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| **Name:****Grade:****Date:** | **Life Teen** **Sunday,** **The Foremost:** (Inspired) The Enduring Wisdom of St. Paul |

**Directions**

* **Make-up work must be completed before the next Life Night.** It should not take you more than 90 minutes to complete.
* **Go to File → Make a copy. Name the file 4-30-2022, Your First and Last Name.**
* Make-up work will require you to research answers, please only use credible Catholic sources, **Wikipedia will not be accepted.**
* You must cite your sources. To do this, just copy and paste the URL after your answer.
* You may not copy and paste directly from any website, it must be in your own words, (unless stated otherwise).
* **All questions or activities are in bold and highlighted.**
* **All your answers should not be in bold**
* **When you are finished, email your assignment to Rachael Kriger:** **rkriger@romeroparish.org****. Please submit with your FIRST NAME-LAST NAME-LifeTeen-4-30-22 . Please do not send it as an attachment on Flocknote, I do not receive it that way!**

**Homework Breakdown**

1. Mandatory Activity
2. Reading
3. Written Questions
4. Video
5. Challenge of the Week

**1. Mandatory Activity (Novena for Confirmation)**

**Participate in the “A Novena to the Holy Spirit to Prepare for Confirmation” Found in Your Confirmation Packets. For reference, it is attached to the Oscar Romero Confirmation Website.**

**Link:** [**https://romeroparish.org/confirmation**](https://romeroparish.org/confirmation)

**Please download it and pray the Novena as you prepare for Confirmation! The Novena begins 10 days before Confirmation, so start it on May 14, 2023!**

**2. Reading
Inspired: The Enduring Wisdom of St. Paul**

Imagine that one thousand years from now, future archeologists discover our text messages and emails. They find out we were ancient believers in Jesus Christ, and they start reading our messages in churches all around the world to inspire and instruct others. That would be pretty wild.

That is similar to what happened to St. Paul. Throughout his missionary journeys, and especially during his numerous times in prison, he wrote letters to church communities that he started in order to help them with issues that had arisen and to encourage them to keep the faith.

He wrote Ephesians to the Church in Ephesus, which is in modern day Turkey, where he had lived for over two years and founded a Christian community there. He wrote to those who sought out his advice and to Christian leaders, offering advice on how to live and lead according to the teachings of Jesus. His letters were circulated, copied, preserved, and read in the early Christian communities to help instruct others how to follow Jesus. (Acts 19:8-10).

They were so impactful and inspired by the Holy Spirit that the Church included them when they assembled the New Testament. As many as fourteen letters, also called epistles, are traditionally attributed to St. Paul, comprising half of the books in the New Testament. Although St. Paul wrote these letters to address specific problems that the local church communities were facing, they contain wisdom and practical advice that is still relevant for us today. (2 Timothy 3:15-17, Hebrews 4:12).

**The Wisdom of Paul**

A central theme in Paul’s letters is the importance of the Resurrection of Jesus. If Jesus really lived, died, and rose from the dead, something no one in human history had ever done before nor since, then that changes everything. It proves that Jesus is who He said He was: the Son of God. If there was no Resurrection, then Paul says our preaching is in vain, our faith is empty, and we are still stuck in our sins. That is how central and important the Resurrection is, and it is something Paul emphasizes in nearly all of his letters, some of which were written before the Gospels. (1 Corinthians 15:1-19, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14).

Saint Paul also wrote frequently about Christian leadership and what characteristics should be expected of those who teach the faith. He spoke often of the necessity for those in leadership to be morally upright, especially in their business affairs and in the area of sexual morality. In today’s world of scandal, fraud, broken relationships, greed, and even horrific abuse within the Church, St. Paul’s wisdom still rings true and calls us to live virtuously. (Acts 6:1-6, 1 Corinthians 6:9-20, 1 Timothy 3:1-13, 2 Timothy 2:1- 7, Titus 1:5-9).

Paul wrote as a Jewish Christian who became the self-named apostle to the Gentiles. He experienced the cultural division and hatred between Jews and Gentiles firsthand, even after they had converted to Christianity. As a result, Paul often appealed to unity and renounced division within the Church. He wrote that salvation in Jesus was for all people, that God shows no partiality or favoritism, and that all are one in Christ. We all have different gifts and backgrounds, but all of us are needed and valued parts of the Body of Christ.

There is not one way to follow Jesus, to be holy, or to become a saint. We all have unique ways we can make a difference in the world and build up the Kingdom of God. The world “catholic” means “universal.” In other words, to be Catholic means that everyone is welcome, needed, valued, and belongs. Saint Paul’s words are sorely needed today in the midst of so much political and ideological division to remind us that we are called to unity. (Romans 2:11, 11:13; 1 Corinthians 1:10- 17, 12:1-26; Galatians 3:27-29).

**His Legacy Lives On**

By prayerfully reflecting on the letters of St. Paul and his legacy, we can look to his wisdom to help us follow Jesus faithfully and continue his mission of sharing the Gospel to the ends of the Earth. (Matthew 28:16-20; Acts 1:8, 13:47).

We can live in the truth of the Resurrection, knowing that Jesus is Lord and saved us from sin and death. In moments of doubt, we can return to the central truth that Jesus rose from the dead and be reassured that our faith is not in vain. Saint Paul reminds us that this foundational mystery of our faith should be constantly proclaimed and can be the source of our joy.

We can examine the ways we lead, mentor, and serve as an example for our siblings, close friends, or classmates (Saint Paul embodied this in his more personal letters to Sts. Timothy and Titus). We are called to take these roles seriously and to live virtuously, but we are also called to humbly admit our shortcomings when we fail and ask for forgiveness, striving for virtue as St. Paul reminded us in his letter to the Colossians.

One of the things Jesus criticized and spoke out against were the instances of hypocrisy, particularly of the religious leaders of His time. In order to be authentic leaders, we need to strive to follow the Lord faithfully and be constantly willing to acknowledge our imperfections and need for improvement. (Matthew 23).

As walking symbols of Christ, we should uphold the dignity of all people as our brothers and sisters in the Lord. We must also be wary of ways we are prone or tempted to fall into immorality as we see St. Paul warn in his letter to the Corinthians. We can be the unfortunate cause for scandal to others when our lives and actions do not match the things we claim to believe. This can easily cause others to become disillusioned with faith and even drive people away from the Church because of the hurt our mistakes can cause.

Saint Paul’s wisdom reminds us that Christians are to be advocates for unity and justice. If our words or actions exclude, judge, or marginalize others, then we are doing something wrong.

The legacy of St. Paul can also help us consider our own legacy to live a life of love. We can consider the sort of example we will leave behind for others and seek to live in such a way that inspires others to fall in love with Jesus and follow him as disciples in the world today.

– End of Reading --

**3. Written Questions**

**Reference, on the next page, the Pauline Letters Handout. Read what is written about each letter, asking the Holy Spirit to guide you in choosing which of the letters would speak to you the most.**

Saint Paul wrote to a multitude of different communities. Each one of these groups were in a different place in their faith and were facing different needs and challenges. Because of this, St. Paul’s writings cover a wide range of areas. His writings can often feel overwhelming to just open and read on our own. Tonight, we would like to help make this easier for all of us. We will be given a short summary of what some of the letters of St. Paul are like. Take a moment and sit with these descriptions. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you and choose which one of these letters stands out to you the most.

**After reading the sheet, answer the following questions:**

**Q1: What ways have people encouraged you the most?**

**Q2: What reason do you think you were drawn to the letter that you chose?**

**Q3: How do you think a letter like this could have helped a community? How do you see the lesson applying to us in a modern community?**

**Q4: If you were given the ability to ask Saint Paul to write another letter, what would you ask him to write about?**

**HANDOUT**

**INSPIRED**

**The Pauline Letters**

• Romans - Paul describing the Gospels in his words and encouraging the Romans in how to react now that they have learned about Jesus. It is a deep and profound letter that gives the Church a new vocabulary on grace and salvation. It provided a framework for understanding the faith two thousand years ago that we still use today. Romans can be one of St. Paul’s more challenging letters but sets up each that follows.

**• 1 and 2 Corinthians** - These letters are sent to an early church that had some struggles understanding why Christians needed to believe and act certain ways. Paul writes to the people of Corinth as they struggle to figure out following Jesus from many different kinds of backgrounds and belief systems. The people of Corinth must have had their struggles with morality, so Paul helps clear up a lot of lines that were blurry. This letter is good for those who are trying to understand some of the morality standards we have as Christians.

**• Galatians** - Somewhere, at some point, the Galatians were misdirected. They were given a focus more on the laws set by Moses and pulled away from God’s grace and the gift that Jesus gave us. Paul writes passionately here about the freedom we are given in Jesus. A great read for someone who might be struggling to understand what this freedom means.

**• Ephesians** - In this letter Paul is guiding this group to walk closer to Jesus. He speaks a lot about grace and peace. This is a good read for a person who is really trying to understand what it means to be a Christian and how to live a life in Christ.

**• Philippians** - Paul writes this letter in prison, but it is full of joy and excitement. He writes to the Philippeans to encourage them. This is a great letter for someone who wants an example of how to make it through a challenging time while holding onto Jesus and anyone wanting to learn how to keep a Christ-like attitude in any situation.

**• 1 and 2 Thessalonians** - These letters are written to a church that is holding up well in their faith but is struggling with different types of pain, suffering, and persecution. Paul writes encouraging words to help these people stay strong. These letters are great for those facing hardships, especially hardships from following Jesus.

INSPIRED

**4. Video**

**Your journey is not just over after you make your Confirmation. In fact, as a Confirmed Catholic, you’re obligated, by the Roman Catholic Law, to attend Mass every Sunday.**

**Please watch the following video. If you cannot click the link either search for the title:**

**“Do I Have to Go to Mass? Sunday Obligation Explained.”**

**Link:** [**https://youtu.be/gHNOaJMR\_BA**](https://youtu.be/gHNOaJMR_BA)

**5. Challenge of the Week**

**Your Challenge is the Activity: the Novena ahead of Confirmation! Please see the following pages for it!**

**Homework is Due on Sunday, May 21, 2023.**

**We do not have class this day, but you must have all your work completed by this day ahead of Confirmation.**

**Remember, Confirmation practice is May 23, 2023, from 7 p.m. to about 9 p.m. at St. Patrick’s Church. Please be on time and prompt with your sponsor! If your sponsor cannot make it, your parent can fill in for the practice.**

**For Confirmation: May 24, 2023. 7 PM.**

**Please arrive by 6 PM at St. Patrick’s and meet in the Cafeteria. You and your sponsor. Your family will go to the church to sit. There is no reserved family seating.**

**A Novena to the Holy Spirit to Prepare for Confirmation**

The idea of a novena – nine days of prayer – began with the time period between Jesus’s Ascension and Pentecost. In that time, the disciples were hiding, out of fear, trying to figure out what to do next, but they also gathered in prayer. The coming of the Holy Spirit, and the Lord promised, answered their prayers on the tenth day. Filled with power of the Spirit and given its gifts, they began to witness to the Lord’s death and resurrection both near and far.

***Begin this novena 10 days before Confirmation Day…***

***Begin each day by reciting the following prayer…***

Holy Spirit, Divine Counselor! I adore you as my True God. I give you praise with the angels and saints. I offer you my whole heart and give you thanks for all you have given me. You shower your gifts on all the faithful. I ask you to visit me with your grace and your love as I prepare to be sealed with your power at Confirmation. Come, O Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle them with the fire of you love.

**Day 1**

Lord, send out your Spirit and renew the face of the earth. Give us wisdom that Your will may be clear to us and that we may accept it. Grant us the gift of counsel that we may always perceive what is right. Strengthen us that we may always be capable of fulfilling Your will. May You reconcile all divisions in the friendships, families, nations, and in Your Church. May the gift of knowledge help us work for reconciliation and peace.

**Practice:** Seek forgiveness when necessary. Pray for peace in a particular part of the world.

**Day 2**

O Holy Spirit, make me faithful in every thought, and grant that I may always listen to Your voice, and watch for Your light, and follow Your gracious inspirations. Come, Holy Spirit, shine on us with the radiance of Your love. May You help us to rejoice in the countless blessings that God has given us and teach us to do God’s will. May Your wisdom guide us and all God’s people.

**Practice**: Spend extra time in silent prayer to talk and listen to the Spirit in your heart.

**Day 3**

You have called me to be a member of the Church, the Body of Christ, and to be a temple of the Holy Spirit. I ask You to give me these gifts: wisdom to seek You, understanding and knowledge of You, counsel to recognize You, the strength and the faith to hold fast to You, and the awe that I may honor You. Make me a true disciple of Christ. Who was anointed by the Spirit to bring us Good News. May I act with justice, see Christ in the face of the poor, and pray for those who mourn.

**Practice**: Earn or set aside money for a charitable cause.

**Day 4**

Loving God, by the light of the Holy Spirit, You instructed the hearts of the faithful. Give us, by the light of the same Spirit, a love for what is right and just. May the Holy Spirit fill our hearts with love for You and respect for all of Your creation. Give us the gift of reverence for You and for all You have made.

**Practice**: Use everything with care and gratitude today.

**Day 5**

Come, O Spirit of holiness from the glory of heaven and send forth the radiance of Your light. Father of all the poor, light and peace of our hearts, come with Your countless gifts. May Your gift of understanding enlighten us to grasp better Christ’s love for us and show us how to love others as He loves us. May we show our love by serving our brothers and sisters.

**Practice**: Do something nice for someone today, and do not let the person know you did it. (Think of random acts of kindness)

**Day 6**

Gracious God, I ask You to send the Holy Spirit, as You have promised. May Your Spirit remind me when I forget You and the path You set before me. May the Spirit help me to remember Your goodness, Your wisdom, and Your unfailing mercy. Give me a new heart and place Your Spirit with me.

**Practice**: Do not complain but speak positively.

**Day 7**

Come Holy Spirit, creator of all things. Come visit our hearts with Your power. Fill the hearts You created with Your grace. You are the source of life, light, and love, and all that is good. Join us all together as Your sons and daughters.

**Practice**: Be kind to someone with whom you have had a disagreement.

**Day 8**

O Holy Spirit, life and light of the Church, give us thoughts higher than our own thoughts, and prayers better than our own prayers, and powers beyond our own powers, that we may love and live, imitating Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. May the gifts of wonder and awe enable us to reject sin and may the Spirit of the Lord live in us as His temple.

**Practice**: Keep God in mind as you make decisions throughout the day.

**Day 9**

Holy Spirit, grant me sight to see the wondrous promise of Your love, insight to see my own weaknesses, and the grace to help for Your help and mercy. As I come to my own Confirmation, may I be filled with zeal to proclaim the Gospel in joy and strength.

**Practice**: Look on others in your life as gifts and graces of the God who loves you.