

Middle School Retreat to Learn about the Church as a Saving Community

The coordinator of the parish middle school religious education program has asked your religious studies class to develop a one-day retreat for the middle school. The students in the parish program are focusing on the Church. Your task is to design a retreat that addresses the Church as a saving community for us. The middle school teacher is hoping the retreat day will give her eighteen students an experience to reinforce what it means to belong to the community that is the Church. The retreat should offer a variety of activities. The teacher has told you that the students will do best with activities that are no longer than 30 minutes. The retreat begins at 9:30 a.m. and ends at 2:00 p.m. Follow these guidelines in creating the retreat:

- Create a schedule for a one-day retreat that engages the students in learning about the Church as a saving community, in learning that each person has unique gifts that are meant to be shared, and in recognizing that there are many ways the Church will help us to grow as followers of Jesus.
- Include activities that appeal to the students and actively involve them in different kinds of activities: prayer, input, large- and small-group activities, quiet time for reflection, recreation. The retreat day includes lunch, so this would be a good place to have a focus on salt and light.
- Type and submit the following in a single folder (portfolio):
 - your introduction to the retreat
 - the schedule of activities for the day
 - an explanation for each activity that tells what the activity is and why you planned it
 - copies of any handouts you may use
 - a playlist of music that includes how you will use each song and why you chose each song
 - sketches of any posters or diagrams you will use in explaining or leading an activity

After you have completed the retreat planning, write a one-page personal reflection on how designing the retreat for middle school students helped you to deepen your own understanding of the Church as a saving community.

