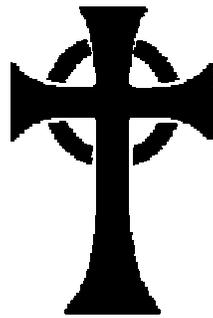


# Faith Ambassador Handbook



**York Catholic District School Board**

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*"We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us."  
2 Corinthians 5:20*

# Faith Ambassador Handbook

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## Overview

*We are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.*

*Paul's letter to the Corinthians*

*-- 2 Corinthians 5:20*

We are increasingly aware of the importance of nurturing the spirituality of adults within our educational communities. The Faith Ambassador program takes St Paul's statement and applies it to our schools throughout the board. Faith Ambassadors work to improve the spiritual climate among the adults in schools and at the Catholic Education Centre through local activities and in partnership with local schools. They are provided with financial, administrative and spiritual resources in their projects. Faith Ambassador Committees consist of school Faith Ambassadors from schools including and associated with the local high school. Each committee is supported by members of the YCDSB Religious Education and Family Life Education Team.

### History of the Faith Ambassador Program at York Catholic

In 1999, the Religious Education Department at the York Catholic District School Board were searching for a vehicle to promote adult faith development among the teachers. After consultation with Kitty McGilly, former religious education consultant in Toronto and Dufferin Peel Catholic Boards, we decided to embark on our own Faith Ambassador Program.

In May of 1999, principals from each school were asked to nominate a Faith Ambassador. The first function attended by Faith Ambassadors was the *Partners in Education* dinner at which Sister Clare Fitzgerald spoke. The program, got off the ground on October 14, 1999 when the Faith Ambassadors gathered at L'Arche/Daybreak's new retreat facility, Dayspring. After Kitty had delivered her inspirational message, the Faith Ambassador groups organized themselves into families based on their affiliation with high schools. These

nine families continued meeting throughout the school year with chairs of the committees, meeting twice at the board. At a final gathering in May, 2000, Faith Ambassadors were given further inspiration by Sister Sue Mostellar of L'Arche/Daybreak. Since our inaugural year, Ambassadors have heard many speakers and been engaged in various faith development activities.

By the 2002-2003 school year, the program has increased by having each school have two Faith Ambassadors as their official representatives. There are now eleven families of schools. Links are also being made to the Catholic School Council Faith Committees. The Faith Ambassador program has frequently been cited as being one of the most important factors in improving staff morale in recent years. Faith Ambassadors have also been ministering to the Board of Education by leading the prayer at regular Board meetings.

### Guiding Principles

The Ambassador Program derives its direction from a number of underlying understandings. These are:

- (1) A general thirst for meaning drives many people to search for the spiritual dimension of life. This is particularly true for Ontario Catholic Teachers. In recent turbulent times, many teachers have been searching for spiritual answers to important questions. The Ambassador program seeks to provide a venue where these questions can be shared, discussed and at times answered.
- (2) Often the best people to minister to staff are their peers. Faith Ambassadors, while not trained spiritual directors, are provided with resources to help those on staff with spiritual questions and those wanting to nurture their spirituality of Catholic Education. They bring ideas and resources from meeting with other Faith Ambassadors and board resource staff into the schools to share with their colleagues. Faith

Ambassadors also share their gifts and concerns with other schools.

(3) Faith Ambassadors need support. At the board level, senior administration are physically present at many functions and provide financial and human resources to support the process. Board religious education staff, particularly the Adult Faith Development Consultant act as advisors in bringing the groups into being and act as supports for their continuance. The Adult Faith Development Consultant also acts as a catalyst by using print and electronic communication to disseminate ideas. The school administration gives moral and logistical support for Faith Ambassadors. For example, the Principal may grant Faith Ambassadors:

- release time to go to local meetings
- opportunities to speak at staff meetings
- a place in the staff room to display Faith Ambassador activities

In a school, the Faith Ambassador may have a colleague as a fellow Faith Ambassador. Since the 2000-2001 school year, this practice has been encouraged. Faith Ambassadors also receive support from each other at regular meetings. Local Faith Ambassador committees are organized according to the high school with which they are affiliated.

(4) Faith Ambassadors need spiritual nurture. Ambassadors receive this nurture from attending centrally organized Ambassador faith days. They also participate in an annual *Partners in Education* dinner as well as attending the *When Faith Meets Pedagogy* conference. Although often consumed in the logistical details of local events, Faith Ambassador run activities can also be tremendously nourishing. One of the projects that has come from the Faith Ambassadors is the creation of a set of prayer services for staff called *Gifts of Love*.

(5) The Faith Ambassador Groups have a degree of autonomy. The local groups are free to develop their local programs as they see fit as long as they conform to the general aim of nurturing teacher spirituality. One Ambassador

group may decide to do a series of twilight retreats, another may concentrate on one or two large events. The meeting dates, locations, agendas and budgets are controlled by the local committees.

(6) The Faith Ambassador Program is directed toward nurturing Catholic educational spirituality. While we recognize the importance of spiritual nurture of all the partners in Catholic education, the focus of this program is on teacher spirituality. There is a distinctive Catholic teacher spirituality that requires distinct attention. This spirituality addresses such questions as:

- How can I be a faithful educator when the surrounding culture is tempting me to take faithless ways?
- What role does prayer take in my professional life?
- How can I nurture my vision of seeing the world as being "charged with the grandeur of God?"
- I share the same job description as Jesus, the Rabbi (= teacher in Hebrew). What can I learn from these relationships?
- How can I help the Holy Spirit nurture the gifts of wisdom, understanding, and good counsel in the classroom?

These questions are distinct from those asked by Catholic parents. Consequently, a separate program needs to be developed for these groups. Moreover, there are logistical difficulties in gathering teachers and parents at the same venue. For example, teachers tend to meet in the late afternoon while parents gather in the evening. This distinction does not exclude joint gatherings or gatherings with open invitations. Sometimes, the question or topic is of relevance to many in the Catholic community.

### **Role of the Chair/Co-Chair**

A Chair or Co-Chair is selected from the Faith Ambassadors from a particular family. Their role(s) are as follows:

## 1. Facilitate and Chair Local Faith Committee Meetings.

This means ensuring that meeting places, dates, and reminders are sent as well as setting the agenda and chairing the meeting. Also a record of the meeting should be kept. Although formal minutes are not required, action items with responsibilities and timeframes should be recorded and distributed to members. Copies of these informal minutes should be sent to Consultant for Adult Faith Development and to the Co-ordinator/Consultant affiliated with your family. Ensure that logistical support for Faith Ambassador projects is in place. Suggestions for running meetings are found in the section: *Running a Faith Ambassador Meeting*.

## 2. Attend Meetings of Faith Ambassador Chairs.

These meetings are held about four or five times a year. Chairs/Co-Chairs should pass on pertinent information to their local committees. These meetings help to shape the direction for Adult Faith formation in the board and so insights and contributions are greatly appreciated.

## 3. Administer the Budget

The Faith Ambassador Budget is located in your school's account. Using the operative Budget Memo, the Chair/Co-Chair works with the school secretary to administer funds for Faith Ambassador projects. Funds are allocated to families according to a funding formula. For every school in the family, the family is granted a set amount. The Family uses the money for Faith Development activities. Any surplus should be devoted to purchasing materials that can be used for individual schools based on a method agreed by the Family.

## Selecting the Chair/Co-Chair

Chairs or co-chairs can be selected either at the year end meeting of the previous school year or at the first Faith Ambassador gathering of the year.

Families can select either a single chair or co-chairs. If co-chairs are chosen, then clear roles need to be established. It helps if co-chairs are from the same school because communication between the two is essential. If co-chairs are from different schools, then the Faith Ambassador budget account needs to be assigned to one of the schools. Let the Adult Faith Development Consultant know which school is so designated.

Chairs and Co-Chairs should have the following strengths:

- Organization;
- Communication;
- Hospitality
- Vision of Faith Ambassador Program
- Experience as a Faith Ambassador.

After serving three years as Faith Ambassador Chair, consider turning over the position to a new person.

## Running a Faith Ambassador Meeting

1. Set the date, time and place for the subsequent meetings at the first Ambassador gathering.
2. Send a reminder of the meeting a week before the meeting date. Faxed messages seem to be the most effective.
3. Try to create a sacred space in the meeting room by use of liturgical symbols either on or beside the meeting table.
4. Remember that meetings should have a significant element of Spiritual nurture. Start with a prayer or better still, a prayer service. Invite people to bring and share various inspirations they have received since the last gathering. (Prayers, ideas)
5. Consider using icebreakers to help form community. This is particularly appropriate early in the school year. See Appendix.
6. Set an agenda and copy it for all.

7. Arrange for someone to take minutes or at least a set of actions resulting including responsibility and timeline. These should be distributed as soon as possible after the meeting.

8. Words or expressions of gratitude should be extended to those attending for coming and the host school for their hospitality.

9. Food and drink (non-alcoholic!) help with the sense of welcome and comfort. Remember to have bills submitted for reimbursement.

10. Consider having one meeting at a restaurant to reward Faith Ambassadors for the hard work that they do.

### **Release Time for Faith Ambassadors**

Ambassadors meet about six times during the school year with their families. Normally Faith Ambassador family meetings will begin at 3:00pm. This provides time for a substantial gathering. The Faith Ambassadors are dependant on the administrative skill of the Principals in order to facilitate early release that will be required at many schools. Each school community has different circumstances that can bring about different solutions. Discussion within staff can lead to local creative solutions. It is also noted that schools with small staffs have a particular problem in finding necessary coverage. The following strategies have been employed to allow Faith Ambassadors to leave to attend 3:00pm meetings

- ❑ Scheduling a period when classes can be brought together for a joint presentation (eg speaker, music, movie);
- ❑ Coverage by the Principal or Vice-Principal
- ❑ Coverage by supply teachers who are in the school on the day of the meeting might be assigned to cover Faith Ambassador's classes or duties.

### **The Role of Faith Ambassador**

1. Usually, a school will have two "official" Faith Ambassadors. These are members of

the regular school staff who represent the school at Family and Board functions. The school can also have its own Adult Faith Development team that can include other staff members. These other members on staff can act as substitute Faith Ambassadors when the regular Faith Ambassadors are not available.

2. The Principal is the Faith Leader of the school. At the school level, Faith Ambassadors work with the administration to nurture staff faith development. It is helpful for the group to meet at the beginning of the year to map out plans for the year for the school. In high schools, Chaplaincy teams should be brought into this conversation.
3. The Faith Ambassador is part of the spiritual leadership of the school. The task is to provide a more spiritual atmosphere in the school by creating environment, occasions and support that facilitate staff faith development. See "Faith Development Activities within the School", that describes a number of specific ways in which faith development can occur in the school.
4. Faith Ambassadors work at the family level to nurture their own spirituality and to plan spiritual development opportunities that are only feasible when several schools get together. They should attend these meetings because are of benefit to themselves and their staffs. By cross-pollinating ideas between schools, new spiritual fruits can be picked among the various schools of the family.
5. The Faith Ambassador may also be involved in Faith Day. These annual faith days provide opportunities for staff to reflect upon their relationships with the sacred in context of their lives in education. The Faith Ambassador acts in a consultative, planning and/or implementing role for faith day activities. The Faith Ambassadors may also work together in their families to plan and implement joint activities. In those situations, it is imperative that the lines of

communication be kept open between Faith Ambassadors, Administration, and in the case of High Schools, Chaplaincy Teams.

6. The essence of being a Faith Ambassador is not so much in the doing, but in the being. By being a person of faith and searching for God's love in our communities, the Faith Ambassador is an implicit example to colleagues of a person seeking to live out their calling as a Catholic Educator. Faith Ambassadors demonstrate to the staff the importance of nurturing their souls by pursuing the nurture of their own souls.

## Selecting Faith Ambassadors

Although there is no formal selection process for Faith Ambassadors, the following points should be kept in mind:

1. In June, the Consultant for Adult Faith Development requests that principals name the two Faith Ambassadors for the upcoming school year. The Principal may defer this decision to early September.
2. Those who wish to become a Faith Ambassador may approach the Principal in early June expressing their interest to him or her.
3. The Faith Ambassador can be any staff member including teachers, secretaries, administration, custodial staff, educational assistants and library technicians.
4. Qualities of a Faith Ambassador should include:
  - ❑ a deep interest in the spiritual formation of adults
  - ❑ good communicator
  - ❑ well respected by staff

## Faith Development Activities within the School

Our faith urges us to translate belief into action. Several people have asked, "What can we do as Ambassadors to help nurture faith within our

schools?" The following activities do not refer to the wonderful shared activities that Families of Schools put together; rather, these are actions that can occur within a school community.

These are not 'must do's.' Each staff is unique and the Faith Ambassador can adapt these possibilities to their circumstance.

One of the main purposes of the Faith Ambassador program is to strengthen our faith life. Through community-building activities, we can become authentic witnesses of the Catholic faith. The following is a list of activities that you can do with your staff to foster the spirit of community. By forming deep connections, staff members feel as though they belong to the greater work of Catholic Education. This list is only a small sample of activities that can be adapted to the needs and interests of your staff. It was started by Melinda Rapallo and we are indebted for her wonderful work.

### LITURGY

When a staff prays together, they not only bring souls closer to God, but they also bring people closer together. Every school has an altar which can be the focal point of a school liturgy. Wherever possible try to use the inclusive language guidelines produced by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops. High School Ambassadors should work in close co-operation with Chaplaincy staff.

#### *Prayer Services*

Within your school community, a faith ambassador can organize a spiritual reflection before a staff meeting, or at another time during the day (before/after school). Please refer to the YCDSB document, *Gifts of Love: A Collection of Prayer Services for Catholic School Communities* for samples of liturgical celebrations.

#### *Celebrate the Eucharist*

Celebrate Mass together, as a staff, throughout the year.

### *Pray the Rosary*

October 2002 to October 2003 is the Year of the Rosary. Consider praying the Rosary with the staff. See [www.americancatholic.org/Messenger/Feb2003/Feature1.asp](http://www.americancatholic.org/Messenger/Feb2003/Feature1.asp) for more information on the new Mysteries of Light.

### *The Season Celebration*

Celebrate the beginning of each season, focusing on the beauty of each season. For example, in the spring, read the parable of the mustard seed. After the passage is read, give each staff member a package of seeds for their garden.

### *Guided Imagery Session*

Organize some guided meditations for your staff. Use books or search the Internet for some meditations. Contact the Consultant for Adult Faith Development for tapes, books and CD's with guided meditations.

### *Thoughts of the Day*

Daily/weekly reflections/quotations over the announcements provide staff and students time to reflect.

### *Musical Reflection*

Enhance a liturgy, meal or staff meeting with music. One can use liturgical music, classical music, nature music (from the Solitudes series) or popular songs from the radio. Some inspirational pop songs that can be used for this purpose are:

*True Colours, Phil Collins*

*You'll be in my Heart, Phil Collins*

*I Believe in You, Amanda Marshall*

*I Wish for Peace, Michelle Tumes*

*Lovely, Michelle Tumes*

*The Rose, Bette Midler*

*Testify to Love, Wynonna Judd*

*Hey Jude, The Beatles*

*I Hope You Dance, Lee Ann Womack*

*Hands, Jewel*

### *Nature Walk/Walking the Labyrinth*

Plan a nature walk with your staff in a nearby park. Stop at certain times to reflect and pray. If there's time, stop for a picnic. Also consider

walking the Labyrinth. For more information, contact the Adult Faith Consultant.

### *Pilgrim's Journey*

Plan a weekend pilgrimage to places such as Martyr's Shrine.

### *Slide Presentation*

Search your library for interesting slides (fine art, people, slides depicting various places and people around the world.). If you have the means for digital projection, then use it for this purpose. Pair up the slides with a piece of music. For instructions on how to create PowerPoint Prayer Services see the Appendix.

### *Plan a retreat*

Organize a weekend retreat for your staff at a retreat house. See the appendix for a list of retreat houses (listed in Inspirations newsletter).

### *Biblical readings and reflections*

Gather staff together to read and reflect on biblical passages. In the Appendix is a sample of bible passages that can be used to foster adult faith development as well as some reflection questions.

### *Seder*

Using the YCDSB document on the Seder and consultation with the Religious Education and Family Life Education team, host a Seder. This is a traditional Passover meal from the Jewish tradition. It is also that meal that Jesus celebrated at the Last Supper.

## **SOCIAL GATHERINGS**

If we follow the example of Jesus, he used meals as regular occasions for gathering and teaching. Work with your school's social committee to add a spiritual touch to staff gatherings.

### *Afternoon Tea*

Hold a "Spring Tea" to celebrate the beginning of spring. For Valentine's Day, hold a "Cupid's Tea". For any other time of the year, hold an "Afternoon Tea". Begin these gatherings with a prayer or prayer service. You might also take this opportunity to give a simple memento with a spiritual reminder.

### *Treat days*

Staff members volunteer to bring in treats on a monthly or weekly basis. This is a good way to get all staff members to visit the staff room during recess. Provide copies of a prayer or poem that staff can take with them.

### *Pot Lucks*

Food is always a good way to bring your staff together as a family and help build community. Depending on your staff and their interests, you can choose a theme — be creative! Decorate the staff room following that theme as well. Try having a "Strawberry Festival" and invite staff members to bring in their favourite desserts.

### *Sharing sessions*

Have you just attended a conference or workshop? Provide an opportunity for your staff to hear what you learned and what you experienced at the workshop.

### *Soup days/Lunch Days*

The staff can come together and make soup for lunch. As a bonus, read the story, *Stone Soup*.

### *Activities outside of school*

Organize social activities outside of the school (dinner, movie, concert, picnic, boat trip or karaoke).

### *Acts of Social Ministry*

Organize food drives, money collections as part of your social ministry. Visit seniors' homes or volunteer together at a community organization.

### *Social Justice*

Form a staff based social justice organization such as Amnesty International.

### *Staff Choir*

Organize a staff, staff/student, or staff/parent choir to sing at nursing homes during Christmas or another time of the year.

### *Album party*

Staff is invited to bring in their favourite albums and share. Have a contest for the tackiest album!

### *Baking/Cookie Exchange*

Bake together as a staff, or bake at home and share your cookies. Those who sign up are asked to bring a dozen cookies for each person. This is a great activity before Christmas.

### *What's Your Type?*

Use the Myers Briggs or David Keirse (Please Understand Me II) to find your temperament type. Explore implications for teaching, spirituality and relationships. Similar type sorters include *True Colours* and the *Enneagram*.

### *Pottery*

Go to a Pottery studio to make or paint pottery that can be used in your Prayer Centres.



### *Craft Night*

Gather staff members together to complete an art activity. Projects do not have to be elaborate, just fun. Make a rosary, decorate a cross for your prayer table, or paint a ceramic object.

### *Exercise Club*

Plan something physically active, one that promotes good health. Take a walk outdoors and find the beauty in all of God's creation.

### *Book Club*

Staff members can read a book at the same time, and, at a later date, discuss its significance to their lives, or bring in a favourite book and discuss one aspect of the book that has touched their lives.

### *Movie Night*

Get together for an inspirational movie night. Some movies can be:

- ❑ *Patch Adams*
- ❑ *Field of Dreams*
- ❑ *Michael*
- ❑ *The Messenger*
- ❑ *How to Make an American Quilt*
- ❑ *Phenomenon*
- ❑ *Groundhog Day*
- ❑ *Pay it Forward*

See [www.hollywoodjesus.com](http://www.hollywoodjesus.com) for suggestions on how movies can be used in a spiritual context.

## **STAFF MEETINGS**

Working with Administration, Faith Ambassadors can help make Staff Meetings a spiritual experience.

### *"Icebreaker" activities*

Begin a staff meeting with some icebreaker activities. See Appendix for suggestions.

### *Prayer*

Become responsible for the prayer. Either choose a prayer service from Gifts of Love, or a prayer pertinent to the season or staff needs. You could also arrange for different teachers to lead

the prayer.

### *Report to Staff*

Ask the Principal to be a regular on the Agenda to report on ongoing Faith Development activities.

## **AFFIRMATIONS**

These are small tokens, deeds to remind one another that they are valued. This needs to be done sensitively because affirmations are tricky. Be aware that some people see this as having their spiritual space invaded.

### *Spiritual "mail"*

Put poems, inspirational stories, newsletters, prayers or reflections in the mailboxes, or leave some copies in the staff room so that staff members can read them during their lunch/planning time.

### *Email Greetings*

Send email cards to staff members who are going through a rough time or even as a "random act of kindness." Also forward inspirational messages to staff members that you may receive but avoid chain letters –they may do more harm than good to your faith development program.

### *Prayer Angels*

This concept is similar to Secret Santa, without the monetary requirement. Staff will pick a name out of a hat, and they will pray for the person for a period of time.

### *Guardian Angels*

Staff will choose a name from a hat and do a kind gesture for them for a week. This is a wonderful activity on Valentine's Day.

### *It Feels like a Gift when...*

This is a good activity to do during Thanksgiving or Advent. This activity emphasizes the everyday gifts we give to one another and that all gifts don't come in packages with pretty wrappings. Write these statements

down on a piece of paper that looks like a gift tag. Ask each person to take a card and think about a time when someone gave him or her the gift written on it, or when they gave the gift to someone else. Draw a large present and ask each person to attach his/her gift tag onto the present.

#### *Small Tokens*

Make prayer cards or bookmarks, laminate, and distribute to staff.

#### *“Thank you” —An act of appreciation*

Staff members are invited to share what they appreciate about a staff member and place card in mailbox. For example, one can write: “Thank you (name of staff member). I really appreciated the way you (quality of that person)”. A variation of this is, during a meeting or liturgy, the staff member lights his/her unlit taper and presents it to another staff member using the same words. This exchange of affirmation continues until each staff member has received a lit taper.

#### *Celebrate Staff Birthdays*

Pair up staff members to form “Birthday Buddies”. Send each other cards and words of encouragement on each other’s birthday.

#### *Prayer Bundles*

Prepare little baggies with the items listed in the appendix. Hand out to each staff member.

#### *Spirit Days*

Have staff members bring in their favourite album, book, character, hat or t-shirt and have them explain how it best describes their personality.

### **SACRED SPACE**

You can enhance the physical environment of your building in several ways. This involves adding physical reminders of our Catholic identity and our relationship with God. Consider working with Administration and Catholic School Councils to plan larger projects.

#### *Entrance*

Create sacred space in the entrance of the school and in the hallways. Visitors to the school should be in no doubt that they are in a Catholic School. Consider placing the school altar, cross, a statue or picture of your school’s patron saint, and student’s religious art work in prominent positions. Liturgical seasons can be recognized with a Jesse Tree, Advent Wreath, Creche, Stations of the Cross, or Easter displays.

#### *Faith Ambassador Bulletin Board*

Create a spiritual bulletin board in the staff room that includes a prayer table, reflections, prayers as well as information about faith development opportunities.

#### *“Funny Board”*

Staff is encouraged to bring in funny comic strips, stories, quips, and other humorous pieces. Post them in the staff room. To get started, try:  
<http://www.pontius.com/main.html>;  
[http://christianbest.com/xian\\_hum.html](http://christianbest.com/xian_hum.html)

#### *“Quotations” Bulletin Board*

Each month, prepare a bulletin board with several inspirational quotations.

#### *Staff Picture Gallery*

Post staff pictures, depicting staff members in their daily routines, or special events.

#### *Bring in Childhood Pictures*

Display childhood pictures in the staff room. Hold a contest, asking staff members to guess who each picture is.

#### *Flowers*

Bring in flowers from your garden to brighten up the staff room and school. Invite other staff members to do the same.

#### *Peace Garden/Tranquil Garden / Marian Garden*

Find staff members with “green thumbs” and help organize a small garden at the school to create a sacred place, a peace garden.

### *School Quilt*

Each teacher/division (depending on the size of your school) designs one square. Once it is assembled, the quilt can be hung in the school foyer.

### **RESOURCES**

Ideas for new resources come to the attention of Faith Ambassadors frequently. Consider working with the Teacher-Librarian, Administration and Catholic School Council to obtain important resources for your school.

#### *Children's Books*

Almost everyone loves being read to. Spend some time reading an inspirational children's book to your staff. Invite others to bring in their favourite picture books. Some examples are:

The Giving Tree, Shel Silverstein

The Tale of Three Trees, Angela Blweli Hunt

Thanks for Thanksgiving, Heather Patterson and Mary Jane Gerber

Does God Know How To Tie Shoes, Nancy White Caristorm

Designed by God, So I Must be Special, Bonnie Sose

Old Turtle, Douglas Wood

Oh, the Places You'll Go, Dr. Seuss

Gift of the Magi, O. Henry

You Are Special, Max Lucado

#### *Catholic Press*

You could subscribe to Catholic newspapers and magazines such as the *Catholic New Times*, *Catholic Register*, *St. Anthony Messenger*, *Words To Live By*, and *Catholic Digest*.

#### *Faith Library*

Have a collection of inspirational books, videos, and liturgical music available to your staff.

#### *Staff Prayer Book*

Ask staff members to collect their favourite prayers/poems/quotations. Put them together for a school prayer book.

#### *Guest Speakers*

Invite a guest speaker for the staff, or division or department. You may want your local priest to come in to share with your staff. Or you can contact Les Miller at the board (713-2711 ext. 3616) He will be glad to conduct a reflection after school ranging from 15 to 75 minutes. He is open to leading reflections on a number of topics related to spirituality. He has presentations on God Speaking in Creation; Finding Sacred Space in Our Lives; Advent; Lent; Easter; The Prodigal Son; The Spirituality of Parenting and Love and Teaching prepared or in preparation.

### **ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT**

#### *Additional Qualification Program in Religious Education*

Faith Ambassadors disseminate information on Religious Education Additional Qualification courses to staff members. This work needs to be done in September and March.

#### *Mentoring program*

Pair up senior teachers with newer teachers for support and encouragement.

#### *Staff Mission Statement*

Work with Administration and compile a staff mission statement. It might be built on devising a personal mission statement. See the work of Steven Covey in this area.

#### *Faith Plan*

Work with Parish, Administration, Catholic School Councils and Staff to produce a school yearly staff faith development plan that proposes strategic actions to further staff spiritual development.

#### *A School Prayer/Affirmation/Creed*

Devise a school affirmation/school prayer that can be recited as a staff and with the school community.

## Family of Schools Faith Development Activities

Many of the activities listed as school activities can also be applied to Families of Schools. Families can also act as a place where ideas for school staff faith development can be exchanged. Some activities that are not possible at an individual school because of size or resource constraints can take place when several schools unite to create Faith Experiences. In the past few years this sample of Family Faith Activities is a starting point for families looking for ideas:

### *Guest Speakers*

Use the list of Guest Speakers as well as your own contacts to invite guest speakers to Ambassador events. Also invite Booksellers (see Appendix) and hold a prayer service.

### *Family of Schools Liturgy*

Hold a liturgy for staff within the family. This can either be a prayer service or a Eucharistic Liturgy.

### *Seder*

Using the YCDSB document on the Seder and advice from the Religious Education and Family Life Education staff, host a Seder. This is a traditional Passover meal from the Jewish tradition. It is also that meal that Jesus celebrated at the Last Supper.

### *Taizé Prayer*

Taizé Prayer is a form of prayer that includes Chants and readings building on the ecumenical Taizé movement. Preparation for the prayer may include showing a video on Taizé to the Ambassador Family before inviting all teachers.

### *Advent and Lent Reflections*

Advent and Lenten Reflections have been held at a number of schools over the past few years. The formula that emerged includes inviting Board staff from the Religious Education and Family Life Education to lead the meditation; Invite booksellers; Have a snacks or a light meal before or after the event.

### *Family of Schools Breakfasts.*

Prayer and Breakfasts are held at family of schools simultaneously on significant days such as the Feast Day of St Lucy.

### *Family Quilt*

Construct a quilt with squares representing each school.

### *Spirituality Workshops*

Using one of the methods of discerning your type of spirituality (True Colours, Myers Briggs or Enneagram) gather staff to explore and reflect on deeper ways of living out their faith.

### *Twilight Retreats*

At one of the retreat facilities or at a High School Chapel, a leader guides staff through a faith experience pertinent to the needs of the family and the liturgical season.

### *Faith Day*

Families of Schools form committees that are responsible for some aspect of Faith Day in cooperation with their Family of Schools Principals.

### *Shared Reflection on Prayer and Spirituality*

Families of Schools work through a book on spirituality or prayer, sometimes as part of their regular meetings.

### *Board Prayer Services*

Each Family of Schools is invited to one of the Board Prayer services during the school year to lead the board in Prayer. These prayer services should be relevant to the liturgical season and be no more than ten minutes long.

### *Craft Sessions*

Family of Schools Faith Ambassadors construct crafts as a group and then go back to the school to share the craft and perhaps repeat the session with their own school staffs.

## **Retreat and Workshop Facilitators and Speakers**

### **Sr. Joan Atkinson, C.S.J.**

Phone: 416-926-1300 x3439

Interest: facilitator for parish groups, retreats for teachers

### **Noel Cooper**

Phone: 905 884- 5209

Interest: Scripture, Faith Development

### **Rev. John F. Duggan, S.J.**

Phone: 416-972-6194

Interest: retreats, works, theological reflection

### **Sr. Judith Engel, O.P.**

Phone: 416-762-1026

Interest: fine arts, spiritual direction, multicultural issues, integration of arts and spirituality, integration of social justice and spirituality

### **Anna Gormley**

Phone: 416-222-5420

Interest: yoga, dance, body movement

### **Fr. Paul Hansen**

426 St. Germain Avenue,  
Toronto, Ontario M5M 1W7

Tel: 416 789-3217

Interest: social justice

### **Brenda Holtkamp-Welbes**

Phone: 519-941-5720

Interest: sacramental preparation, chaplaincy, high school retreats

### **Rev. Bob Holmes, C.S.B.**

Phone: 416-516-1046

Interest: social justice workshops

### **Margaret Keogh**

Phone: 416-424-3354

Interest: workshops on wellness spirituality and on ministry and spirituality

### **Rev. George LaPierre, C.S.B.**

Phone: 416-926-1300

Interest: spirituality, liturgy

### **Rev. John Lee C.P.**

Phone: 416-755-2131

Interest: leadership development, group facilitation, workshops

### **Bertha Madott**

Phone: 416-488-1538

Interest: prayer, spirituality. Slide and music presentations for Lent and Advent

### **Mary Marrocco**

Phone: 416-406-3597

Interest: spirituality, prayer, scripture

### **Rev. Gary McCarthy, C.S.Sp.**

Phone: 416-698-2003

Interest: spirituality, inner sacredness and worth, hope, Jesus, prayer

### **Kitty McGilly**

97 Wesley St. Toronto, ON M8Y 2W8 Phone:  
416 201-7375

Interest: Teacher spirituality, pilgrimage

### **Colleen O'Leary, C.N.D.,**

### **Irene Wilson, S.P.**

Phone: 416-323-0704/416-968-0482

Interest: Spiritual Direction, retreat direction, group facilitation, workshops, reflection days

### **Sr. Elizabeth Losinski, N.D.S.**

Phone: 416-762-1026

Interest: scripture, spiritual direction, twilight retreats

### **Fr Vito Marzilliano**

Phone: (416)244-3066

Interest: Spirituality, Liturgy, Taizé prayer

### **Marilyn Melville**

Phone: 416-653-0563

Interest: adult education, counseling, Meyers Briggs, Jungian psychology, mid-life workshops, personal and spiritual growth, the unemployed

### **Fr. Eugene O'Reilly**

426 St. Germain Avenue,  
Toronto, Ontario M5M 1W7

Tel: 416 789-3217

Interest: Spirituality

**Sr. Anne Schenck, C.S.J.**

Phone: 416-861-9100

Interest: intercultural issues, refugee families, retreats

**Ted Schmidt**

Phone: 416 690-2220

Interest: Social Justice

**Mary Ann Takacs**

Phone: 905 832-4636

Interest: teacher's prayer life, personal faith journeys.

**Rev. David Whalen, O.S.F.S.**

Phone: 416-926-1300

Interest: ministry, theological reflection, spirituality

**Sr. Marge Zdunich, N.D.S.**

Phone: 905-279-6472

Interest: women's spirituality, biblical women, women's groups

**Retreat Facilities**

**Carter Centre**

1335 St. John's Sideroad E.  
Aurora, Ontario L4G 3G8  
905 727 4215

**Dayspring**

11339 Yonge Street,  
Richmond Hill, ON L4S 1L1 (905) 884-3454  
ext. 226

**King View Farm**

Dufferin St., Snowball.  
905 727-9171

**Loretto Christian Life Centre**

6881 Stanley Ave., Niagara Falls, ON L2G 7B6  
Phone: 905 354-2775  
Contact: Sr. Marianna Gignac

**Manresa Jesuit Retreat House**

2325 Liverpool Road  
Pickering, Ont. L1X 1V4  
Phone: 905-839-2864  
Contact: Mrs. Alice Quigley

**Mount Carmel Spiritual Centre**

7021 Stanley Ave.  
Niagara Falls, Ont. L2G 7B7  
Phone: 905-356-4113  
Contact: Mrs. Jean Yazaroglu

**Mount Mary Immaculate Retreat Centre**, 437 Wilson St. East

Ancaster, Ont. L9G 3K4  
Phone: 905-648-4485  
Contact: Sr. Florentine Smisniuk

**Nazareth House of Mary – Regina Mundi**

19309 Warden Ave. (5<sup>th</sup> Conc. Rd)  
Queensville, Ont. L0G 1R0  
Phone: 905-478-4264  
Contact: Johnny & Nanette Cruz

**Queen of Apostles Renewal Centre**

1617 Blythe Road, Mississauga, Ont. L5H 2C3  
Phone: 905-278-5229  
Contact: Bruna Gumieniak

**St. Bernard's Retreat/Guest House**

685 Finch Ave. West  
Willowdale, Ont. M2R 1P2  
Phone: 416-635-8422 x263  
Contact: Sr. John Marie

**St. Francis Centre for Religious Studies (Retreat Centre)**

208501 Hwy. #9, Mono Mills, RR#8,  
Orangeville, Ont. L9W 3T5  
Phone: 519-941-1747

**St. Joseph's Centre of Spirituality**

Box 155, L.C.D. 1  
Hamilton, Ont. L8L 7V7  
Phone: 905-528-0138  
Contact: Patti Melanson

## **Books and Religious Articles**

### **Claude Le Gros Sales Inc.**

(church supplies, furnishings, wine, candles, vestments, statues, nativity sets)  
36 Colville (south of Lawrence, off of Keele)  
Toronto 416-242-2712

### **Joseph's Inspirational Services**

(bibles, crucifixes, cards, books, music, candles, statues, altarware)  
2721 Markham Road Unit 39  
(north of Finch) 416-291-1772

### **L'Arche Community**

(book store carries writings of Father Henri J.M. Nouwen and Jean Vanier)  
11339 Yonge St  
Richmond Hill 905-884-3454

### **Lion's Den Christian Book Shoppe**

(books, gifts, cards, music)  
115 Main St.  
Markham 905-472-8412

### **Mitchell's Family Books**

565 Gordon Baker Rd.  
416-499-2029  
Steeles & Victoria Park

### **Mitchell's Warehouse Outlet**

120 West Beaver Creek Road, Unit 1&2  
905-707-9815  
(Leslie & Hwy 7)

### **The Treasure House**

Christian Supplies Ltd.  
905-898-3582  
1110 Stellar Dr., Unit 104  
Newmarket

### **Canadian Bible Society**

10 Carnforth Rd.  
416-701-1761  
Victoria Park & Lawrence

### **Airport Christian Fellowship Bookstore**

272 Attwell Dr.  
416-674-8463  
Dixon Rd & Hwy 27

### **Speelman's Christian Bookstore**

5010 Steeles Ave. W.  
416-741-6563  
Kipling & Steeles

### **Agape Christian Bookshop**

1280 Finch Ave. W. Unit 102  
416-661-7623  
\*Finch & Keele

### **Pauline Books and Media**

(gifts, excellent collection of books, music, statues, cards rosaries),  
3022 Dufferin Street  
Toronto  
South of Lawrence Ave. W  
416-781-9131

### **Religious Gift Shop (books, gifts, statues, rosaries, candles, bomboniere)**

Yonge & Oxford,  
Richmond Hill  
905-737-0691

### **Sisters of the Good Shepherd**

25 Good Shepherd Court  
Toronto, Ontario  
416-787-6588

### **St. Michael's Church Supplies**

810 Danforth Avenue  
Toronto  
416-461-0690

### **ABC**

(inspirational books, religious greeting cards, church supplies, education resources)  
600 Jarvis St. Toronto  
416-924-9192

Thanks to Gina Creta and Martha Baglieri of the Br André family

# Appendix I

## Icebreakers

### ICEBREAKERS

These Activities help to form community, make people feel at ease and put a distance between previous activities and the business at hand.

#### *What Are Icebreakers?*

The Encyclopedia of Icebreakers (University Associates, 1983) says that icebreakers "are tools that enable the group leader to foster interaction, stimulate creative thinking, challenge basic assumptions, illustrate new concepts, and introduce specific material." (pg. 1). As such, icebreakers can be used nearly any time a facilitator has a need to gather a group, get them together, and help them move forward. Energizers can be used to the same ends, and are generally thought of as best for points in the midst of a meeting, training, workshop, or other group learning experience.

#### *The Use of Icebreakers*

Be sensitive to the various needs of the group and allow for some to opt out if they don't feel comfortable.

#### **Tone**

Icebreakers "set the tone" for some aspect(s) of the event the precede. Given this, it makes sense to choose an icebreaker that is consonant with this tone. Sometimes "more serious" icebreakers inadvertently send a message that "there will be no fun here!" At other times, "silly" icebreakers can have unintended impacts with a particular audience, or provide just the right break at the start of a multi-session program or when used as an energizer. Generally, then, it makes sense to be deliberate in your choice of icebreakers.

#### **Length**

Some of the icebreakers in this compilation are best for very short programs, while others make most sense when used in programs that last for several days.

### ICEBREAKER STRATEGIES

#### **1. What's Different, Partner? - partners (5 minutes)**

Ask everyone to team up with a partner (someone they haven't met or who has the same color eyes). Ask them to turn back-to-back and change 5 things about their appearance, one which is very silly. Partners turn around when ready and try to guess the 5 things that have been changed.

*This ice-breaker gets people to interact with one new person and helps everyone feel comfortable and part of the session. It also shows how observant we really are.*

2. **4 Facts** - 4-6 people per team (10-15 minutes)

Each person writes down 4 facts about themselves, 1 of which is a lie. Each person takes turns reading their list aloud and the rest of the team writes down the one they think is a lie. When all are done reading the lists aloud, the first person reads their list again and identifies the lie. The team sees how well they did.

*This ice-breaker gets people to know one another very quickly and find things in common. Some of the truths and lies are so outrageous! This icebreaker can show how right or wrong our perceptions can be.*

3. **4 C's** - 4-6 people per team (10-15 minutes)

Each person writes down on an index card his/her favorite: **Color, Cuisine, Country to visit and Closet Dream**. The cards are shuffled and redistributed. Each person reads aloud the card they picked up and each person guesses in writing who wrote it. At the end, see who guessed the most correct responses.

*This ice-breaker also is an easy way to get people talking and mingling more with each other. It allows the team members to see what they have in common.*

4. **Let's Make a Deal** - 4-8 people per team (10 minutes)

Make up a worksheet with 6-8 items listed that the team members would likely have with them. Make 1 or 2 items, more uncommon things. Assign a recorder based on some criteria (i.e., person with the oldest car, whose birthday is next, who has the longest last name, etc.). The team gets points for **each** person who has these items. Only 1 of each item per person can be counted and the team with the most points wins. Your list could include: a photograph, a calculator, a pencil, more than 3 credit cards, an unusual keychain, something red, etc.

*This ice-breaker helps give a team a sense of identity. Be sure to award a prize!*

5. **Birth Order** - all participants (10-15 minutes)

Put one of the following signs in each room corner: **Only Child, Oldest Child, Youngest Child, Middle Child**. Have participants go to the appropriate corner of the room based on their own birth order position.

When everyone is assembled, ask them to discuss what special characteristics their birth order has and how it is reflected in their choice of job. Assign a recorder based on some criteria (i.e., person who was born the farthest from the meeting site, person who has been with their company the longest/shortest, person who is the tallest, etc.). Have groups report back.

*This ice-breaker gets people moving and interacting with a larger group.*

6. **The Mingle Game** - works well with large groups (from 15-200 people) (15-20 minutes)

Create a worksheet with space for 12-15 blanks. Ask participants to walk around the room collecting signatures from people who meet the criteria. A person can only sign the sheet once. If people finish early, have them help others finish their sheets. Collect completed sheets. Select 3 to win prizes.

The criteria you list can be easily adapted to any group. Here are some ideas. "Find someone who: is wearing contact lenses, has brown socks, saw \_\_\_\_\_ movie, has gone to Europe, has grandchildren, plays a musical instrument, has an unusual hobby, etc."

*This ice-breaker also gets people moving and interacting with a larger group.*

**7. Word Puzzles** - 4-6 people per team (5-10 minutes)

Use word puzzles to list 5-8 common phrases. Give a prize to the team who gets the most correct. The Wuzzle Book is a great source for these (800-383-9210). Here are some examples (*answers are listed below in italics*):

Cycle	<u>Wear</u>	Dice	<u>Stand</u>	MCE MCE MCE
Cycle	Long	Dice	I	
<i>Bicycle</i>	<i>Long Underwear</i>	<i>Paradise</i>	<i>I understand</i>	<i>3 Blind Mice</i>

*These puzzles are fun "brain-teasers." Be sure to include easy ones to build confidence!*

**8. Team Brainstorming** - 4-6 per group (10-15 minutes)

Ask teams to list: things that are round, things associated with a holiday, things that are red, things you can make out of tires or coat hangers, excuses for speeding, etc. No discussion, just list items! Assign a recorder (see criteria in activity #4 or 5). The team with the most wins.

*This activity helps everyone feel equal and sets the stage for activities on the course topics.*

**9. Beach Ball Brainstorming** - entire group (5-10 minutes)

Announce a topic (things associated with a season, a holiday, the course content, the company, etc.). Then pass around an inflatable beach ball. Have everyone stand and pass the ball. When someone catches the ball, they shout out something related to the topic and then toss the ball to someone else. If the group is small, they can pass the ball in a circle chain.

**10. Mind Reading Attention Getter** - entire group. Helps stress listening & taking directions. (5 mins.)

Tell the group, you have ESP and can read their minds. To prove it, 1) ask each person to mentally think of a number from 1 up to 10. Step 2: take that number and multiply by 9. Step 3: Take the result and add the number together (i.e.  $7 \times 9 = 63$ ,  $6 + 3 = 9$ ). Step 4: take that number and subtract 5. Step 5: take that result and equate it to a letter of the alphabet (i.e.,  $4 = D$ ). Step 6: think of a country beginning with that letter. Step 7: Ask them to think of an animal that begins with the **second** letter of the country name. Then ask the group: "*How many people are thinking of elephants in Denmark?*" This exercise works because any number they think of for step 1, will result in the answer of 9 for step 3. From that point on, the country will begin with D (Denmark is one of the few) and Elephants is typically used for E.

**11 Favorite T-shirt -**

Ask attendees to bring (not wear) their favorite T-shirt to the meeting. Once all participants have arrived, ask each person to show the shirt to the group and explain how the T-shirt best resembles their personality.

**12 Say cheese, please -**

As each participant arrives, take their picture with a Polaroid type camera and hang their photo on a piece of easel paper in the entrance area of the meeting room in groups of two or three photos (depending on size of meeting - you may have only 2 per group or more if the group is large). Use your creativity and decorate the easel paper to extend a Warm Welcome and set the tone of the meeting. Once all participants have arrived, ask them to find their partner(s) from the photo display on the easel and spend about 5 - 10 minutes getting to know the person(s). Then have them introduce their partner(s) to the rest of the group and share something they discovered they have in common.

**13 Famous people/cities -**

As each participant arrives, tape a 3 x 5 index card on their back with the name of a famous

person or city. They must circulate in the room and ask questions that can ONLY be answered with a YES or NO to identify clues that will help them find out the name of the person or city on their index card. EXAMPLES: Paris, Madonna, Santa Claus, John Wayne, Casablanca

#### **14 Sensuous Sam & Inquiring Ida -**

Ask each participant to choose an adjective that begins with the first letter of their first name and one that really matches their personality. Have them introduce themselves just as they wrote it on the card and allow time for others to ask questions.

#### **15 Dream Vacation -**

Ask participants to introduce themselves and describe details of the ideal, perfect dream vacation.

#### **16 Favourite animal -**

As the guests arrive, and before you write their names on a name card, ask them to tell you their favourite animal and three adjectives to describe the animal. As they tell you, write the three adjectives on a name tag BEFORE their name (omit the name of the animal). Ask them to mingle with the crowd, sharing why these adjectives best describe their own personality. EXAMPLES: Loyal, cuddly, playful Dan

#### **17 Birthday Partner -**

Have participants mingle in the group and identify the person whose birthdate (not year - just month and date) is closest to their own. Find out two things they have in common.

#### **18 Long lost relative -**

As a group, 1) ask each person to turn to the person on their right and greet him/her as if they really didn't want to be there. Yeah, you know what I mean - you can't wait to get out of there! Then everyone (simultaneously to create lots of fun and excitement) turn to the same person and greet him/her as if (s)he is a long lost, deeply loved relative who has just returned home and you're about to see the person for the first time in years! In fact, you thought you may never see this person again until this very moment. Okay, now ask everyone (again simultaneously) to turn to the same person and greet him/her as if this person just told you that you won the state lottery for 50 million dollars and you have the ONLY winning ticket!

#### **19 Circle of Friends -**

This is a great greeting and departure for a large group who will be attending a seminar for more than one day together and the chances of meeting everyone in the room is almost impossible. Form two large circles (or simply form two lines side by side), one inside the other and have the people in the inside circle face the people in the outside circle. Ask the circles to take one step in the opposite directions, allowing them to meet each new person as the circle continues to move very slowly. If lines are formed, they simply keep the line moving very slowly, as they introduce themselves.

#### **20 Names & Stories**

Ask participants to introduce themselves, with each person talking briefly about the most ridiculous thing they've done in their working life.

## 21 Interviewing & Introducing

*Objectives:* Learning enough about one other person to be able to introduce them to the entire group. All participants get to hear about other participants from the perspective of a third party instead of hearing from the person themselves. Provides a bit of a stretch for participants to have to ask someone they just met to tell them enough about themselves to introduce them.

*Design:* Pair off the audience. Have the teams interview one another. Then have each take a turn introducing the other to the audience at large. Interviews should be timed (begin, end) anywhere from 1-2 minutes to ? depending on how much time you want to allow for this activity.

*Comments:* You can prepare questions ahead of time or provide just general guidelines for the interview. You may want to ask people to pick someone to interview that they don't already know.

## 22 Toilet Paper Go-Round

*Purpose:* Use for short introductions at the start of a "heavy" or "intense" kind of meeting in order to lighten the atmosphere.

*Material:* 1 roll of toilet paper (if you "borrow" it from an office bathroom, be kind and leave some for your colleagues!)

*Instructions:* Pass around a roll of toilet paper and say something like "just in case this meeting gets a little messy, everyone needs to take some" (with no other qualifiers or instruction). Then go on with other business (agenda, minutes, "housekeeping" items...) as the roll makes it way around the room.

Some folks by nature will take many "squares" and some just a few.. once everyone has had the roll, and you've finished other business, ask everyone to introduce themselves and share with the group as many "things" about themselves as number of "squares" they took! You can suggest the "things" be generic or make it work-related.. you choose.

## 23 All My Neighbors #1

Everyone begins by sitting on chairs in a circle with the facilitator standing in the middle. Explain that the person in the middle needs to find some "neighbors." To do so, they'll make a true statement about themselves and hope that it will be true for others. Everyone that "identifies" with the statement has to then stand up and find an empty chair. The person in the center is also looking for a chair, so once again someone will be without a chair, and they get to go to the middle and find some "neighbors." The facilitator then begins with something like: "All my neighbors wearing blue jeans." At this, everyone who is wearing jeans should jump out of their seats and look for an empty seat. The odd person out goes to the middle.

## 24 All My Neighbors #2 (for more "sedate" groups)

The group is in a circle, standing up. The facilitator is standing in the middle of the circle. Explain that you are going to make a variety of statements and you'd like everyone who "identifies" with the statement to join you in the center of the circle for "high fives."

The facilitator then begins: "All my neighbors wearing white underwear." At this, everyone who is wearing white underwear should join the facilitator in the middle of the circle for a high five. Folks then return to their seats. The facilitator then goes on through 10 to 15 other such

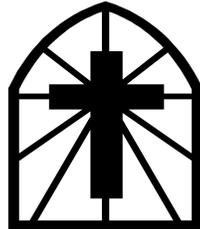
statements.

## **25 Blob Tag**

Its helpful to have a pretty large, open space for this energizer. The facilitator is it. When she or he tags someone they lock arms and then jointly attempt to tag someone else. As each person is tagged they lock arms with those who are already it. The game is over when the last person is "captured." Some boundaries must be set up for this activity to keep folks from roaming too far afield. This game typically takes less than 10 minutes to complete.

<http://www.susan-boyd.com/tenways.htm>

<http://www.work911.com/cgi-bin/links/jump.cgi?ID=2694>



# Appendix II

## Scriptural Quotations

The seed (Mt 13:3-9): What is the seed inside me that is trying to germinate? Is the soil of my life, my interior (spiritual) life and my exterior actions, helping that seed to grow and develop?

The feeding (Mt 14:13-21): What do I have to share with God's people that Jam clinging to and not sharing? Why? Do I believe there is bounty and abundance in Christ? Can I trust that? Will I let him feed me?

The forgiving parent (Lk 15: 11-32): To whom do I relate in this story? Why? Have I ever experienced the benevolent embrace of God like this? Who do I hold grudges against in my life?

The withered hand (Mt 12:9-14): What is withered up inside of me right now? Do I know my preciousness before God? Do I recognize preciousness in others?

The net (Mt 13:47-52): In my net, what sorts of things have I collected? What helps me in my spiritual journey ? What hinders me? What old and new treasures from Church history can I bring from my storeroom to enrich me?

The salt of the earth (Mt5:13): How am I the salt that gives to others? What is the salt I offer? Has my inner life gone flat ? What would restore it?

The light of the world (Mt 5:14-16): Am I living under a bushel basket? How? Do others see my goodness? Is it shining through me? Where?

The storm of the sea (Lk 8: 22-25): What are the storms inside that are preoccupying me? Can I slow down and allow God to enter my storm? Where is my faith? Where is my courage?

Hidden treasure (Mt 13:44): What is the buried treasure within my community? Why are we hiding it? Is Christ worth giving all that I have?

(From Planning and Implementing Retreats: A Parish Handbook)



## Appendix III (a)

### Prayer Bundles

Use a piece of fabric or a coffee filter, circular shape, as the container and a piece of ribbon, string etc. to hold the collection and offering together.

Decide what you would like to put inside the “Prayer Bundle”, to offer up in prayer and to stay “mindful of”.

Sight: to appreciate God’s beauty; **the eyes, rose buds...**

Smell: to appreciate and notice the fragrance of life, the “spice” of life; **cloves...**

Touch: to appreciate our sense of touch, touch stones; source of life: **pebble, glass, marble...**

Connections: to stay together, to keep in touch, to not feel alone: **button...**

Lightheartedness: not taking ourselves too seriously, remember to laugh at life our self, as a family, with friends: **feather...**

Light: to perceive and pass light on to those we encounter: **candle...**

Wrap these items up in the fabric, tie it together with the ribbon.

Stand and offer the prayer bundles in prayer:

Lord, may my prayer rise as incense in your sight. May the place be filled with the fragrance of Christ.

Another option that may work in the prayer bundles was passed on as an anti-stress kit. It includes:

An **eraser** to make all those little mistakes disappear.

A **penny** so you will never be completely broke

A marble for those days you’re sure you’ve lost yours.

An **elastic** to help you stretch beyond your limits.

A **string** to hold it all together when it seems to be falling apart.

And a **Hug & Kiss** (small Hershey candies) to remind you that you are loved.

Create a prayer bundle to your own based on the needs of your staff, friends, family, or you!

## **Appendix III (b)**

### **Prayer Bundles**

*Contained in this bag are a few items to help you make it through the year...*

*COTTON BALL... cushioned support of friends for the rough roads ahead*

*RUBBER BAND... reminder to stay flexible*

*CANDY HUG... we all need them*

*PAPER CLIP... to help it hold it all together*

*CANDLE... a reminder to share your light*

*MARBLE... to help keep on rolling*

*SWEET AND SOUR CANDY ...to help you accept and appreciate the differences of others*

*HAPPY FACE... smiling not only increases your face value... it's contagious*

*BAND-AID for healing hurt feelings, yours and someone else's.*

*ERASER... to remind you that everyday you can start over with a clean slate*

# Appendix IV







