

Spirituality Stations for Youth

“Compassion is sometimes the fatal capacity for feeling what it is like to live inside somebody else’s skin. It is the knowledge that there can never really be any peace and joy for me until there is peace and joy finally for you too.”
—Frederick Buechner

These spirituality centers are a great way strengthen the faith of youth. They could be used as one whole event or used separately at different occasions throughout your youth ministry.

If using all or most, set these stations up around the room or throughout several rooms. Instruct participants to complete as many stations as possible during the allotted time. They do not have to go in order or complete all the stations. As the facilitator, you can choose whether to ask participants to do this quietly or to allow people to talk.

Listen

Materials: Portable CD players, Mp3 Players, iPods. Set up each listening device to play a different style of music, such as classical, Taize, nature sounds, African drumming, etc.

Instructions: Music and sounds are a gift of God. They can be a way of praying without speaking. Pick a CD player/iPod and listen. Listen to the music as it comes to you and see where the Spirit leads you in prayer.

Smell #1

Materials: Items that have a particular smell-grass, mustard, honey, a flower, cinnamon, rosemary, scented candle, etc.

Instructions: Smell is a powerful way to experience God’s created world. Take each item, smell it, and pass it among your group, experiencing them together. What are they like? Stinky? Calming? Strong? What memories do they bring back? Consider how different smells represent the diversity of God’s world. Offer a silent prayer as you feel led by the Spirit and the scents.

Smell #2

Materials: Large Sheet of Paper, Markers. Large Sheet of Paper, Markers.

Instructions: Smells can be intimately connected to memory. A revisited smell can trigger powerful, detailed memories. Think of a smell you can remember that connects to a need in the world or something for which you are thankful. Share that memory in words or art. Prayerfully consider: What does the Kingdom of God smell like?

Water

Materials: Large Bowl of Water

Instructions: Water is a source of life. Reflect on the importance of water in your own life. Think about how it might represent God's presence. In pairs, pour water over each other's hands, experiencing the water together and offering a silent prayer for the other person. What memories come to mind as you feel the water? Baptism? Jesus washing the feet of others? Washing your hands before a special meal? Those who don't have clean water?

The Journey

Materials: Large Sheet of Paper, Markers

Instructions: "What words, images, or symbols express your journey of faith? Meditate on your journey so far. The ups and downs, those who have encouraged you, mentors for your life, the questions, doubts, fears, the mountain top experiences, and the challenges. Use this wall to express your spiritual journey in an image, symbol, or word. Take time to consider what others add to the mural. Where do their journeys intersect, parallel, or diverge from your own?"

Question

Materials: Play-Doh, Story of Bartimaeus (Mark 10: 46-52)

Instructions: After reading the Story of Bartimaeus, reflect on the Lord's question, "What do you want me to do for you?" Take Play-Doh and sculpt your answer.

Taste

Materials: Items with a particular taste-crushed mint leaves, lemon juice, sugar, cinnamon, salt and place each in a separate small bowl, Toothpicks, Trash Cans

Instructions: Toothpick into the dish, taste, and discard the stirrer. Continue tasting as many as you would like. We don't often think about taste when pondering God, but taste and memory are strongly connected. What do these tastes bring to mind? What does the love of God taste like?

Idol Worship

Materials: Play Doh

Instructions: Read Exodus 20:22-24

What are some of the idols in your life—possessions, activities, attitudes and relationships that get in the way of your relationship with God? What worries or challenges in your personal life, work, or ministry seem to loom bigger than your trust in God? Use Play Doh to create a symbol of those items, then smash this idol as a sign of your desire to move closer to God.

Forgiveness

Materials: Large Bowl of Sand

Instructions: Read Colossians 3:12-14

As we look into our hearts, there are times when we need to be forgiven and God forgives us. There are times when we need to forgive. God gives us the strength to forgive. How will we respond? By a prayer of thanksgiving? By promising never to do it again? By praying for the person we have forgiven? Reflect on this.

Is there something you wish to bring to God to ask forgiveness? Write or draw it in the sand. Ask forgiveness. Then pass your hand through the sand, erasing the words or images as a symbol of receiving God's forgiveness. Is there something which you should forgive? Write it in the sand. Ask God to give you the strength to forgive. Smooth the sand. Now, what will be your response to God's forgiveness working through you? Write or draw your response in the sand and leave it for the next visitor to see.

Confession

Materials: Paper, Pens, Paper shredder

Instructions: Confession is not easy. We are called to confess those things that separate us from God, ourselves, others, and the world. As Christians, we often call those things sin. The Psalmist writes in Psalm 32: "While I kept silence, my body wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not hide my iniquity; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord and you forgave the guilt of my sin."

Let us confess by writing the broken places, attitudes, and relationships in our lives and in our world. As you write, you are invited into a time of reflection. Feel God's mercy. Consider what it might feel like to let go of guilt and shame. Consider how you will work to repair broken relationships and broken systems. As you feel comfortable, you are invited to shred these confessions as an act of release and transformation. As you shred your pieces of paper, you are invited to pray your own personal prayer accepting God's forgiveness.

The World

Materials: World Map, Colored Glass Beads/Rocks, Current News Articles

Instructions: Place the World Map on the ground. Take some time to silently focus on the many needs of the world. Use the surrounding magazines and newspapers for inspiration. Consider how your prayers, offered in this moment move out and meet God's center with the cries for release from those in need around the world. When you are ready, take one or more of the stones and place them on the locations on the map that have stirred your prayers today.

Draw-A-Prayer

Set out paper, markers, and crayons and invited participants to express their prayers through the created image. You could provide a quote or scripture to encourage reflection on a certain topic or idea.

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