

Family Formation

Session 20: Receiving Jesus' Heart

Handout: "Sharing Heart Thoughts"

Background for Parents

Jesus said, "Let the children come to Me." Jesus wants to share His heart thoughts with us. In the prayer experience, "Sharing Heart Thoughts," your family will experience being brought into Jesus' heart, feeling His heart beating inside their own. This should be a strong experience of Jesus' tremendous love for them. Then they are to bring their hurts and fears to Him—and leave them there in His heart.

With the family

Begin with the prayer experience: "Sharing Heart Thoughts." Turn the lights down low, and have family members get in a comfortable position, in a place where they will not be distracted by others. They need to have their prayer journals for this meditation. Read "Sharing Heart Thoughts" meditation slowly. Have family journal at appropriate times. When finished, discuss as a family.

Heart feelings can lead us to discernment. We can ask ourselves, "Is this heart feeling drawing me closer to God?" We can use this as a guide to help us know what to do. We turn our hearts over to Jesus, one step at a time, moment by moment, decision by decision. What is the next step in my life in coming closer to Jesus?

Example of a magnet. Have a regular magnet (representing each of us individually) and a larger, more powerful magnet representing Jesus.

- Show how the larger magnet draws the less powerful magnet to itself. Likewise, we are being drawn to Jesus, whether awake or asleep; we can cooperate by clinging to Him.
- Show how sin makes us less "magnetic" by putting something over the magnet that represents us. To represent each way we turn our hearts from Jesus, put a piece of masking tape over the magnet that represents us. Add more and more layers until our magnet doesn't work anymore. Sin makes us less "magnetic" and even though Jesus continues to draw us, we may not feel the magnetic pull through the layers of dirt, sin, etc. Jesus never becomes less magnetic—we simply no longer respond.

Our job is to allow and cooperate with God in removing all the layers that keep me from Him. How can I do this? For example, if I am having trouble with being selfish. . .

- there will be opportunities that will arise where I can share. But it will be my choice as to whether or not I cooperate with God's grace. I need to cooperate with God by asking the Holy Spirit to help me and then pushing myself to share (even when I don't want to). Each time I choose to share, then another part of the layer that is keeping me from a deeper friendship with God will be removed.
- I can ask an adult to help me when I feel that I am being drawn into sin.
- I can frequent the Sacrament of Reconciliation for absolution, and I will receive strength and graces to help me avoid this sin.

Have two, different sized containers filled with pop or something that the family really likes to drink.

Ask "Which container is full?"

"Both" is the answer.

Then ask, "But which one would you rather have?"

Both are full but one definitely holds more than the other.

We want to increase our ability to "hold" God's love on the inside.

Pray: “Father, our hearts are too puny. We need Jesus’ heart. Take this stubborn heart of mine and make it like Jesus’ heart. Increase my ability to hold You, Father!”

Stand in small circle. Have each person sing “More Love, More Power” very slowly and with meaning over the person to their left, asking for Jesus’ heart of love to fill them. This is like a very deep prayer asking for God to fill them with His love power. Then have each person switch and pray over the person to their right. If you don’t know this song, sing another song asking for God’s infilling or you can just pray silently with words.

Throughout the week

Continue to identify those things that make your magnet less “magnetic” and share them with your family at the dinner table. Ask family members to help you to avoid the sins that are being pointed out to you. Pray at family prayers for each member to know what is the next step for them in their journey to the Lord.

Sharing Heart Thoughts



What does it mean to share heart thoughts? Have you ever shared the deepest feelings and thoughts inside your heart with anyone else?

Jesus said, “Let the children come to me.” Now Jesus is speaking to you and He is saying, “I want to share *My* heart thoughts with *you*.”

Get comfortable, let go of all the distractions, and close your eyes. I want you to imagine yourself standing inside Jesus’ heart.

What would it be like? // Can you feel His heart beating?

How would you feel? // Can you feel His tremendous love for you?

What would He say to you? // Would He say, “I love you so very much. You are my beloved child. // I died for you so you could live with Me forever. // There has not been a time of your life that I have not thought about you or cherished you.”

Once again, imagine yourself inside of Jesus’ heart. It is so big that you can even stand in there! Can you feel His heart beating? // As you can feel His heart beating, let each of His heartbeats, beat inside your heart. // Continue to feel these beats until your heartbeat and His heartbeat are one in the same beat. // Can you feel how full of love His heart is for you?

Jesus says something to you now and you listen very closely. //

Open your eyes. Journal 1 or 2 sentences of what He said to you or what you experienced.

Once again go back into Jesus’ heart. You can feel His heartbeat, full of love, so you are not afraid to be here in Jesus’ heart but instead you feel very secure and protected. // This time be aware of all the things inside you that hurt. Maybe all the things that you are afraid of, all the things about you that you do not think are any good, all the things that hurt you. // Be aware of all these hurts as you are standing within Jesus’ heart of love. You do not have to be afraid here. // Give Jesus your hurts, one by one. // Let all your hurts be washed away by Jesus’ tremendous love for you. // Give Him all your fears, all the things that make you nervous. Let His blood cleanse you and heal you. //

Jesus is saying something to you now // and you listen closely. // Journal 1 or 2 sentences of what He said to you or what you experienced.

Now imagine yourself going back into Jesus’ heart. // You can feel His heartbeat and His blood washing away your hurts and fears. // Rest your head upon His tremendous heart of love and just rest. // Let Him fill you with His peace and His joy. //

When you are ready, open your eyes but remain in the peace of Jesus’ heart.

You can do this prayer exercise at home any time!! Whenever you feel afraid, uptight, or full of hurts, you can go back into Jesus’ heart and experience His love and care for you. You can let Him wash away all the pain.

Jesus loves you so much! And He wants to share His heart thoughts with you—and He wants to listen to your heart thoughts, too!