

BROKEN/PARDITO

“IN THIS WORLD YOU WILL HAVE TROUBLE. BUT TAKE HEART! I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD.”

JOHN 16:33

Summary	What in your life seems BROKEN? The saints teach us how to turn to Christ with purpose in trial. In life there will be pain and weakness; God is glorified when we are vulnerable, choosing and trusting Him.
Objective	A pre-trip participant/chaperone session on the second theme of NCYC featuring a game, reflection/catechesis and prayer. Participants will be able to... 1) learn about the role of suffering in growing closer to Jesus. 2) reflect on how young saints in history have united their Cross to Christ's. 2) discuss the beauty and blessing of brokenness, the key to our Eucharistic spirituality.
Administrative Tasks	If this session is completed between August and October, you may have additional housekeeping items to take care of such as late paperwork, chaperone introductions, group introductions, etc.
Supplies Needed	Packing List and Travel Itinerary. Participant journals, if desired. Trading items for distribution if possible. For the game, you will need

LESSON PLAN

OPENING PRAYER All powerful and ever-living God,
 In our brokenness we find your presence. You are near to us especially in trial.
 Whatever or whoever persecutes us, Lord,
 Help us to remember that we have a choice
 to bring our suffering to you or to turn away from you, and feel like we suffer
 needlessly, alone.
 Melt away all fear, distrust and panic.
 Help us to rely on you alone.
 May we bring our suffering as an offering to you,
 allowing ourselves to be broken for others.
 We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you
 and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

ICEBREAKER **Unicorn Jump**
Objective: Socialization. For a more catechetical game that ties into the Broken theme, see page 5 (needs to be played after message/prayer.)
Supplies Needed: 1 water bottle for every 2 people

Put a water bottle between two people's foreheads. They have to jump three times without dropping the water bottle. Many teams can compete against each other simultaneously. After 3-4 rounds of jumping, the remaining teams can be asked to: imitate a clapping rhythm initiated by youth minister, hop on one foot 3 times, do the Macarena, box step, waltz, etc. Continue until there is a winning pair. The teens may want to play more than one round.

MESSAGE

(Group leaders should be prepared to share a summary of the following information with their participants. It is best not to read it all word-for-word, but to deliver the information in an informal, casual way.)

In the second part of the Eucharistic prayer, the bread is broken. To follow Christ is to trust through the imperfect, painful and confusing tragedies of our life. Joyful suffering, the blessing of brokenness, is the trademark of a Christian. Long-suffering is a fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23), and hope is one of the theological virtues (1 Cor 13:13).

Our circumstances do not change whether or not we follow Christ. Whether or not we turn to him in our suffering also doesn't change the fact that he is with us, united in our suffering, no matter what. The only difference is whether we choose to feel alone.

Pope Francis reminds us, "Sometimes we are tempted to be that kind of Christian who keeps the Lord's wounds at arm's length. Yet Jesus wants us to touch human misery, to touch the suffering flesh of others. He hopes that we will stop looking for those personal or communal niches which shelter us from the maelstrom of human misfortune and instead enter into the reality of other people's lives and know the power of tenderness. Whenever we do so, our lives become wonderfully complicated and we experience intensely what it is to be a people, to be part of a people."

We cannot avoid the cross if we are to follow Christ. We must be willing to give all to Him. Pope Francis continues, we must say no to "a world that thinks it can keep something for itself." Furthermore, "When we realize we are chosen, we feel that the weight on us is too great, and we experience fear – in some cases even panic. That is the beginning of the cross." Pope Francis warns us not to long for an easy life, but a life of beauty, depth and self-gift.

Much of our ability to suffer relies on the virtues of faith, hope and love. We must believe in our heart that God will be there for us, that God is real (faith). We must also be willing to give of ourselves even when it hurts (love). Finally, we must have hope: "To Christians, the future does have a name, and its name is Hope. Feeling hopeful does not mean to be optimistically naïve and ignore the tragedy humanity is facing. Hope is the virtue of a heart that doesn't lock itself into darkness, that doesn't dwell on the past, does not simply get by in the present, but is able to see a tomorrow." (Pope Francis)

We often can experience spiritual dryness, like Mother Teresa, even when we are serving the Lord and trying to follow his will. Perhaps our deepest fear is that we will follow Jesus and give up everything for Him only to be disappointed, or duped. But you will find that in moments where you have the most reason to be angry, you actually feel the closeness of Christ. Because he suffered on the Cross, embracing your Cross will always bring you closer to Him. In fact, it is perhaps the best way to be near him. When we feel we are losing our Jesus high or that God isn't close, we must think what may be blocking our genuine conversation with God. Is there something you don't want to hear God say? Something you do not want to give up?

St. Rose of Lima tells us, "Apart from the cross there is no other ladder by which we may get to heaven." The blessing of brokenness is freedom. Our hope is so strong that nothing can limit our decisions; we are not stuck worrying about whether something will be uncomfortable or how it will gratify us. We are more concerned with trusting our future to God to see what is resurrected from the tomb, what wonder he will shine forth from tragedy.

**SUPPLEMENTAL
 QUOTES**

- Are we all supposed to become “saints”? Yes. (YouCat342)
- “The cross on which Jesus, although innocent, was cruelly executed is the place of utmost degradation and abandonment. Christ, our Redeemer, chose the Cross so as to bear the guilt of the world and to suffer the pain of the world. So he brought the world back home to God by his perfect love (CCC 613-617, 622-623). Since then, no one can say, “God does not know what I’m suffering.” (YouCat 101 [CCC 613-617, 622-623])
- “When we realize we are chosen, we feel that the weight on us is too great, and we experience fear – in some cases even panic. That is the beginning of the cross.” (Pope Francis)
- Christians should not seek suffering, but when they are confronted with unavoidable suffering, it can become meaningful for them if they unite their sufferings with the sufferings of Christ. In faith we can accept our own suffering and share the suffering of others. In this way human suffering becomes united with the redeeming love of Christ and thus part of the divine power that changes the world for the better. (YouCat102)
- “The everlasting God has in His wisdom foreseen from eternity the cross that He now presents to you as a gift from His inmost heart. This cross He now sends you He has considered with His all-knowing eyes, understood with His divine mind, tested with His wise justice, warmed with loving arms and weighed with His own hands to see that it be not one inch too large and not one ounce too heavy for you. He has blessed it with His holy Name, anointed it with His consolation, taken one last glance at you and your courage, and then sent it to you from heaven, a special greeting from God to you, an alms of the all-merciful love of God.” (St. Francis de Sales)
- “The best medicine against spiritual dryness is to place ourselves like beggars in the presence of God and the saints. And to go like a beggar from one saint to another and to ask for spiritual alms with the same insistence as a poor man on the street.” (St. Philipp Neri)
- “Christ... suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.” (1 Pet 2:21) (CCC 618)
- “If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.” (Mark 8:34)
- “Let us not say, then, that things are harder today; they are simply different. But let us learn also from the saints who have gone before us, who confronted the difficulties of their own day.” (Pope Francis)
- “Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross is nothing else than the culmination of the way he lived his entire life. Moved by his example, we want to enter fully into the fabric of society, sharing the lives of all, listening to their concerns, helping them materially and spiritually in their needs, rejoicing with those who rejoice, weeping with those who weep; arm in arm with others, we are committed to building a new world. But we do so not from a sense of obligation, not as a burdensome duty, but as the result of a personal decision which brings us joy and gives meaning to our lives.” (Pope Francis)
- “Christian triumph is always a cross, yet a cross which is at the same time a victorious banner borne with aggressive tenderness against the assaults of evil.” (Pope Francis)

**REFLECTION/
 DISCUSSION**

Found in Journal, Page 12.

The following can be used as an alternative message, prayer service (read aloud by 2-7 people) or read from their journals in quiet reflection.

BLESSED JOSE was broken by the Mexican Cristero War in the 1920's. To save his life, the Mexican army offered him freedom if he proclaimed, "Death to Christ the King" he refused and was stabbed with bayonets and shot while shouting, "Viva Cristo Rey!" He was forced to march to the town cemetery with the soles of his feet slashed before he was stabbed with bayonets and shot. Broken by the world, he drew a cross in the dirt before him and kissed it. He was 14 years old.

ST. CECILIA was broken by the persecution of Christians in 4th century Rome. Called to a vow of chastity, Cecilia was forced to marry at a young age; she converted her husband and his brother to Christianity. They were arrested and beheaded for practicing the Corporal Work of Mercy of burying the dead. Cecilia's tomb was opened in 1599 revealing that she proclaimed the Trinity even in her last moments. Broken by the world, she died holding 3 fingers aloft on one hand and 1 finger on the other.

ST. PAULUS LANG FU, SAINT MARIA ZHENG XU, SAINT ANDREAS WANG TIANQING, SAINT ANNA WANG. The Martyrs of China, aged between 9 and 14, were broken by the ongoing persecution of Christians in China by rulers threatened by their faith. Broken by the world, they were among 30,000 other Chinese converts to Christianity who died in 1900.

BLESSED ALBERTINA was a Brazilian teen broken by the sin of others. The daughter of farmers, she was attacked by one of her workers who eventually slit her throat. Broken by the world, Bl. Albertina died rather than abandon her chastity.

ST. DENIS SEBUGGWAWAO was broken by the Ugandan government. He was page to the Ugandan king, but handed over for execution. Broken by the world, St. Denis was martyred following his Baptism.

ST. DYMPHNA was broken by mental health in her family. Upon her mother's death when she was a teenager, she ran away from her home due to her father's deteriorating mental health. Broken by the world, she was eventually killed by her father and she became the patron saint of mental illness.

THE ULMA FAMILY of Josef and Wikoria Ulma were broken by the Nazi regime in Poland. They were executed with 4 of their children, including their nearly full-term unborn baby, for hiding Jews in their home. Broken by the world, their beatification process is underway.

Discussion/Journal Questions

- Why are the stories of these saints so beautiful?
- Why did these saints choose Christ over their own life? What were they so convinced of?
- Do you believe only bad things will happen to you if you follow Christ? Where does this fear come from? How do you overcome this fear?
- Can we avoid a life of brokenness as a Christian? Why or why not?
- What is the Paschal Mystery? Why do we have hope that persecution only lasts for a short period of time?
- Why is it so powerful of a witness when teenagers become saints?
- Joyful suffering, the blessing of brokenness, is the trademark of a Christian. What is one area in your life where you could witness to hope even in something you're struggling with?

Optional Video

Why do bad things happen to good people? Fr. Mike Schmitz

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=80mslR5Zs6s&list=PLeXS0cAkuTPrHPAveZQtnRXDolNjqovfc&index=5&t=0s>

Optional Game

Given: A Review Game on Young Saints

Objective: *The point of this game is to recall important information from the reflection above, focusing on the youthfulness and hope of these saints.*

Supplies: *Utilize trivia below however you see fit! The same trivia questions are also available on Kahoot! here:*<https://play.kahoot.it/#/k/4b667c04-3ff4-4bde-a8b2-f1d3605d17dc>

1. The oldest Martyr of China (discussed today) was how old? (14)
2. Which saint died for burying the dead? (St. Cecilia)
3. Which saint is the patron saint of mental illness? (St. Dymphna)
4. Blessed Jose died crying out which phrase? (Viva Cristo Rey!)
5. Which Saint was from Brazil? (St. Albertina)
6. St. Denis was martyred for receiving which sacrament? (Baptism)
7. Which saints did not die in the 20th century? (Bl. Jose and Ulma Family, Martyrs of China died between 1900 and 2000) (St. Cecilia)
8. Which saint was martyred by their own family? (St. Dymphna)
9. Which saints were martyred for political reasons? (Bl. Jose, Ulma family, St. Cecilia, St. Denis, Martyrs of China)
10. How old was Blessed Jose when he died? (14)

Optional Bible Studies

“Solitude” from Friday’s Blessed section in the Participant Journal
Daily Readings from November 22 in the Participant Journal

Optional Reflection

A Note from the Vocations Director, Page 4 of Participant Journal

CLOSING PRAYER

All powerful and ever-living God,
In the saints we see an example of those who would rather die than deny you.
How can I live to glorify you as they did?
The martyrs did not throw their lives away...
They allowed them to be spent for something greater.
What sacrifices can I make for your will to be done?
You model the beauty and blessing of brokenness
in the Eucharist.
With great trust, we want to model your example.
Show us the small ways in our life that we can embrace our own cross
and follow you.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.