

# RESOURCES FOR A NEW ACADEMIC YEAR



AUGUST 2024 DRAFT

# CONTENTS

We hope this will be of help to you in planning beginning of year activities for your youth group or RE classes. The Bible references, song titles and websites have all been hyperlinked in this pdf to make life a little easier for you!

- Letter to my Future Self
- Beginning of New Year Liturgy
- Inspirational Music (click on the links to listen)
- Reflection: Our Deepest Fear
- Reflection: Just Think
- Reflection: The Starfish
- Beginning of New Year Liturgy
- Reflection: Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati Litany
- Consecration Prayer: Consecrating our school / youth group to Our Lady
- Lesson Activities:
  - No Couch Potatoes Allowed
  - Let's get to work
  - Know Your Heart
  - Growth Mindset
  - Time, Talent, Treasure
  - Faithful in Little Things
  - The 1% Rule
- Craft activity: Blessing Jar Idea
- Icebreaker Games: People Bingo / Sit down if / Klumps / The Wind Blows if / Conversation Starters / Crossword Names / Birthday Line Up / Categories (Bus Stop) / Would you rather
- Useful Websites



For more resources for post-primary schools / youth groups, check out [www.waterfordlismore.ie/youth-ministry](http://www.waterfordlismore.ie/youth-ministry) or subscribe to our weekly *To the Heights* newsletter by clicking [here](#) or emailing [youthministry@waterfordlismore.ie](mailto:youthministry@waterfordlismore.ie)



AT THE BEGINNING OF A NEW ACADEMIC YEAR, WRITE A LETTER TO YOURSELF. YOU DON'T HAVE TO SHOW THIS TO ANYONE ELSE.  
SEAL IT IN AN ENVELOPE, PUT IT SOMEWHERE SAFE AND DON'T OPEN IT UNTIL THE END OF THE YEAR!



# Letter to my Future Self

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Future Me,

It's hard to believe that when I read this again I'll be just a few days away from finishing this academic year! Well done me! I've made it this far!

My best memory of this summer is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

My favourite song at the moment is \_\_\_\_\_

The last movie I saw was \_\_\_\_\_

My favourite saying / phrase right now is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If I had to evacuate my home because of a natural disaster, the three things I would take with me are \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

My best friends right now are \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The subject / challenge I think I will like the most this year is \_\_\_\_\_

because \_\_\_\_\_

The person who knows me best right now is \_\_\_\_\_

The person (or people) in my year I'd really like to get to know better this year is (are) \_\_\_\_\_

The three most important people in my life right now are \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What I think I will enjoy most about this year is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What advice have people given me about this coming year? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

For Christmas I hope I get \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Letter to my Future Self

As I'm writing this letter, I'm feeling a bit \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_

What scares / worries me most about this year is \_\_\_\_\_

I wish when people looked at me, they could see (or know) \_\_\_\_\_

If I could change / improve one thing about myself this year it would be \_\_\_\_\_

One thing I would do if I wasn't so afraid would be \_\_\_\_\_

One person I need to forgive is \_\_\_\_\_

One person I should really tell that I love them is \_\_\_\_\_

The people that make me feel good about myself are \_\_\_\_\_

One thing that I'm too hard on myself about is \_\_\_\_\_

One thing I do that holds me back from being the best version of myself is \_\_\_\_\_

I want to be remembered for \_\_\_\_\_

More than anything, by the time I read this letter again I hope that \_\_\_\_\_

Enjoy the holidays!

Kind regards,

Me!

# Beginning of Year Liturgy

## Opening Reflection:

Let us listen to the words of Oscar Romero....

*This is what we are about; we plant seeds that one day will grow. We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise. We lay foundation that will need further development. We provide yeast that produces effects beyond our capabilities. We cannot do everything and there is a sense of liberation in realising that. This enables us to do something and do it very well. It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for God's grace to enter and do the rest. We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between artisans and the worker. We are workers, not artisans; ministers not messiahs. We are prophets of a future not our own.*

## A Reading from the Letter to the Colossians

As the chosen of God, then, the holy people whom he loves, you are to be clothed in heartfelt compassion, in generosity and humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one another, forgive each other ....Over all these clothes, put on love, the perfect bond. And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, because it is for this that you were called together in one body. Always be thankful. Let the Word of Christ, in all its richness, find a home with you. Teach each other, and advise each other, in all wisdom.

The Word of the Lord

**All: Thanks be to God**

## Prayer Intentions:

We pray for our staff, management and all those involved in the running of our school: that we will be filled with joy, love, peace and patience in the months ahead.

Lord hear us **All: Lord graciously hear us**

We pray for our students, those who are returning to us and those who are joining us this year. Lord, bless their hearts and minds with an openness to learn and to be formed, so that they can become the best versions of themselves this year. For those who are nervous or afraid, grant them a spirit of calm.

Lord hear us. **All: Lord graciously hear us**

We pray for the parents, guardians and families of our students and staff, that they be blessed with all the graces and gifts that they need this coming year.

Lord hear us. **All: Lord graciously hear us**

We pray in thanksgiving for a new year full of opportunities, and surrender to you Lord any concerns, fears or obstacles we may have or encounter in the months ahead.

Lord hear us. **All: Lord graciously hear us**

We take a moment in silence to recollect our own thoughts and intentions at this time....

Lord hear us. **All: Lord graciously hear us**

Let us pray together, united as Children of God, in the words that Jesus taught us:

**Our Father....**

## Blessing

**The Lord bless you and keep you, make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord turn His Face toward you and give you peace. Amen**

THE SONG TITLES ARE HYPERLINKED TO YOUTUBE VIDEOS

# INSPIRATIONAL MUSIC

## ENTRANCE / RECESSIONAL

- **And all the people said Amen** (Matt Maher)
- **A rightful place** (Steve Angrisano)
- **Blessed be Your Name** (Matt Redman)
- **Come now is the time** (Brian Doerksen)
- **Give us your heart** (Melanie Tierce)
- **God I look to you** (Bethel)
- **Great Things** (Matt Maher)
- **Hallelujah** (Your love is amazing) (Brian Doerksen)
- **Here I am to worship** (Tim Hughes)
- **How great is our God** (Chris Tomlin)
- **Set the world on fire** (Britt Nicole)
- **In Christ alone** (Stuart Townend)
- **I will be** (Natalie Grant)
- **Joy** (Rend Collective)
- **King of my heart** (Kutless)
- **Love the Lord your God** (Lincoln Brewster)
- **Mighty to save** (Hillsong)
- **My Lighthouse** (Rend Collective)
- **Not I yet but through Christ in me** (City Alight)
- **Oceans / where feet may fail** (Hillsong)
- **Open the eyes of my heart** (Brian Doerksen)
- **Our God** (Chris Tomlin)
- **Our God is here** (Chris Muglia)
- **Raise a Hallelujah** (Bethel)
- **Lord Reign in Me** (Brenton Brown)
- **Shine Jesus Shine** (Graham Kendrick)
- **Shout to the Lord** (Darlene Zscheck)
- **Shout to the north** (Robin Mark)
- **Ten Thousand Reasons** (Matt Redman)
- **Today I choose** (Brian Doerksen)
- **Walk on the water** (Britt Nicole)
- **Waymaker** (Leeland)
- **What a beautiful name** (Hillsong)
- **What faith can do** (Kutless)
- **Who you say I am** (Hillsong)
- **You are my shepherd** (Tricia Brock)
- **You are my vision** (Rend Collective)
- **Your grace is enough** (Matt Maher)
- **Your Promises** (Elevation worship)

## PSALMS

- **As the deer** (Stefanie Gretzinger)
- **May your love be upon us** (Boyce & Stanley)
- **Only in God** (John Michael Talbot)
- **The Lord's my Shepherd** (Stuart Townend)

## OFFERTORY

- **All for Jesus** (Robin Mark)
- **Here's my heart, Lord** (David Crowder)
- **Holy and Anointed One** (Vineyard Worship)
- **Jesus be the centre** (Vineyard Songs)
- **Jesus, be with us now** (David Haas)
- **Jesus Christ, You are my Life** (Marco Frisina)
- **Nothing I hold onto** (Will Reagan & Utd Pursuit)
- **Refiner's Fire** (Brian Doerksen)
- **The Potter's Hand** (Hillsong)

## COMMUNION

- **At the Cross** (Hillsong)
- **Behold the Lamb** (Boyce & Stanley)
- **Bread of Life** (Boyce & Stanley)
- **Everything** (Tim Hughes)
- **God I look to you** (Franciscan Battistelli)
- **Great are you Lord** (All Sons & Daughters)
- **Here I am to worship** (Tim Hughes)
- **I shall not want** (Audrey Assad)
- **It is well with me** (Kristene di Marco)
- **Lord I need You** (Matt Maher)
- **Not I yet but through Christ in me** (City Alight)
- **O Come to the Altar** (Elevation Worship)
- **One Bread One Body** (John Michael Talbot)
- **Take and eat this is my body** (Ian Callanan)
- **The Potter's Hand** (Darlene Zscheck)
- **This is Jesus** (Jim Cowan)
- **Worthy is the Lamb** (Hillsong)
- **You are my all in all** (Brentwood Baptist Worship)
- **You gave your life away** (Paul Baloche)

## REFLECTION

- **A living prayer** (Alison Krauss)
- **Be still my soul** (Kari Jobe)
- **Build my Life** (Housefires)
- **Good good Father** (Chris Tomlin)
- **Good to me** (Audrey Assad)
- **In your arms (through the storms)** (Oslo Gospel Choir)
- **New wine** (Hillsong)
- **Oceans / where feet may fail** (Hillsong)
- **Only by grace** (Fr Rob Galea)
- **Reckless Love** (Cory Asbury)
- **Restless** (Audrey Assad)
- **So Will I (100 Billion X)** (Hillsong)
- **The Blessing** (Bethel)
- **Who am I** (Casting Crowns)
- **You Say** (Lauren Daigle)
- **You Speak** (Audrey Assad)



# ***OUR DEEPEST FEAR***

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.  
Or deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.  
It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us.  
We ask ourselves,  
who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented and fabulous?  
Actually, who are you not to be?  
You are a child of God.

Your playing small doesn't serve the world.  
There is nothing enlightened about shrinking  
so that other people won't feel insecure around you.  
We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is  
within us.

It is not just in some of us: It's in everyone.  
And when we let our own light shine,  
we unconsciously give other people  
permission to do the same.  
As we are liberated from our own fear,  
our presence automatically liberates others.

**- Marianne Williamson -**



# ***JUST THINK***

Just think

You're not here by chance,

But by God's choosing.

His Hand formed you

And made you the person you are.

He compared you to no-one else,

You are one of a kind.

You lack nothing

that His grace cannot give you.

He has allowed you to be here

At this time in history

To fulfil his special purpose

For this generation.







# ***THE STARFISH***

As the old man walked down the beach at dawn, he noticed a young man ahead of him picking up starfish and flinging them into the sea.

Catching up with the youth, he asked him why he was doing this.

The answer was that the stranded starfish would die if it was left out in the morning sun.

*“But the beach goes on for miles and there are millions of starfish”,* said the man.

*“How can your efforts make a difference?”*

The young man looked at the starfish in his hands and threw it into the safety of the sea.

***“It makes a difference to this one,”*** he said.



# **THE PRAYER OF BLESSED PIER GIORGIO FRASSATI**

ADAPTED FROM A PRAYER BY FR THOMAS ROSICA CSB



If we do not know the road -

*Show us the Way, verso l'alto, upward to heaven.*

If we often abandon the path -

*Show us the Way, verso l'alto, upward to heaven.*

If we never lift up our gaze, slaves to fear -

*Show us the Way, verso l'alto, upward to heaven.*

If we lack the strength to overcome -

*Show us the Way, verso l'alto, upward to heaven.*

Trials, testing, abandonment, rejection,

Breakup, breakdown, grief, prison -

*Show us the Way, verso l'alto, upward to heaven.*

The most difficult passes -

*Show us the Way, verso l'alto, upward to heaven.*

If we have the strength but use it to turn back -

*Show us the Way, verso l'alto, upward to heaven*

If we never pause to be nourished by the bread of eternal life,

If we do not quench our thirst from the fountain of prayer -

*Show us the Way, verso l'alto, upward to heaven.*

When we do not fully contemplate the beauty of gifts given -

*Show us the Way, verso l'alto, upward to heaven.*

When we do not know how to offer ourselves for others -

*Show us the Way, verso l'alto, upward to heaven.*

When we have committed many sins and even if we've lost hope -

*Show us the Way, verso l'alto, upward to heaven.*

Teach us to hear the voice of Christ calling us towards purity of heart.

**BLESSED PIER GIORGIO FRASSATI, PRAY FOR US, LEAD US DEEP INTO THE HEART OF GOD**

*Consecrating our School to Our Lady*



MOTHER MARY,  
QUEEN OF OUR HEARTS AND QUEEN OF OUR SCHOOL,  
WE ENTRUST OUR SCHOOL TO YOU TODAY;  
ALL THE STUDENTS, TEACHERS AND STAFF,  
MANAGEMENT, TRUSTEES AND CLERGY, FAMILIES,  
AND THE COMMUNITY TO WHICH WE BELONG;  
ALL WHO VISIT THE SCHOOL THIS YEAR,  
ALL THE PLACES WE TRAVEL TO;  
EVERY CLASS, EVERY EXAM,  
EVERY PROJECT AND TASK,  
EACH MATCH AND EACH COMPETITION;  
EVERY DECISION WE MAKE,  
EVERY PATH WE FOLLOW,  
EVERY JOY WE SHARE,  
EVERY WORRY WE FACE,  
EVERY OBSTACLE WE OVERCOME,  
EVERY SUCCESS WE EARN.

WE PLACE OUR WHOLE SCHOOL  
IN THE SAFE REFUGE OF YOUR IMMACULATE HEART,  
KNOWING THAT YOU CARRY OUR DEEPEST INTENTIONS  
TO YOUR SON, JESUS.

OUR LADY, MOTHER AND QUEEN, PRAY FOR US

- ASCEND YOUTH MINISTRY (DIOCESE OF WATERFORD & LISMORE) -

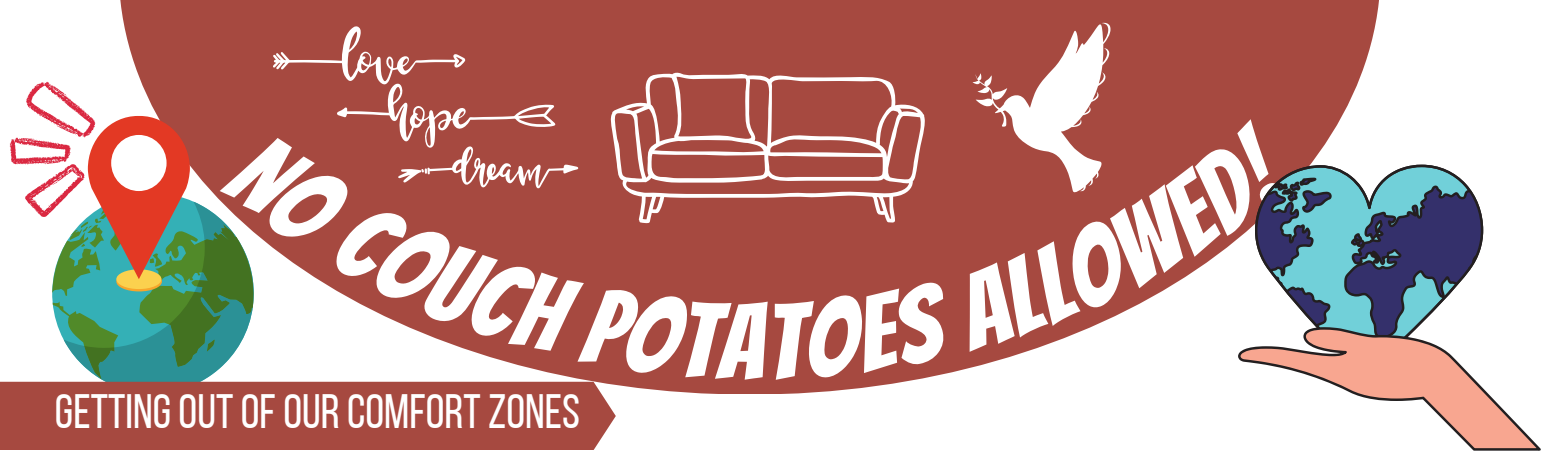
Consecrating our Youth Group to Our Lady



MOTHER MARY,  
QUEEN OF OUR HEARTS AND QUEEN OF OUR GROUP,  
WE ENTRUST OUR GROUP TO YOU TODAY;  
ALL THE MEMBERS AND LEADERS,  
OUR FAMILIES, ALL OUR LOCAL PRIESTS AND RELIGIOUS,  
AND THE COMMUNITY TO WHICH WE BELONG;  
ALL WHO VISIT OUR GROUP THIS YEAR,  
ALL THE PLACES WE TRAVEL TO;  
EVERY SESSION AND ACTIVITY,  
EVERY DECISION WE MAKE,  
EVERY PATH WE FOLLOW,  
EVERY JOY WE SHARE,  
EVERY WORRY WE FACE,  
EVERY OBSTACLE WE OVERCOME,  
EVERY SUCCESS WE EARN.  
WE PLACE OUR GROUP  
IN THE SAFE REFUGE OF YOUR IMMACULATE HEART,  
KNOWING THAT YOU CARRY OUR DEEPEST INTENTIONS  
TO YOUR SON, JESUS.  
OUR LADY, MOTHER AND QUEEN, PRAY FOR US

MOTHER I AM YOURS, NOW AND FOREVER.  
THROUGH YOU AND WITH YOU, I WANT TO BELONG ALWAYS AND COMPLETELY TO JESUS.

- ASCEND YOUTH MINISTRY (DIOCESE OF WATERFORD & LISMORE) -



**GETTING OUT OF OUR COMFORT ZONES**

Who are the people who impress you the most? Who are you most likely to listen to and take advice from? Why?

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What kind of message do you think young people most need to hear today? What are their hearts looking for?

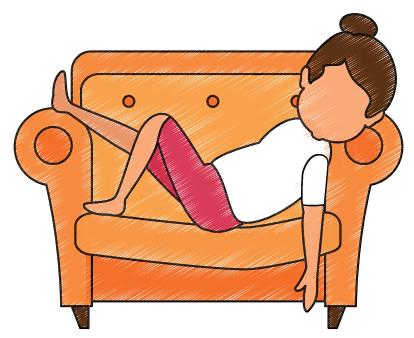
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**POPE FRANCIS: WORLD YOUTH DAY 2016 MESSAGE TO YOUNG PEOPLE**



*Pope Francis spoke first about the fear we can feel of being paralysed: "thinking that ... there is no longer any room to grow, to dream, to create, to gaze at new horizons - in a word to live..."*

"But in life there is another, even more dangerous, kind of paralysis... I like to describe it as the paralysis that comes from confusing happiness with a sofa. In other words, to think that in order to be happy all we need is a good sofa. A sofa that makes us feel comfortable, calm, safe. A sofa like one of those we have nowadays with a built-in massage unit to put us to sleep. A sofa that promises us hours of comfort so we can escape to the world of videogames and spend all kinds of time in front of a computer screen. A sofa that keeps us safe from any kind of pain and fear. A sofa that allows us to stay home without needing to work at, or worry about, anything... That is probably the most harmful and insidious form of paralysis, since little by little, without even realizing it, we start to nod off, to grow drowsy and dull while others - perhaps more alert than we are, but not necessarily better - decide our future for us....



Dear young people, we didn't come into this world to "vegetate", to take it easy, to make our lives a comfortable sofa to fall asleep on. No, we came for another reason: to leave a mark. It is very sad to pass through life without leaving a mark. But when we opt for ease and convenience, for confusing happiness with consumption, then we end up paying a high price indeed: we lose our freedom.

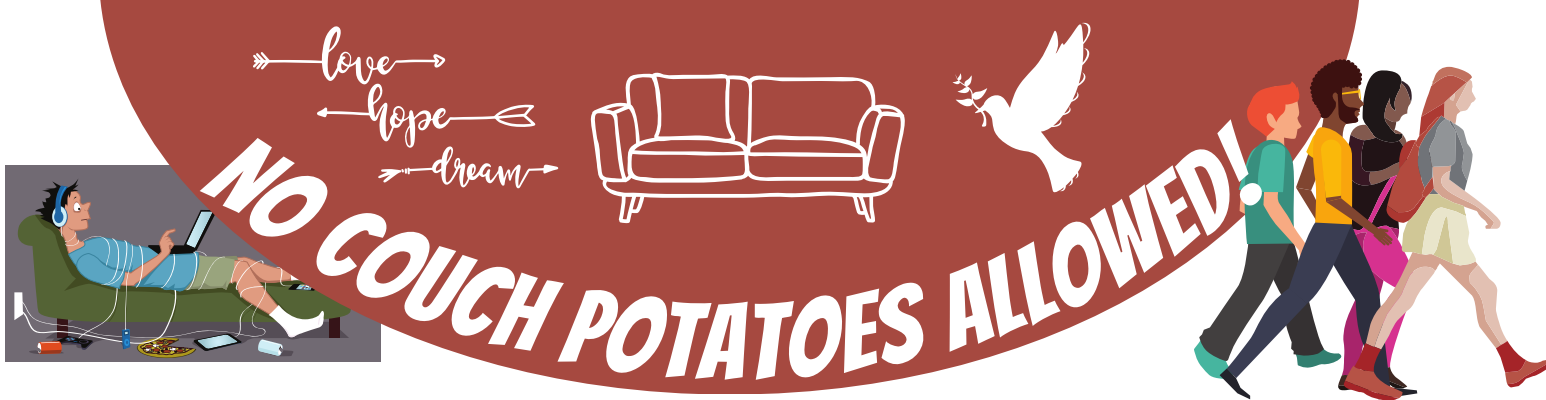
This is itself a great form of paralysis, whenever we start thinking that happiness is the same as comfort and convenience, that being happy means going through life asleep or on tranquillizers, that the only way to be happy is to live in a haze. Certainly, drugs are bad, but there are plenty of other socially acceptable drugs, that can end up enslaving us just the same. One way or the other, they rob us of our greatest treasure: our freedom....

Jesus is not the Lord of comfort, security and ease. Following Jesus demands a good dose of courage, a readiness to trade in the sofa for a pair of walking shoes and to set out on new and uncharted paths. To blaze trails that open up new horizons capable of spreading joy, the joy that is born of God's love and wells up in your hearts with every act of mercy. To take the path of the "craziness" of our God, who teaches us to encounter him in the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the sick, the friend in trouble, the prisoner, the refugee and the migrant, and our neighbours who feel abandoned. To take the path of our God, who encourages us to be politicians, thinkers, social activists. The God who asks us to devise an economy inspired by solidarity. In all the settings in which you find yourselves, God's love invites you bring the Good News, making of your own lives a gift to him and to others...

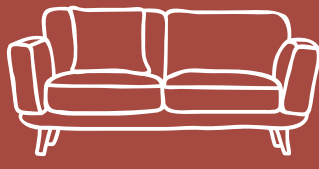
God expects something from you. God wants something from you. God hopes in you. God comes to break down all our fences. He comes to open the doors of our lives, our dreams, our ways of seeing things. God comes to break open everything that keeps you closed in. He is encouraging you to dream. He wants to make you see that, with you, the world can be different. For the fact is, unless you offer the best of yourselves, the world will never be different.

The times we live in do not call for young "couch potatoes" but for young people with shoes, or better, boots laced. It only takes players on the first string, and it has no room for bench-warmers. Today's world demands that you be a protagonist of history because life is always beautiful when we choose to live it fully, when we choose to leave a mark... He wants to turn your hands, my hands, our hands, into signs of reconciliation, of communion, of creation. He wants your hands to continue building the world of today. And he wants to build that world with you....



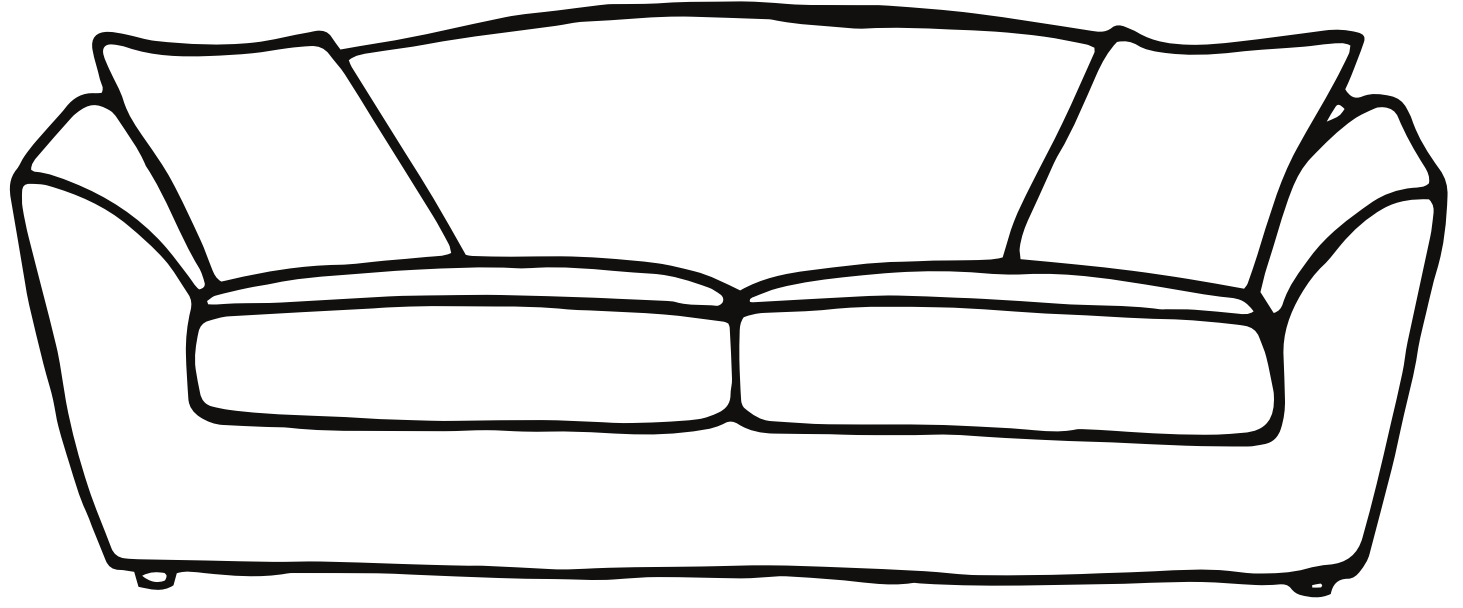


love  
hope  
dream



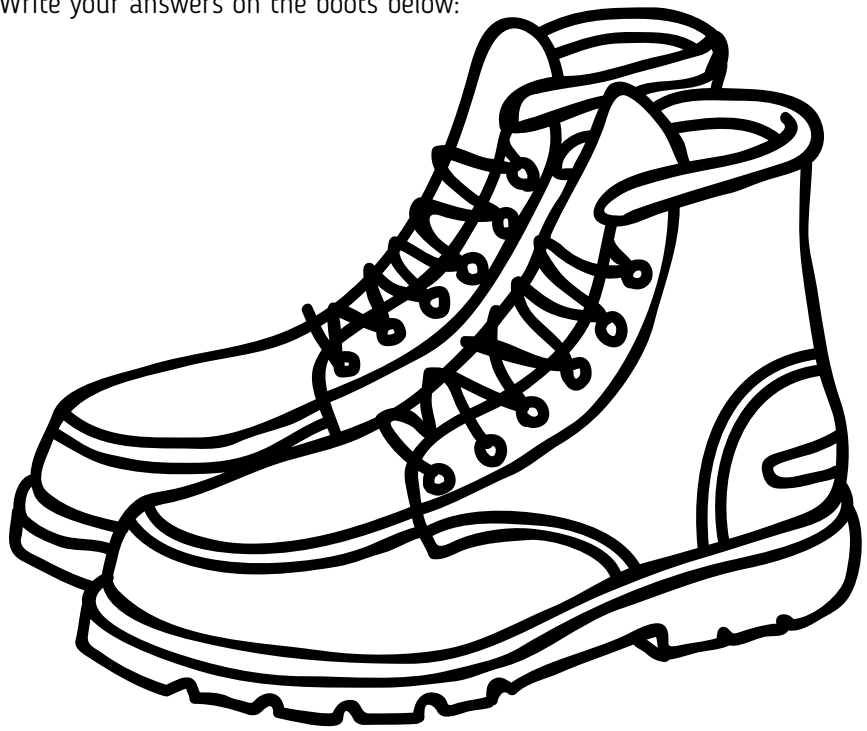
**WHAT IS MY "SOFA-HAPPINESS"? WHAT DISTRACTS ME FROM SPENDING MY TIME WELL AND FOR OTHERS?**

Write your answers on the sofa below:



**WHAT COULD MY WALKING SHOES BE? HOW CAN I LACE UP MY BOOTS TO LEAVE A MARK IN THE WORLD?**

Write your answers on the boots below:



*"I am only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something. And that which I can do, by the grace of God, I will do."*  
 — Dwight L. Moody —

TUNES TO INSPIRE YOU...



SET THE WORLD ON FIRE: BRITT NICOLE    LIFESONG: CASTING CROWNS    THE MOTIONS: MATTHEW WEST    AWAKENING: CHRIS TOMLIN

- ASCEND YOUTH MINISTRY (DIOCESE OF WATERFORD & LISMORE) -



*"God has created me to do Him some definite service."  
Cardinal John Henry Newman*



# LET'S GET TO WORK!

WHAT DID YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU WERE LITTLE? DID YOU EVER WANT TO BE A FAMOUS FOOTBALLER OR MUSICIAN? OR BE A SUPERHERO OR A PRINCESS? OR LIKE THE KARATE KID?

HOW HAVE YOUR DREAMS CHANGED? WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE IN LIFE NOW?



WATCH THIS VIDEO FROM FR MARK MARY, CFR, "GOD HAS A MISSION FOR YOU" (ASCENSION PRESENTS) AND REFLECT ON THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW



Fr Mark Mary wanted to learn to karate-chop people as a child - but what kind of steps did he have to learn first?



## GOD INVITES MAN TO PARTICIPATE IN HIS WORK IN A REAL AND EVEN NECESSARY WAY.

Fr Mark gives three Old Testament examples to prove this point (**Adam & Eve, Noah, Moses**).

Explain how any of these people were invited to participate in God's work of salvation?



In the New Testament, how was Mary invited to be part of God's work of salvation in a necessary way?

In what ways were the disciples and Apostles of Jesus invited to be part of this necessary work of salvation?



What short phrases from Jesus does Fr Mark Mary use to explain the mission given to the Apostles, the first priests?

• **Go make** \_\_\_\_\_ **| Do this in** \_\_\_\_\_ **of me.**

When Jesus breathed on the Apostles, what did he give them power to do?

## LET'S GET TO WORK!



Explain how the creation of the bible itself shows how God wants man to participate in his work of salvation.

KARATE-CHOPPING TIME! YOU AND I HAVE A GOD-GIVEN NECESSARY MISSION, AS AN EXPRESSION OF HIS PARTICULAR LOVE FOR YOU AND I: A MISSION WHICH IS OUR OWN AND THAT NO-ONE ELSE CAN ACCOMPLISH.



Why should we take this mission seriously?

HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED WHAT YOUR UNIQUE CALL / MISSION TO THE PARTICULAR PEOPLE AROUND YOU MIGHT BE? OUR PLOT MIGHT BE SMALL, BUT IT'S STILL NECESSARY!



In today's Gospel, Jesus calls Peter and the other apostles to follow Him, to become *fishers of men*' instead of fishermen. There's no way they could have understood what that actually meant at the time or how it would really change their whole lives, but they trusted in Him.



READ: MARK 1:14-20

Do you ever wonder what your personal mission is? You definitely have one - God has given you a particular mission and way of serving Him and others that no-one else can do in the same way! You don't need to figure it out all at once. But it's a good idea to keep it in mind.

Here are some tips to figuring it out: 1. With every decision, just do the next good thing (and then the next after that..) i.e. make good daily decisions. 2. Be open and honest about who you are (and ask God who He created you to be). 3. Discern your gifts and talents [For more ideas, read this blog from LifeTeen by clicking here!](#)



MISSION!

WRITE OUT A LIST OF YOUR STRENGTHS AND TALENTS. BE HONEST ABOUT THEM! MAYBE ASK SOMEONE WHO KNOWS YOU WELL TO LIST SOME TOO. AND THEN ASK GOD HOW HE WANTS YOU TO USE THOSE GIFTS AND TALENTS.



PRAYER TIME!

God has created me to do Him some definite service. He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission. I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next. I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons. He has not created me for naught. I shall do good; I shall do His work. - St John Henry Newman -



### CREATE A PLAYLIST TO LISTEN TO AS YOU REFLECT ON YOUR MISSION IN LIFE



- Newsboys: Fishers of Men
- Pat Barrett: Canvas and Clay
- Cain: The Commission
- Christ for the Nations: Take my Life and Let it Be
- Keith and Kristyn Getty: Speak O Lord
- Rend Collective: Plans
- Casting Crowns: Nobody
- Josh Willson: Dream Small



Scene from The Chosen Season 1: Jesus Calls Peter



Cardinal John Henry Newman's Prayer





“God has created me to do Him some definite service.

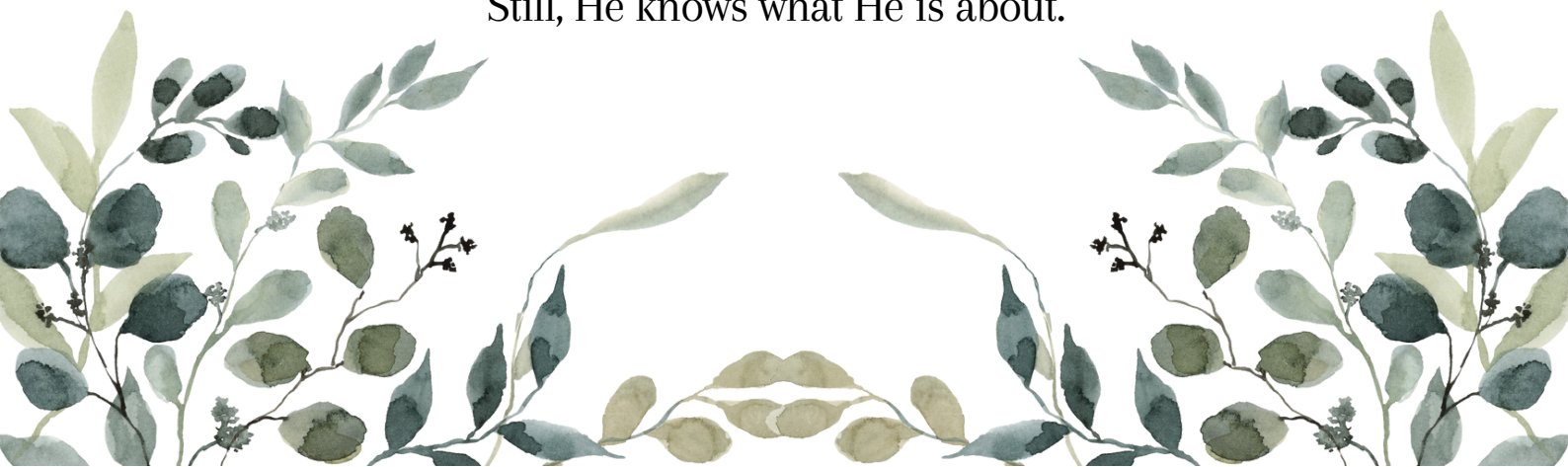
He has committed some work to me  
which He has not committed to another. I have my mission.  
I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next.  
I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons.

He has not created me for naught.  
I shall do good; I shall do His work.  
I shall be an angel of peace,  
a preacher of truth in my own place,  
while not intending it if I do but keep His commandments.

Therefore, I will trust Him,  
whatever I am, I can never be thrown away.  
If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve Him,  
in perplexity, my perplexity may serve Him.  
If I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve Him.  
He does nothing in vain. He knows what He is about.  
He may take away my friends.  
He may throw me among strangers.  
He may make me feel desolate, make my spirits sink,  
hide my future from me.  
Still, He knows what He is about.”

ST JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

- ASCEND YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY (DIOCESE OF WATERFORD & LISMORE) -

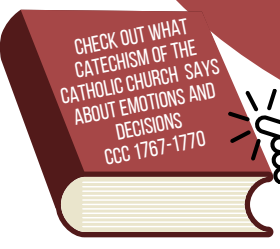


MAKE IT HAPPEN



# KNOW YOUR HEART!

Try replacing "I have to" with "I get to" ...  
"I get to go to school",  
"I get to help my parents", "I get to go to Mass"...



PRAYER DOESN'T HELP YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD. PRAYER IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD. MARK HART

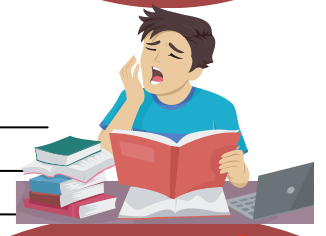
## LIST THE TOP THREE THINGS YOU STRUGGLE TO MOTIVATE YOURSELF TO DO!



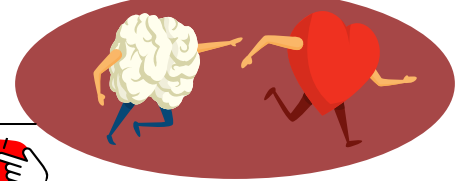
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## THINK OF ONE SITUATION WHERE IT'S BETTER NOT TO BE GUIDED BY YOUR EMOTIONS



## WATCH THIS VIDEO FROM FR MIKE SCHMITZ "WHEN YOU DON'T FEEL LIKE IT" AND REFLECT ON THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW



What temptation do we all often face, according to Fr Mike?

\_\_\_\_\_

When we don't feel like doing something, or struggle to find the motivation or be enthusiastic, what should we do?

\_\_\_\_\_

# WHY?

Our reason / why should be: it's \_\_\_\_\_ to do the right thing.

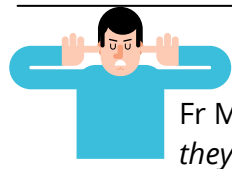
Mark Hart says: "Prayer doesn't \_\_\_\_\_ our relationship with God. Prayer \_\_\_\_\_ our relationship with God." That means if we don't have a daily prayer life, then we don't have a \_\_\_\_\_ relationship with God.



Our motive to pray should be: "I want \_\_\_\_\_"

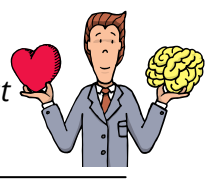
What did Jesus make possible for us to have? \_\_\_\_\_

What can the Holy Spirit do for us? \_\_\_\_\_



## SO, SHOULD WE JUST IGNORE OUR EMOTIONS?

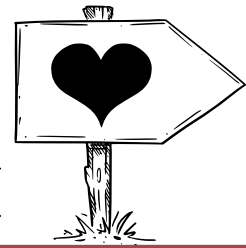
Fr Mike's friend Dean says, "Emotions do not reveal the truth about reality, but they do reveal the condition of your heart." How would you explain this in your own words? \_\_\_\_\_



Think of a situation that could explain this idea: where your feelings could show where your heart is at, but it would be wiser not to follow your heart in that situation!

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



REMEMBER: YOU HAVE A REASON, A WHY, A MOTIVE: THE LORD WANTS A RELATIONSHIP WITH YOU, HE WANTS TO BE PART OF YOUR LIFE, HE WANTS YOU TO HAVE ACCESS TO HIS HEART, TO ENTER IN AND ENGAGE WITH THE FATHER, THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT.

# KNOW YOUR HEART

LUKE 5:1-11

Are there areas in your life where you find yourself saying, "My heart's not in it, I can't do it, I don't feel like it."? Reflect on one of those areas, and what the condition of your heart might really be saying. Then find your motive, your why and name it!

**SITUATION:** \_\_\_\_\_

**WHAT MY HEART MIGHT BE SAYING:** \_\_\_\_\_

**MY MOTIVATION TO ACTUALLY ACT:** \_\_\_\_\_



REGARDLESS OF WHAT YOU'RE FEELING, DO THE RIGHT THING!



## Now Read Luke 5:1-11



This Gospel passage tells the familiar story of the miraculous catch of fish. Simon (Peter) has been fishing all night, and is no doubt exhausted. He's skilled at his trade, but for whatever reason, the night has not gone his way, and he has nothing to show for his efforts. He's weary, disappointed, possibly cranky at the loss of earnings, the weather, his own inability, maybe the faults of others. He could have lots of excuses to just pack up and go home. Then Jesus of Nazareth, a Carpenter, not a fisherman, tells him to cast his nets again. Simon has listened to Jesus preaching and although every emotion in him was already strained and telling him to give up, he chose to obey (although not without a little grumbling!) We know what happens next: his nets filled to breaking point, his boats almost sank! Simon dropped to his knees, overcome and significantly very aware of the condition of his own heart. We don't know a lot about Simon before this point, but the heart of Jesus spoke directly to his heart that day, and caused him to leave his comfort zone and follow Jesus. Could he have known what Jesus meant by a fisher of men? Highly unlikely! But Simon had a motive, to stay close to Jesus, and that was enough for him.



**MISSION!**

BE VERY CONSCIOUS THIS WEEK OF AREAS YOU STRUGGLE TO MOTIVATE YOURSELF IN. MAYBE IT'S HOUSEHOLD CHORES, ASSIGNMENTS, SPENDING TIME WITH PARTICULAR PEOPLE, CUTTING DOWN ON SCREEN TIME, SERVING OTHERS: WHATEVER IT IS, STOP AND ASK YOURSELF WHERE YOUR HEART IS AT, AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, WHAT'S YOUR MOTIVE FOR DOING THE RIGHT THING IN EACH SITUATION. LET THAT DRIVE YOU FORWARDS.



**PRAYER TIME!**

Dear Jesus, you know I struggle a lot sometimes to do the right thing. Getting out of bed on time, pulling my weight around the house, completing assignments to the best of my ability and on time, not making excuses for myself... the list goes on. Help me to see my heart as you see it, to acknowledge what's truly going on in there. Give me the strength to rise above myself and my emotions, to find the why and the motive, daily, because the battle is daily. Amen



## CREATE A PLAYLIST TO LISTEN TO AS YOU REFLECT ON THE CONDITION OF YOUR HEART



- Lord I need you - Matt Maher
- Today I Choose - Brian Doerksen
- Ten Thousand Reasons - Matt Redman
- Nothing I hold onto - W Reagan & Utd Pursuit
- Here's my heart - David Crowder Band
- Blessed be your name - Matt Redman
- I raise a Hallelujah - Bethel
- I shall not want - Audrey Assad
- I will follow you - Kristene di Marco
- Build my Life - Pat Barrett

Click the links for the YouTube videos to listen to some suggestions!



**HFM Testimony: Watch Áine's story of how she knew she had a choice to make in her faith**

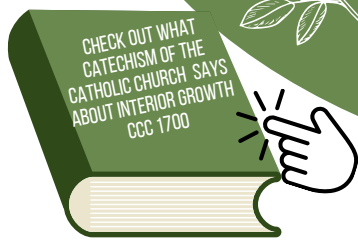


**Fr Patrick Cahill: The Spirit of God**

LUKE 4:21-30



*The world offers you comfort. But you were not made for comfort. You were made for greatness.*  
 (Benedict XVI)



# GROWTH MINDSET

"EVERY SAINT HAS A PAST, AND EVERY SINNER HAS A FUTURE." OSCAR WILDE

## LIST FIVE THINGS YOU ARE GOOD AT:




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## LIST FIVE THINGS YOU ARE BAD AT:




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## WHY DO YOU BELIEVE YOU ARE GOOD OR BAD AT ANY OF THESE THINGS?

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## HAVE YOU EVER STRUGGLED WITH SOMETHING AND PERSEVERED UNTIL YOU COULD DO IT WELL?

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## WATCH THIS VIDEO FROM THE FR MIKE SCHMITZ "WHO YOU ARE VS. WHO YOU'RE CALLED TO BE" AND REFLECT ON THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW

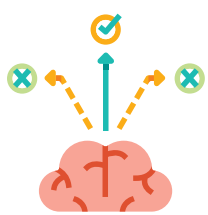


Why did Fr Mike think he is not good at Maths? Do you think it is true?

What did this 2nd Grade belief develop into an attitude of in later life?



Carol S. Dweck's book, "Mindset" speaks of two types of mindset: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.



### Identify each statement as an example of either type of mindset:

- "I'm good at X and I'm bad at Y" \_\_\_\_\_
- "I currently struggle at Maths, but I can get better" \_\_\_\_\_
- "This is just me." \_\_\_\_\_
- "This is where I'm at. This is where I could go forward." \_\_\_\_\_



Why did the second group of test students who were praised with, "Wow, you really worked hard on that test!" continue to do better than the first group who were praised with, "Wow, you're really smart!" ? Which group had a fixed mindset and a growth mindset?

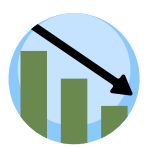
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## OUR MINDSET CAN SHOW A LOT ABOUT:



- our willingness to \_\_\_\_\_,
- our willingness to \_\_\_\_\_,
- our willingness to see ourselves as someone who \_\_\_\_\_.



**What organisation praises the growth mindset more than any other?**




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GOD SEES US AS WE ARE, HE SEES US WHERE WE STRUGGLE, HE SEES WHERE WE HAVE STRENGTHS, HE SEES WHERE WE'RE WEAK, HE SEES WHERE WE'RE WOUNDED, HE SEES WHERE WE WIN. HE SEES US AS WE ARE BUT HE APPROACHES US AS WE COULD BE.

# GROWTH MINDSET

LUKE 4:21-30



As Christians we called to acknowledge the truth: to see ourselves as \_\_\_\_\_, and to acknowledge where \_\_\_\_\_, who we \_\_\_\_\_.

What sacrament does Fr Mike call the "growth mindset sacrament"? \_\_\_\_\_

If we feel we're not as holy as we should be, or as conformed to Christ as we should be, how should we let the Lord respond in our lives?



**Fill the gaps:** "Every saint has a \_\_\_\_\_, and every sinner has a \_\_\_\_\_."



WE'RE CALLED TO THE STRUGGLE AND TO ENTER INTO THE FRAY.  
EVERY TIME YOU FALL AND GET BACK UP, THAT'S A VICTORY. EVERY TIME YOU STRUGGLE THAT'S GROWTH.



Now Read Luke 4: 21-30



This Gospel passage begins with Jesus' listeners marvelling at His words and ends with them trying to throw Him off a cliff?! That escalated quickly! What on earth could turn them against Him so quickly? Jesus called them out of their fixed mindset, and it hurt! Prophets before Him had called people to conversion, and God's Chosen People had rejected them, as they would now God's own Son. Rather than being able to look at their own failures and weaknesses and show a willingness to grow and move forwards, it was easier for them to chase Jesus out of the town (*his own hometown*) and actually remove His presence from their lives. "I can't change", "I don't want to change", "It's too hard" - these fixed mindset phrases can be toxic to our lives, and especially to our Christian faith. Jesus acknowledges the reality of who we are and where we are, and He loves us right there, but He also calls us on to more, to become the best version of ourselves. So how will I react? Will I stay stuck in my own mindset and push away who / what I could be, or will I admit my reality and continue to struggle, with Jesus at my side?



MISSION!

IF YOU FIND YOURSELF CAUGHT IN A TOXIC FIXED MINDSET, GRAB A POST-IT NOTE AND WRITE: "I AM NOT AFRAID TO STRUGGLE. I CAN GROW, BY GOD'S GRACE" ON IT. REMIND YOURSELF OF THIS TRUTH EVERY DAY. ASK FOR GOD'S GRACE TO CONTINUE THE STRUGGLE FOR GREATNESS. IF YOU SEE SOMEONE STRUGGLING, REMIND THEM OF THEIR WORTH AND THE VALUE OF THEIR STRUGGLE TOO!



PRAYER TIME!



**The Knots Prayer:** Dear God, please untie the knots that are in my mind, my heart and my life. Remove the "have nots", the "can nots" and the "do nots" that I have in my mind. Erase the "will nots", "may nots", "might nots" that may find a home in my heart. Release me from the "could nots", "would nots" and "should nots" that obstruct my life. And most of all, dear God, I ask that you remove from my mind, my heart and my life all of the "am nots" that I have allowed to hold me back, especially the thought that I am not good enough. AMEN



## CREATE A PLAYLIST TO LISTEN TO AS YOU REFLECT ON GROWING IN FAITH



- Beautifully Broken - Plumb
- Who you say I am - Hillsong
- When all is said and done - Matt Redman
- Not yet I but Christ in me - City Alight
- Lead Kindly Light - Audrey Assad
- Into Faith I Go - Pat Barrett
- Work in Progress - Leanna Crawford
- Ok - Josh Wilson
- Garden - Matt Maher
- Great Things Worth it all - Elevation Worship

Click the links for the YouTube videos to listen to some suggestions!



**HFM Testimony: Watch Louise's story of how she decided to allow her faith to grow**



**What Defines You? (Fr Mike Schmitz)**

# TIME, TALENT, TREASURE

Do the best with what you have!

YOUNG PEOPLE IN IRELAND CAN SPEND UP TO 6 HOURS A DAY ON THEIR SMART PHONES - DOES THIS TREND REFLECT YOUR USAGE?

WHAT DO YOU SPEND THE BULK OF YOUR TIME ON, OUTSIDE SCHOOL OR COLLEGE?

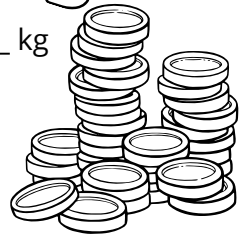


WATCH FR PATRICK CAHILL EXPLAIN THIS GOSPEL IN HIS VIDEO: "TIME, TALENT, TREASURE FOR OTHERS" AND REFLECT ON THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW:



A "talent" in biblical terms was a measure of silver. How much silver was 5 talents? \_\_\_\_\_ kg

What were the servants supposed to do with the talents they were given?



*Summarise each of the Three Ts in the grid below:*

TIME	TALENT	TREASURE

Explain Fr Patrick's analogy of the plastic tools and real tools in your own words:



Referencing the gift of intelligence, how does Fr Patrick explain the ways you can use that for yourself only or for serving others:

**What is key to remember about the Three T's and why we were given them?**

*THINK ABOUT IT! If a class or a sports team or a family even were striving to serve others - how awesome would that be!?*

What situation in rural Ireland exemplifies this attitude really well? Explain.

Choose one of the following and explain how they could use their talents to serve others and give glory to God: **teacher** | **singer** | **politician** | **mechanic**



# TIME, TALENT, TREASURE

MATTHEW 25:14-30

Explain the following in your own words: **"To whom much has been given, much is expected."**

God doesn't care about the things we can think are important e.g. the accumulation of wealth. What matters to God is the good we do with these things.

Why was the Master so angry with the servant who buried the talent?

What is the end goal for all of this selflessness and service? Where should we keep our eyes focused?



## Now Read Matthew 25:14-30



It's been said that love can be spelled "T-I-M-E"... we put our time and our treasure into what we love. Today's parable is an interesting one. Each servant was given a measure of silver, a number of talents, according to their ability to use or invest them. We shouldn't look to others and wish for their lives, we each have been given exactly what we need to serve others and give glory to God in the situations we find ourselves in. There's a simple phrase that's worth remembering: **"Blossom where you're planted!"** If we don't use the time, treasure and talents we have at our disposal, but instead wish for another situation in life, or to be someone else, we miss out on the exact opportunities God has given to us to become the best version of ourselves. False humility isn't helpful either: if you are good at something, there's no point pretending that you're not, but rather use that gift for others! The amazing thing about all of this is that whatever we give, we know the Lord will bless and multiply. Think of the little boy with the loaves and the fish - all Jesus needed was his yes to feed thousands! Whatever we have been given, let's give it back to God, using it to do good for others and glorifying God by our attitude and actions!



MISSION!

TAKE SOME TIME THIS WEEK TO TAKE AN HONEST LOOK AT YOUR TIME, YOUR TALENTS AND YOUR TREASURE. HOW CAN YOU USE THESE TO SERVE OTHERS AND BRING GLORY TO GOD? WHAT CONCRETE CHANGES DO YOU NEED TO MAKE?



PRAYER TIME!

Lord, help us to be wise and faithful servants. May we use whatever we have for good, so that we may help others. May we return all that you have given us to you - all for the greater glory of the Father, so we might hear these words someday with our own ears: "Well done, good and faithful servant, ... come and join in your master's happiness."



## CREATE A PLAYLIST TO LISTEN TO AS YOU REFLECT ON SERVING GOD AND OTHERS



- The Afters: Well Done
- Casting Crowns: What If I Gave Everything
- Matthew West: Do Something
- John Waller: While I'm Waiting
- Kathy Troccoli: Go Light Your World
- Steven Curtis Chapman: Love Take Me Over
- Sidewalk Prophets: Live Like That
- Kari Jobe: The Cause of Christ



[What does God want me to do? Fr Mike Schmitz](#)





[Bishop Barron on The Parable of the Talents](#)




# TIME, TALENT, TREASURE

*Reflected on your own Time, Talents and Treasures below and how you can use them to serve others and God*

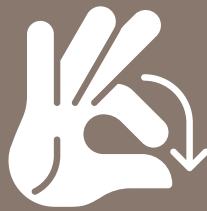
TIME	WHAT FREE TIME DO I HAVE EACH WEEK?	HOW CAN I USE THIS FOR OTHERS AND FOR GOD?
		

TALENTS	WHAT TALENTS AND SKILLS HAVE I BEEN BLESSED WITH?	HOW CAN I USE THESE FOR OTHERS AND FOR GOD?
		

TREASURE	WHAT WEALTH OR OTHER MATERIAL POSSESSIONS COULD I SHARE? (IT DOES NOT HAVE TO BE MONEY!)	HOW CAN I USE THESE FOR OTHERS AND FOR GOD?
		



"BE FAITHFUL IN SMALL THINGS BECAUSE IT IS IN THEM THAT YOUR STRENGTH LIES." MOTHER TERESA



# FAITHFUL IN LITTLE THINGS

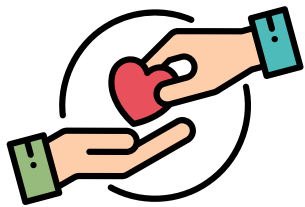


### ICEBREAKER



- **What reactions annoy you the most from people?**
- **What reactions encourage you the most?**
- **Are you an eye-roller???**

WATCH THIS VIDEO FROM FR MIKE SCHMITZ (THE "LITTLE THINGS" ARE ACTUALLY MOST THINGS) AND REFLECT ON THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW:



What small act of kindness touched Fr Mike's heart at Mass?

\_\_\_\_\_

All of life is made up of \_\_\_\_\_:

- small gestures of \_\_\_\_\_, of \_\_\_\_\_ and of \_\_\_\_\_.
- or a small \_\_\_\_\_, an eye \_\_\_\_\_, a \_\_\_\_\_ of frustration!

**It's very rare that we have big, heroic moments.  
We just have small moments, added up to become a life.**



Jesus said, "**Those who are trustworthy in \_\_\_\_\_ will also be trustworthy in \_\_\_\_\_.**"

When things are a certain size, Fr Mike suggests we tend to excuse ourselves and say it's not a big deal.

**Can you think of any examples you've seen of this attitude?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What do you think of Tony's advice to the unmarried man in the group?  
What do you think Tony's wife's reaction was?



\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What does Fr Mike suggest is a very powerful way to undercut a man?

Do you agree? Do you think it's the same for a woman as well?

\_\_\_\_\_



### Pause

**WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST POWERFUL WAY TO AFFIRM A MAN / WOMAN?**

# FAITHFUL IN LITTLE THINGS

LUKE 16:1-13

What invitation does Fr Mike issue in this video?

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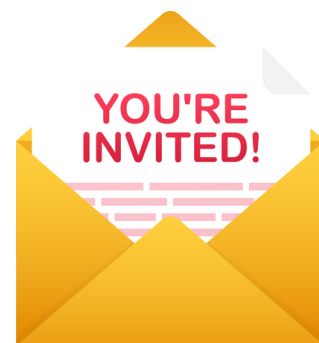
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What practical things could you do to respond to that invite this week?

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What would Fr Mike like to hear Jesus say to him (or to any of us?)

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**In times when we can be disillusioned that greater, more exciting things are not happening in our day, when we have a day of "little things" remember the words from the prophet Zechariah: "Do not despise these small beginnings, for the Lord rejoices to see the work begin" Zechariah 4:10**



Now Read Luke 16:1-13



Have you ever had your day brightened because someone smiled at you, or did a small act of kindness for you? Have you ever had your temper ruined because someone dismissed you, or cut you off, or rolled their eyes at you?! It's the little things in life that count.... in fact, all of life is made up of little things. In today's Gospel Jesus asks us to be faithful in the little things, so He can trust us with greater.

Sometimes we get bored with the little things, or we long for grander, more epic and meaningful ways to spend our time. Most of our day, or most of our life even isn't made up of opportunities for great heroism or epic decisions however. Most of our life is made up of small decisions, one after the other, where we need to choose the good each and every time, to build up good habits and grow in virtue.

Big grand sweeping gestures are impressive, expensive gifts can wow us, but the small personal touches, knowing that someone truly knows you and considered your personality, your interests, your likes and dislikes when choosing a gift for you, even if it was inexpensive and made no sense to anyone else - those are the gifts that really matter! The little things matter, always



MISSION!

THIS WEEK, TRY TO BE CONSCIOUS OF THE LITTLE THINGS: THE LITTLE THINGS YOU SAY AND DO: CHOOSE TO LOVE, CHOOSE TO PRAY, CHOOSE TO SPEAK KINDLY AND TRUTHFULLY, CHOOSE TO BE TRUSTWORTHY IN THE LITTLE THINGS.



PRAYER TIME!

*Jesus, help me to be conscious of the effects of my actions, both little and great.  
May I always choose good, choose prayer, choose love, choose faithfulness.  
And may I always see Your presence and Your love for me in the little things too!  
Amen*



## CREATE A PLAYLIST TO LISTEN TO AS YOU REFLECT ON THE LITTLE THINGS



- Jim and Melissa Brady: The Little Things
- Brian Doerksen: Today I Choose
- Point of Grace: A Thousand Little Things
- Tim Hughes: Everything
- Chris Tomlin: I will follow
- Matt Redman: When all is said and done



*"Be Faithful in small things  
because it is in them that  
your strength lies."*



- Mother Teresa -



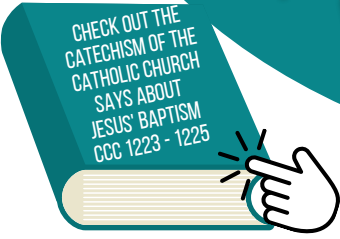


Take Action!  
Take a Step!  
Move!



LUKE 3: 15-16, 21-22

Therefore, my dear brothers & sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.  
1 Cor 15:58



# The 1% Rule

THE SECRET TO STICKING TO NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS!



HAVE YOU MADE ANY NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS? HAVE YOU MADE THEM IN THE PAST?  
WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR EXPERIENCE OF TRYING TO STAY FAITHFUL TO THEM?

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WATCH THIS VIDEO FROM FR MIKE SCHMITZ, "THE SECRET TO STICKING TO A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION" (ASCENSION PRESENTS) AND REFLECT ON THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW



Click here to see the montage Fr Mike references and see what you think!

What is it about the Rocky movies that Fr Mike finds so inspiring?

What effect did seeing Rocky IV have on Fr Mike and his siblings?



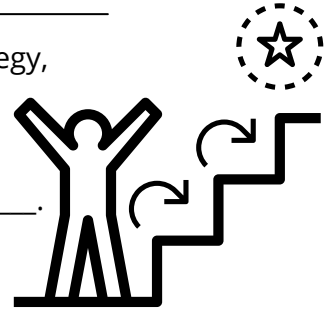
INSPIRATION ON ITS OWN IS NOT ENOUGH FOR CHANGE TO HAPPEN...

What cycling team did Dave Brailsford coach to victory in just three years?



Brailsford credited "mimimal aggregate gain" as his winning strategy, also known as The \_\_\_\_\_ rule.

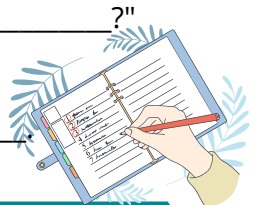
In simple terms this means we try to improve ourselves by \_\_\_ % every \_\_\_\_\_. Small steps that help us move towards where we want to be.



This Rule demands we have a clear sense of \_\_\_\_\_.

For Christians that means asking "What kind of person does God \_\_\_\_\_ me to be by the \_\_\_\_\_ of this \_\_\_\_\_?"

To discover this, Fr Mike invites us to do two things: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_



## goal:

WHEN WE HAVE A CLEAR VISION, WE CAN DECIDE ON THE SMALL 1% IMPROVEMENTS THAT BRING US CLOSER TO THE VISION GOD HAS PLANTED IN OUR HEARTS.

Being faithful does not necessarily mean having a lot of faith and feeling it a lot.



- **Faithful means:** Keeping your \_\_\_\_\_ and keeping them \_\_\_\_\_.
- **Consistency** will beat \_\_\_\_\_ every time!

# THE 1% RULE

LUKE 3:16-16, 21-22

AM I CONSISTENT IN CHOOSING THE LORD? AM I CONSISTENT IN REPENTING WHEN I FALL? EVEN IN THE MIDST OF FAILURE AND SIN, DO I REMAIN FAITHFUL? DO I CHOOSE GOD WHEN I FALL?

STILL FEELING A BIT MEH? *It's not about your emotions!*

If you are feeling lukewarm and don't care, what does Fr Mike recommend?



Remember: your intellect and will can guide your \_\_\_\_\_.

Now Read Luke 3:16-16, 21-22



The story of the Baptism of Jesus might seem simple enough until we start probing a little deeper. Why was John baptising people in the River Jordan? So they could repent of their sins and prepare for the coming of the Messiah. Did Jesus need to repent of any sins? Of course not, He is God, and He **was** the coming Messiah. So why did He get baptised?

Jesus' baptism was *symbolic*. Jesus, as God, actually *sanctified* the waters by His descent into them, rather than needing to be cleansed of any sin. His baptism was for *our* sake, not for His. He chose to embrace and represent the human condition which is broken and in need of forgiveness and healing, and this was symbolised at his baptism. His public ministry is about to begin, and at that moment, the Father says, "You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you." The will of Jesus was completely united with the Will of the Father. If we want to become the person God is calling us to be, we also need to unite our will to His, and follow His guidance for each day and each action of our lives!

**"God has placed a vision of your life for who he wants you to be at the end of this year.**

**Choosing that faithfully, just 1% every day, ends up resulting in the kind of person God wants you to be."**

**(Fr Mike Schmitz)**



**MISSION!**

SPEND TIME THIS WEEK PRAYING, JOURNALING AND COMMITTING TO THE KIND OF PERSON GOD WANTS YOU TO BE AT THE END OF THIS YEAR: WHAT VIRTUES, DECISIONS, GROWTH, PRUNING, CHANGE WILL THAT REQUIRE? WHEN YOU'RE READY, COMMIT TO YOUR FIRST 1%, AND THEN REPEAT DAILY TILL THE END OF THE YEAR! KEEPING A JOURNAL, A WRITTEN RECORD, WILL HELP YOU.



**PRAYER TIME!**

Father God, my Father, You have a loving plan for my whole life. I do not know exactly where You want to lead me, but grant me the grace to trust in Your plan. Show me now who it is You want me to be at the end of this year. Teach me daily what I need to do, to become that person, the best version of myself. Help me to commit to small steps faithfully, to grow 1% closer daily to that vision.



## CREATE A PLAYLIST TO LISTEN TO AS YOU REFLECT ON THE YEAR AHEAD



- Your Plans for Us - Eleventh Hour Worship
- The Change in Me - Casting Crowns
- When God's Perfect Plans - Resound Worship
- I will follow You - Kristene di Marco
- I will trust - Elevation Worship
- I choose to worship - Rend Collective
- Your Promises - Elevation Worship
- Good to me - Audrey Assad

Click the links for the YouTube videos to listen to some suggestions!



**New Year's Resolutions ... for Me or for God? LITTLE BY LITTLE w/Fr Columba Jordan CFR**



**The Key to Self-Mastery: Improvements by Aggregation of Marginal Gains**

## WHY NOT START A TRADITION FOR BEGINNING A NEW YEAR?



# BLESSING JAR

If you don't have a jar, get a notebook and write your blessings in that instead!

## WHAT IS A BLESSING JAR?

Blessings jars are a practical and fun way to keep a record of the things that you're thankful for on a daily basis. Whenever you recognize something that is a "blessing" in your life throughout the year, just write it on a piece of paper, fold it up, and stick it in the Blessing Jar. It might be as simple as a good chat with a friend, a hug, a gift, having the ability to play sports, having food on your table...

You can do this alone, or with your family, or even your youth group. Then decide how often you want to empty out the jar out to count your blessings: maybe on New Year's Eve, each month, on a special Feastday, or, if you're having an especially tough day, you may just want to empty out the contents of the blessings jar right then and be reminded of God how is blessing you each and every day! It will be a great reminder of God's faithfulness... in times of joy as well as in times of struggle.



## HOW TO MAKE A BLESSING JAR

- Choose a large jar (or use a notebook or box if you can't source a jar)
- Stick the Blessings Label on the jar.
- Choose a scripture passage if you'd like (see next page for ideas), punch one end and tie to your jar with string.
- Decorate the jar with stickers, washi tape, ribbon, string - whatever way you like! (*Google Blessing Jars and you'll get lots of ideas!*)
- Write your first blessings idea on a small note card, fold it and put it in the jar.
- Make sure you have paper and pen near the jar to make the process easier each time you see a blessing you want to record!
- Enjoy the process and choose to be thankful every single day
- Repeat as often as you like



"MAY HIS FAVOUR BE UPON YOU AND A THOUSAND GENERATIONS,  
AND YOUR FAMILY AND YOUR CHILDREN, AND THEIR CHILDREN, AND THEIR CHILDREN" THE BLESSING - KARI JOBE  
- ASCEND YOUTH MINISTRY (DIOCESE OF WATERFORD & LISMORE) -



## BLESSING JAR SUGGESTIONS FOR LABELS



**or create your own!**

And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.  
Philippians 4:19

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.  
James 1:17

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.  
Numbers 6:24-26

Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.  
Isaiah 41:10

And from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.  
John 1:16

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.  
Ephesians 1:3

Find someone in the group who fits each category and get them to sign in the box! They can only sign one box on your sheet...

<h1>PEOPLE BINGO</h1>	Someone who went to Kerry this summer	Someone who has longer hair than you
Someone who has green eyes	Someone who ate an egg for breakfast this morning	Someone who was at a festival this summer
Someone who was at a birthday party this summer	Someone who has two brothers	Someone who has a sister
Someone who was in Connaught this summer	Someone who was at a GAA match this summer	Someone who likes spicy food
Someone who has been to America	Someone who has seen a Marvel movie in the last three months	Someone who can't swim
Someone who supports Manchester City	Someone who likes Maths	Someone who is on a school team
Someone who cycles a lot	Someone who has brown hair	





Find someone in the group who fits each category and get them to sign in the box! They can only sign one box on your sheet...

<h1>PEOPLE BINGO</h1>	<p>Someone who went abroad this summer</p>	<p>Someone who has shorter hair than you</p>
<p>Someone who has blue eyes</p>	<p>Someone who ate cornflakes for breakfast</p>	<p>Someone who got sunburned this summer</p>
<p>Someone who can play a musical instrument</p>	<p>Someone who was at a BBQ this summer</p>	<p>Someone who has more than one brother</p>
<p>Someone who has no sisters</p>	<p>Someone who got caught in a shower of rain this summer</p>	<p>Someone who likes Chinese Food</p>
<p>Someone who has been to France</p>	<p>Someone who has seen Top Gun: Maverick</p>	<p>Someone who can bake</p>
<p>Someone who supports Liverpool FC</p>	<p>Someone who likes Irish</p>	<p>Someone who can touch their toes</p>
<p>Someone who travels on a bus to school, but not the same bus as you</p>	<p>Someone who can tell you a joke right now</p>	



Find someone in the group who fits each category and get them to sign in the box! They can only sign one box on your sheet...

<h1>PEOPLE BINGO</h1>	<p>Someone who was born in a different year to you</p>	<p>Someone who has broken a bone before</p>
<p>Someone who owns more than 15 pairs of shoes</p>	<p>Someone who can touch their nose with their tongue</p>	<p>Someone who has never been on a tractor</p>
<p>Someone who can whistles "Happy Birthday"</p>	<p>Someone who can name 5 places outside of Ireland beginning with the letter "B"</p>	<p>Someone who plays hurling or camogie</p>
<p>Someone who can hum a nursery rhyme</p>	<p>Someone who is left-handed</p>	<p>Someone who has allergies</p>
<p>Someone who is afraid of spiders</p>	<p>Someone who doesn't like peanut butter</p>	<p>Someone who loves salad</p>
<p>Someone who has been on a pilgrimage (or has a family member who has been on one)</p>	<p>Someone who does not have their ears pierced</p>	<p>Someone whose toenails and fingernails are painted at the moment</p>
<p>Someone who runs a lot</p>	<p>Someone who never hits the snooze button in the morning</p>	



# SIT DOWN IF....

- Players sit in a circle (or can sit at their desks too).
- Ask everyone to stand up, and then read through the following list.
- The last person standing is the winner.
- (Use your discretion when choosing questions - you know your group!)
  - *Sit down if you have eaten chocolate today.*
  - *Sit down if you are wearing purple.*
  - *Sit down if you were born in September*
  - *Sit down if you have blue eyes.*
  - *Sit down if you are the youngest child.*
  - *Sit down if you have broken a bone.*
  - *Sit down if you don't drink tea or coffee.*
  - *Sit down if you can speak more than two languages.*
  - *Sit down if you can roll your tongue.*
  - *Sit down if you wear a size 5 shoe.*
  - *Sit down if you have traveled to more than three countries.*
  - *Sit down if you have a pet.*
  - *Sit down if you have ever won a competition.*
  - *Sit down if you enjoy spicy food.*
  - *Sit down if you have a sibling.*
  - *Sit down if you have ever sung in public.*
  - *Sit down if you have ever tried surfing.*
  - *Sit down if you have watched all the seasons of a TV show in one sitting.*
  - *Sit down if you have a fear of heights.*
  - *Sit down if you have ever gone camping.*
  - *Sit down if you have ever run a marathon.*



# KLUMPS

The players must walk around the room mingling until a particular instruction is called out. They must then get themselves quickly into groups according to the instruction.

*You can also call out numbers: anyone not fitting into a group of that number must be sidelined (momentarily - or you can run it as a knockout competition).*

Use your discretion when choosing instructions - you know your group!



- *favourite subject*
- *favourite cereal*
- *your class group first thing this morning*
- *same number of brothers as you*
- *same shoe size*
- *same bedroom colour*
- *favourite school room*
- *first name beginning with same letter*
- *favourite superhero*
- *same mood as you this morning*
- *favourite type of crisps*
- *same colour socks*
- *same number of letters in first name*
- *favourite hot beverage*
- *same birthday month*
- *favourite TV show*

# THE WILD WIND BLOWS IF...

For this one, everyone stands (or sits) in a circle with one person in the middle of the circle. That person says a fact about themselves, such as "The wild wind blows if you have a sister." Then, everyone in the circle who has a sister/the stated fun fact applies to them runs to find a new spot in the circle. The person without a spot shares the next fact!

## Sample facts:

- if you have a brother
- if you support Man Utd
- if you are the youngest in your family
- if you eat Weetabix
- if you can whistle
- if you have brown eyes
- if you have ever broken a bone



# CONVERSATION STARTERS

- Ask the group to walk around the room and each time you say stop they must get in groups of 2 or 3 to chat about a particular question. Move to a different group for each question.
- (Use your discretion when choosing questions - you know your group!)
- You can also use this with thematically linked questions before starting a particular module.

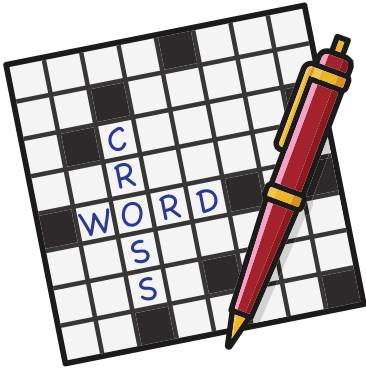
## Sample questions:

1. *Are you a cat or a dog person. Why?*
2. *What would your DJ name be?*
3. *What would your chosen superpower be and why?*
4. *What is the best prank you've experienced or planned?*
5. *Tell us a weird fact you happen to know for no reason.*
6. *If you could take one prop from any movie set, what would it be?*
7. *If your life was captured in the "expectation vs. reality" meme, what would the two pictures be?*
8. *Best Christmas meal ever.*
9. *If you could dis-invent one thing what would it be?*
10. *What's the most adventurous thing you have ever done?*
11. *What makes someone a good leader?*
12. *If you could give one piece of advice to a child, what would it be?*
13. *What would you like to learn if you only had the time?*
14. *If you had an extra day of the week how would you spend it*
15. *If you could only eat one kind of food for the rest of your life what would it be?*



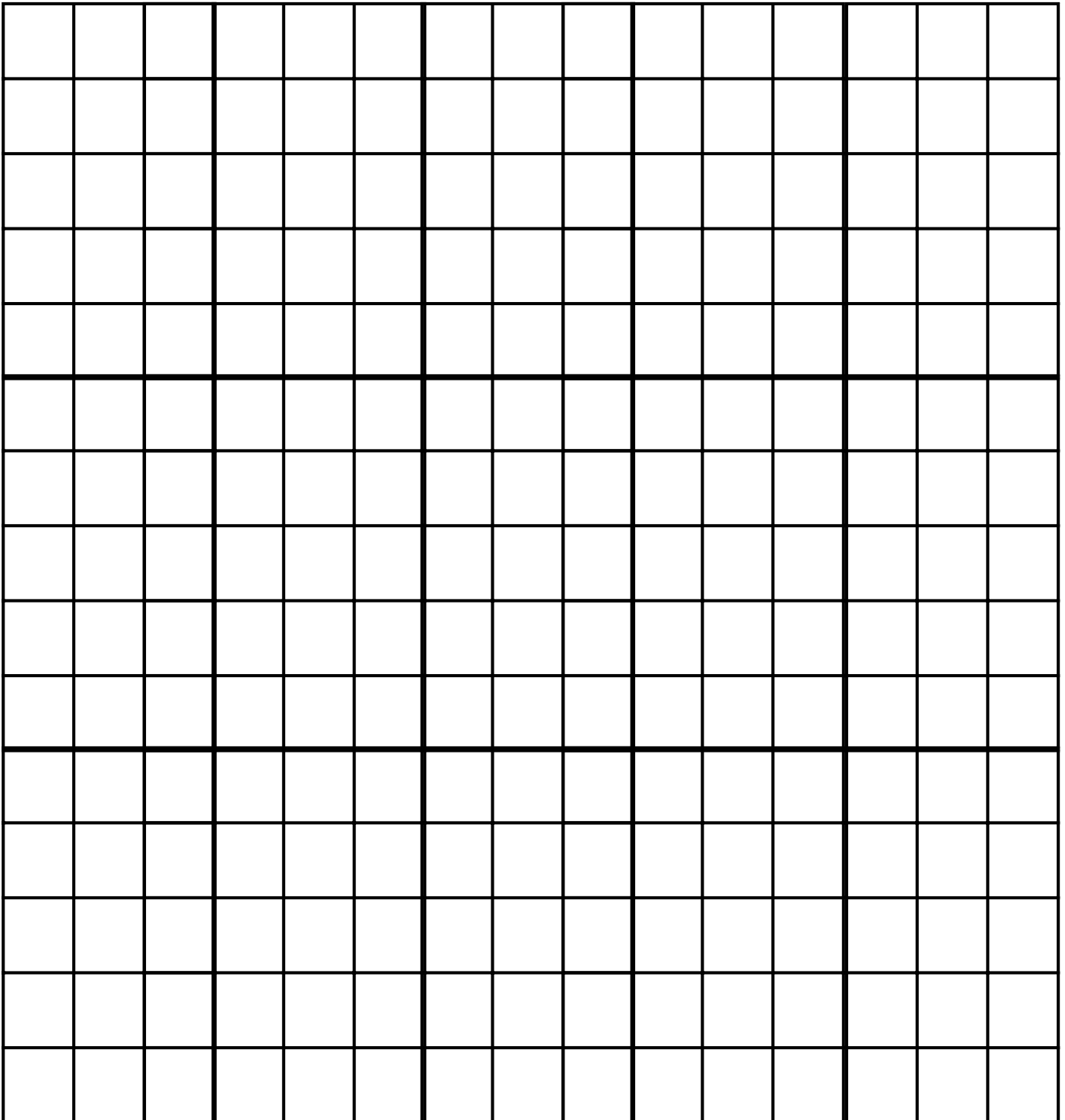
# CROSSWORD NAMES

- Each person must write their own name in capital letters in the middle of the grid.
- They then move around the room inviting others to "attach" their name to the crossword. Whoever has the most names at the end of the allocated time is the winner. Remember, it must be created like a crossword - letters can only go side by side if they are connected to names, otherwise shade in the squares to separate them.
- An optional extra is to test the winner prior to awarding the prize by picking out one name on their sheet of paper - if the winner cannot identify that person they don't win!



# **CROSSWORD NAMES**

- Write your name in the middle of the crossword in block capitals.
- Move around the room and invite others to "attach" their names - make sure you remember each person you meet!
- Remember, it must be created like a crossword - letters can only go side by side if they are connected to names, otherwise shade in the squares to separate them.



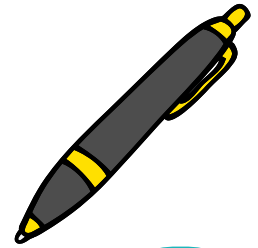
# BIRTHDAY LINEUP

- The players must line up in order of birthday without making a sound (or writing anything down).
- Depending on the size of the group, give the players just enough time to finish with nearly perfect accuracy!
- Use could also choose height, shoe size, names arranged alphabetically or by number of letters in first name as ways to line up.



# CATEGORIES / BUS STOP

- Players get into teams of 4 - 5 and sit around a table to work out the answers together as fast as they can.
- Decide on 10 categories (keep them the same for all rounds in this game to speed things up)
- Down the left hand side write your chosen categories:
  - TV Show or Movie
  - Singer or Band
  - Food
  - Animal
  - Colour
  - Place
  - Sport
  - Car
  - Household Item
  - Classroom item
  - Something to pack on holidays
  - Job



- Call out a letter and give the groups a certain amount of time to quickly write down something that matches that category e.g. 2 mins / 5 mins
- For example: M: Mad Max / Madonna / Meatballs / Monkey / Mauve / Madagascar / Marbles / Mercedes / Mini Fridge / Marker / Map / Musician
- Go around the groups category by category to check answers.
- Each group is awarded one point for each category they have answered successfully, unless another team has used the same word.
- If a group uses a double letter, they get two points e.g. **Mad Max**

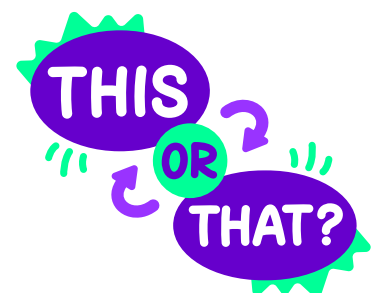
*Tip: Print and laminate templates if you want to reuse them and not have to photocopy each time. Use whiteboard makers, one per group.*

# WOULD YOU RATHER

Players stand in the middle of the room and move to either left or right depending on their response to the question asked - for extra discussion, ask them to back up their opinion! Use discretion when choosing questions: more options [available online](#).

## **Would you rather...**

- eat a bug or get stung by a jellyfish?
- eat all your food ice cold or super hot?
- delete your Instagram or your Snapchat?
- always have to cough or always have to sneeze?
- go bald or lose your toes?
- own a baby monkey or a baby seal?







# USEFUL WEBSITES

## **GRADUATION RESOURCES**

- [www.prayever.com](http://www.prayever.com)
- [www.slife.org](http://www.slife.org)
- [www.catholicteacherresources.com](http://www.catholicteacherresources.com)

## **MUSIC**

- <https://www.ultimate-guitar.com/> (*for guitar chords - keys can be transposed*)

## **SCRIPTURE**

- <https://www.biblegateway.com/> (*for Bible references*)
- <https://www.catholicireland.net/readings/> (*readings of the day*)

## **ARTWORK / BANNER / BOOKLET IDEAS**

- [www.pinterest.com](http://www.pinterest.com)
- [www.canva.com](http://www.canva.com) (*create booklets / posters / invites etc*)

## **TECHNOLOGY**

- [www.viewpure.com](http://www.viewpure.com) (*to show YouTube videos without ads*)