Reconciliation Retreat

December 7, 2014

10:00 a.m. - noon

* Meet in room off office, parents on chairs – students sitting in circle on the floor
* Begin with prayer /song (Father, I adore you)
* Pass out the cards with pictures:
  + Before Time was invented…God, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit are a Trinity of Persons
    - Perfect love
    - Perfectly happy
    - Wanted to share that love so God created the world and HUMANS to live in the world (visible and invisible)
    - Have you ever been so happy you couldn’t help but share it?
  + Picture of God making man
    - He made humans special
      * Breathed LIFE into man (Gen 2:7)
      * In His image and likeness
      * **To be His friends** (not that He was lonely – He is Trinity)
        + If you could make your own friend what would he or she be like?
        + Can’t force someone to love you (example)
        + Free to choose
      * Our First parents (Adam and Eve) given 1 law (wouldn’t that be nice?)
      * They disobeyed God – they didn’t trust Him; they didn’t trust His love
      * Original sin –Now their children (and beyond) have this tendency to make themselves happy first and can’t go to heaven
  + Picture with heart and “law of love” written on the heart
    - God made a promise
    - I will place my law within them, and write it upon their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (Jer 31:33)
    - This means that people won’t just hear God’s laws – He would write it in their hearts and teach them how to love Him and one another
  + Picture of Jesus
    - Jesus is the fulfillment of that promise
    - He has a heart of love for God, his Father and all people.
    - Jesus came and taught us how to live God’s law of love
    - Not just as God’s friends – He teaches us how to live as God’s sons and daughters (even more important to listen to law of love)
    - He opened a way for people to go to heaven and live forever with God
    - He taught us about baptism so we can have God’s law of love written on our heart
    - Do you have God’s law of love in your heart?
      * Parents – help me out here!
      * What are some loving things to do? (listen to others, share, clean messes, talk kindly to others, pray, go to Mass,
      * What breaks or hurts that law of love? (skipping Mass, lying, stealing, gossiping, not praying
      * May feel sick or get a tummy ache if someone breaks that law of love – hurting something very precious: story of my son running from the room when someone did something wrong on TV
      * Discerning God’s will…
  + Picture BE MINE
    - “You are my friends if you do what I command you” (Jn 15:14)
    - We keep our relationship with God when we do all that God commands us to do.
    - He is our Creator – He knows what is best for us!
    - Do you trust Him?
    - God is our BEST FRIEND FOREVER!
    - What are some of God’s commands? What has He told us to do so we’ll be happy? (LOOK AT EXAMINATION... talk about a few of them WRITE ON WHITE BOARD THEIR IDEAS)
  + Picture of “Do to others whatever you would have them do to you.” (Mt 7:12)
    - Jesus summarized this law of love with this saying
    - Do what is best for the other person!
    - We show we love God by loving each other – even people who may not be very nice!
    - This is how we should relate to other people
    - Remember – God is our BEST FRIEND FOREVER!
  + Picture of broken heart
    - What happens to your friendship if you hurt your friend?
    - If we don’t listen to the law of love on our heart we hurt or break our friendship with God (probably with someone else too…)
    - Do any of the adults have anything else to add to what we’ve talked about so far?
    - Oh no! I’ve broken the law of love in my heart.
    - What should I do?
* Here is a story of a man who broke the low of love in his heart. He became spiritually paralyzed and he was also physically paralyzed…

*(Should be at* ***1 hour*** *mark - If extra time: have the students retell the story based off the cards.) Hand out Scripts…*

**Skits…**

*(Get students and everyone in the proper position: Fr. Matt, 4 on chair, one on ground, rest around Father, and parents will be Pharisees and teachers of the law)*

Story of the paralytic *(explain…)* and Jesus healing (Luke 5:17-26) (…*friends bring paralytic to Jesus)*

**Narrator**: One day as Jesus was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and Jerusalem, and the **power of the Lord** was with him for healing.

And some men brought on a stretcher a man who was paralyzed; they were trying to bring him in and set [him] in his presence. But not finding a way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on the stretcher through the tiles into the middle in front of Jesus *(note: four students stand on chairs and one lie down in front of Fr. Matt – all others can stand around Fr. Matt)*

**Fr. Matt**: “As for you, your sins are forgiven.”

**Narrator**: The people were thinking…

**Parent say together**: “Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who but God alone can forgive sins?”

**Narrator:** Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them in reply,

**Fr. Matt:** “What are you thinking in your hearts? Which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise and walk’? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins (*turn to paralyzed man*) I say to you, rise, pick up your stretcher, and go home.”

**Narrator:**  The paralyzed man stood up immediately before them, picked up what he had been lying on, and went home, glorifying God. (*have ‘paralyzed’ student get up*) Then the people said…

**Parents say together:** We have seen incredible things today.

* This story shows that Jesus has the power to forgive sins.
* How does that power of Jesus to forgive sins get to Fr. Matt?
* Here’s another skit from John 10:19-23 to help us understand

*(Move students so they are all standing together like the Apostles)*

*Explain that Jesus had died and had risen from the dead. Apostles were afraid they were going to be killed too.*

**Narrator:** On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, *(note the door was locked and Jesus came in – Fr. Matt wasn’t given the power to walk through a locked door)*

**Fr. Matt**: “Peace be with you.”

**Narrator:** When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. *(Student s rejoice!!)* [Jesus] said to them again

**Fr. Matt:** “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.”

**Narrator**: And when he had said this, he breathed on them (*Fr. Matt breathes on them)* and said to them,

**Fr Matt:** “Receive the holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained.”

* Here it is!! The moment when Jesus gave His Apostles the power to forgive sins…
* That was the Apostles. How does Fr. Matt get the power to forgive sins?
* They passed on that power by laying on of hands - We call it ordination or the Sacrament of Holy Orders
* 2000 years… until today we have our very own Fr. Matt who was given that same power to forgive sins. (game of tag)
* Breath of Jesus carried through the years and is there for us in the confessional
* When Fr. Matt absolves you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, then your sins have really been forgiven by Jesus.
* So Jesus has given us the Sacrament of Reconciliation to forgive our sins
* This is what you are studying in class and why we are having this retreat

So how does Jesus forgive YOU…? Steps to Reconciliation….

* + 4 Pictures: Steps to saying sorry…
    - * Be sorry (Bee)
        + Examination of Conscience
        + Feel bad about what you did; at least you should feel afraid of the consequences
      * Say sorry (mouth)
      * Try to fix it – extra love (band aid)
      * Try not to do it again (heart)

**Steps of Reconciliaton…**

(*have set up with the pieces, glue, a piece of paper to glue the steps on) Parents can help and we will go through it with them: find the piece that says…*

**Be Sorry: Examination of Conscience - then go to Confession**

*(this is our Bee picture – should feel bad about what you did or at least feel bad that you hurt your friendship with God)*

*(Now is the process of saying your sorry – mouth)*

**In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

**Forgive me, Father, for I have sinned. This is my first confession (or It has been \_\_\_\_\_ since my last confession)**

*(this lets the priest know when the last time you said sorry)*

**These are my sins…For these sins and the sins of my whole life, I am sorry**

*(This is so Father knows you are done with saying your sins)*

*Listen to Father – Remember the penance he gives you!*

*(Try to fix it – bandaid. I can’t tell you your penance – Fr. Matt can’t tell you your penance later. He has to keep it a secret even from YOU!)*

*(This next part has all the elements: bee sorry, say sorry, try to fix it, and try not to do it again)*

**O my God, I am heartily sorry for all my sins, because in choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against You who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly intend now, with the help of Your grace, to do penance and to amend my life. Our Savior Jesus died to set us free, so in His name, Lord, have mercy on me. Amen.**

(*Here is the part where you are forgiven…)*

*"*God, the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of His Son has reconciled the world to Himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins; through the ministry of the Church may God give you pardon and peace, and I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, + and of the Holy Spirit.*"*

*you answer:* **"Amen"** *(You can say “thank you” or “thanks be to God” before you leave)*

* Visit the confessional
* Do mock confessions based off the script they just put together. Take turns being the priest or penitent.
* If there is extra time:
  + Discuss examination of conscience and
  + Have the students and parents sit in the church quietly while they examine what they should be sorry for.
* Closing Prayer