



SESSION 2 SEEKING

GOAL

The goal of this session is to assist the teens in examining their desires, specifically the root of those desires, how they connect to our innate human desires, and where these desires truly point (toward God).

KEY CONCEPTS

We are all created with inherent desires and spend our lives trying to discover and fulfill them.

When we try to fill our deepest longings with things other than God, we often feel unfulfilled and disappointed.

There is something greater in store for us. Our earthly desires point us in the direction of our heavenly yearning.

KEY TERMS

Concupiscence: Human desires which remain disordered due to the temporal consequences of original sin, which remain even after baptism, and which produce an inclination to sin.

Happiness: Regularly used in Scripture to describe the lot of those who are blessed by God for doing His will, and the reward of the just for their faithful service on Earth. Happiness is a divine gift but requires human's cooperation to be gained.

Yearning: A feeling of intense longing.

SCRIPTURE: Acts 17:27, Joshua 24:15

CATECHISM: 27, 1214, 1285

ABOUT THIS CONFIRMATION SESSION

The Gather is based on the game charades, in which a teen picks a desire they have and acts it out for the rest of the group. The Proclaim examines our innate human desires and where they come from, and encourages the teens to begin to question the deeper root of their longings. The Break is an adaptation of a root cause identification tool called, "The Five Whys." It is designed to help the teens realize that some of their desires have a deeper root than they realize. The Send encourages the teens to continue to examine and track their desires and discover ways to fulfill their deeper longings throughout their Confirmation journey.

ENVIRONMENT

Create a slideshow of things that people in the world today desire, like money, popularity, new cars, etc.

AS YOU GET STARTED

For a *prayer-centered Send*, consider having the teens pray for courage. Give each teen a piece of paper and a pen. Invite them to name and reflect on their desires. Encourage them to write a prayer to God, asking for the courage to conform their desire to God's desire for us. After they are finished with their prayers, invite a teen to lead the group in a closing prayer.

SUMMIT

Welcome and Opening Prayer (5 min)

Gather the teens in the main meeting space. Welcome them to the session and begin in prayer.

Summit (20 min)

Divide the teens into small groups of six to eight with one Core Member in each group; these will be their small groups for the remainder of the Confirmation preparation program. Use the modified *Summit* session to lead the teens through a *lectio divina* based reflection on the Sunday readings.

GATHER

Charades (15 min)

Gather the teens in the main meeting space and instruct them to remain with their Confirmation small groups. Prior to the session, write different desires on slips of paper. Give each Core Member enough slips of paper so each teen in the small group can have one. When instructed to do so, each teen acts out the desire on their slip of paper. The teens have 30 seconds to act out their desire while the other teens in the group guess what the desire is. If the teens guess correctly, their small group receives one point. The small group with the most points at the end of the game wins.

The following are some sample desires:

- To be loved
- To have a lot of friends
- To be rich
- To have a new car
- To be famous
- To have a family
- To go to a good college
- To make a difference in the world
- To go to sleep
- To eat at your favorite restaurant
- To be in a fulfilling relationship

“Seeking” Video (5 min)

Play the video “*Seeking*” before transitioning into the teaching

PROCLAIM

“Seeking” Teaching (10 min)

Yearning

Have you ever found yourself drawn to something with no explanation?

Ask the teens to name a few of the desires they have in their lives.

We all have some desire, a deep-seated longing that we do not really have an answer for. Sometimes we try to mask it or fill it with other things.

All humans seek happiness, a basic desire that we all share. But why is happiness so important? Where does it come from? How can we be truly happy?

One of the main desires we all share as humans is a desire to be loved and cared for. Think about when you are most vulnerable — when you are sick or sad. What kinds of things do you want in those moments? How do you feel? What do you need?

Have some of the teens share their answers to the previous questions.

God created each of us with human desires, with needs. But what does that mean? It is a calling deep within us, a hearkening back to the way in which we were made and who made us. Something is calling us and in this confusing world, it is sometimes hard to hear and answer that call. As we prepare for Confirmation, we will be exploring what those desires are and how we fulfill them.

CCC 33

Disordered Desires

Unfortunately, we live in a far from perfect world. We know that there is human suffering and that suffering is sometimes the result of someone's desire or emotion causing them to harm someone else. Our desires can also leave us feeling empty. We seek to fill our lives with things that end up not being good for us or things that do not last. In the chaos of this world, we are told all kinds of lies about what we need or deserve. And when we pursue them, we are left with a certain emptiness, some greater than others.

How many of you can think of a time when you sought out something that ended up not being what you actually wanted? How do we even know what we really want?

In the example that you thought of, why do you think you were not satisfied with what you got? What do you think you were actually looking for?

Have some of the teens share their answers to the previous questions.

We sometimes struggle with articulating our desires or needs. In some cases, we may not even know what it is we really desire. Everyone knows that one person whose response is always, "I do not care," when in reality, they do care. The conversation goes something like this:

"Where do you want to go to dinner?"

"I don't care."

“How about hamburgers?”
“Naw, I don’t really want burgers.”
“OK, what about Italian food?”
“Mmm, that doesn’t really sound good.”
“Ooook, pizza?”
“Nah...”

It is even difficult for us to discern our own needs and wants at times. If we cannot figure out what we want, how are we supposed to figure out what God wants? Our true desires are written on our hearts, woven into the very fabric of our creation. But do we know our own heart? Can we hear what it is calling out to?

CCC 27

Growing Up

As we grow and mature, so do our desires and longings. Think of what you wanted as a kid versus now. As life is a journey of maturity, so too is your faith. What you needed as a kid is not the same as what you need in your faith now. The time you invested in your faith as a child is not the time it needs now. When you were young, your parents stood before the Church and declared that they would raise you in the faith. You were plunged into the water and rose a new creation. But that was their choice, their decision. When you are young, your parents decide how to fulfill your needs and desires. But as you grow, you get to decide for yourself.

CCC 1214

The Journey

Confirmation is just the beginning of your faith journey. It is the moment that you stand up, as an adult in the Church, and take ownership of your faith. It is no longer the faith of your parents, but your own. It is the beginning of your journey toward true happiness, fulfilling those desires in a way that lasts, and chasing not what is fleeting but what is eternal. As we will learn over the course of this program, life is bigger than our small sphere of influence. There is something bigger going on around us. There is a deeper meaning to our human longings and the things we continue to seek.

Confirmation completes the grace that was given to us at our baptism. Now it is your turn to stand up and make a decision for your faith, to “choose today whom you will serve.”

CCC 1285; Joshua 24:15

Everyone on this Earth is looking for something. We all have desires — yearnings — that we are seeking to fill. The purpose of our lives becomes how we choose to fill them. Most people spend their entire lives spinning their wheels, stuck in the mud of this life without much thought about what is beyond. Luckily for us, this world is not the only thing on our horizon. Spoiler alert: the journey we are embarking on over the course of this program can be previewed by a special saint, Thérèse of Lisieux, who wrote, “The world’s thy ship, not thy home.”

BREAK

Small Group Discussion (15 min)

Divide the teens into their Confirmation small groups. Begin in prayer and then use the following questions to facilitate a discussion:

- What is something you really want right now?
- Why do you think you want it?
- Have you ever wanted something but were disappointed when you actually received it? What was it and why did you feel that way?
- What is your biggest motivation in life right now? Why do you get up every day and live your life?

The 5 Whys (10 min)

After the discussion, challenge the teens to think more deeply about the root of their desires. Give each teen a pen and a copy of The Five Whys handout. Use the following example to help them find the root of their desires:

Desire: I want to be popular.

Why? Because I want people to know who I am.

Why? Because I want lots of friends.

Why? Because I want to always have someone to hang out with.

Why? Because I do not like being alone.

Why? Because I get depressed when I am lonely.

Invite the teens to take a few minutes to reflect on their desires using The Five Whys handout. After several minutes, use the following questions to process the activity:

- Do you want to share one of the root desires you identified? Did it surprise you?
- Was this activity easy or difficult for you? Why?
- What makes this kind of thinking so important? What happens if we do not understand the root of our desires?

SEND

“What Are You Looking For” Journaling

Gather the teens into your parish nave and ask them to spread out. Provide each teen with paper and a pen. Place a large basket or baskets near the foot of the altar. If possible, play worship music in the background of this dynamic.

Read John 1:35-39. Then use the following to set up a time of reflection for the teens:

The first words that St. John records Jesus saying are, “What are you looking for?” Although these were words Jesus spoke to two of the first disciples, they are words that Jesus speaks to us. We are all seeking something. Jesus knows this and offers us what we are seeking, but so much more. We need to answer the question, though, before we get started. What are you looking for? What are you seeking in your life right now? Take a few minutes to write down your response to that question. Be honest as though you were responding directly to Jesus’ question.

Allow the teens several minutes to write. Then explain the next step of the process:

Jesus wants to do something with our desires and what we seek. Sometimes this means helping us find what we are seeking, sometimes it means redirecting our desires to something better. It always means leading us closer to Him. We need to be willing to take the first step in trusting God with what we seek, just like the disciples did when they chose to follow Jesus. We've placed a basket for your reflections at the base of the altar. We are going to allow you a few moments to come forward to drop your reflection into the basket as an act of trust in God's plan for this confirmation process. You don't need to come forward, but at any point in the process may hand your letter to your small group leader as a sign you want to at least engage Jesus a little bit more during your walk toward confirmation.

Allow the teens to come forward. After most of the teens seem to have dropped their letter into the basket, remind them that they can keep their journal and at any point give it to a small group leader. Close the night with a spontaneous prayer and a final reading of John 1:35-39.