



**SERVES:
PARISH**

**TIME:
LENT**

AGAINST THE GRAIN

PRESENTING THE NEED TO MY TEAM

- When you take a piece of rough wood, you can slide your hand smoothly in one direction but every inch you move your hand the opposite way is difficult and causes splinters. This is rubbing against the grain. So often being faithful in today's world appears this difficult. If you want to make great works of art with wood though, sometimes you need to go against the grain.
- 2000 years ago Jesus walked directly against the grain. He easily could have walked with the Pharisees in hypocrisy, or with the Romans in indulging his senses. He completed his walk against the grain with the rough hewn wood pressing against his shoulder as he ascended the hill of execution, and as he raised himself, pushing against the grain, to speak his final words before he breathed his last.
- Since he walked so strongly against the grain, he can strengthen us in our challenging walk as faithful Christians. If your family and friends hear of his final pressing against the grain they will have the strength to walk against it themselves.

JESUS PUSHED HIMSELF UP, AGAINST THE GRAIN OF THE WOOD ON THE CROSS

OUR CALL TO SERVE

We can organize a mini-retreat for kids in the parish this Lent, to tell them about Jesus last hours.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

PROJECT OVERVIEW

WEEK	STEPS	QUESTION OF THE WEEK
1	<p>Schedule: Set a date (usually an evening or a Saturday morning) and get permission to use the church (from the Pastor) or other facility. You should try to get the Pastor or another priest to say Mass at the end of the retreat.</p>	
2	<p>Roles: You need to determine who will do want for the retreat. Usually some team members do the talks (1 each) and others prepare other things (see responsibilities). To do this you need to determine your audience (your friends, younger kids, whole families, or some combination).</p>	
3	<p>Set Price: You need to make a budget and set the price for the retreat. You can avoid charging if you will charge for food or get someone to donate enough money to cover expenses.</p> <p>Flyer/Posters: Make a flyer or posters to promote the retreat. Also notify the parish so they can promote in the bulletin 2 weeks leading up to the event (in week 8). Social media promotion is also good.</p>	
4	<p>Promotion: Begin promoting the retreat in the parish, school and elsewhere. Focus on getting it mentioned this week and getting key people signed up by personally having team members call them.</p>	

AGAINST THE
GRAIN





AGAINST THE GRAIN

WEEK	STEPS	QUESTION OF THE WEEK
5	<p>Promotion: Begin promoting the retreat in the parish, school and elsewhere. Focus on getting it mentioned this week and getting key people signed up by personally having team members call them.</p> <p>Prepare: Now that the groundwork is set, each team member needs to be responsible for his part in the retreat. They need to prepare their talks, sports (if included), food and other elements.</p>	
6	<p>Promote: Keep promoting!</p> <p>Prepare: Continue preparing the retreat schedule of talks/activities.</p>	
7	<p>Rehearse: Your team should rehearse their talks individually and all the transitions and introductions together to make sure it runs smoothly.</p>	
8	<p>Retreat!: Execute the retreat well. Make sure the team arrives at least one hour early to setup and make sure all is ready.</p> <p>Donations: You could have a donation basket in the back for when parents exit to help off-set any costs the group may have incurred.</p>	

PROJECT OVERVIEW

TACTICS BY AREAS

**SERVES:
PARISH**

**TIME:
LENT**

LOCATION

- Usually a parish church is ideal for such a retreat. A large hall or a retreat center will also usually work well. There needs to be a gym nearby or a large area outdoors for activities that you may plan.
- A park is also a good location for a retreat, enabling the kids to play to get out some energy before the talks.
- Promotion can be done just about anywhere.

PROVISIONS

- Promotional Material: Make a flyer / poster that presents this as a retreat that will be full of fun and activities. Make sure that the flyer is clear and not overly cluttered with so many pictures that the main message gets lost.
- Sports Equipment: Make sure you have proper sports equipment for whatever sports or games you want to play.
- Snacks / Drinks: It is always good to plan a snack in the middle of the mini-retreat.
- Talk resources: for the members that will be presenting stations of the cross in a more in depth way.
- Projector / screen: If you choose to project pictures of the stations for a more visual experience.
- Schedule: A clear and simple schedule printed out so all members can stick to the time.

**AGAINST THE
GRAIN**



TACTICS BY AREAS



RESPONSIBILITIES

- The team leader should be in charge of the schedule and theme. He should also review each person's work as there are some parts that are hard to do correctly.
- Each talk or meditation on the retreat should be assigned to a different team member.
- One young man should also be the master of ceremonies.
- One member of the team will have to organize, explain, and referee sports if you are going to have sports or other activities as part of the event.
- Promotion: One boy should design the promo material and each member is responsible for promotion at their school, at their parish, among their friends, and with their family members.
- One person needs to be in charge of snacks and drinks you will serve.

CONTACTS

- Pastor: He will want to see that what your doing will help his parish. You need to present the material you will present. Work with him on the themes as he may have a pastoral program focusing on certain items.
- Friends and Family: They need to see the benefit of the retreat. If you are giving one of the talks they may be inclined to go and hear you because they know you.
- Parishioners: Mention that the pastor is supporting the retreat. Make sure to invite a specific age group of kids such as 10-14 (or middle school age). Younger kids will find it more difficult to absorb the formation.
- Kids at school: Promote to kids in middle school if possible, by asking permission to hand out flyers or hang posters. Each member should promote to his friends.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

DEBRIEFING

**SERVES:
PARISH**

**TIME:
LENT**

SPECIAL OPS

- Professionalism in everything: come dressed nice (maybe shirt & ties) and make it look like a serious event.
- Focus on getting key people to the retreat. It is better to have a dozen leaders than 30 zombies. This will pay off long term as they will take more from the retreat.
- You do not need to mention the words “retreat” or “lent” in your promotion as you may be able to reach the audience you want better if you name it something else.
- Be serious and don’t just run a laugh track of jokes but don’t make it dead and boring either. This is a skill and team members should help each other until there talk meet this vigorous requirement.
- Talk a lot about Jesus. Focus on his person as he is the one who will give you strength. You can do this anytime outside of Lent by changing the theme. It is good to focus on the Eucharist, Confession, God the Father, the Holy Spirit and Mary as well. These can be covered whatever the overall theme of the retreat is.

CONTINGENCY PLAN



- This retreat can be co-ed or just done for guys your age, boys, dads, or as a Father-Son event. Talks and events should be adjusted accordingly. If there are boys only and younger than you, sports are an absolute necessity.
- This can be done at another time of year even though a Lenten retreat is somewhat traditional.
- Invite a well-known speaker to give a retreat and organize all the details: promotion, logistics, etc.
- Your team can help organize and lead the weekly stations of the cross at your parish. Or promote and lead a special kids stations of the cross on a Friday evening.

**AGAINST THE
GRAIN**



**SERVES:
PARISH**

**TIME:
LENT**

PROJECT NOTES:

[illegible]

**SERVES:
PARISH**

**TIME:
LENT**

SCHEDULE & QUESTIONNAIRE:

Here is an example schedule that includes all the elements in quick succession. You may want to lengthen the talks and possibly drop some elements.

6:30 Arrival
6:45 Talk #1
7:00 Stations of the Cross
7:30 Snack
7:45 Talk #2
8:00 Talk #3
8:15 Mass
8:45 Departure

An example questionnaire from a Lenten retreat:

Do I realize the love that Christ has for me? Do I fill in my heart the need to love him in return and become a saint?

Do I realize that if I want to be faithful to my mission I need to be a Saint? Why do I need to be a Saint and not just good?

Have I made deeply in my heart the decision to be a Saint with all the consequences that this may bring in my life?

What am I going to do during Lent to become more Christ-like?

