



## Overview of

# *Sacraments and Prayer Course*



This course is designed to help the young people better understand and more fully participate in the Church's sacraments and prayer life. The sessions connect directly to *The Catholic Connections Handbook for Middle Schoolers* and cover basic teachings about the sacraments and prayer. The participants will begin with an overview of the Church's Seven Sacraments and then explore the sacraments in more detail. They will also explore the topic of prayer and address two life issues relevant to young people in light of course material. The importance of the central place of the Eucharist in Catholic life will also be emphasized.

## Course Themes

### **Core Session: 1. Sacraments: Celebrating Christ's Presence**

This session introduces the participants to the Seven Sacraments and how they help us to recognize the invisible reality of Christ's presence.

### **Core Session: 2. The Eucharist**

This session looks at the Church's central sacrament, the Eucharist, and provides the participants with an overview.

### **Core Session: 3. Baptism and Confirmation**

This session uses a sports metaphor to introduce the concept of initiation and explores Baptism and Confirmation and how the Church initiates new members through these sacraments.

### **Core Session: 4. The Sacraments of Healing**

This session helps to increase the participants' familiarity with the Sacraments of Penance and Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick so that they will be comfortable asking for them when they, a friend, or a family member would benefit from them.

### **Core Session: 5. Matrimony and Holy Orders**

This session provides an overview of the Church's two Sacraments of Service and encourages the participants to consider how they can use their gifts to serve others.

### **Core Session: 6. Prayer: Tuning In to God**

This session focuses on God's constant presence and desire for relationship with us. It encourages the participants to consider ways they can tune in to God's presence.

### **Core Session: 7. The Lord's Prayer**

This session looks at the meaning of the Lord's Prayer and involves the participants in exploring the prayer's seven petitions.

### **Life Issue Session: 8. The Ultimate Question: Why Am I Here?**

This session draws on course material to help the participants explore one of life's big questions and encourages the participants to recognize that they were created with a God-given purpose.

### **Life Issue Session: 9. God, Where Are You?**

This session focuses on finding God when God seems far away, and considers how helpful the Church's sacraments and prayer can be.

### **Concluding Session: 10. The Eucharist in Catholic Life**

The final session returns to the topic of the Eucharist and emphasizes its central place in the life of the Church.

### **Optional Course Project: Project Global Connect**

By collecting and reviewing parish bulletins from around the nation and world, the participants learn how their home parish's sacrament and prayer practices are linked to the global Catholic Church family.