

Catholic Exchange and American Family Media

PRESENT

CHAMPIONS OF FAITH

BASEBALL EDITION



LET'S
PLAY
BALL!

ELEMENTARY



RETREAT

Mini Faith Sessions for Youth Corresponding to *Champions of Faith: Baseball Edition*

Champions of Faith: Baseball Edition is a powerful film that showcases the faith of Major League Baseball's premiere players and coaches. Contained here are directions for easy-to-follow, 60 minute 'mini-sessions' corresponding to clips in the film. These are designed for elementary school children.

Let's Play Ball!

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For the Teacher/ Facilitator: *Champions of Faith: Baseball Edition* is a powerful film that showcases the faith of Major League Baseball's premiere players and coaches. Contained here are directions for easy-to-follow, 60 minute 'mini-sessions' corresponding to clips in the film. These are designed for elementary school children.

Introduction: Just like baseball, each of these mini-sessions has three bases and a home plate. Before taking the field, begin with a prayer (remember to pray slowly and reflectively):

Champions of Faith Prayer:

Lord Jesus, we were created in Your Image. Our lives have a big purpose. You've called each of us to play in *The Big Game*. We know this will not be easy. The other team knows us well, and they do not want us to win. There are many curve balls coming our way. Many times we will swing and miss. Many times we will drop the ball. But You do not abandon us. We are not alone. You are our Coach to help us along the way. We ask right now that You be with us in this Big Game of Life. That we know how much You love us, God. Keep our hearts fixed on the ultimate Home Run. We ask this in Your Name. Amen.

Lesson 1: Welcome to The Big Game (Corresponding to Title 1: "Baseball: A Metaphor for Life")

Before beginning the lesson review the corresponding DVD clip and description in the companion guide.

Pray the Champions of Faith Prayer (above)

Using the metaphor of baseball, the purpose of this lesson is to open up the children's hearts and minds to the ultimate questions in *The Big Game* of life.

First Base: Questions for group conversation, to get the game rolling. Write these questions on a board, or have them on a sheet of paper. Do not suggest answers--they will appear at Third Base. At this stage the questions should get the children thinking and talking. (10 - 15 minutes)

- 1) Why are you alive?
- 2) What field are you called to play on? What is your position on the field?
- 3) Who is your Owner or Coach? Do you have one?
- 4) In *The Big Game* of life, who is your team?
- 5) What team do you play against?

Second Base: Clip. Play the clip from the corresponding title in *Champions of Faith: Baseball Edition* (5 minutes)

Third Base: Conversation. Return to the questions from First Base to guide the conversation about the clip everyone has just watched. (25 minutes)

General Questions:

1) Why are you alive?

Points: We were purposefully designed by God (Ps. 139), to know Him, love Him and serve Him in this world so we can be happy with Him in the next (Baltimore Catechism).

2) What field are you called to play on? What is your position on the field?

Points: Everyone has a certain role to play as a student, a son or daughter and a friend. Each of us has been given a set of gifts and talents. We work best when we work together as one team.

(1 Cor. 12:20).

3) Who is your Owner or the Leader of your life? Do you have one?

Points: An owner or leader is someone who gives our lives purpose and meaning. Another word for owner or leader is "lord." Everyone has a "lord," the only question is "who" or "what." Encourage the children to consider who or what their lord is, and where their particular lord is leading them.

4) In *The Big Game* of life, who is your team?

Points: We are called to strengthen one another in Jesus Christ. Family is the main team. Everyone here is a team. The ultimate goal is heaven. Think about how your friends help you win in *The Big Game*. How do you help others win in *The Big Game*?

5) Who or what is the opposing team?

Points: A famous writer, C.S. Lewis, said that Satan's greatest trick is making people think he doesn't exist. Have a conversation about the devil—who or what demons are, what they can or can't do. It is helpful to ask the children to read a book that features the struggle between good and evil.

Home Plate: Commitments.

Create a simple scorecard suitable for 2nd-5th graders, that lists four commitments and six columns to chart progress.

Design a "Scorecard" and print out one copy for participant. This can be a simple sheet of paper that reads "Scorecard" at the top, with the various commitments in the left column, followed by six columns for ranking fulfillment of those commitments on a baseball-inspired scale: "Struck Out," "Single," "Double," "Triple," "Home Run" and "Grand Slam." Instruct them to keep the Scorecard by their bed and fill it out every night for two weeks. They earn a "Grand Slam" ranking only if they nailed their commitment perfectly, and helped at least one other person in the class do the same. Explain this.

Commitments

1) I will talk with someone about our ultimate purpose.

(Remember to speak to a new person every day).

2) I will tell God that He is my owner, and that I will follow Him.

3) I will choose a good team.

(The people you choose to hang around with today are your team).

4) I will be a good teammate.