

7

AT A GLANCE

Jesus on Leadership

Study It

Core Session:

Jesus on Leadership

(60 minutes)

- ◆ News Report Role-Plays (30 minutes)
- ◆ Jesus' Leadership Qualities (20 minutes)
- ◆ Personal Leadership Reflection (10 minutes)

Pray It

- ◆ Hearing the Call to Lead (10 minutes)

Live It

- ◆ Want ads
- ◆ Thank-you notes

Overview

As Christians we are called to follow the example of Jesus in the ways that we live. That call includes the way we use our gifts and talents in leadership roles. This session invites the participants to reflect on the ways Jesus led—providing insight into the leadership qualities that Christian leaders should strive for.

Outcomes

- ◆ The participants will explore and use Scripture stories to uncover characteristics of Jesus' leadership style.
- ◆ The participants will compare qualities of Jesus' leadership style with those of their own leadership styles.

Background Reading

- ◆ "Qualities of Effective Leaders," found on the CD-ROM
- ◆ *Catholic Youth Bible* article connections: "We Are the Body of Christ" (Rom. 12:1–8), "Divine Humility, Cosmic Glory" (Phil. 2:1–11)



Core Session: Jesus on Leadership(60 minutes)

Preparation

- Gather the following items:
 - Catholic Youth Bibles* or other Bibles, one for every three or four participants
 - copies of handout 9, "Leading As Jesus Did," one for each participant
 - pens or pencils
 - newsprint, one sheet for the leader plus one sheet for every three or four participants
 - markers, one for every three or four participants
 - masking tape
 - chairs and other props for role-plays
 - about twenty sheets of blank paper
 - copies of handout 10, "Jesus as Leader," one for each participant
 - self-stick notes, five for each participant
 - a tape player or a CD player
 - tapes and CDs of reflective instrumental music
- On a sheet of newsprint, list the following questions:
 - Who are the characters in the story?
 - Where is the action and what is happening?
 - What is Jesus doing?
 - When does the story take place?
 - What qualities in Jesus have amazed or challenged people?
- Prepare a space in the room where the groups can perform role-plays. Have some chairs and other props available for use.
- On a sheet of newsprint, list the following questions:
 - How did Jesus interact with people?
 - Why did people flock to Jesus?
 - What qualities or characteristics did Jesus possess?

News Report Role-Plays (30 minutes)

1. Welcome the participants and introduce the session using these comments:

- Many people are familiar with WWJD?—the slogan that stands for "What Would Jesus Do?"

- Today's session helps us look at what Jesus did as a leader in the many settings he encountered.
- We know that Jesus was a leader, but he never held an office, he never won an election, and he never had an official title next to his name.
- Jesus led others in the everyday situations in which he found himself. Today we will take some time to find out more about those situations and the leadership qualities and the principles by which Jesus led.

2. Form small groups of three or four participants. Give each group a Bible, and give each participant a copy of handout 9 and a pen or a pencil. Assign each group one of the Scripture passages listed on the handout. Then give this instruction:

- Read the assigned Scripture passage and talk about the questions listed on the handout. Choose someone from the group to record your answers to the questions.

3. After 5 minutes, post the list of five questions that you wrote on newsprint and give these instructions:

- Your small group is to prepare a news report based on the Scripture passage you just read. Select one person to play the role of the reporter. The rest of the group should portray people from the Scripture passage who witness what happens.
- Note the five questions I have posted on newsprint. These questions will give you more direction on what should be included in the news reports. You have 5 minutes to prepare your role-plays.

4. Invite the participants to gather in the area you have prepared for the presentation of the role-plays. Invite each group to present its role-play.

Jesus' Leadership Qualities (20 minutes)

1. Instruct the participants to return to their small groups, and to appoint one person to be the facilitator of the group. Give each group a sheet of newsprint and a marker. Post the list of three questions that you wrote on newsprint, and ask the small groups to share their responses to the questions. Tell them to write their responses to the last question on the newsprint you provided. Explain that they will have 5 minutes to work.

2. Gather the participants back together, and invite each small group to present its list of Jesus' qualities or characteristics to the large group. Post the small groups' responses on the wall so that all can see them. Then ask the participants this question:

- After seeing the news reports and spending time with your Scripture passage, what conclusions can you draw about Jesus as a leader?

As the participants share their responses out loud, write each answer on a sheet of blank paper—one answer to a sheet—large enough for others to see. Post all the sheets on a wall, slightly apart from one another.

3. Ask the participants this question:

- The answers listed on the handout tell us what Jesus did in his time and place. How can we act as Jesus did in our own time and place? Complete this sentence: "One who leads like Jesus will . . ."

As the participants share their responses out loud, write each answer on a sheet of blank paper—one answer to a sheet. Post all the sheets on the same wall as you did the responses in step 2.

4. Distribute handout 10. Talk about the information presented on the handout. Then ask:

- Did we miss anything that should be added to the responses listed on the wall?

Add any qualities or actions that the young people suggest. If the participants have overlooked a significant number of the qualities or actions listed on the handout, pause and talk more about those items.

Personal Leadership Reflection (10 minutes)

1. Give each participant five self-stick notes. Have everyone write their names on each note, then invite them to reflect on their own leadership qualities and their own style of leadership. Ask them to look at the posted qualities of ways that Jesus led. Play reflective instrumental music in the background, and give the participants about 3 minutes to reflect.

2. Ask the participants to take the self-stick notes on which they have recorded their names up to the wall and post them on qualities they have in common with Jesus and on actions they have done or want to do in the future. Explain that they must place their names on five different qualities and actions. Invite them to do this quietly and prayerfully. Continue to play reflective music.

3. Ask the following questions:

- How do you feel right now?
- What are you feeling challenged to do?

4. Summarize the session by making the following points:

- Jesus led people through his everyday actions. At times he did extraordinary things (miracles), but often he greatly affected people through simple actions—he listened, he was compassionate, he reached out to people in need.
- Jesus made a difference wherever he went, and we are called to do the same. That is what it means to lead as Jesus did.

- Leadership is not always easy. As leaders, we may be called to do or say something difficult.
- Leadership requires integrity. Though no one expects us to be perfect leaders, we can be expected to act with integrity, to choose what is right and good. Jesus experienced tough times in leadership too. Frequently his leadership was called into question. Jesus stayed true to his integrity and his knowledge of what was right and what was wrong.
- We are all blessed with gifts and abilities we can use for others.

Pray!

Hearing the Call to Lead (10 minutes)

Preparation

- Gather the following items:
 - copies of handout 11, "Hearing the Call to Lead," one for each participant
 - copies of *Spirit & Song* or another hymnal, one for each participant
 - a *Catholic Youth Bible* or other Bible, marked at Jer. 1:4–8
- Select a gathering song and a closing song from the *Spirit & Song* Connections in this chapter, or from another hymnal.
- Ask a participant to proclaim the Scripture reading that is noted on handout 11.

1. Invite the participants to gather for prayer, facing the wall that has been created with the qualities and actions of Jesus and their own names. Differentiate the sides of the room so that the young people know if they are on the left side or the right side. Give each participant a copy of handout 11 as well as a hymnal.

2. Begin the prayer with the sign of the cross, and then lead the participants in singing the gathering song you have selected.

3. Offer this opening prayer:

- Almighty God, you gave us your Son, Jesus, to show us what it means to lead and serve others. He washed the feet of his friends and never turned down anyone in need. We ask you to help us to be people who take our call to leadership seriously. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

4. Direct the volunteer to proclaim the Scripture reading. Allow a moment for quiet reflection. Then invite the participants to pray the response together as noted on the handout.

5. Lead the group in a blessing of one another. Invite the participants on the left side of the room to stand and extend their hands over their peers on the right side of the room. Read the five lines of blessing from the handout, one line at a time as noted, asking the participants to repeat each line after you. Then tell those on the left to sit down and those on the right to stand, and repeat the process.

6. Invite the participants to join in singing the closing song.



Options and Actions

- **Want ads.** Create a list of leadership opportunities available in your community, in local schools, or in the parish. Make sure that some of the opportunities are unofficial roles of service (for example, befriending people who are alone at school, volunteering at a nursing home, and helping an older neighbor). Urge the young people to think about ways they can use their gifts in making a difference.
- **Thank-you notes.** Ask the participants to list five people they know who exemplify one or more of Jesus' leadership styles or qualities. Ask them to write those people each a thank-you note in the coming weeks. Suggest the following format for the body of the note: "In my youth ministry program, I have been studying Jesus as a leader. One of the leadership qualities I see Jesus possessing is _____. I have noticed this quality in you when you _____. Thank you for being an example of Christian leadership. I too will try to follow Jesus, by _____."

Leading As Jesus Did

Scripture reading	Leadership qualities	Jesus as leader	Christian leaders
Matthew 21:12–17 (Jesus cleanses the temple.)	Principle centered	A person of principle	Lead lives based on the values and beliefs that they embrace: walk the talk
John 2:1–11 (The wedding at Cana)	Incorruptible	A person of integrity	Demonstrate integrity by being true to values in word and action
Matthew 5:1–12 (The Beatitudes)	Vision oriented	A visionary	Establish a vision that gives direction to all members
Matthew 22:15–22 (A question about paying taxes)	Proactive	A proactive person	Hold values that determine how they will act; do not react out of feelings and situations
Matthew 15:32–39 (Feeding the four thousand)	Compassionate	A person of compassion	Respond to the needs and pains of others
John 8:1–11 (A woman caught in adultery)	Forgiving	A forgiver of past transgressions	Forgive unconditionally while pointing to the future
Luke 10:38–42 (Jesus visits Martha and Mary.)	Listening	A listener	Listen to people and really try to hear their issues, concerns, and feelings
Mark 2:1–12 (Jesus heals a person who is paralyzed.)	Interdependent	Interdependent with God and others	Rely on God; rely on the gifts of the community to complement personal gifts and weaknesses
Matthew 10:5–15 (The mission of the Twelve)	Empowering	Empowering of others	Share power; know that God has the power; bring out the best in others; equip others with the skills needed to contribute
John 13:1–8,12–15 (Jesus washes the disciples' feet.)	Serving others	A servant-leader	Meet the needs of the people they lead; don't ask others to do what they themselves are not willing to do

Jesus as Leader

1. What did Jesus do or say in the passage?

2. How did the people in the story react to Jesus?

3. What qualities in Jesus might have amazed or challenged the people in the story?

Hearing the Call to Lead

Gather

Gathering Song

Opening Prayer

Listen

Scripture Reading

Jeremiah was a prophet called by God to challenge the Israelites to healthy and holy living. His prophecies brought hope to the people. Jeremiah was surprised that God called him to leadership. Yet Jeremiah followed through with God's desire for him and became a prophet leader during a time of trial. Listen to a reading from the Book of Jeremiah.

Read Jeremiah 1:4–8.

Respond

Right: Jesus, you taught us the meaning of leadership when you washed the feet of your friends.

Response (all): May we lead and love as you did.

Left: Jesus, you never turned down a request for help or healing.

Response (all): May we lead and love as you did.

Right: Jesus, you accepted all people and challenged them to be their best selves.

Response (all): May we lead and love as you did.

Left: Jesus, you call us as Christian leaders to meet the needs of our families, our friends, and our communities.

Response (all): May we lead and love as you did.

Send Forth

Blessing of Leaders

God, we call upon you to bless the work of these hands, these hearts,
and these minds.

Bless in a special way our friends who have been called to leadership.
Give them courage to act with justice, and make decisions for the good
of all.

Bless each one of them with your love and presence.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Closing Song

(This prayer service is adapted from *Give Your Gifts: The Prayer Services*, by Linda M. Baltikas and Robert W. Piercy [Chicago: GIA Publications, 1999], pages 40–42. Copyright © 1999 by GIA Publications, Inc., Chicago, IL. All rights reserved. Used with permission.)