



LEADER GUIDE



Faith and Family Life
Catholic Ministries

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AN INVITATION

You have been invited to accompany families in an introductory opportunity to hear and experience the Gospel. Many people you minister to have not yet experienced faith as good news and have come to see religion as judgmental, irrelevant, and distant. The *Seek* experience invites families to personally encounter God's love, mercy, and direction for their lives.

As we accompany families in this “new start” let us be mindful of the patience and understanding Jesus offered to those he ministered to as they began to open their hearts and minds to his message. May this *Seek* resource help you draw them into the arms of the Father.

In the kerygma, the active figure is the Lord Jesus, who manifests himself in the testimony of the one who proclaims him; the life of the witness who has experienced salvation therefore becomes that which touches and moves the hearer. (DC 58)

The centrality of the kerygma for the proclamation leads to several guidelines for catechesis as well: “it has to express God’s saving love which precedes any moral and religious obligation on our part; it should not impose the truth but appeal to freedom; it should be marked by joy, encouragement, liveliness and a harmonious balance which will not reduce preaching to a few doctrines which are at times more philosophical than evangelical.” (DC 59)

THE KERYGMA

Seek is a kerygmatic experience with 3 tracks: children, teens, and parents, with age appropriate content for each. Over the course of 4 at-church Sessions families will be invited on a journey to discover anew the good news of our faith, by reflecting on the following themes.



COMMUNITY

Establish small groups and build trust by getting to know one another.



CREATION

We are made good by God our Father.



REDEMPTION

We have sinned and God sent his Son, Jesus to save us.



RELATIONSHIP

We are called to live for God who gives us the Holy Spirit and the Church.

SESSIONS

Seek for Children is a kerygmatic VBS style experience designed for early elementary school aged children (grades 1-4) to encounter the Gospel. Through songs, activities, and video teachings, children will get to know a God who is love and be given a shared vocabulary to engage in conversations of faith with their parents.

Seek for Teens is a kerygmatic youth night style experience designed for junior high and high school aged teens to encounter the Gospel. Through games, discussions, witness sharings, and teachings, teens will get to know a God who is love and be given a shared vocabulary to engage in conversations of faith with their parents.

Seek for Parents is a kerygmatic small group experience designed for parents to encounter the Gospel. Through discussions, activities, reflections, witness sharings, and teachings, parents will get to know a God who is love and be given a shared vocabulary to engage in conversations of faith with their children.

A FEW TIPS

- Limited facility space may be a challenge. The parent Sessions can be done together in a large group in one room or in many small groups in different rooms. You may all be able to gather in the church for the closing prayer experiences.
- Snacks and hospitality are always appreciated by both parents and children. You may consider serving snacks at the end of the event to encourage families to stay and visit with one another. The snack table can also be a creative part of the Session. Set up a simple and fun snack area with the sign “God’s love is a buffet!” with an ice cream sundae bar. Include different ice creams, toppings, and syrups. You may also consider “Dip into God’s Goodness” and offer veggie sticks with ranch dressing or “More and S’more of God’s Blessings” with cups filled with mini marshmallows, chocolate chips, and teddy grahams.
- *Seek* was designed to be run once a month for 4 months. There has been good success in running it every 2 week over 2 months, which keeps the momentum up. Alternately, it can be run each week for a month or 4 nights in row, however it will work best for your community. We do not recommend running all the Sessions in 1 day as the content needs time to be integrated and the community time to develop.

SEEK GENERAL

- It can also be run multiple times a year or multiple nights to be available to families when it is best for them.
- *Seek* can also be used as a VBS camp over the summer in the evenings.
- Less is usually more, especially in the beginning. Try your best to make this a quality experience for the families. You will earn their trust, making it easier to guide them in the direction you are leading.
- Even with plenty of reminders, participants may forget their supplies or Guide Books. You may choose to purchase a few extra supplies to have on hand.
- We currently do not have a *Seek* resource for older children in grades 5-6. We recommended inviting them to help serve as small group leaders for the younger children. They will still experience all of the content while not feeling too young for the approach.

SESSIONS FOR PARENTS

Seek for Parents includes 4 Sessions focusing on the themes of the kerygma. Each Session includes an opening prayer, check-in, witness, teaching, reflection, sharing, and closing prayer experience with the children or teens. You will need a facilitator or MC to lead the Session from the front.

You will also need a leader for each of the small groups of parents to help facilitate the experience. This could be a companion, catechist, parent, etc. We suggest 6-8 parents per table or small group. These groups should remain consistent throughout the *Seek* experience. If parents will be continuing in small groups throughout their faith formation journey, this is the perfect time to assign them to their groups with their companion that will accompany them throughout.

You will need to purchase a yearly license for the Content along with a Guide Book for each parent or the Printable Guide Book license to accompany the experiences that you will need to print. The content for the Sessions will be provided to you after you purchase *Seek for Parents* Content. Videos are available for leading the entire Session with parents and children, with the exception of the closing prayer in Session 4. They will need to be started and stopped as needed. Make yourself familiar with it beforehand, so everything runs smoothly. You also can make this into an entirely live presentation, using the videos ahead of time to help set you up for the Sessions. A leader script for the Sessions is also available for your use. We recommend reviewing the content in the videos and script early on to decide which pieces you will play from the video and which parts you will do live. Feel free to break the video up. Maybe you want to introduce some pieces yourself and use the video for others. It is most important to have local witnesses that connect with the daily realities of your parents.

Seek for Parents is meant to take place in a separate space from *Seek for Children* or *Teens* and conclude together for the closing prayer experience.

TIME FRAME

Seek Sessions are designed to last 90 minutes. You may want to plan for 2-hours, to include time to gather, check-in, and enjoy fellowship. Try to start and stop on time to respect the family's schedules. You know your families best, feel free to adjust and adapt the timelines given.

GATHER

Begin each Session with a facilitator or MC who introduces and helps facilitate the event. Make sure they are well prepared and very familiar with the schedule. This person will move the Session along and add any instructions and anecdotes. Their interaction with the parents should always be positive, authentic, encouraging, and supportive. It is crucial to choose the right person for this important role. Try to use someone the parents can easily relate to. The small group leaders should also be given the Small Group Leader Guide Book, delivered with the Content, to help facilitate the Sessions at the group level.

CHECK-IN

This is a tool to get the parents talking. The question asked is one that is simple to answer and is a chance for each person's voice to be heard. The answers discussed also begin to develop a shared narrative for the group.

ACTIVITY

Each Session has an experiential activity. This activity is another way to teach, and is meant to lead parents into reflection, connecting with their personal experience. Elements of the activities are located in their Guide Books. Make sure these are on hand. If not, have paper and pens available so parents can still participate. Some activities will need additional supplies. A list can be found in the Session specific Content.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION TIME

Small group discussion time is an opportunity for parents to learn from one another. There is much wisdom around a table full of parents. Facilitators are key in getting that wisdom shared.

WITNESS

Witness talks are a chance for parents to hear from other parents on a similar journey. The people sharing will make the teaching and theme for the Session personal. These small talks are also meant to get parents thinking about their own lives. A person's testimony can be the key to unlocking someone else's. As they hear from another, they naturally begin to reflect within themselves. These should be less than 5 minutes in length. You can use the witness videos provided, or find witnesses from your own community to share in a similar way.

TEACHING

A teaching is provided for each Session that connects the activity, discussion, and witness to an essential element of the kerygma that is intended to be delivered that day.

CLOSING PRAYER EXPERIENCE

The closing prayer for each Session will be done with parents and children or teens together. Make sure to coordinate the exact time children will return to the space. For many parents this may be the first time praying in this way with their child. These beginnings will help them feel more comfortable in a faith leadership role. Your modeling is so important!

PARENT INVENTORY

A good way to follow up the *Seek* for Parents experience is to share with them the *Parent Inventory*, included at the end of the *Seek* for Parents Content. This will help them reflect on and embrace their role as the primary catechists of their children. You can email this PDF to the parents and also include a survey to welcome feedback from the parents about their experience with *Seek*.

SESSIONS FOR CHILDREN

Seek for Children includes 4 different Sessions. Each Session begins with singing and doing the hand motions to the theme song, playing a game, watching a themed introduction video, doing an activity, watching a teaching video, participating in a closing prayer experience with parents, and extending the experience through an at-home activity. You will need a main facilitator or MC to welcome children, lead the game, and guide the overall experience. You will also need small group leaders that can help lead hand movements, activities, and keep the small groups on task. You will need to purchase a yearly license for the Content along with a Backpack for each child or the Printable Guide Book license, that you will need to print, to accompany the experiences. The content for the Sessions and the Small Group Leader Adventure Guide Book will be provided to you after you purchase *Seek for Children* Content. For small groups: We suggest placing them in groups of 6-8 children of a similar age. They can also be grouped to mirror their parents groupings. You can utilize older children as group leaders or helpers.

TIME FRAME

Seek Sessions are designed to last 90 minutes. You may want to plan for 2-hours, to include time to gather, check-in, and enjoy fellowship. Try to start and stop on time to respect the family's schedules. You know your families best, feel free to adjust and adapt the timelines given.

THEME SONG

Each Session begins with singing and doing the hand motions to the theme song. This also functions as the opening prayer. It is important to lead the hand motions from the front. A video to teach your leaders the hand movements is available with the video content. Be sure to refresh by watching and practicing the hand motions before each Session. The theme song can be found on Spotify and other places music is found. Title: *Seek*, Artist: Faith and Family Life Catholic Ministries. ([Theme Song Link](#))

GAME

This is a fun way to engage the children, by moving around and inciting a little friendly competition. Instructions for the games can be found in the Content.

INTRODUCTION

This short clip is designed to introduce the theme for the day and engage the imagination.

ACTIVITY

Each Session has an experiential activity. This activity is another way to teach, and is meant to lead the children into reflection, connecting with their personal experience. Elements of the activities are located in their Guide Books. Make sure these are on hand. Some activities will need additional supplies. A list can be found in the Session specific Content.

TEACHING

A video teaching is provided for each Session that connects the activity to an essential element of the kerygma that is intended to be delivered that day. At the end of each teaching the children will receive an adventure badge with the theme from the Session to attach to their bags.

CLOSING PRAYER EXPERIENCE

The closing prayer for each Session will be done with parents and children together. Make sure to coordinate the exact time the children will unite with their parents. For many children, this may be the first time praying with their parents in this way. Instructions for this can be found in the *Seek for Parent/Children* Content.

SESSIONS FOR TEENS

Seek for Teens includes 4 different Sessions. Each Session begins with a game, followed by an opening prayer, check-in, activity, discussion, witness talk, teaching, and discussion. Each Session then closes with a prayer experience with parents and an at-home activity that extends the experience. You will need to purchase a yearly license for the Content along with the Printable Guide Book license, that you will need to print, to accompany the experiences. The content for the Sessions and the Small Group Leader Guide Book will be provided to you after you purchase *Seek for Teens* Content. You will need a main facilitator to guide the overall experience using the leader script provided. You will also need small group leaders that can facilitate activities, guide discussions, and keep the small groups on task. You can utilize older teens as group leaders or helpers. A witness is needed for each Session to help bridge the teens' experience with the gift of our faith. We suggest placing teens in groups of 6-8 people of a similar age. They can also be grouped to mirror the groupings their parent's are in.

TIME FRAME

Seek Sessions are designed to last 90 minutes. You may want to plan for 2-hours, to include time to gather, check-in, and enjoy fellowship. Try to start and stop on time to respect the family's schedules. You know your families best, feel free to adjust and adapt the timelines given.

GAME

Begin each Session with the Chair Game. This is a fun way to engage the teens by moving around and inciting a little friendly competition. Instructions for this game can be found in the Content.

PRAYER

After the game, place the teens in their small groups and begin with the prayer provided in the content that helps to focus in on the theme of the day.

CHECK-IN

This is a tool to get the teens talking. The question asked is one that is simple to answer and is a chance for each person's voice to be heard. The answers discussed also begin to develop a shared narrative for the group.

ACTIVITY

Each Session has an experiential activity. This activity is another way to teach, and is meant to lead teens into reflection, connecting with their personal experience. Elements of the activities are located in their Guide Books. Make sure these are on hand. Some activities will need additional supplies. A list can be found in the Session specific Content.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION TIME

Small group discussion time is an opportunity for teens to learn from one another. There is much wisdom around a table full of teens. Facilitators are key in facilitating these conversations. There are two discussion times, one after the activity and one after the teaching.

WITNESS

Witness talks are a chance for teens to hear from other teens or adults on a similar journey. The people sharing will make the teaching and theme for the Session personal. These small talks are also meant to get teens thinking about their own lives. A person's testimony can be the key to unlocking someone else's. As they hear from another, they naturally begin to reflect within themselves. You will need to find and coach a witness for each Session. These should be no longer than 5 minutes. You can find the notes to direct the focus of the witness below in the Session specific notes.

TEACHING

A teaching is provided for each Session that connects the activity, discussion, and witness to an essential element of the kerygma that is intended to be delivered that day. We recommend using the text found in the Content as a guide. Make it your own by adding stories and language relevant to the teens in your group.

CLOSING PRAYER EXPERIENCE

The closing prayer for each Session will be done with parents and teens together. Make sure to coordinate the exact time teens will unite with their parents. For many teens, this may be the first time praying with their parents in this way. Instructions for this can be found in the *Seek* for Parents/Teens Content.