

Leader's Guide for
PARDON, PEACE AND STORIES OF RECONCILIATION
Pardon and Peace...Remembered

Overview of the Program

Jesus used the forgiving father in the Parable of the Prodigal Son to give us an idea of how ready God is to forgive us and how much God longs to be reconciled with us. In this video, viewers will see a touching story of human forgiveness—a modern-day Parable of the Prodigal Son. This is actually the story of *two* prodigal sons who both find ways to ask for and receive forgiveness. A third character, the granddaughter of the older “son,” is touched by her grandfather’s telling of these stories and allows the spirit of reconciliation to touch her heart as well.

Viewers familiar with the catechetical film *Pardon and Peace* produced in 1983 by Franciscan Communications will recognize this story as an updated and expanded version of that classic program. The title of that original program, *Pardon and Peace*, comes from the priest’s words of absolution in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The program helps us to see the spirit of reconciliation at work in those who had formerly closed their hearts to its transforming and healing power. It helps us to see the importance of human forgiveness and reveals to us something of the depth of God’s love and mercy.

Our story opens with John receiving an unexpected visit from his teenage granddaughter, Jennifer. She has just had a big fight with her parents. She declares that she hates them, is never going back home and will never speak to them again.

John listens to her story and begins to share a similar story of his own youth. He had had a big fight with his parents over a girl they didn’t approve of—Jennifer’s grandmother. He cut them off—a split that lasted 62 years. It wasn’t until his parents had been dead for some time that he made an attempt at reconciliation.

Jennifer is noticeably shocked and incredulous as she asks about how reconciliation finally took place. Her grandfather tells her that something he saw 15 years before changed his life. He was on his way home from a fishing trip when he gave a ride to a young hitchhiker named David. David too had left home after a fight with his dad, making a vow that he would never return. He traveled and bummed around until he hit bottom. Finally, writing a letter to his mother saying that he would like to come home, he indicated when he would be coming through their town and asked if she would leave a lamp burning in the front window if he was welcome back. If there was no light, he would go on with no hard feelings.

David's desire to return home so impressed John that he shared his own similar story with the youth. David asked him why he hadn't moved back home, to which John replied, "Neither me nor my folks could ever say, 'I'm sorry'—some folks never do."

It was dark when they entered David's hometown. David was so anxious that he couldn't look for the light himself but asked John to do so. When they reached the house, it was full of light! Every light in the house was turned on to welcome David home.

John sat in his car outside the house trying to "soak up that light," wishing that it was his house and that he was being welcomed home.

The "light" John saw that night was the realization that it wasn't too late to reconcile with his folks and let go of his anger. He decided to do what David had done—he wrote a letter to his parents asking if he could come back and saying that he was sorry. He took the letter and some flowers to the cemetery and left them at their graves. There was no house ablaze with lights, but he felt some of the light in his heart as well as regret for the lost years.

Having been touched by her grandfather's story, Jennifer announces that she should probably get home—her parents will be wondering where she is. She thanks her grandfather and leaves him looking at a wedding photograph of his parents.

Suggestions for Use

This story can help viewers reflect on several different aspects of the process of reconciliation—our need to ask for and offer forgiveness, the fact that we are forgivable, and God's generous mercy.

The story is so personally touching that viewers will likely be able to relate the story to some experience of their own. Once participants are personally engaged, it is a natural step to move toward sharing. This might take place in any of the following settings. Sharing might be facilitated by use of the questions that follow.

- *This story could be used in parish meetings for parents of children who are preparing to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Parents are models of God's forgiveness to their children. It is important that, as they help their children prepare for First Reconciliation, they know personally the abundant love and mercy of God. This story could help reiterate this message. It might also be used in a prayer service at such a meeting, as a contemporary retelling of the Parable of the Prodigal Son story in Luke's Gospel.*

- *Facilitators of a welcome home program for inactive Catholics who are returning to the Church might find this story a beautiful way to express the Church's and God's delight about their return.* It might also introduce or reinforce how helpful celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation may be for the participants.
- *RCIA facilitators may use this story in the preparation of participants for the celebration of Reconciliation.* Instruction on this sacrament needs to begin with personal experiences of reconciliation as an introduction to the theme of God's forgiveness. This story meets this need well.
- *Bereavement ministers may use this story with those who have lost a family member or friend.* The grieving process is often more difficult to navigate when there are unresolved issues with the deceased. John's story of reconciliation with his parents may serve as a model of one way to handle such a situation. It may also help participants in a bereavement group to share their own experiences and ideas.
- *Those ministering to adolescents or parents of adolescents may find a use for this program as they explore parent/adolescent relationship.* Adolescence is a period typically fraught with tension between parents and their adolescent child. Communication problems often abound with the biggest issue being the youth's desire for independence. It may serve as a revelation to the young people that teenagers' struggles with parents didn't begin with their own generation. It may help parents to remember their own youth and thus better connect to the feelings their child might be experiencing.

Suggested Procedure

1. Invite participants to recall a time when they felt emotionally separated from someone they loved because of misunderstanding or disagreement. Ask them to write down three or four feelings they experienced during this time of separation.
2. Introduce the video as the stories of three characters who each desired and took personal risks to bring about reconciliation with the family members from whom they had been separated.
3. View the video.
4. Ask participants to consider quietly if any of the feelings they wrote down were reflected in the story. Invite them to write down two or three emotional roadblocks that delay reconciliation—as found in the story or in their own lives.
5. Invite sharing of insights. If the group is small and knows each other well, share within the group. If the group is large or unfamiliar with each other, break into groups of two or three for sharing. Follow small group sharing with a chance to report insights gained with the larger group. Additional questions for sharing and/or reflection follow. -3-

Questions for Sharing

1. John tells David that some folks never can say “I’m sorry.” Why is saying “I’m sorry” so difficult for some people? Why is it so important?
2. How big a part does fear play in resistance to reconciliation? What other factors get in the way?
3. Have you ever waited with hope for someone else to make the first move toward reconciliation? What happened? Why did you wait for the other to act first?
4. How did you feel when another person was willing to forgive you? What effect did this have on your relationship?
5. Some people say that the story in Scripture (Luke 15:11-32) on which this story is based should be called *The Forgiving Father* rather than *The Prodigal Son*. What does this story tell us about God’s mercy?
6. Do you need to ask/offer forgiveness to anyone now? What about God? Is God waiting to forgive you?
7. Have you ever refused to ask for/offer forgiveness? Did it hurt you or the other party more?

Sample Prayer Experience

1. The leader introduces the prayer experience in these or similar words:
God wants all creation to be reconciled and at peace—men and women at peace with each other, the earth and God. This is God’s dream of harmony for our world. Our sin affects this harmony and the realization of this dream. We need to be reconciled—to come together again—with those with whom we are at odds. Let us reflect for a moment on the areas where reconciliation is most needed in our lives...
2. A time of silence follows.
3. View the video.
4. Invite each member of the group to reflect on an action that may help bring about reconciliation in their lives. In a small group, encourage sharing as a way to commit to that action. In a large group, participants may offer one word that symbolizes the action or write their commitment to action on a slip of paper to be added to a common basket.

5. Preface and invitation to share petitions with the following or similar words:

Two of God's great gifts to us are free will and God's abundant mercy. We know that we may choose to sin, but we also know that we can be forgiven for our sins and begin again. Just as God forgives us, we need to offer each other forgiveness.

Sometimes asking for forgiveness is difficult for us; we cannot do it without God's help. Sometimes the temptation to sin is great; we cannot resist it without God's help.

(Model one or two petitions for the group.)

6. Pray together the Lord's Prayer.
7. Conclude with a song reflecting the theme of reconciliation and share a sign of peace when the song ends.

This program might also be used within a communal reconciliation service.

Resources for Further Study

1. Scripture references:

Scripture references to support this story include the Parable of the Prodigal Son (or Forgiving Father) in Luke 15:11-32 and other parables of divine mercy: the Lost Sheep (Luke 15:1-7) and the Lost Silver Piece (Luke 15:8-10).

Examples of Jesus forgiving sins appear in Luke 19:1-10 (Zacchaeus); Luke 7:36-50 (Penitent Woman) and Mark 2:1-12 (Paralytic at Capernaum).

Support for the Sacrament of Reconciliation can be found in John 20:19-23 and 2 Corinthians 5:16-21.

Guidance in right living appear in Matthew 5-7; Galatians 5:7-26; 1 John 1:6-10; Ephesians 4-6; Romans 12-15:13 and Exodus 20:1-17.

Prayers of repentance can be found in Psalm 51; Luke 11:1-4 and Matthew 6:9-15.

Old Testament invitations to repent are found in Joel 2:12-13; Isaiah 1:16-18 and Ezekiel 36:25-32.

2. *Catechism of the Catholic Church* references:

The *Catechism* addresses several of the topics found in this video: The Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation (1422-1498); Reconciliation with God (980); The Role of the Holy Spirit (1099-1103); Obligation to Receive the Sacrament (2042); Preparation to Receive Communion (1385) and Sacramental Seal of Confession (2490).

3. Resources for further study from St. Anthony Messenger Press and Franciscan

Communications: For a complete and updated listing of our resources, visit

<http://catalog.AmericanCatholic.org>.

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Leader's Guide for
PARDON, PEACE AND STORIES OF RECONCILIATION
Skateboard

“Values are as much caught as taught.”

Theological Orientation

Learning to make mature, loving choices is an ongoing process for all of us—a process that began when we were very young. The film *Skateboard* tells a story which can help children in Grades 2-4 think about the kinds of choices we learn to make as we grow.

As the work of Kohlberg and others has indicated, children at this age often are not capable of choosing a course of action simply because “it’s the ‘right’ thing to do,” or to weigh the pros and cons and choose the most “loving” way of acting. Very often their choices are limited to behaving in a way they’ve been told to behave (told by a person in authority), and they will act either in hope of a reward or in fear of punishment. The reward can be anything from a simple smile and a pat on the back to something more tangible, a treat of some kind. So basically, when a child of this age is expected to behave in a certain way, he/she wonders (consciously or unconsciously), “What’s in it for me?” Children are not “bad” or “selfish” for approaching the world from this perspective, “What’s in it for me?” They are simply children.

However, what we, as their parents and teachers are challenged with (among other things) is guiding our children toward making more Christian decisions—that is, choices that are made out of love for ourselves, for each other and for God.

The first and most important thing we must do now and throughout their lives, as we challenge and invite them to grow is to love them totally, just as they are, right where they are. Around the ages of 7-9, children want very much to please their parents and teachers. Knowing they have our unconditional love is an important step toward reaching out and learning to care about other people.

Secondly, children need to know that they are enjoyed and respected as very important people. They love to “make a difference” in the lives of others. They are proud to be able to help. Consequently, in “disciplining” children, in guiding them as they learn to make responsible choices, an effective measure is to invite the child to be a part of the process. Ask what steps he/she feels ought to be taken to correct a situation. They will often need your guidance—they tend to be rather hard on themselves—but feeling that they are part of what’s happening builds their self-respect and therefore their generosity in

loving others and wanting to be better at loving others.

Finally, it's crucial that we be good examples to our children. We must live as we hope they will live. We must be courageous lovers and reach out even if we're not quite sure "what's in it for us." We need to take the time to examine our own decisions to be sure we aren't acting out of fear or in search of a false security, but are making truly generous, loving choices. We need to live our lives honestly, with a deep believe that "the truth will set us free." We need to allow ourselves room to make mistakes, being gentle and loving with ourselves, as well as with our children.

It's important to remember that all of this is a *process*. We will never reach a point where we've "made it." There will always be room for improvement, and it's never too late to begin, no matter how many times we fail. We are all in this process of learning to love together. We and our children can be great teachers for each other.

Application to the Sacrament of Reconciliation

Skateboard is an excellent resource in preparing children for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. It could be shown at any point during preparation for the sacrament. Perhaps you would like to show the film at the beginning AND at the end of your program. As the various parts of Reconciliation are discussed throughout the program, Sandy's experience could be referred to. It would then be a good review at the end of the program and a "treat" for the children to see it again.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a celebration of our restored friendship with the Lord, each other and with ourselves. When we are in touch with our neediness, our brokenness, our limitations and when we can be grateful for our selflessness, our friendships, our lives, we can truly *celebrate* the Sacrament of Reconciliation. It's not just a time to say, "I'm sorry." It's not just a time for "confession." It's a time to rejoice in our oneness with God, to rejoice in our decisions to deepen that relationship, and to share with the rest of God's Kingdom, the Church, as we all try again and again to renew our intimacy with the Lord.

It is recommended that the group leader(s) view and discuss the film ahead of time, as well as discussing their own feelings about the attitudes toward reconciliation and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. This would also be a good time to take a look at the lesson procedures, to decide on possible revisions to be made in order to best serve the group.

Media Orientation

Skateboard is a 12-minute film, created especially for children in Grades 2-4, as an aid for parents and teachers in guiding these children as they learn to make loving choices. The story is presented from the

viewpoint of the child. It proceeds from Sandy's excitement about buying a skateboard with her birthday money, to her arguing with her conscience before taking the forbidden ride down the hill, to her fears about being arrested for her disobedience, or worse still, excluded from her parents' love. For this reason, children easily identify with the story and will enjoy seeing the film more than once.

Storyline

Skateboard is a story of an event that teaches a young girl something of reconciliation. Her name is Sandy, and the film begins as she is leaving the sporting goods store with her parents after having purchased a skateboard with her birthday money. As they drive home and are turning the corner to go up the hill on which their home is located, Sandy's father narrowly avoids a collision with a young man coming down the hill on a skateboard. In the panic of the moment, Sandy's father turns to her and sternly warns her, "If I ever catch you doing something that stupid, your skateboard-riding days are over." Sandy assures him that she'll be careful, and he tells her she must stay off the hill altogether.

As Sandy's skateboarding skills improve, she becomes bored with skating in the safe area agreed upon with her parents, and, after some argument with her conscience (we can see the "conscience" on the screen as another Sandy), Sandy decides on just one trip down the hill, riding stomach-down on the skateboard. On her way down, she gains more momentum than she expected to gain and discovers she is unable to stop, even though she hears the siren of an approaching fire truck. The fire truck is able to stop in time for Sandy to roll under it. Once she is safely across the street, she runs away in fear, to talk with her conscience about how she might escape her predicament. She decides to run away so her parents can't call the police and have her put in Juvenile Hall. But first, she decides, she must have a change of clothes to bring with her.

On returning home, Sandy sees Captain Jim of the fire department talking with her parents and knows then that they know what happened. She runs to her room to hide, where her parents find her.

Sandy's mother tells her that what she has done was obviously very dangerous, but she also had broken a promise.

After assuring Sandy of their love (and that they wouldn't call the police), her parents and Sandy decide she'll give up her skateboard for two weeks. Sandy is relieved and happy to re-discover her parents' unconditional love.

Suggested Procedure

1. (Before viewing the film)

Ask the children: What have your parents warned you about not doing? Why have they given you

this warning? What might happen if you decided not to listen to them?

2. Have the children fold a sheet of drawing paper in half and draw and color on one half of the paper a picture of themselves doing something their parents have warned them against doing. Have them draw on the other half of the paper a picture of what they think might happen if they went against their parents' warning.
3. Say: Today we're going to see a film that tells a story about a girl named Sandy. Sandy's parents gave her a warning against doing something very dangerous. Let's see how Sandy handled the situation.
4. Show the film.
5. Discussion Questions

a.) Retelling the story:

What did Sandy buy with her birthday money?

On their way home, they almost hit a young man on a skateboard. What did Sandy's father tell her?

Where was she never supposed to use her skateboard?

What happened when she was nearly down the hill? (She heard the fire truck and couldn't stop.)

What happened at the bottom of the hill?

Why did Sandy run away and hide?

When she went home for a change of clothes, whom did Sandy see her parents talking to?

Where did she run to hide? What did her parents say to her?

b.) What was the warning that Sandy's father had given her?

Why did she decide to skate down the hill anyway?

Why do you think Sandy's mother and father wanted her to stay off the hill?

c.) Who was the girl in white? (Sandy's conscience)

What is your conscience?

Can you really *see* your conscience, like we see Sandy's conscience in the film?

Do people always listen to the good advice given them by their conscience? (The teacher may wish to make it clear that conscience is not separate from, but integral to oneself.)

d.) How do you think Sandy's parents handled the problem of Sandy's going down the hill after they had told her not to?

Do you like what they did or do you think they should have done something different?

What did Sandy decide she could do to help make up for her wrong choice?

Do you think that was a good idea?

What else might she have chose to do?

- e.) What were the two wrong choices Sandy made?
 1. Going down the hill endangered herself and others.
 2. She broke a promise.
- f.) Sandy's mother told Sandy, "Just being sorry isn't enough..." What do you think she meant by this?

6. Follow-up Activities

(Choose one or more of the following activities.)

- a.) Give the children another sheet of drawing paper and have them draw a picture of themselves doing something to make up for the wrong choice they drew about before they viewed the film.
- b.) Discuss with the children some of the hurtful choices we make from day to day. (Example: Speaking unkindly to another person, leaving people out of games, pushing to be first, lack of consideration of the feelings of other people.) Discuss how the children might make up for these choices when they happen and encourage them to report for the group the *nice* things they see happening and the *good* choices they make themselves. (If "tattling" has been a problem in your classroom or home, this can be an effective step towards eliminating it. The children are proud to report when they notice these positive "events" and the children being reported on are honored too!) Reward the "reporters" and the "reportees" by placing them first in line for recess or letting them choose the story for the day or pass out papers. If you're working with a family group instead of a class, your reward might be a favorite dessert, an extra 10 minutes before bedtime, an extra bedtime story, or playing a game together as a family—to celebrate each other and growing up!
- c.) **PRAY TOGETHER**

You may wish to copy the group prayer in this guide and pass out parts to individuals in the group, or you may wish to spend some time having the children create their own prayer service, perhaps using this as a model.

Arrange the group in a circle, with a candle in the center of the circle. Say: "Jesus told us that he is the light of the world. We have a candle burning to remind ourselves that he is with us and loves us very much, no matter what we do."

Reader 1: Lord, we try to be good, but sometimes we forget or we get too tired and we are selfish.

All: We're sorry, Lord.

Reader 2: We want to love each other the way you love us, but sometimes we leave people out of our games or say unkind things to them.

All: We're sorry, Lord.

Reader 3: You've given us our families to teach us about your love, but sometimes we fight with them.

All: We're sorry, Lord.

Reader 4: You have given us a beautiful world and have asked us to take care of it, but sometimes we are destructive or wasteful.

All: We're sorry, Lord.

Reader 5: All people are your children, but sometimes it bothers us when someone is different from us and then we are mean to them.

All: We're sorry, Lord.

Leader/Teacher: A long, long time ago, Jesus taught his friends a special prayer. Let's join hands and say the prayer that Jesus gave us.

All: "Our Father..."

You may end by giving each other the Sign of Peace or by singing a song you all enjoy, perhaps a song being practiced for your celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

- d.) You may wish to read the books with the theme of reconciliation and forgiveness to the children and later have the children make their own storybooks to read to the group. Some books that may help you get started are:

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe by C.S. Lewis

The Quarrelling Book by Charlotte Zolotow

The Hating Book by Charlotte Zolotow

The Butter Battle Book by Dr. Seuss

Leader's guide written by Peggy Bradley

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Leader's Guide for
PARDON, PEACE AND STORIES OF RECONCILIATION
The Stray

“The theological problem today is to find the art of drawing religion out of man, not pumping it into him. The redemption has happened. The Holy Spirit is in men. The art is to help men become what they are.”

—K. Rahner

Orientation

At the heart of all the Gospel parables is the good news that sinners are loved, that the poor and the strayed are God's people. In these simple moral tales, Christ is saying repeatedly, “I know what God is like, so good to the poor, so glad when the lost are found...so merciful to the despairing, the helpless, and the needy.”

The Parable of the Lost Sheep (Mt 18:12-14; Lk 15:3-7) is a prototype of this message of mercy. In biblical times, it was Christ's reply to the Pharisees' criticism that he talked with outcasts and ate with sinners. Today, the parable warns us similarly against any kind of self-righteousness, but it speaks to us more immediately of God's “humanness,” of his concern for the losers and for the unwary troublemakers that most of us become in moments of weakness or of sin.

The Stray is a film about one such very young “unwary troublemaker” and the very human shepherd who is responsible for him. Instead of 100 sheep in a pasture, there are 12 active, wide-eyed children at a zoo, accompanied by a harried chaperone who drives a yellow school bus. The interaction of driver, children and animals transforms the scriptural tale into a contemporary adventure full of fun and fantasy, illuminated by the ageless truth of God's love.

As a filmic parable, *The Stray* employs all the characteristics of the form, calling for reflection and insight by enticing the audience to pursue hidden meanings while still unaware of all that is involved. Among its pattern of meanings, the more apparent themes include: the power of our desires to distract us, the anguish and affirmation of being lost and then found again, the ambivalent joy of being responsible for and caring about another, and the influence on the whole when any part of it is in jeopardy. But above all, *The Stray*, like the scriptural story it recreates, affirms the joy of community in communion.

Content

An adult chaperone, doubling as a bus driver, sets out to take 12 youngsters to the zoo. In the process of locating the children at their various pick-up spots, he has each child choose an animal and a number by which to identify himself.

From the beginning, Number 12, who calls himself a tiger, tends to get side-tracked from the

group. And when the children arrive at the zoo, it is Number 12 who wanders over to the balloon vendor and soon has all the children shouting for balloons. The chaperone says a very definite “No” to their request and proceeds to give directions about staying together and about what they are to do should they get separated from the group. He then has them check in to the Children’s Zoo by counting off, a tactic he uses repeatedly in the hope of keeping track of his charges.

Subsequent action shows the children riding a turtle, playing with a goat, feeding an elephant, watching a seal show, and wondering at the mystery of a hatching egg. Again Number 12 has a way of falling over fences where he shouldn’t and doing unexpected things such as eating food intended for the animals. A guided tour to see the rhinos, giraffes and zebras concludes at the hippo’s enclosure. There Number 12 learns from a hippo-like spectator with a menacing voice that the animals who stray from their herd are the ones the hunters catch and sell to the zoo.

In the meantime, the balloon vendor has by accident let go of one of his red treasures, and the wind is carrying the balloon high over the aviary where Number 12 first spots it. Fascinated, he begins to chase it, not hearing the loudspeaker announcement that the zoo is about to close and not heeding the fact that the rest of the group has started for the bus, counting off for a chaperone too weary to realize that he has failed to hear, “I’m a tiger, Number 12.”

When the balloon finally eludes him, Number 12 realizes that the other children are gone. He runs in panic back to the aviary, where he waits dejectedly for someone to find him. All alone, he grows increasingly afraid and fantasizes being chased by the large “hippo-man” whom he now envisions dressed as a hunter and carrying a giant net. His fantasy ends with jeering faces mocking his plight.

By this time, the chaperone has missed Number 12 and is frantically searching for him throughout the now silent zoo. Stern-faced, he confronts the tearful “stray,” but adult exasperation soon gives way as the youngster whispers a woeful “I’m a tiger, Number 12.” Back at the bus, the worried children greet their driver with cheers as he emerges from the zoo, Number 12 riding on his shoulders and carrying balloons for everyone.

Discussion

1. Before viewing the film with younger children, explain briefly what a parable is. It might prove helpful to give an example of a parable (other than the Lost Sheep) and to interpret it together with the children so that they see how Christ used this kind of story to help us understand ourselves and God’s plan for our happiness.
2. A few general questions to interest and involve the children might precede the film.
 - a. What do you think it is like to be all alone and lost in a strange place?
 - b. Has anyone here ever been lost? When?

- c. Can you describe what it is like to come home to the people you love after you have been away from them for a long time?
3. After the film has been shown, a basic understanding of the storyline could be the basis of a series of questions.
- a. What is the bus driver doing as the film begins? Why do we see the bus turning around and going back and forth so many times? Can grown-up people get lost too?
 - b. Why do you think the bus driver has each of the children choose an animal and a number? How many children are there?
 - c. What are some of the things about the boy who is “Tiger—Number 12” that show at the very beginning that the bus driver will have to work very hard to keep him with the group? (He is up in a tree when the bus comes for him. He is standing at the front of the bus when all the others are sitting down. He wanders over to the balloon man when the group is still at the bus.)
 - d. Why do you think the bus driver did not want the children to have the balloons at first? Is the bus driver as gruff as he sounds?
 - e. What does the bus driver tell to children to do if they get separated or lost from the group?
 - f. When the children are visiting the different animals, were there some times when the bus driver had to take special care of Number 12? (when he starts falling over railing, when he wanders off to buy and eat some of the animal food)
 - g. As the stay at the zoo gets longer, how does the bus driver feel? Why is he tired?
 - h. What do you suppose Number 12 is thinking about when the big man at the hippo pool tells him about how the animals who stray from their herd get caught by the hunters and put in the zoo?
 - i. How does the balloon which Number 12 sees at the aviary first get into the zoo?
 - j. Why do you think Number 12 chases after the balloon? What are the other children and the driver doing at this time?
 - k. When the balloon floats away and Number 12 sees that he is not with the other children, what does he do? What warnings does he remember hearing?
 - l. As he waits all alone for someone to find him, what do you think Number 12 is feeling? Is he really being chased by a hunter with a big net? Are all those laughing people really there? What do these make-believe pictures tell you about how Number 12 feels being lost?
 - m. When the tired bus driver discovers that Number 12 is missing, what does he do? Is he worried?
 - n. How do you think the other children feel as they wait in the bus for Number 12 to be found?
 - o. How does the bus driver look when he first finds Number 12? Does his face change when he sees the tears on Number 12’s face?

- p. Why is there so much happiness and excitement when the driver returns to the bus with Number 12? Why do you think he now has balloons for all the children?
- 4. The animals in the film will naturally interest the children. Let them name their favorite animal and what they like about it. See if they can tell you which animals in the film showed fear, curiosity, happiness. This discussion might provide a good opportunity to explore the idea that in a community everybody shares what happens to any one person, whether it be happy or sad.
- 5. A comparison between God and the bus driver might also be pursued.
 - a. How is the bus driver like God?
 - b. Does God want us to be happy and to enjoy all the good things he has made?
 - c. Does God give us rules so that we won't get lost or separated from him?
 - d. Does he tell us what we should do if we do get lost?

Further Experiences

1. Create a celebration with drawings, music, and simple prayers by the children to say how good it is to belong to God's flock.
2. *The Stray* might be used effectively as a way of preparing younger children for the Sacrament of Reconciliation since the film points out how God understands our weakness and cherishes us all the more when we turn to him for help.
3. The children might enjoy making their own mural-movie on a roll of shelf paper to illustrate one of the other parables concerning God's love for the lost or strayed, i.e., The Prodigal Son (Lk 15:11-32) or The Lost Coin (Lk 15:8-10).

Leader's guide written by Corinne Hart, I.H.M., Ph.D.

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NOTE: This guide can be printed and cut down in size to be stored with the DVD version of this video program. Simply cut 3/4 inch from each side of the page for a guide that, when folded, can be placed inside of the DVD case or attached to the DVD or VHS case.

For use with: *The Stray* on VHS (7109V) and DVD (D2004).

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Leader's Guide for
PARDON, PEACE AND STORIES OF RECONCILIATION

El Descarriado

Introducción

Este video es un instrumento para el Catequista o Animador, con la meta de facilitar el aprendizaje de aquellos que lo ven.

Se recomienda que lo vea antes de utilizarlo con el grupo y que prepare la discusión que sigue después de la proyección de este video.

Hemos preparado algunas sugerencias de presentación. Siéntense libres de utilizarlas y adaptarlas a su situación particular.

Descripción Del Material

- *Nota Importante:* El animador, previo a la reunión, ha de leer esta ficha siguiendo los pasos indicados. Después preparará la profundización del tema y la discusión.
- *Título:* *El Descarriado*
- *Objetivo:* Que el grupo acoja el llamado que nos hace Jesucristo a colaborar en su tarea de buscar las ovejas perdidas de este mundo.
- *Producción:* TeleKETICS—Comunicaciones Franciscanas
- *Dirección:* Tony Frangakis
- *Duración:* 15 minutos
- *Destinatario:* Niños, Jóvenes y Adultos
- *Resumen Del Contenido:* Una historia encantadora acerca de 12 niños de primer año y su visita al zoológico. Un acontecimiento feliz hasta que el niño No 12, el “tigre” problemático del curso, corre tras un globo sin rumbo y se pierde. El ceñudo conductor del autobús, que ahora además estaba agotado, repentinamente adquiere nuevas energías y se dedica a buscar a su niño problema con todo el esfuerzo de que es capaz puede. Una parábola moderna basada en la historia de la oveja perdida.

Desarrollo Del Video-Foro Jóvenes Y Adultos

- *Acogida:* Saludos, presentación, etc.
- *Oración:* Que tenga relación con el tema a tratar.
- *Motivación:* Los invito a disfrutar de este video en la cual se nos narra una experiencia que podemos haber vivido más de alguna vez. Procuremos descubrir cuál es su relación con nuestra misión de cristianos.

- *Proyección:*

Trabajo Grupal: Se sugiere al Animador: el dialogo se puede hacer con el grupo total o dividirlo en pequeños equipos. Lo importante es la máxima participación de cada uno. Se comentan las siguientes preguntas:

1. ¿Qué es lo que más nos llama la atención en este video?
2. ¿A qué parábola hace referencia el video?
3. ¿A qué personaje de la parábola representa el conductor?
4. ¿A qué personaje de la parábola representa el niño perdido?
5. ¿Qué conducta tuvo permanentemente el niño “tigre 12”?
6. ¿Cuál fue la experiencia que vivió el niño al alejarse del grupo al cual pertenecía?
7. ¿Hemos tenido nosotros alguna vez una experiencia semejante?
8. ¿Por qué compra globos y golosinas para los niños el conductor al final cuando ya se van y no al principio, como se lo habían pedido ellos?

- *Plenario:* Si se ha trabajado en pequeños equipos se da cuenta de las conclusiones a las cuales se llegaron.

- *Profundización:* La tarea encargada por Cristo de evangelizar a los hombres de todas las épocas y lugares, tiene como última meta el recuperar las ovejas perdidas de nuestra sociedad (Lc 18:12-14).

Ser un pastor que cuida las ovejas, supone mucho amor y paciencia y tener presente que es una labor no siempre bien comprendida o aceptada por el mundo (Mt 10:34-36).

La alegría que produce el encontrar la oveja perdida, supera en mucho los dolores y sufrimientos que ha causado su alejamiento. Esto es algo que debemos tener siempre presente cuando nos sentimos agotados (Lc 15:20-24).

Muchos hoy en día viven alejados de Dios y esto es una realidad que aumenta gradualmente y se hace a la vez más profunda. Esto exige una rápida acción de nuestra parte.

Debemos asumir nuestra tarea de evangelizadores como algo fundamental que da sentido a toda nuestra existencia. Sólo así tendremos la certeza de que la palabra de Dios llegará a todas las ovejas perdidas de este mundo (Jn 4:34-38).

1. *DESPEDIDA:*

A) Si el grupo tiene ya una experiencia previa se sugiere comenzar pidiendo perdón a Dios por las veces en que hemos sido flojos en la búsqueda de las ovejas perdidas. Enseguida se toman todos de los brazos entrecruzados y alguien lee (Lc 18:12-14). A continuación y en la misma postura se reza el Padre Nuestro.

B) Si el grupo es nuevo simplemente se toman todos del brazo entrecruzándolos, se lee el Evangelio y se termina con el “Padre Nuestro.”

*Los brazos entrecruzados representa una comunidad que se mantiene estrechamente unida a su Divino Pastor.

Desarrollo Video—Foro Niños

Discusión

1. Antes de ver el video con los niños explíqueseles brevemente el contenido de la parábola. Quizá sea de utilidad citarles el ejemplo de otra parábola (no la de La Oveja Perdida) para comentarla con los niños para que vean como Cristo use este tipo de historia para ayudarnos a comprendernos a nosotros mismos y lo que Dios ha designado para nuestra felicidad.
2. Las siguientes preguntas podrán despertar el interés y involucrar a los niños antes de ver el video.
 - a) ¿Qué creen que se siente al encontrarse uno solo y perdido en un lugar extraño?
 - b) ¿Se ha perdido alguno de ustedes? ¿Cuándo?
 - c) ¿Pueden describir lo que se siente al regresar a casa después de haber estado lejos de los seres amados por mucho tiempo?
3. Después de haber exhibido el video puede sugerir una serie de preguntas. Por ejemplo:
 - a) ¿Qué está haciendo el chofer del autobús cuando empieza el video? ¿Por qué vemos el autobús dando vueltas tantas veces? ¿También los adultos pueden perderse?
 - b) ¿Por qué creen ustedes que el chofer hace escoger a cada niño un nombre de animal y un número? ¿Cuántos niños son?
 - c) ¿Cómo sabemos desde el principio que será difícil para el chofer hacer al “tigre, número 12” permanecer con el grupo? Se ha trepado a un árbol cuando llega el autobús.
 - d) Cuando el globo se aleja flotando y el número 12 ve que no está con los otros niños ¿qué hace? ¿Cuáles advertencias recuerda haber oído?
 - e) Cuando espera que alguien lo encuentre ¿qué creen ustedes que siente el número 12? ¿De veras lo va persiguiendo un cazador con una red grande? La gente que lo rodea burlándose ¿está realmente allí?
 - f) ¿Qué nos dicen estas escenas imaginarias de lo que siente el número 12 al verse perdido?
 - g) ¿Cómo creen que se sienten los otros niños esperando que el chofer encuentre al número 12?
 - h) ¿Qué cara pone el chofer al encontrar al número 12? ¿Cambia su expresión al ver la cara llorosa del número 12?
 - i) ¿Por qué hay alborozo y alboroto cuando regresa al autobús el chofer con el número 12? ¿Por qué creen ustedes que ahora trae globos para todos los niños?
4. Los animales en el video despiertan espontáneamente el interés de los niños. Que digan cual es su

animal favorito y que es lo que les gusta de él. Véase si pueden decir ¿cuáles animales se ven atemorizados? ¿contentos? Esta discusión puede dar oportunidad para explorar la idea de cómo en una comunidad todos participan de lo que le sucede a una persona, sea la ocasión feliz o triste.

5. Se puede comparar a Dios con el chofer del autobús. Por ejemplo:
 - a) ¿Cómo se asemeja el chofer a Dios?
 - b) ¿Quiere Dios que seamos felices y que gocemos de todas las cosas buenas que ha hecho?
 - c) ¿Nos da Dios reglas para qué no nos perdamos ni nos separemos de El?
 - d) ¿Nos dice que debemos hacer si nos perdemos?

Otras Experiencias

1. Organice una fiesta usando dibujos, música y oraciones sencillas con los niños demostrando lo bueno que es pertenecer al rebaño de Dios.
2. El Descarriado puede usarse eficazmente para preparar a los niños para la confesión. Ya que el video demuestra que Dios comprende nuestras debilidades y nos aprecia más cuando volvemos hacia El para que nos ayude.

Leader's guide written by Corinne Hart, I.H.M., Ph.D.

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For use with: *El Descarriado* on VHS (7516S) and DVD (D2004).

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Leader's Guide for
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The Way Home

Summary

In this film, the Parable of the Prodigal Son is retold from the viewpoint of the son who remained with the father. The older son is excited because today is the day that they are going to pick up a new delivery truck—the son's thoughts upon awakening are of the truck. The past has evidently been difficult for him—as well as for the father. The son goes to the dealership and awaits the arrival of his father so that they can take delivery of the new truck. But the plans are thrown awry by the return of the other brother. The film concentrates on the response of the older brother to the unexpected arrival of the “prodigal son.” This is a story about reconciliation, its meaning and application to daily life. It is designed to be used in conjunction with, or explanation of, the Rite of Reconciliation.

Aims

1. To examine the Parable of the Prodigal Son from a new viewpoint.
2. To gain an awareness of the sacramental character of reconciliation.
3. To achieve a deeper understanding of God's love for us.

Questions

1. How do you think you would have reacted if you were Joey?
2. What different methods are there for expressing forgiveness?
3. How does Papa's attitude throughout the film compare with your idea of God?
4. What would you say to Joey?

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For use with: *The Way Home: A Parable of Love* on VHS (7115V) and DVD (D2004).

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Leader's Guide for
PARDON, PEACE AND STORIES OF RECONCILIATION
Camino a Casa

Introducción

Este video es un instrumento para el Catequista o Animador, con la meta de facilitar el aprendizaje de aquellos que lo ven.

Se recomienda que la persona que utilice este video lo vea antes de utilizarlo con el grupo y que prepare la discusión que sigue después de la proyección del video.

Hemos preparado algunas sugerencias de presentación. Siéntense libres de utilizarlas y adaptarlas a su situación particular.

Descripción Del Material

Nota Importante: El animador, previo a la reunión, ha de leer esta ficha siguiendo los pasos indicados. Después preparará la profundización del tema y la discusión.

Título: Camino a Casa

Tema: Versión contemporánea del hijo pródigo (centrada en la actitud de perdón del padre).

Objetivo: Hacer conciente al grupo de la actitud de perdón, y la relación de ésta con el sacramento de reconciliación.

Producción: TeleKETICS—Comunicaciones Franciscanas

Dirección: Nicholas Frangakis

Duración: 16 minutos

Destinatario: Adultos, jóvenes, matrimonios

Resumen Del Contenido

Ralfi es un hijo rebelde que vuelve a su casa después de largo tiempo. Su regreso colma de felicidad a su padre, que gasta gran parte de sus ahorros en celebrarlo.

Pero Joey su hijo mayor que trabaja con él y le está cerca, se siente indignado. El trabaja duro en los negocios de sus padres y su mujer está pronta a dar a luz, sin embargo considera que a él nunca le han mostrado tanto amor. Por eso se margina de la celebración.

El padre, que ha mostrado todo su gozo con el regreso del hijo menor, ahora revela la tristeza que le produce la actitud del hijo mayor y le ruega que vuelva a su casa.

Guia De Uso

Al final del video hemos incluido a un comentador que plantea algunas preguntas para discutir en grupo.

Las siguientes son otras preguntas posibles que usted puede agregar.

1. ¿Con qué personaje del video te sientes más identificado por sus actitudes, sentimientos y situación?
¿Por qué?
2. ¿Evalua la actitud de los personajes principales, considerando lo positivo y lo negativo.
3. ¿Me he sentido amado alguna vez de manera tan incondicional como este padre amaba a sus hijos?
¿Soy yo capaz de amar así?
4. ¿Qué tengo yo en común con Joey? Qué resistencias tengo en mi para perdonar?
5. ¿Qué semejanzas encuentras entre el video y el sacramento de la reconciliación?

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For use with: *Camino a Casa* on VHS (7510S) and DVD (D2004).

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