**WELCOME:** (10-15 minutes)

Hello and Welcome and thank you for coming and giving your time to grow in your faith. As we go through today we will have the chance to get to work alongside one another and I want to encourage you to get to know some people you don’t know that well. We all want to hear your story… who are you? What makes you shine? Now I realize that that might be impossible to accomplish with so many of you and in one day but that is the exciting part of meeting someone. Everyone has a story and each of you matter and are important. I am not just saying this, I ***believe*** it, and so does the team who will be accompanying us on this retreat. Just so that everyone knows who is here to journey with us we are going to introduce ourselves and since today is about being called they will say how they feel called.

Now that you know our names and such we are going to divide into the teams that we will be working in for the day. Look for those with the same color dot on their name tags and let’s see who can do this the quickest.

**Divide the teens and small group leaders** (5 minutes) Once you are in your groups please take a couple minutes to get to know everyone in your group.

**Teamwork Ice Breaker (cup stacking game)** 15 minutes

We are going to do a quick activity in our groups to get to know each other better and to work together as a team. How this activity works is that you have a stack of 10 cups and 2 rubber bands with strings attached to them. You must with your team use the rubber bands with the strings to carry your cups over to this line and build a pyramid. You cannot touch the cups with your hands and you must hold the strings at the very end. Both rubber band teams must place some cups on the pyramid. You will get 10 minutes to accomplish this. Ready… Go! (Don’t have time for this this time around)

**Process**

Who found this easy? Who found this hard? Why… etc

**Intro to the Day and Prayer** (ask the Holy Spirit to open us up for an encounter with Him as we go out and meet Him in the day to day) 10 minutes

Points to touch on:

* Unique day because going out and sharing an experience
* The theme of the day is your calling- Christ called each of us here how are we called
* Often times we are told in order to know who you are you need to look into yourself however our identiy is not with in us but in God we are chosen. We are called.
* Today we are going to look at the different ways we are called. Called to serve, called to love, called to pray and called to live.
* The first that we will be looking at is a call to serve and we are going to begin our day with a prayer centered on that
* Sending them out to get to their site. Remind them they are working in their community representing their families, St. Katharine’s, their peers, most of all you are the face of Christ and as such we need to make sure to show respect and kindness to all we meet even and especially when we are uncomfortable.

**Confirmation talk-**

* While getting ready with door hangers ask them their stories. What are you looking forward to Senior year? Are you nervous or excited about the big changes? Where do you want to go from here? What are you thinking about doing after high school? How do you prepare for what is ahead? What gives you strength? What about in faith? What is their faith to them? Where do you want to go in your faith? What will give you strength to do that?
* We are called to go out and serve and love others.
* Pope Francis wrote an Encyclical addressed not only to the faithful but the entire world calling all of us to care for the gifts we have been given. It is rooted in scripture, tratidion and also the Holy Father’s wisdom on what he sees is needed for all of us to practice. ( give more background on Laudato Si) In it he states that: “True wisdom, as the fruit of self-examination, dialogue and generous encounter between persons, is not acquired by a mere accumulation of data which eventually leads to overload and confusion, a sort of mental pollution. Real relationships with others, with all the challenges then entail, now tend to be replaced by a type of internet communication which enables us to choose or eliminate relationships at whim, thus giving rise to a new type of contrived emotion which has more to do with devices and displays than with other people and with nature. Today’s media does enable us to communicate and to share our knowledge and affections. Yet at times they also shield us from direct contact with the pain, the fears and the joys of others and the complexity of their personal experiences. For this reason, we should be concerned that, alongside the exiting possibilities offered by these media, a deep and melancholic dissatisfaction with interpersonal relations, or a harmful sense of isolation, can also arise.”
* We are going to try to experience what Pope Francis is calling us to do by going out and knocking on people’s doors and tell them we care.
* How do we receive the ability to do what is hard? To love those who may not love you back and keep going?
* Go out and serve
* Ask them what that was like to go up to a door and knock on it. What was it like to be praying on the sidewalk while watching friends knock on the door? Was this experience hard? Easy? Tiring? Energizing? Why?
* Our strength as Christians doesn’t come from us but from God. He gives it to us through the Sacraments. The sacrament of confirmation gives us spiritual muscles to reach out and be the hands and feet of Christ- to love the unlovable- to serve the un-servable- to do the unthinkable. Like all muscles these need exercise and it is uncomfortable at first but so rewarding. We receive so much more than we give when we depend on the Holy Spirit to give us strength in our weakness. (St. Paul) We get further strength by the other sacraments which give us God’s life, grace, so that we can keep going. It also brings us joy and peace that we cannot find in the world.
* We also get strength from one another, lifting each other up in words and prayer. You know each other well and know the struggles and successes that you each are going through and if you don’t I encourage you to do so. Pray for one another.
* Conclude confirmation time praying for one another.

**Pray and Dinner** (45 mins)

**Process – small group process and then Large Group Process** (45 mins.)

Small group processing- Create a mini presentation that everyone will be involved in to share with the large group that shows what you did as a team and how it impacted you and others. It can be oral, a play, a poster that you present… etc. The only rule is everyone in your group has to help. Question to help: What is unique about the mission of service of those we helped? What did we do? Was it hard? Was it easy? Why hard? Why easy? What impact did it have on you personally? You as a team? What impact did it have on those we helped? Could we easily see it? Why is it important to serve in this way? What did you learn from this experience? Why? If didn’t like it don’t leave it there ask why. Did it cause them to grow in an uncomfortable way? If they were board did they understand their mission and how they were making a difference? If they liked it don’t leave it there either ask them why. Why did they like it? Did it help them grow? Did they see how they were making a difference? How did you see Jesus in the mission? Look back on Mt. 25 (Now give them time to make their presentations) What they need to have is what their mission was and how they felt they were making a difference and most importantly how did they meet Jesus in their mission.

As time permits have each group present their mission and their impact statements. Make small comments and affirmations of their work and write the conclusions of their mission on a white board or paper. Conclude this session with thanking them for their unique gifts of service and point out how yes even though each experience is different they all are important.

**Intro to Service talk** (15 mins)

• Short Intro to Lectio

• Lectio/reading of Mt. 25

We just experienced going out of ourselves and serving others in different ways. Let’s recap for a second. What was some of the ways we served? What was the impact? Ok, how did we meet Jesus in those experiences? How did we meet Jesus in hearing the experiences of others? In Matthew 25, we hear how we are called to serve, those who serve others serve Jesus and those who do not serve others are told they did not serve Christ. Why do you think we have a calling to serve? Why is this important? What kind of difference are we making when we show kindness to another person, an animal or even to the earth? What is at the heart of the call to serve and why does Jesus say it is necessary for entering the kingdom of heaven?

**Witness (Jeff)**  (15-20 mins) Stories where you have served or been served. How has this impacted you? How did it impact those you served or who helped you? What is at the heart of this? Is it just fulfilling material needs? How did you see Jesus in your experience?

**Lesson: What is at the heart of the Call to Serve** (5-10 mins) Transfer from witness…

Points that I want to cover.

Service helps make us more human/more capable to love and be loved.

Service doesn’t just help the person being served but also the one who is serving.

We have an inner desire to serve others because we are made to love and be loved. Pope Francis puts it this way, “For all our limitations, gestures of generosity, solidarity and care cannot but well up within us, since we were made for love.”

Service is a gift from God to grow our capacity to love, without it life soon becomes empty and shallow, lacking fulfillment because we get to stuck in ourselves. We are called to serve because we are made to go out of ourselves. It is through serving others that we are able to discover who we are. This discovery isn’t complete unless we are seeing Jesus in others because their identity and our identity is in Christ. That is why he says when you did this for the least of my little ones you did it for me.

To drive this point home I would like to play a video for you. Some of you have seen it but it is worth watching again. I want to encourage you to look for the primary need that the man helped is looking for. What does he really need? The need that every person longs to have satisfied. (watch) This is always a hard clip for me to watch. What was it that he needed? More than food or money…? How many times was I one of those people who walked by turning my head so I wouldn’t see so I wouldn’t feel convicted that I was passing by Christ? We don’t always need to give money or maybe we can’t. I have been in that position many times and because I couldn’t give money I thought I didn’t have anything to give. I was wrong. Sometimes it isn’t safe to stop and help someone by yourself but what is it that we can do? Shortly after high school I had the opportunity to serve the poor of Calcutta, India with Mother Theresa’s sisters. I just barely made enough money to go on this trip and so I didn’t have much money on me and did what I could to spend as little as possible because I didn’t have it. While I was there I got to work with children at their children’s home. They were abandoned by their families or orphaned and unwanted because they had mental and physical handicaps. One day however, as I was walking with my friends after we were done with our service for the day, I think we were going to go look at bringing back something for our families, a woman stopped me and asked me to buy her this milk. I was frightened because she was very persistent and in my face about it. I told her I couldn’t and rather than she leaving me alone she started to say I wasn’t very Christian. It was hard to hear that. I felt accused and rightly so. I didn’t really have money to buy the milk but I could have asked her if I could pray with her and see if there was another way to help her. I could have also bought some cheaper milk and opened it for her since many times the beggars there will ask you to buy them something necessary but expensive so they can sell it back to the venders and get the money. I went away from that experience wondering if I denied Christ if she was right and if I was just playing a part when it was convenient and didn’t ask much. It comes down to this: is what I am doing right now an action of love? There is a happy ending to that story even though I may not have made the right choice in the moment. I learned from that and I get to keep that in mind the next time an opportunity to serve when it is uncomfortable comes along.

**Small Groups** (15 mins) What I would like you to do is go back in your small groups and discuss: What is that inner need? Why are we called to serve? How can we serve those who are in need even if we can’t help them materially? Who are the people we are called to serve every day and how can we serve them? Pope Francis says that, “The creation accounts in the book of Genesis contain, in their own symbolic and narrative language, profound teachings about human existence and its historical reality. They suggest that human life is grounded in three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbor and with the earth itself.” What does this mean for us? If these relationships are fundamental what do we need to be doing? Are we building these relationships up or letting them fall to pieces? Why might these relationships be important? Are they connected? If so how?

**Adoration and Confession: (Elizabeth)**  (60 minutes) Call to Love and Be Loved

What does it mean to adore something? (picture of baby sleeping or something like that) What is your reaction when you see this baby, even if you don’t say anything out loud? I bet you are experiencing an “aww” moment. That moment of saying “aww,” or feeling it inside for those of you who don’t want to audibly express it, is a moment of worship. WHAT?!!! Crazy right! However this is a good response to a child, you are experiencing the beauty of love in that child and that child doesn’t have to do anything. A baby doesn’t do anything it just is and we love it for just being. Our “aww” reaction is a free movement of the heart towards the good the true and the beautiful. It is a good and holy thing to recognize the sacredness found in a baby or found in something beautiful. The thing is we can’t stop there. We won’t find rest in the finite beauty; we need to go to the source and then we can really encounter the “AWE” moment. Worship is the proper response to the good, the true and the beautiful that we encounter. The next step is to recognize and thank the source of that which we encounter. It is to call us up to the Maker and Giver of all that is good and all that is true and all that is beautiful and then comes adoration, which is the exchange of hearts. Fully surrendering your heart to God and He giving His Heart to you. This is Adoration, opening yourself up completely to another surrendering all your love and letting the other in completely to yourself. Who here desires to be known fully for who they are and loved completely in light of that? No walls, no barriers no masks. Just to be and be loved. All of us do, we are made to be infinitely loved. We are about to go into a time of adoration where we get to be loved and to love back. God is always infinitely loving you He never stops and never grows tired of you and He sees you as you are. But we don’t always recognize that and surrender to that love. Adoration is a time to do that. To gaze at Jesus and Him gaze at you. Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist. It is not just a piece of bread that we eat at mass. It really is his Body Blood Soul and Divinity that we encounter under the appearance of bread and wine. When we are in adoration we are not just looking at a piece of bread but at Jesus and he is looking at you.

**What We are about to do and What we are going to encounter. Adoration. Confession. Music.**

Witness: What is adoration and confession for me. Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist. Jn 6- do a quick summary of what is going on in John 6 and then read when Jesus says He IS the bread come down from heaven. It is not a metaphor. Not the same as when he says he is the good shepherd or the vine… etc. Jesus wants to touch your life he wants to be a part of you so much that He not only came and became one of us and then died for us but he gave us a way to have him with us always and to eat him so that he might be one with us.

Adoration: a time to be loved with no masks and no barriers to be completely free to love and be loved. A time to realize that the God who made the universe, who made me loves me soooo much as I am and He just wants to be with me and me to be with Him no pressure to say anything, do anything, be anything except myself right there right now and to be loved.

Confession: It isn’t painful for me anymore. It is a sheading of all those burdens and hurts, hurts I have caused and hurts that have been done to me. To be forgiven but also to forgive. To let love in and hold me. It is freedom from hate and freedom from the deceptions that surround me.

Joy of the Gospel

“Now is the time to say to Jesus: “Lord, I have let myself be deceived; in a thousand ways I have shunned your love, yet here I am once more, to renew my covenant with you. I need you. Save me once again, Lord take me once more into your redeeming embrace.”

“God never tires of forgiving us; we are the ones who tire of seeking his mercy.”

“Time and again he bears us on his shoulders. No one can strip us of the dignity bestowed upon us by this boundless and unfailing love. With a tenderness which never disappoints, but is always capable of restoring our joy, he makes it possible for us to lift up our heads and to start anew.”

Music: The music that will be sung and played is to help. Sing even if you don’t have a great singing voice sing if you do. The lover sings for the beloved. The music is there to help you worship to have that “aww” moment. Don’t worry about others judging you you aren’t here for them and they aren’t going to make fun of you for loving God. Music is a gift from God to move our hearts up so that we can encounter the divine.

Meditation: During Adoration, if you want to sing you can, go to confession please feel free to do so as well. Also I would encourage you to write a letter or two. One could be to your future self. Maybe one that you open on your graduation day of high school and for you in Confirmation how about a letter on what you would like to receive in Confirmation that will help you with college and who you would like to be in college and write it to your Freshman self. The other I encourage you to write is a litany of thanks to God. List everything you are thankful for: your gifts and talents and also you weaknesses. True humility comes from a heart that is full of gratitude because you are able to recognize all that is good comes from God.

**After Adoration break: (**10 mins)

**Discipleship** (45 mins) ***The Call to Imitate and Invite***

**Re-cap of day and Intro (Dylan)** (15 mins)

We have been talking about how we are called. Beginning with an experience we got to go out and help others. Then we looked at how we are called to serve. Next called to love and be loved. Now we are going to look at how we are Called to Imitate and Invite.

**Points to cover**

People we are around influence us and how we see ourselves and the world around us.

We take on the characteristics of those we are around the most. (give an example from own life of this and maybe ask for an example from the students)

We are given an opportunity to choose then who we become.

When baptized we are given a huge gift, the ability to call God Father and to be like Him to be His children.

We can intentionally choose who we want to be.

The word Disciple comes from the Latin word meaning student. But it doesn’t mean student in our current understanding of it. It is a full immersion program where you leave family, friends, and everything you know to become like your teacher in all respects.

Discipleship is an intentional formation of our whole self, our mind, our character, and our actions. (example that comes to mind is discipleship in the army… maybe you can run with this for a bit?)

It isn’t something that you can just do however you have to be called/selected.

This is the good news. YOU are CHOSEN!!! By right of our baptism we are able to be called children of God. We get to receive the inheritance given to those who are children that means we are a part of a family. God wants his family to grow so a part of being in His family is to find others to bring into this family so they too can share in the inheritance that we receive as children. We are called to share this wonderful message with all we meet, even those who might hate us. (video Who would dare to love Isis)

**Witness (Dylan)** – (15 mins) discovering personally that you are called you are chosen. Relate to the teens where they are at and tell them why faith has become important for you. Your story.

**Small group-** (15 mins) What is something that you want to take from today and use in every day life? How are you called? How will you serve those in need, those in your family, those in your school, those that you pass by every day? How will you share what you learned today with others? Make a plan of action and maybe talk to some friends about having an accountability group to help encourage you to live out what you want to do.

**Closing of Retreat-(Elizabeth)**  Final recap of the day. What were the main points? Chosen, Call to serve, call to love and be loved and a call to invite. Like the Eucharist we are called/made to be taken, blessed, broken and shared with others. How are we going to live these things? It all comes down to relationships. Each has something special and important to give and each is needed as a part of this family. Thank the team that helped and the teens for being a part of the family.