**St. Elizabeth Young Church**

**Volunteer Responsibilities**

**Confirmation Year 2**

**HOMEWORK**

**October 7 / Session 3**

Where Am I Going?

Understanding God’s Will Through Prayer

***Taking Points for the Presentation in Chapel:*** *(any not covered, can be highlighted elsewhere)*

* ***Today we are going to talk about the “four last things”: death, judgement, heaven, and hell. We will also discuss purgatory and the very last thing: Jesus coming again at the end of time.***
* *Life has a goal. It has an end zone. It has a target. And in life the only way to attain our goal—to be with God and the communion of Saints forever in heaven—is to stay focused on our target and to pursue truth, beauty, and goodness, which are glimpses of heaven and of God, here and now.*
* *Otherwise, we end up wandering through life from one thing to the next, aiming our hearts at the wrong target after another. And, if we live for all the wrong things we might end up being on the wrong team with the wrong coach, and you may not realize it until it is too late.*
* *Turn to the person next to you, who you will spiritually share with the following: If you found out you may only have a week to live, what are some things you would do with that time? Ready, go for 30 seconds each. Anyone want to share what they would do?*
* *On this note, here’s a short story and I need 7 men/women volunteers to tell it:
1. We arrived at the hospital on Christmas Day within minutes. Had the moment I had been dreading finally arrived? I was born with a partially closed aortic valve, and the doctors had told me that one day it would give out. I didn’t play competitive sports since it might mean sudden death.*
* *2. After a few hours in the hospital I felt better but my doctor said I had to have surgery because my valve had shrunk and was leaking. He said, “if we don’t operate within 3 months to a year, you’ll be dead.”*
* *3. A priest gave me Anointing of the Sick. As they rolled me to surgery and into the room I was thinking “I have put my life in your hands. Jesus, I trust in you and I trust you will take care of my family. As the drugs caused me to start slipping away, I thought: Well, this is it. God, I believe in you!*
* *4. It was a sobering moment. It made me sad to think that my life might be over, that I might not be able to watch the kids grow up and get married. But I knew I was in the hands of Jesus.*
* *5. You probably have guessed that I didn’t die on the operating table. More than 10 years have passed. I don’t know how much time I have left or whether the new heart valve will ever give out. What I do know is that every day is a gift to embrace. We all are going to die at some point, possibly without warning.*
* *6. And I didn’t share this to encourage you to live your life in fear but the opposite…to encourage you to live with the freedom that comes from knowing you’re right with God and with the knowledge that he loves you more than you can imagine.*
* *7. So live your life in a way that will allow you to have no regrets in your relationships with others and no regrets when you finally see your Father in heaven. Live every day fully.*
* *Turn to your partner again. Are you right with God and know he loves you more than you can imagine? Ready, go. Share for 30 seconds each.*
* ***How do you get right with God you might be thinking?*** *Or, you see this narrow and challenging path to heaven vs. the wide and easy highway the world can offer to hell?*
* *Are you ready for judgement? Until you die is the time of mercy and after your last breath you are judged and there is no more time to make sure you are in a state of sanctifying grace before God.*
* *This short life on earth ends and only continues forever in heaven, which he promised, if you obeyed his commandments and were his friend and not slaves to sin.*
* *You may have been taught by now that prayer is a friendship—a deep personal relationship with God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. You don’t have to raise your hands but how many of you have that? Know that a strong spiritual life and strong desire to love God and His people through works of love is the path to heaven, with others hopefully following you as you follow Jesus.*
* ***Write this down in your journal or in notepad on your phone to see regularly.*** ***You talk to God in many ways, such as:*** *-written/memorized prayer—others words you learned from family and Church to help you express your faith, especially as you start a prayer life or prayer in Communion with others
-pray in your own words—to express who you are, what you think, how you feel, and what you need or have to offer God and His people (service, thanks, praise)
-listen to God, not just talk—just as in good relationships with family and friends, it has to go both ways. How can we know what God’s will is for us if we are telling him what to do or our plan vs open to what is His will and wait for His response in silence.*
* ***Definition of prayer is:***  *-raising of one’s mind & heart to God or requesting of good things from God (CCC 2590).
-prayer is a conversation with our loving God (children of God growing to love our Father)
-one’s mind grows in insight slowly through encountering God in prayer
-one’s heart grows in affection slowly for God when encountering him in prayer
-when you open your heart in friendship to God, you can hear his voice saying, I love you
-prayer heals you and loving God helps you love others
-less about saying right words or right technique but about sharing desires, joys, sorrows, worries, thanks and praise, petitions for others (asking for); and, discovering God the Father who reveals himself and yourself to you
-offer everything to the God we trust, including the messiness of our lives to let Him control it and not us thinking we can control our lives alone or control other’s lives
-Prayer is the most important conversation of your day. Take it to God before you take it to anyone else (Christian singer-Toby Mac)*
* *Jesus always prayed to His Father, especially before and after he did his ministry or before major events in his life. It was a way of life. It can be done when you wake up, when you eat, through the day, before a minor/major decision, and before you go to bed. You will learn and understand more and more over time and get to practice it—how to pray heart-to-heart so you encounter Him and feels His presence despite distractions.*

***In Spirit, He takes us to places, tells us stories, gives us wisdom, so that we are ready for the answers He wants to give us.*** *Jesus knows that it’s not knowing the answers. It is the* ***praying****, the serving, the being (imitating) more and more like him that brings us closer to him.*

*And so, He calls to us: “Come and see”. And our job is to follow, to listen, to learn, and to love. But how do we follow, listen, learn, and love? You heard one of the most important answers tonight, prayer. A relationship with Jesus in deep personal and communal prayer will transform our lives. They will not be the same. They will be what they were meant to be, not what the world wants our lives to be. The answer to “Where Am I Going? is to God on earth and in heaven, if you freely choose to do so. God wants everyone in heaven but he will not impose His will on you. We are accountable for our choices. Our choosing to be Confirmed is a choice, and not a choice of your parents or anyone else. It is a step to being strengthened by the Holy Spirit to join Jesus in His mission to love and serve God and His people and then sit at His right hand in heaven. “Draw near to God and he will draw near to you” (James 4:8).*

**MC Closing Prayer:** (when we reconvene in hall after small group)

Lord Jesus, you invite us to pray with confidence, expecting answers and an outpouring of graces. But sometimes when we pray, our hearts are in the wrong place. Show us what parts of our lives need to change in order for our prayers to become holy and our wills to be conformed to yours. Give us the grace to make time for daily prayer and to listen for your gentle voice in our lives so that we may face life together with you.

*We ask you Jesus, our Lord and Savior, to listen to our spoken prayer and prayers in our hearts. We end with an Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be…*

***Small Group Discussions*** *(RE Classrooms)*

Have a different student read slowly and out loud a definition before discussion:

**Heaven** is “the state of supreme, definitive happiness” (CCC 1024). Every true joy we experience in this life comes from God. We get a glimpse of the joyful COMMUNION OF SAINTS through our family and friends. We get a taste of the love of the Holy Trinity by loving one another. In heaven, we directly experience the source of all joy forever.

**Hell:** Because we are free to choose good and act in love, we are also free to choose evil and make unloving, sinful choices. If we freely choose to do something we know is mortally sinful (blocks us from God), we lose SANCTIFYING GRACE, which is necessary for salvation. Those who willfully persist in a state of MORTAL SIN until death, freely choose to reject God, cannot be saved. The place for those who reject him is hell. In hell, people are separated from the source of every joy forever.

**Judgement:** At the end of our lives, we will experience the particular judgement of God, and we will know how our actions and life compared to what he made us to be. This judgement will determine how we spend eternity, either with God in heaven or separated from him in hell. When Jesus returns at the end of time “to judge the living and the dead” (see CCC 1040), all will experience the Final Judgement, when at last justice, love, and truth will triumph over evil. After that last judgement and the resurrection of the body, people will be whole, body and soul, again, either in heaven or in hell.

**Purgatory:** Is the state of preparation and purification for those who die in the state of grace but are not yet ready for heaven due to remaining imperfections in their souls. We are purified to enter heaven prepared to experience its blessings.

We are called to pray and offer up our sufferings for the souls in purgatory, so that their sufferings might be lessened and their entry into heaven may occur more quickly. It is a way to express our love for family and friends who have died and to extend forgiveness to those who have hurt us and who we were unable to forgive while they were living. They are a big prayer support once they enter heaven.

**Small Group Questions** (this page to be given out to students for group and take home)

(start with any question or reword and do not have to get through all if not possible)

Q: What is the first thing on your “to do” list after hearing today’s teaching/stories?

Q: What other things would be on your list?

Q: What impression did the death of a friend or family member make on you?

Q: What if someone asked you why a loving God would allow people to go to hell?

Q: What do you imagine heaven to be like?

Q: What kinds of experiences here on earth closely resemble heaven?

Q: How does wanting to go to heaven make a difference in how you live your life?

BONUS:

What do I say when my Protestant friends ask if I am saved? Yes.

Why?

* It began with my Baptism into new life.
* My salvation is not a one-time event. It is a share in God’s very life that can increase or decrease.
* The saved are guided by the Church and strengthened for the journey by receiving Him in the Eucharist.
* Those who persevere in faith will one day be united with God in heaven. God has not taken away my freedom to reject and neglect Him in my daily choices.
* My life with God—my salvation—begins, is nourished, and is restored when lost, within His family, the Church Christ established, the “pillar and foundation of truth” (1 Tim 3:15).

**CHALLENGES:** (things to take home, to consider doing outside of session)

(choose at least one till next class and write about it in your journal)

**Pray for the Release of Souls from Purgatory.** Use your own words for friends and family and/or pray: *“Eternal Father, I offer you the most precious blood of your divine Son, Jesus, in union with the Masses said throughout the world today, for all the holy souls in purgatory, for sinners everywhere, for sinners in the universal church, for those in my own home and within my family. Amen.”* (Prayer of St. Getrude the Great)

**Go to Confession this week.** Invite your family or friends to go with you.

**Try Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in Chapel or Sanctuary.** Chapel is always open or go early to Mass or stay after Mass. Go with your parent or family member or friend or on First Friday of month Adoration from 7:30am-8am Saturday. You can meditate by praying personal devotions (e.g., Rosary, Chaplet of Divine Mercy), read Scripture or do Lectio Divina, or other prayers (e.g., Jesus prayer, Our Father, Hail Mary, those in back of Missalette). Meditation is thinking about God and trying to understand what he has said or is saying to us. Contemplation is prayerful silence in the presence of God to reduce noise/ distraction in your life and better able to hear God and be aware of his presence.

**Just say it.** Is there someone with whom you need to be reconciled, someone who needs your apology or forgiveness? What are you waiting for? Talk or write a letter. Ask parents for advice.

**Discusiones en grupos pequeños ( En los Salones)**

Tener un estudiante diferente leer despacio y en voz alta una definición antes de la discusión:

**El cielo es** "el estado de la felicidad Suprema y definitiva" (CCC 1024). Cada verdadera alegría que experimentamos en esta vida viene de Dios. A través de nuestra familia y amigos, vislumbramos el dichoso Communio de los Santos. Conseguimos una muestra del amor de la Santísima Trinidad amándonos unos a otros. En el cielo, experimentamos directamente la fuente de toda alegría para siempre.

**Infierno**: porque somos libres de elegir el bien y actuar en el amor, también somos libres de elegir el mal y hacer elecciones no amorosas y pecaminosas. Si elegimos libremente hacer algo que sabemos que es mortalmente pecaminoso (nos bloquea de Dios), perdemos la gracia santificadora, que es necesaria para la salvación. Aquellos que intencionalmente persisten en un estado de pecado mortal hasta la muerte, eligen libremente rechazar a Dios, no pueden ser salvados. El lugar para los que lo rechazan es el infierno. En el infierno, la gente está separada de la fuente de cada gozo para siempre.

**Juicio**: al final de nuestras vidas, experimentaremos el juicio particular de Dios, y sabremos cómo nuestras acciones y nuestra vida se comparan con lo que él nos hizo ser. Este juicio determinará cómo pasamos la eternidad, ya sea con Dios en el cielo o separados de él en el infierno. Cuando Jesús regrese al final del tiempo "para juzgar a los vivos y a los muertos" (ver CCC 1040), todos experimentarán el juicio final, cuando por fin la justicia, el amor y la verdad triunfarán sobre el mal. Después de ese juicio final y la resurrección del cuerpo, la gente será entera, cuerpo y alma, de nuevo, ya sea en el cielo o en el infierno.

**Purgatorio**: es el estado de preparación y purificación para los que mueren en el estado de gracia, pero todavía no están listos para el cielo debido a las imperfecciones restantes en sus almas. Somos purificados para entrar al cielo preparado para experimentar sus bendiciones.

Estamos llamados a orar y ofrecer nuestros sufrimientos para las almas en el Purgatorio, para que sus sufrimientos puedan ser disminuidos y su entrada en el cielo pueda ocurrir más rápidamente. Es una manera de expresar nuestro amor por la familia y amigos que han muerto y para extender el perdón a aquellos que nos han herido y a quienes no pudimos perdonar mientras vivían. Son un gran apoyo de oración una vez que entran al cielo.

**Preguntas de grupos pequeños (esta página se dará a los estudiantes para el grupo y llevar a casa)**

**(comience con cualquier pregunta o reword y no tiene que conseguir a través de todos si no es posible)**

**P: ¿Cuál es la primera cosa en su lista de "hacer" después de escuchar la enseñanza de hoy/historias?**

**P: ¿Qué otras cosas serían en su lista?**

**P: ¿Qué impresión le ha hecho la muerte de un amigo o miembro de la familia?**

**P: ¿Qué pasaría si alguien le preguntara por qué un Dios amoroso permitiría que la gente se fuera al infierno?**

**P: ¿Cómo te imaginas que es el cielo?**

**P: ¿Qué tipo de experiencias aquí en la tierra se asemejan estrechamente al cielo?**

**P: ¿Cómo es que querer ir al cielo hace una diferencia en cómo vives tu vida?**

**Adicional: ¿qué digo cuando mis amigos protestantes me preguntan si soy salvado? Sí.**

**¿Porqué?**

**• Comenzó con mi bautismo en nueva vida.**

**• Mi salvación no es un evento de una sola vez. Es una parte de la vida misma de Dios que puede aumentar o disminuir.**

**• Los salvados son guiados por la iglesia y fortalecidos para el viaje al recibirlo en la Eucaristía.**

**• Aquellos que perseveren en la fe algún día estarán Unidos con Dios en el cielo. Dios no ha quitado mi libertad para rechazarlo y descuidarlo en mis elecciones diarias.**

**• Mi vida con Dios — mi salvación — comienza, se nutre, y se restablece cuando se pierde, dentro de su familia, la iglesia que Cristo estableció, el "Pilar y fundamento de la verdad" (1 Tim 3:15).**

**Desafios: (cosas para llevar a casa, considerar hacer fuera de la sesión)**

**(elija al menos una hasta la siguiente clase y escríbala en su diario)**

**Oren por la liberación de las almas del Purgatorio. Usa tus propias palabras para los amigos y la familia y/o ora: "Padre eterno, te ofrezco la sangre más preciada de tu divino Hijo, Jesús, en unión con las masas que se han dicho en todo el mundo hoy, por todas las almas santas en el Purgatorio, por todos los pecadores, por los pecadores en el Iglesia universal, para aquellos en mi propia casa y dentro de mi familia. Amén. " (rezo de San Getrude el grande)**

**Ve a confesarte esta semana. Invite a su familia o amigos a ir con usted.**

**Prueba la adoración del Santísimo Sacramento en la capilla o en el Santuario. La capilla está siempre abierta o ir temprano a misa o permanecer después de la Misa. Vaya con su padre o miembro de la familia o amigo o el primer viernes de mes adoración de 7:30am-8am sábado. Usted puede meditar orando devociones personales (por ejemplo, Rosario, coronilla de la divina misericordia), leer las escrituras o hacer lectio divina, u otras oraciones (por ejemplo, oración de Jesús, nuestro padre, Ave María, aquellos en la parte posterior de Missalette). La meditación está pensando en Dios y tratando de entender lo que él ha dicho o nos está diciendo. La contemplación es el silencio de oración en la presencia de Dios para reducir el ruido/la distracción en su vida y más capaz de escuchar a Dios y ser consciente de su presencia.**

**Sólo di lo. ¿Hay alguien con quien necesites ser reconciliado, alguien que necesite tu disculpa o perdón? ¿a qué esperas? Hable o escriba una carta. Pida consejo a los padres.**