

A NEW CREATION:

THE HS: GIFTS

CHECKLIST: WHAT YOU NEED

- Pencils and pieces of paper; small container
- Copies of the Book of Common Prayer (or 622 service booklet)
- Copies of the lesson handout
- Copy of the leader’s notes
- OPTIONAL: Clock or watch with second hand for timing
- OPTIONAL: Bibles (ESV or similar recommended)
- OPTIONAL: A white board, easel pad, or chalk board with markers/chalk
- OPTIONAL: Have notebooks on hand for teens to take home and use as prayer journals if they wish

ICE BREAKER: ON THE SPOT

Write out some of the categories listed below on pieces of paper (you may wish to add your own), fold them, and place them in an opaque container. Have the teens sit in a circle. One at a time, ask each teen to select a paper from the container and tell a story about someone admirable who fits the description. Stories can be true or made up, and are designed to prepare the teens to consider a wide range of ways that very different people can be a blessing to others.

YOU MAY WANT TO ALLOW FOR ONE “PASS” PER TURN IF TEENS SELECT A QUESTION THAT THEY ARE UNCOMFORTABLE SPEAKING ABOUT. FOR SMALL GROUPS, YOU MAY WANT TO TAKE MULTIPLE TURNS. FOR LARGE (OR TALKATIVE) GROUPS, YOU MAY HAVE TO TIME RESPONSES (FOR EXAMPLE, EACH PERSON HAS THIRTY SECONDS TO ANSWER).

- A person who suffers for what he/she believes
- A person who shows unusual sensitivity to the feelings of others
- A person who acknowledges his own faults openly
- A person who finds joy in doing practical jobs to help others
- A person who sees beauty where no one else does
- A person who thrives on study and research
- A person who encourages others continuously
- A person who is generous, but doesn’t talk about it
- A person who is drawn to help those who are hurting
- A person who excels at planning
- A person who sees opportunity where others see obstacles
- A person who doesn’t hesitate to talk about Jesus
- A person who is quick to do the job no one else wants to do

622: BEGINNING WITH PRAYER

Begin the formal part of the lesson by saying together the first part of the order of service for young people in the booklet, up to the middle of page 4.

AT THIS POINT IN THE LESSON, ASK IF THE TEENS SUCCEEDED IN DOING LAST WEEK’S CHALLENGE, HOW IT WENT, AND WHETHER THEY HAVE ANYTHING TO SHARE.

DISCUSSION: WHO BENEFITS?

As an introduction to the lesson ask the teens to discuss the following questions.

DEPENDING ON THE COMFORT LEVEL FOR SHARING IN YOUR GROUP, IT MAY BE EASIER TO HAVE THEM VOLUNTEER ANSWERS WITH ALL RESPONSES WRITTEN TOGETHER ON A BOARD.

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- What are some things that you're really good at?
- How do you feel when you are doing those things?
- What benefits are there to doing what you're good at - for you? for others?

A few things worth pointing out (if they don't otherwise arise during the discussion):

- *Everybody is good at something! We've all been given unique personalities and natural talents, along with strengths and weaknesses.*
- *Using our strengths, doing what we're good at, is like a plant thriving in the sunlight: it feels wonderful. For example, Scottish missionary and athlete Eric Liddell famously wrote, "I believe God made me for a purpose, but he also made me fast! And when I run I feel his pleasure." There is a sense in which we honour God by doing those things that he has made us good at.*
- *Sometimes doing what we're good at brings benefits that are just for us. That's okay. But what's better still, is if we can find ways to benefit others by using the advantages, talents, strengths and abilities that God has given us.*

THE LESSON: 1 CORINTHIANS 12, 13

The first part of the lesson can be read aloud. Then the teens are asked to read the Bible text (either silently to themselves or aloud together), followed by some additional questions for discussion.

At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was sent to indwell believers, to reside within us and to reveal God to us. Scripture tells us that the Spirit is active in a variety of ways in our lives – comforting us, guiding us, teaching us, advocating for us, and equipping us to do God's will.

In our last lesson we talked about the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. These virtues are meant to form our characters as believers. But there's more. We've also been equipped with spiritual gifts – that is, supernatural graces and abilities rooted in our relationship with God that give expression to who we are. And these gifts are to be used for the benefit of other believers and to further the mission of the Church. Some of these gifts may be similar to natural abilities that we have, but we understand them to be something beyond those natural abilities, flowing from a spiritual source and given for a spiritual purpose.

The gifts of the Spirit are referred to in several different passages of the New Testament, and each list contains some overlap and some variation – so these "gift lists" are not exhaustive but rather a sampling. And while some of the gifts lend themselves to specific roles in the Church, many of the gifts can be lived out wherever you find yourself – anywhere where you have interaction with others and with the work of the Church.

Refer to 1 Corinthians 12: 4-13, 21-27, 31b-13: 3, 13.

(VERSES HAVE BEEN CLIPPED FROM THE READING FOR THE SAKE OF BREVITY AND FOCUS, BUT IF YOU HAVE TIME TO EXPLORE THE PASSAGE FULLY, FEEL FREE TO READ IT IN ITS ENTIRETY: 1 CORINTHIANS 12:4-13:13.)

(THE TEXT IS PROVIDED ON THE BACK OF THE HANDOUTS AND IN THESE LEADERS' NOTES SO THAT EVERYONE CAN MARK IT UP AND MAKE NOTES ON IT IF DESIRED. ALTERNATIVELY, YOU CAN READ OUT OF A BIBLE.)

Read through the text. Then ask the teens to respond to what they've just read. Here are some questions to help guide the discussion.

- What are some of the gifts mentioned in this passage?
- Why do you think Paul might go straight into a sermon on love after he talks about the gifts?
- Brainstorm about a few examples of gifts being used with love versus without love.

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A few notes and reflections for reference:

- *The gifts listed in this passage are: the utterance of wisdom, the utterance of knowledge, faith, healing, working of miracles, prophecy, the ability to distinguish spirits, various kinds of tongues, the interpretation of tongues. (There are a variety of views on what each of these refers to and how it might look in today's Church.)*
- *Paul emphasizes love in his talk on spiritual gifts because it is possible for the gifts to be misused. In order for us to use the gifts effectively, they must flow from the fruit of the Spirit, and love in particular.*
- *Some examples of gifts used with/without fruit might be: people with the gift of mercy can find it difficult to be firm or decisive, losing sight of truth in their deep concern for the feelings of others. But when they use their gift in line with the Spirit they can be an instrument of healing grace to people who are hurting. On the other hand, those with prophetic gifting are able to clearly discern false teaching and call the Church to repentance, but without the fruit to check the gift, prophets can be tactless, railroading over the feelings of others unnecessarily.*

DURING EACH LESSON, IF THE TEENS RAISE THEOLOGICAL OR BIBLICAL QUESTIONS THAT YOU DON'T FEEL CONFIDENT ABOUT ANSWERING, SAY SO, BUT LET THEM KNOW THAT YOU'LL FIND THE ANSWER AND RESPOND AT THE NEXT MEETING.

PREVIEW: AT-HOME CHALLENGE

Take a brief moment to look at the at-home challenge together.

THE WEEKLY "AT-HOME CHALLENGE" IS TYPICALLY A SIMPLE ASSIGNMENT TO SPEND SOME QUIET TIME IN PRIVATE PRAYER. ENCOURAGE THE TEENS TO GET NOTEBOOKS THAT CAN BE USED AS PRAYER JOURNALS. ASSURE THEM THAT THEY WILL NOT BE REQUIRED TO SHOW THEIR JOURNAL OR THEIR PRIVATE PRAYERS TO ANYONE.

Each morning and evening, follow the rule of prayer that you created for yourself.

(If you didn't make one, try saying the morning and evening prayers from the "Forms of Prayer to be used in Families," which begins on page 728 of the BCP. If you don't have a copy, you can look it up here: <http://prayerbook.ca/resources/bcponline/family-prayer>.)

Spend some time reflecting on the gifts of the Spirit. Ask God to show you those gifts that he has given to you and ask him to help you to use them for the good of the Church. Perhaps there are gifts that you lack, but which you'd like to have so that you can bless other believers: bring that as a request to God.

- AND/OR -

Take some time to pray through this collect, pausing to reflect after each phrase.

O Lord, who hast taught us that all our doings without charity are nothing worth: Send thy Holy Spirit, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity, the very bond of peace and of all virtues, without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before thee. Grant this for thine only Son Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

(COLLECT FOR QUINQUAGESIMA, BCP PAGE 136)

622 (AGAIN)

Close with any prayers that might be appropriate in the context of the discussion of the day.

AT THE END OF EACH LESSON, IF YOU FIND THAT YOU STILL HAVE LOTS OF TIME REMAINING, YOU MIGHT CHOOSE TO TAKE SOME TIME TO EXPLORE

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THE “PRAYERS AND THANKSGIVINGS” SECTION IN THE BCP (PAGES 39-62, OR YOU CAN USE THE DOWNLOADABLE BOOKLET). AS YOUR GROUP MEMBERS COME ACROSS PRAYERS THAT THEY FIND RELEVANT, PAUSE AND PRAY THEM TOGETHER. IF YOU’RE PRESSED FOR TIME, YOU MIGHT CLOSE WITH THE THEMED PRAYER FROM THE AT-HOME CHALLENGE.

Then finish with the “Grace”, the final prayer in the booklet.

1 CORINTHIANS 12, 13: **FOR THE BODY, WITH LOVE**

12⁴Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; ⁶and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. ⁷To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ⁸For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, ⁹to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, ¹⁰to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

¹²For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit...

²¹The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” ²²On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³and on those parts of the body that we think less honourable we bestow the greater honour, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, ²⁴which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honour to the part that lacked it, ²⁵that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together.

²⁷Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it... ³¹...And I will show you a still more excellent way...

13¹If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ²And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. ³If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing... ¹³So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.