

Agents of Mercy

Faith on Fire - Middle School

I. (15 min) Spontaneous Prayer & Introduction: God's Superpower

- A. Prayer: Lord, we thank you for this day and all the blessings we have. We thank you for our time on retreat and the opportunity for us to grow in our friendship with you. We ask that you be with us during this time. Open our hearts to your deep love for us so that we may share it with others. Teach us Lord, to be Agents of Mercy. Amen.
- B. Opening Discussion
 - 1. Ask: What's with all the superhero movies lately? Name some current hero movies/TV shows.
 - 2. Ask: Wouldn't it be great if we had superpowers that could help people?
- C. Icebreaker: **Same, Same, Out of the Game** (see activity sheet)
- D. Introduction:
 - 1. Say: All superheroes have a common mission -- to help people. It is as if they all belonged to a group or Agency whose job it is to seek good for all people. **They are like "AGENTS of Goodness"**
 - 2. Say: Today, we want to show you how we all actually do have some super powers that can help people in our lives...and how we can become agents too.

II. (10 min) Teaching on Mercy

- A. God's Superpower
 - 1. Say: First let's look at the One who has the most power...God. He has every superpower.
 - 2. Ask: If you were God and had every superpower, but didn't need anything, what would you use your superpower for?
 - 3. Say: God's desire is to love us and to be in relationship with us. Since we are constantly messing up and turning away from Him in different ways, he chooses to share his favorite superpower with us -- MERCY.
 - 4. Say: Mercy is when love meets suffering. If someone is hurting we can show them love and that is showing them mercy.
- B. Video Clip
 - 1. Say: Let's see what Mercy looks like. I am going to show you a video clip. In this clip, I want you to look for acts of mercy.
 - 2. Show Lifevest "Kindness Boomerang" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u8tzswROt70>
 - 3. Process:
 - a) What are some of the things you saw the people doing for others?
 - b) Why do you think they were doing those things?
 - c) These are not just acts of kindness, they are Works of Mercy. In a way, they are being **Agents of Mercy** for one another...**showing love where there is suffering**.

III. (25 min) Living Mercy

- A. (5 min) Intro:
 - 1. Say: We saw how others chose to be merciful. Ask: What does Jesus tell us about showing others mercy?
 - 2. Read Matthew 25:35-40.
 - 3. Ask: Why do we do acts of mercy? Say: If we just want to look good or fulfil some sort of community service, we get our reward in being noticed or getting praise.
 - 4. Say: When we are merciful to others because we love Jesus, then we're on the right track.
 - 5. Say: When we show mercy to Jesus, we are showing love for him and our reward will be in Heaven. So, being merciful is much more than being kind or doing something nice.
- B. Mercy Alive Challenge (see activity sheet)

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IV. (10 min) Teaching: The Divine Mercy Message

- A. Share the story of St. Faustina and the Divine Mercy message using the *Divine Mercy Message Sheet* and the Divine Mercy Slideshow.
- B. At the image of the ocean:
 - 1. Ask: What happens when you throw a rock into the ocean?
 - 2. Say: Imagine God's mercy is like an ocean and your sins are the rock. If you throw the rock (meaning your sins) into the ocean, the ocean swallows it up, and you will not find it again. God's mercy swallows up our sins in the same way.
- C. Say: Understanding the message of Divine Mercy is as simple as A-B-C:
 - 1. Ask for Mercy
 - 2. Be merciful to others
 - 3. Completely trust in Jesus
- D. Say: God's mercy is for everyone - we share it through actions (Works of Mercy) and words.

V. (2 min) Introduce the Divine Mercy Card

- A. Quickly explain each section.
- B. Say: Each of you will receive two Divine Mercy Cards in your small group. One card is for you to keep, and the other is for you to give away to someone who needs to hear the Divine Mercy message.
- C. Say: In case you are wondering how to share the message of mercy with others, we are going to demonstrate for you.

VI. (3 min) Demonstrate how to share Divine Mercy Message: 2 or 3 leaders show how a student their age can be an Agent of Mercy by acting out one or more of the following scenarios using the ABC's.

- A. At school, a girl has been bullied via social media.
- B. Your grandmother is upset because your grandfather had to go into a nursing home.
- C. Your friend's parents are getting a divorce.
- D. Other scenario appropriate to your situation.

VII. (15 min) Small Group Discussion (use same groups from Mercy Alive Challenge):

- A. Hand out two Divine Mercy Cards to students.
- B. Ask the following questions:
 - 1. What did you learn about mercy today?
 - 2. What are some ways you can share mercy with others?
 - 3. Think of one person you will talk to about Divine Mercy.
 - a) Who will you give your card to?
 - b) When will you see them next?
 - c) Where will you give them the card and share the message?

VIII. (2 min) Essential Message

- A. Say: God *is* Mercy - He wants us to feel His endless mercy and give it to others.
- B. Say: We can do this by living the works of mercy in our lives every day. When you wake up, think, "What can I do to share God's mercy and help someone today?"
- C. Say: We are God's **Agents of Mercy** whenever we share mercy with others.

IX. (8 min) Closing--The Divine Mercy Chaplet

- A. Say: Jesus gave St. Faustina a special prayer in which we ask for God's mercy.
- B. Say: Explain words of chaplet using information sheet at the end of this handout.

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- C. Pray 1-2 decades of the chaplet and challenge them to finish it at home.

