister, overseas missionary and high school teacher. She answers some teens' questions about discipleship, Christian service and the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives. The questions and a summary of her responses follow:

Q. What is discipleship?

A. Disciples are followers of Jesus—living out the love Jesus shares with us and following his example.

Q. I don't see myself as a disciple. I'm not that holy.

A. Sometimes it's hard to see ourselves as holy. But "holy" isn't somebody set apart. Holy is everyone who believes and tries to follow Jesus.

Q. I like the idea of helping others, but how can I fit in with my friends and get involved with service activities too?

A. Being "holy" might draw friends to us because people want friends who listen and care. You might be surprised by your friends' interest in joining you in service.

Q. I just don't have the time. My life is filled—school, work, family, outside activities, sports... and especially my friends. How can I fit one more thing into my life?

A. Discipleship is a way of life, not one more thing to schedule. Once you've made the decision to follow

Jesus, that's who you are. Discipleship is also more than just service work.

Q. The Holy Spirit is still pretty hard for me to understand. How can the Spirit help me to be a disciple?

A. Jesus promised the Holy Spirit to his followers. The Spirit guides and energizes us, giving us the help, strength, wisdom, courage, direction and guidance we need to live as his followers.

Q. I really want my life to make a difference but I'm not sure what I want to do. Where do I find the answers?

A. The answers are inside of you. Participating in different service opportunities can help you gain new experiences while you learn about yourself. Considering what you like to do and processing the experience by thinking about it, talking with others and praying will give you the needed insights. All that's left is to follow your heart.

Q. Most of the jobs in our Church seem to be for adults. Does the Church really want me involved?

A. The Church needs the energy, idealism and hope of youthful disciples. There are all kinds of great ministries to get involved with. We need and want you to be an active member of our Church.

Suggestions for Use

Teens may have their own questions about discipleship but may at first struggle to put them into words. This segment could be used as a start to a "Q&A" session about discipleship and service. Such a session could begin with the video segment and then lead into the additional questions of the teens in the group. Adults—

youth minister, priest, outreach coordinator, parishioner with missionary experience, college student in service organization—and young people in the group who have had some positive experiences of service can offer answers to the teens' questions.

The segment might also be used as individual discussion starters. Use one question and answer at a time and then work to develop the theme. Sister Patty's answers are necessarily short and so are not the complete and final word on the subjects she addresses. The teens themselves may have more to add to both the questions asked and the answers given.

Questions for Sharing

1. Have you ever thought of yourself as "holy"? What do you understand this to mean in your life?
2. Which answer of Sister Patty's made an impression on you? Why?
3. Which of the questions asked are ones you also have?
4. What about the Holy Spirit? What is your understanding of the Spirit and how it relates to discipleship?
5. How open is your parish to teens getting involved in ministry and service?
6. What ministry would you like to learn more about? Get involved with?

Musical Reflection Segment

(Begins approximately 24:30 into program.)

Summary

The music video for the song *We Can Make a Difference*, sung by Christian recording artist Jaci Velasquez, is a musical and visual challenge to all who view it to open our eyes to the needs in our world and do something about them. Images of violence and graffiti give way to young people working together to first cover over and then paint something upbeat and positive on a graffiti-covered school wall. In addition to images of people in need, we see young people responding to these needs and making a difference in the lives of others. Scenes of young people volunteering in soup kitchens, daycare centers, doing yard work, at prayer, and supporting and enjoying one another show evidence that young people really can, do and must “make a difference.”

Suggestions for Use

This segment may be used in a prayer setting. An outline of a sample prayer experience follows.

1. Gather the group in a circle—if possible sitting on the floor. Place a lighted candle in the center of the circle as a reminder of Jesus’ presence.
2. Open the prayer experience with the following or similar words: *Jesus, we know that you are with us here. We want to come to know you better—grow beyond our prejudices and fears so that we can see you in the face of everyone we meet. Help us to discover ways to reach out to others in need, so that they might also see you in us—in the kindness and generosity of our words and actions, in our courage to speak out on behalf of the oppressed, in our efforts to right an injustice. Send your Holy Spirit to help us live as your disciples.*

3. Scripture: Choose one of the following Scripture passages: The Call of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1: 4-8); The Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29-37); or The Judgment of the Nations (Matthew 25:31-46). Share the reading and offer an opportunity for members of the group to offer their own insights and reflections on the story shared—particularly how it applies or relates to their own lives.
4. Ritual: Pass the lighted candle around the group inviting each person to share something they are committing to do in Christian service of others.
5. Show the video segment.
6. Close with “Amen” and a group hug or sign of peace.

RESOURCES FOR FURTHER STUDY

1) Scripture references:

Many of the teachings of Jesus such as those found in Matthew 5-7; 25:31-46 and the teachings of Paul in Colossians 3-4:6; Philippians 1:27-4:9; Ephesians 4:25-6:17; and Galatians 6:1-10 give us guidance about how to live as disciples. Acts 2:42-47, 4:32-37 tells us about life in the early Church.

Some references to the Holy Spirit can be found in Isaiah 11:1-2; John 1:32, 3:8; 14:15-26, 15:26 and 16:13; Acts 2:1-41, 19:1-7; Romans 5:5, 8, 14:17, 15:16; 1 Corinthians 12:7-11; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 5:6-8; Matthew 3:16; Mark 1:10 and Luke 3:21-22.

2) *Catechism of the Catholic Church* references:

Themes covered in this program are found in the *Catechism* under:

Christian Holiness 2012-2016; Moral Life and Missionary/Witness 2044-2046; the Church, People

of God, Body of Christ, Temple of the Holy Spirit 781-810; Sacraments of Initiation 1212; Baptism 1213-1284; Confirmation 1285-1321; Eucharist 1322-1419; The Holy Spirit and the Church in the Liturgy 1091-1112; I Believe in the Holy Spirit 683-747; and Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit 1830-1832.

3) Available from St. Anthony Messenger Press

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