



## Spiritual Works of Mercy | Instruct the Ignorant

### **Song: Open the Eyes of My Heart Lord**

Michael W Smith

Open the eyes of my heart, Lord,  
Open the eyes of my heart  
I want to see You  
I want to see You

Open the eyes of my heart, Lord,  
Open the eyes of my heart  
I want to see You  
I want to see You

To see You high and lifted up  
Shining in the light of Your glory  
Pour out Your power and love  
As we sing holy, holy, holy

**SCRIPTURE:** Mark 16:14-16

Jesus Commissions the Disciples

### **PRAYER:**

#### **Intro prayer (example):**

Open our eyes and hearts, Lord, to what You want us to see; Your presence in our lives, Your plan for us, the struggles of our brothers and sisters, opportunities to love and situations that we are ignorant to. Break our hearts for what breaks Yours and lead us to a deeper understanding of Your mercy and the needs of Your people.

#### **Prayer Activity:**

Spread picture cards out (depending on group number), and ask participants to select a card, based on situations of ignorance in their lives or in the world today. Let them spend some time reflecting on this (you can use the song during reflection). Afterwards, invite participants to share their reflections with the group (or with their neighbour if you have a larger group).



#### **Wrap up prayer (example):**

Lord we thank You for opening our eyes and hearts to situations of ignorance in our lives and in the world today. Work through us and with us to open the eyes of others as You have done for us.

*Note: Picture This Photo Cards may be borrowed from ACYM or you could use your own photos or clippings from magazines etc.*

# GROUP ACTIVITIES: Exploring ignorance and instruction

## Objective

- To foster attitudes that help us give and receive instruction
- To turn to Jesus in times of challenge in order to bear wrongs patiently

## Materials

- Alphabet jigsaw (or alternatively sheets of paper taped to the floor)
- Blindfolds
- Hoop
- Quoits

## Dynamics

- Split group into two teams (or if you have a smaller group then run one activity followed by the other).
- One team works with the quoits, the other works with the maze
- Quoits:
  - Each member takes a turn throwing three ropes on to the pegs.
  - The team can choose to do so blindfolded or normally; if they do so blindfolded, they triple their points.
  - The other members are to instruct the throwing member
  - Tally up all the points
    - Inside the hoop, 1 point (multiplied by three if they are blindfolded)
    - Over pin, corresponding number (multiplied by three if they are blindfolded)
    - Over two pins, total of numbers (multiplied by three if they are blindfolded)
- Maze
  - The team picks one member to go through the maze. The youth leader knows the way, but the team does not (The way spells out 'IGNORANT'). DO NOT TELL THE PARTICIPANTS THAT THEY ARE LOOKING FOR A PARTICULAR WORD.
  - The team member that's walking through picks one puzzle piece; if they are correct the leader says "YES" and they can move on, but if they are wrong the leader will say "NO" and that team must start again from the beginning.
  - The remaining team members must strategise and instruct the walking team member with what piece to step on. Alternatively the participant steps off the grid once they take a wrong step and another team member starts (having to remember the steps the earlier person/people have taken)
- The two groups then swap.



## Reflection/Debrief:

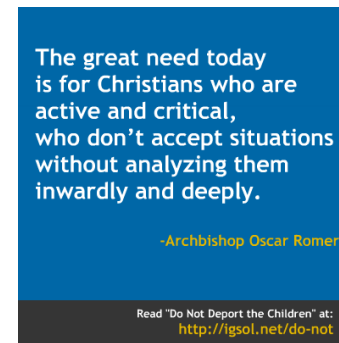
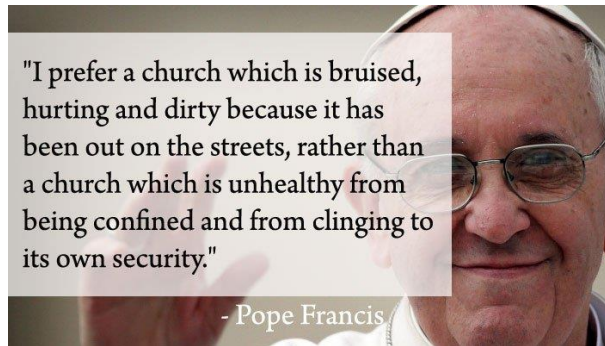
- **Quoits**

- Did you pick to do the activity blindfolded? Why? Would you change your decision in hindsight?
- How did your choice link to the idea of doing things the easy/hard way?
- For those who chose to do it blindfolded:
  - How did it feel to be blindfolded?
  - Was it worth choosing this decision?
  - Were your team-mates helpful? How?
  - How does this link to ignorance?
- For those who chose to do it normally:
  - Was it worth choosing this decision?
  - Did you need your team-mates' help as much?
  - Do you think this was the best choice?
  - Were you tempted by the prospect tripling your points?

- **Maze**

- How did it feel not knowing the way?
- How did it feel to depend on your team? Was your team helpful in strategising? Was it better to work together as a team, rather than individually?
- How did you feel when you had to start all over again?
- How does this link to ignorance and being instructed? Being aware of the good and God's presence even when you are faced with difficulty?
- We don't always know God's plan and we can go the wrong way – sometimes it takes starting over to go the right way
- Would it have been easier to know the way? To be aware and enlightened? How does this relate to you in your life and in the world today?

## TOOL: Catechesis of Current Events | Mercy/Forgiveness Edition



In this Year of Mercy (2016) Pope Francis is calling us to be aware of what is happening in the world around us. Similarly in *Fit for Mission*, our Diocesan Pastoral Plan, Bishop Patrick challenges us to work as disciples of Christ with a strong commitment, discipline and courage on the spiritual fitness we need for our Mission. That challenge includes an awareness of the situations in our world today that are desperately in need of our prayer and our action. We encourage you to use this resource as a way to introduce young people to YouCat and to becoming aware of the issues in our world today.

In this activity we have extracted statements from YouCat relating to mercy and developed short summaries of current events in our world today. This activity invites participants to take one situation in our world today and to discover what church teachings relate to that event.

### *Instructions:*

1. Download a selection of news articles and extracts from YouCat (included in the file **Instruct the Ignorant - Catechesis Activity**) or create your own that relate to your own community.
2. Set up a prayer focus (a photo of our one is shown in the photo) and include the news clippings.
3. Begin with an introductory prayer, for example: "Loving God you call us to be aware of the needs in our world today. Pope Francis has said that he would prefer a church which is bruised and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security. We ask that you be present with us as we gather in prayer and that you help us to open our hearts and minds to the world around us. Today especially we open our eyes to examples of forgiveness and mercy that others has shown."

## TOOL: Catechesis of Current Events | Mercy/Forgiveness Edition (continued)

4. Read aloud a piece of scripture. We used Matthew 5:1-11 (The Beatitudes).
5. Invite young people to select one of the news articles and to take some time to read and reflect.
6. After they have read the news clipping they are invited to select an extract from YouCat that in some way relates to that news.
7. For those who are comfortable we recommend that they spend time journaling about this. Alternatively you might provide paper and pens for young people to write/draw a response. We had background music playing while they read/reflected/journaled. We allowed 15-20 minutes for this.
8. Bring the group back together with an invitation for each person to state aloud one word or phrase that speaks to them.
9. Bring the time of prayer to close with an impromptu prayer.  
Example: "Loving God, we give thanks for your presence in our lives. We ask that you help us to keep the issues that we have reflected on in our hearts and prayers this week. We give thanks for the way that they have demonstrated mercy and forgiveness and we pray that they will inspire and challenge us to be forgiving and merciful to others."



## Spiritual Works of Mercy | Feed the Hungry



- Organise a pantry raid where parishioners donate food to St Vincent de Paul or another food bank.
- Organise a Halloween for the Hungry where young people collect canned goods instead of lollies. You could have young people make cards about saints which they could give as a thank you for food donated.
- Have young people make a meal or treat food that can be donated to a group in need eg womens refuge, homeless centre, City Mission etc.
- Contact a local food bank, refuge, boarding house or similar to find out how your group could help eg with serving meals, making regular donations of food etc.
- Give young people the opportunity to fast eg a Stop It Challenge for Caritas Challenge, Operation Rice Bowl during Lent.



### Check what our New Zealand Bishops have to say:

1. Statement on food security:  
<http://www.catholic.org.nz/news/fx-view-article.cfm?ctype=BSART&loadref=51&id=275>

### Resources on Food Security:

**Our Daily Bread:** Putting Food on the Table

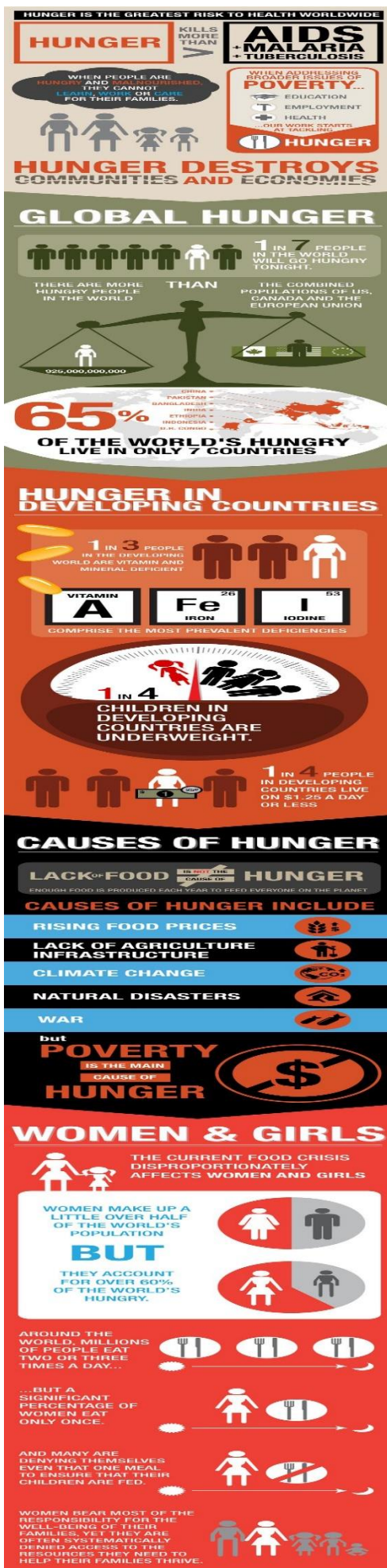
Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand

<http://www.caritas.org.nz/search/node/SJW%202012%20Our%20daily%20bread%20booklet>

Message from Pope Francis for World

Food Day 2015:

[https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/food/documents/papa-francesco\\_20151016\\_messaggio-giornata-alimentazione.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/food/documents/papa-francesco_20151016_messaggio-giornata-alimentazione.html)



## Pray for the Hungry:

We like the prayers on this page from World Vision:  
<http://archive.worldvisionmagazine.org/story/pray-hungry>

## Prayer Chopsticks:

Use Jelly Beans or another small lolly! Divide the group into teams and give each team a pair of chopsticks and small bowl, which they place in the centre of the group. Place a large bowl of Jelly Beans in the centre of the room. When the time starts one person from each team runs to the Jelly Beans and picks up one (using the chopsticks) and brings it back to the bowl in their group. As they put it in the bowl they say a prayer that relates to your theme. The chopsticks are then passed onto the next person. Allow about 2 or 3 minutes. At the end count up the total number of Jelly Beans each team got and announce the winner. Then get the whole group to stand in a circle and say a concluding prayer.

## Prayer and Feasting:

Choose a country you are going to pray for. Encourage young people to find out about the issues in that country and to write a prayer that speaks to an issue. The possibilities are endless and only limited by your imagination! Add in fancy dress of that country! You could also prepare food that would be served in that country ... Indian or American, Thai or Mongolian? You could also learn some of the language too!

## Knock the Cans Down

Discuss what issues exist in your nation or city. Write these on paper and stick onto empty soft drink cans. Take it in turns to throw items (eg balls) at the cans. When one can (representing an issue!) falls then the group prays for that issue!

Keep repeating as long as there are cans left!

If you have a Facebook page for your group, parish or community you could include photos and the actual prayers on Facebook in the week that follows (one per day).