



**Greater**

**Parish Leader Roadmap**

---

**Four Week**



# Leader Roadmap

## Welcome to Greater!

Thank you for investing in your young people preparing for the sacrament of Confirmation. Thank you for loving the young church! Whatever the reason is that you need this retreat, the desire is the same - you want to offer an amazing and unique retreat experience to your young people. Thank you for choosing this retreat!

This is the Parish Leader Roadmap for *Greater*. In it you will find everything you need to know about what your teens are experiencing over the next four weeks. There are discussion questions for each video so that you can engage in deeper conversation. There are also places for you to do some of your own reflecting and journaling over the course of the retreat. We encourage you to take this experience and grow personally too. Share your own experiences and thoughts with your teens!

Our goal for the retreat is to take your teens from a place of complacency to a place of zeal and our hope is that you will be a source of encouragement, positivity, and love throughout this experience. This may be something that is completely out of your comfort zone, and that's ok! Lift up any anxiety you may be feeling and place it at the foot of the cross. Ask for the guidance and wisdom to be the person your teens need you to be during this retreat.

Enjoy this experience!

# What is *Greater*?

***Greater is an online Confirmation retreat.***

We know how important a solid retreat experience is during the Confirmation preparation process. Though we love the idea of taking teens away for an in-person, weekend retreat, we know that option is not always available.

With that in mind, we worked with ministry leaders and Catholic speakers across the country (and around the world) to build an amazing, on-demand, virtual Confirmation retreat experience...

Not as another avenue for more catechesis, but rather as a chance to create an environment of conversion and give young people opportunities for real world encounters with the Jesus who loves them.

That's what preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation should be all about.

# Why is it called *Greater*?

We are all called to something *greater*. God loves us where we are at, but He doesn't want us to stay where we are. We are called to grow in relationship with Jesus, with each other, with our community. This retreat encourages your young people to evaluate where they are currently in their lives and challenges them to strive for something more, for something *greater*.

# What do I need?

Great question. You need this guide, some kind of electronic device, a bible (bible app is fine), something to write with, an open and joyful heart, and a willingness to go all in.

# What do my teens need?

Same thing you do: Some kind of electronic device, internet, a bible (bible app is fine), something to write with, an open and joyful heart, and a willingness to go all in.

# What do our families need?

Each week has an adult guide that goes along with the content their teen is experiencing. It can be printed out or downloaded and used digitally.

# How can I support the families?

- **Be positive!** Parents need love and support instead of guilt.
- Encourage them to use the adult guide.
- **Check in with the family** in addition to checking in with your teens.
- Engage in conversation about what the families are learning about this experience.
- Encourage the parents/caregivers/sponsors to watch the videos and engage in the content. They don't *need* to, but it would be great if they did!
- **Share the goal of the retreat.** This is not an online class, but rather a journey. There are key times for the parent to journey with their youth in the process. Be sure to articulate that!
- **Be clear and concise about what they need to do.** Some parents may need help signing up, or with reminders about the next steps they should take. Empower them with clean information that includes simple action steps.

# Roadmap Legend

This retreat contains these elements:

- ➔ **Video Based Content** - There is no better way to communicate online than through video! With that in mind, we've brought in a team of speakers from across the country to create hours of dynamic video content that will keep your teens engaged from beginning to end.
- ➔ **Beautiful Daily Prompts** - No one hates filling out worksheets more than teenagers, so we don't give them any! Instead, our artists have created beautiful images that serve as a starting point for reflection and prayer. Rather than filling in a blank, we let them use their own blank canvas to express their thoughts in their unique style!
- ➔ **Parish Leader Roadmap** - We don't want your teens to experience this retreat in isolation – and we don't want you to have to guess how you can help. We provide a step-by-step guide for the youth minister, director of faith formation, confirmation coordinator, or head cat wrangler.
- ➔ **Adult Guide** - The Confirmation process isn't just about the teen who's receiving the sacrament – it should involve parents, sponsors, and other influential adults in that student's life. Our adult companion guide can be accessed for free by any of those adults, and will walk them through how they can be intentionally involved in this retreat experience!
- ➔ **Student Progress Reports** - Regardless of your role, you'll be able to follow along with your student. Parents can log right into their teen's account and see which pieces of the retreat they still need to complete. Parish ministry leaders can track the progress of all the students in their ministry, so they can see who needs help and encouragement to finish their journey.
- ➔ **Printable Certificates** - We want to make it as easy as possible for parents and parish leaders to keep track of students who have completed the retreat! Not only can you see student progress once you log in, but students can also download and print certificates of completion.

# Retreat Overview

In this retreat, there are:

- ➔ **Four Weeks** - Each week is one topic. Think of each week as one session of the retreat. Each session is roughly 90 minutes in total length of content.
- ➔ **Session Videos** - Each week has three 20-minute session videos, each given by a different speaker. The sessions are highly engaging and challenge your teens to go beyond what they've already experienced and what they already know about God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Your teens need to watch them in order and in their entirety for the next one to unlock.
- ➔ **Session Check-Ins** - At the end of each video session is a four question check in. It's not challenging, just enough information to make sure they were paying attention and not just pressing play and walking away. They need to get three out of the four questions correct before the next video will unlock.
- ➔ **Prayer Experiences** - During each week, the teens will engage in a prayer experience video. The purpose of this is to expose them to different ways to pray and show them that praying is not always just sitting in silence.
- ➔ **Adult Guides** - Each week has an adult guide with video summaries, speaker bios, conversation starters, reflection prompts, and an overview of the week.
- ➔ **Daily Prompts** - To get the most out of the retreat experience and encourage life and habit change, each week has six daily prompt graphics. Your teens will reflect on a bible verse or Saint quote and journal on a simple question. This is to encourage continued processing of the information in between sessions and opportunities to see God in their lives and the lives of others.

# Prepare for the Journey

It's important to make sure that your teens are prepared both mentally and spiritually for any retreat, this one is no different! Use this checklist as a guide to build up some excitement and anticipation for this experience like you would an off-site retreat!

- ➔ **Talk It Up!** - Be as excited about this retreat as you would a retreat that you are going away for. Your teens will feed off of your energy or your negativity. Don't promote it as "just a Confirmation requirement", but as unique retreat experience that will bring your teens closer to Jesus and better understand what it means to live a Christian life.
- ➔ **Promote It!** - Post about it! Use your youth group's social media accounts to promote and get the word out! Create a cool countdown til retreat day and don't forget to promote #**GREATERRETREAT**.
- ➔ **Communicate with Parents** - Meet with the parents, in person or virtually, to tell them what this retreat is like, what to expect, and what your expectations are for them!
- ➔ **Be Positive!** - Be very aware of the language you use when talking about this retreat experience. Avoid using words like "requirement", "you have to", etc. Be supportive, positive, and encouraging.
- ➔ **Involve the Family** - Whether or not they tell you or like to admit it themselves, parents are still the primary influence in their teens' lives. Getting the whole family on board and involved will not only help with teen participation, but it will help create an even stronger family bond.
- ➔ **Pray for Your Teens** - This may seem like a no-brainer, but pray for them. Pray that they get the most out of this retreat that they can. Pray that they hear whatever it is that God needs to tell them or show them during this time. Pray that they have open hearts and minds to this whole experience.

# Topic Summaries

**Week 1 - Greater Love:** This week we talk about how God is in love with us. He wants to be in a relationship with us and has always been faithful. We're the ones that have fallen, rejected Him, said no. ***But God never leaves us or gives up.***

➔ ***Session 1: Jesus Desires a Relationship with Us***

God's love for us is unconditional, absolute, and unlimited. God wants us to love Him, not out of fear, but because He is our Father. We don't have to be perfect to have a relationship with Him.

➔ ***Session 2: God's Promise***

We were created to be face to face with God. Sin makes us turn away. All throughout scripture we see instances where the people of God have turned away. But God, in His infinite love, gives us so many opportunities to turn back to Him.

➔ ***Session 3: Jesus is Real***

Jesus is alive and present in the sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation, and the Eucharist.

**Week 2 - Greater Power:** This week answers the questions - who is the Holy Spirit? Where does He come from? What kind of power does He have? The goal is to show your teen that the Holy Spirit is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

➔ ***Session 1: Origin Story***

Who is the Holy Spirit? The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity - always present, always faithful, always loving. He was not created, but always has been and always will be.

➔ ***Session 2: On Fire***

The Holy Spirit moves through scripture and sets our hearts on fire to go out and spread the Gospel. In this video, we are told we're made for greatness and challenged to ask the Holy Spirit to move in big ways in our lives.



➔ **Session 3: Alive and Active**

We've met the Holy Spirit, throughout the Old and New Testaments. Now we'll see how He is alive and active in our lives today.

**Week 3 - Greater Living:** What does it actually mean to be a disciple of Christ? What is a disciple? These are just a couple of the questions we answer as we dive into greater living. We look at examples of Saints who lived discipleship in their every day lives and offer

➔ **Session 1: What is a Disciple?**

In this session, we learn about what a disciple is and that holiness is hard! Sometimes what God calls us to do is different than what we had planned for ourselves, but when we give our "yes" to God, He blesses us more than we ever could have imagined.

➔ **Session 2: Striving for Holiness**

In this session, we learn that holiness takes practice and that holiness is what we should be striving for instead of perfection. God wants our authentic selves, not the one we pretend to be. He loves who He created us to be.

➔ **Session 3: Living It!**

So what does all this mean for us? In this session, we learn some simple and practical ways to better live like a disciple of Christ and keep moving towards holiness.

**Week 4 - Greater Mission:** The Holy Spirit empowers us to live out the Great Commission. He puts you, me, and every other disciple on a path for mission. Every one of us! Every day! What does it mean to be on mission? How does it happen? And how do we know if we are doing it "right"?

➔ **Session 1: Experiencing a Personal Pentecost**

We need to experience a personal Pentecost to empower us to move out of the upper room and head out to set the world on fire!

➔ ***Session 2: Unrepeatable***

We are each unrepeatable creations equipped with a unique set of natural gifts and supernatural charisms. These qualities are God's way of calling each of us into living our greater mission.

➔ ***Session 3: Am I Doing it Right?***

In this session, we explore the fruit and the blessings of what happens to us when we are living out our greater mission by explaining and reflecting on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

# Small Groups

## Why small groups?

Having guided conversation with their peers sheds light on different points of view and allows them to externally process what they've been listening to, ask questions, and share with each other. It's very different than having conversation with their parents or reflective journaling.

## How small groups work in *Greater*

Small groups in *Greater* work just like any other small group, you just do them virtually! Pick a day and a time, select a meeting platform like Zoom, or Google Meet, make sure you send the join info to your teens, and show up! Below are some suggested small group questions to start conversation. However, feel free to ask your own questions!

## Ideas for your small groups

This experience should be fun! Here are some ideas to make meeting virtually just as awesome and entertaining as meeting in person:

- ➔ **Have a Weekly Theme** – tell your teens ahead of time what each week's theme is going to be so they can be ready to participate! Some ideas are *crazy hat day*, *bring your favorite chocolate day*, *tie-dye shirt day*, *meet outside day*. Be creative, think outside the box, maybe even tell everyone to find a favorite spot in their house, their neighborhood, or their favorite coffee or fro-yo place!
- ➔ **Play Games** – With each of the virtual meeting platforms, there is a way to screen share. Take advantage of that and play some games! Use any of the 4 games you got with this retreat. If you want more ideas, check out [ProjectYMGames.com](http://ProjectYMGames.com) for many more ideas! If you don't want to go the screen game route, there are many different games you can play like house scavenger hunt, UNO (each person has their own deck), Pictionary, charades, or any kinds of games that don't require a board!
- ➔ **Keep It Informal** – Remember this is not class. Small groups are a place to be real, safe, yourself in all the amazing ways you are. Don't just rattle off questions and look for the answers. Have conversation. Check in. Do what you would do if you were together in person. Share your life and be interested in theirs.
- ➔ **Have Fun** – Yes, have fun. Did we mention this should be fun? Oh, and one more thing – have fun! Take pictures of your fun small groups and post them on Instagram with **#GREATERRETREAT**.

# Sample Snack Menu

Below is a sample snack menu you can send out to your teens. If you are like most youth ministers, you ask them to bring a drink and a snack to share. Do the same here (or maybe flip the script and deliver snack boxes to them)! Be creative with your snack choices. The menu below is divided into themes correlating with the weekly theme, but you can do whatever you want!

## Week 1 – Greater Love

### Snacks:

- Hershey's Kisses
- Chocolates
- Red candy
- Flaming hot Cheetos
- Red, pink, or white foods
- Strawberry or vanilla ice cream
- Oreos

### Drinks:

- Big Red
- Pink Lemonade
- Cherry Sprite or 7up
- Any flavor milkshake
- Strawberry milk
- Milk

## Week 2 – Greater Power

### Snacks:

- Granola bars
- Beef jerky
- Smoothie
- Oatmeal cookies
- Popcorn
- Peanut butter cookies
- Oreos

### Drinks:

- Smoothie
- Juice
- Water
- Tea
- Coffee drink of some kind
- Milk

## Week 3 – Greater Living

### Snacks:

- Fruit
- Chips and salsa
- Easy Mac
- Mixed veggies and ranch
- Granola bars
- Popcorn
- Oreos

### Drinks:

- Smoothie
- Water
- Sparkling water
- Iced Tea
- Lemonade
- Milk

## Week 4 – Greater Mission

### Snacks:

- Trail mix
- Nuts and berries
- Yogurt
- Fro-yo
- Happy Meal
- Chips
- S'mores
- Oreos

### Drinks:

- Water
- Milk
- Gatorade
- Soda
- Lemonade

# Small Group Questions

## Week 1 - Greater Love

### SESSION ONE

1. Do you love God because you *have* to or because you *want* to?
2. What stuck out to you from Katie's talk?
3. Is it easy or hard for you to understand the concept of *unconditional, absolute, and unlimited* love? Why?

### SESSION TWO

1. Why do you think God won't give up on us?
2. When in your own life have you felt that hope was lost?
3. What sin do you need Christ to step into and lift you out of?

### SESSION THREE

1. When was the first time you heard about Jesus? Who told you about him and what did they talk about?
2. What would Jesus be like if he were here on earth today?
3. What do you need from Jesus to have a deeper relationship with him?

### SESSION ONE

1. What stuck out to you about Johnny's talk?
2. When has God used you to speak truth to someone else? (Ezekiel 37:1-14)
3. Who do you connect with in prayer: the Father, the Son, or the Holy Spirit?

### SESSION TWO

1. Do you think the it's the Holy Spirit that's changed or the world that has changed? How?
2. What is the big miracle you really need to ask for in your life right now?
3. Are you content with mediocrity and normalcy or do you want something more?

### SESSION THREE

1. Do you think you're ready to be sent out and evangelize? Why or why not?
2. Why are you getting confirmed?
3. What kind of impression has the Holy Spirit made on your life?

## Week 2 - Greater Power

### SESSION ONE

1. *Holiness is hard.*  
How do you typically respond when things get difficult?
2. *Matthew 28:19*  
Have you ever invited someone to come to church or youth group with you? Why or why not?

### SESSION TWO

1. What do you think is the most important quality in a friend? Why?
2. Who sets the expectations for your life - you or your parents/caregivers? Do you think they are realistic?
3. Do you think God sets realistic expectations for your life? Why or why not?

### SESSION THREE

1. Who is someone who could be your accountability partner in prayer?
2. What time each day are you going to stop and pray?
3. (Start small) Aside from setting an alarm to pray every day, what small thing are you going to change to live more for Christ?

### SESSION ONE

1. What gifts do you see active in your life right now?
2. What would *your* personal Pentecost look like?
3. How does the Holy Spirit need to transform *your* community?

### SESSION TWO

1. Has anyone ever asked you to pray for them or with them? What was that like? How did you feel?
2. How comfortable are you speaking with your friends about God? What would make it easier for you?

### SESSION THREE

1. Do you love yourself?
2. In your friendships, are you the positive influence or the negative influence?
3. What's next? What are you going to do differently now this retreat is over?

# Small Group Questions

## Week 3 - Greater Living

### Day Two

***"Our hearts were made for You,  
O Lord, and they are restless  
until they rest in you."***  
(St. Augustine of Hippo)

What are 3 things keeping your heart "restless"? In other words, what are 3 things turning you away from the Lord?

### Day Three

***"We love because he first loved us."***  
(1 John 4:19)

What is a way you can spend time with your family today?

### Day Four

***"All the earth will worship You, And  
will sing praises to You; They will sing  
praises to Your name."***  
(Psalm 66:4)

What are 3 things you're grateful for?

### Day Five

***"Faithful friends are a sturdy shelter;  
whoever finds one finds a treasure."***  
(Sirach 6:14)

Who is a friend you are grateful for? Why? Call or meet up with this friend to ask them how they're doing.

### Day Six

***"You need to hold fast to two virtues:  
kindness toward your neighbor and  
humility toward God."***  
(St. Padre Pio)

What is an act of kindness you can do for your family today?

### Day Seven

***"Let the heavens be glad and the  
earth rejoice; let the sea and what  
fills it resound; let the plains be joyful  
and all that is in them. Then let all the  
trees of the forest rejoice."***  
(Psalm 96: 11-12)

Spend 10 minutes outside today. Use your senses. What are 3 things you've never noticed before?

## Week 4 - Greater Mission

# Daily Prompts: Week 1

Below are the daily prompts that your teens will reflect on during the week. You are invited to do any and all of them yourself. It would also be a good way to engage in deeper faith conversations with them.

## Day Two

Litany to the Holy Spirit

***Spirit of wisdom and understanding, have mercy on us.***

What does it mean to have a spirit of wisdom and understanding? How do you see this in yourself?

## Day Three

Litany to the Holy Spirit

***Spirit of counsel and might, have mercy on us.***

What does it mean to have a spirit of counsel and might? How do you see this in yourself?

## Day Four

Litany to the Holy Spirit

***Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord, have mercy on us.***

What does it mean to have a spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord? How do you see this in yourself?

## Day Five

Litany to the Holy Spirit

***Spirit of love, have mercy on us. Spirit of joy, have mercy on us. Spirit of peace, have mercy on us.***

What does it mean to have a spirit of love, joy, and peace? How do you see this in yourself?

## Day Six

Litany to the Holy Spirit

***Spirit of patience, kindness, and goodness, have mercy on us.***

What does it mean to have a spirit of peace, kindness, and goodness? How do you see this in yourself?

## Day Seven

Litany to the Holy Spirit

***Spirit of faith, humility, and chastity, have mercy on us.***

What does it mean to have a spirit of faith, humility, and chastity? How do you see this in yourself?



# Daily Prompts: Week 2

Below are the daily prompts that your teens will reflect on during the week. You are invited to do any and all of them yourself. It would also be a good way to engage in deeper faith conversations with them.

## Day Two

***"It is Jesus that you seek when you dream of happiness; He is waiting for you when nothing else you find satisfies you."***

(Pope St. John Paul II)

What about this quote connects with you?

## Day Three

***"Miss no single opportunity of making some small sacrifice, here by a smiling look, there by a kindly word; always doing the smallest right and doing it all for love."***

(St. Therese of Lisieux)

What about this quote connects with you?

## Day Four

***"Every day, my love for the mountains grows more and more. If my studies permitted, I'd spend whole days in the mountains contemplating the Creator's greatness in that pure air."***

(Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati)

What about this quote connects with you?

## Day Five

***"The secret of happiness is to live moment by moment and to thank God for all that He, in His goodness, sends to us day after day."***

(St. Gianna Beretta Molla)

What about this quote connects with you?

## Day Six

***"All for the greater glory of God!"***

(St. Ignatius of Loyola)

What about this quote connects with you?

## Day Seven

***"May today there be peace within. May you trust God that you are exactly where you are meant to be."***

(St. Teresa of Avila)

What about this quote connects with you?

# Daily Prompts: Week 3

Below are the daily prompts that your teens will reflect on during the week. You are invited to do any and all of them yourself. It would also be a good way to engage in deeper faith conversations with them.

## Day Two

***"The world offers you comfort, but you were not made for comfort. You were made for greatness."***

(Pope Benedict XVI)

How can you live a life of greatness for the Lord?

## Day Three

***"What really matters in life is that we are loved by Christ and that we love Him in return."***

(Pope Saint John Paul II)

In what ways has your love for Christ grown during this retreat? How have you seen Christ love you?

## Day Four

***"Pray, Hope, and Don't Worry"***

(St. Padre Pio)

In what ways are you worried about entering back into daily life? Journal about these things and give them to Jesus, who is Peace.

## Day Five

***Jesus said to them, "Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature."***

(Mark 16:15)

Who in your life will you share the Gospel with?

## Day Six

***"Prayer is the oxygen of the soul."***

(St. Padre Pio)

What prayer are you going to commit to after this retreat?

## Day Seven

***"Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus."***

(1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

What are 3 things you're grateful for because of this retreat?

# Daily Prompts: Week 4

Below are the daily prompts that your teen will reflect on during the week. You are invited to do any and all of them yourself. It would also be a good way to engage in deeper faith conversations with your teen.

# Best Practices

Use these quick tips to help your teen have the best online retreat experience ever:

- ➔ Pray for your teens every day.
- ➔ Be enthusiastic!
- ➔ Surprise and delight! Create and send your teens “retreat care packages”. You can mail them, have them pick up the packages from church, or even go drop them off yourself!
- ➔ Encourage your teens to take pictures of their doodle pages, themselves getting ready for the retreat, their prayer spaces, anything that they want to share and post them on Instagram or Twitter with **#GREATERRETREAT**.
- ➔ Carve out some dedicated time to “be on retreat” yourself.
- ➔ Check in with them daily.
- ➔ Ask questions. This helps them process the information and their thoughts and feelings.
- ➔ Encourage them to set up a dedicated prayer space.
- ➔ Give yourself and your teens the grace to fall and get back up.
- ➔ Attend Mass.
- ➔ Go to Confession.

# Reminders

- ➔ YOU are doing a GREAT job!
- ➔ Your teens love you and wants you to be part of their faith journey.
- ➔ This is not confirmation class. This is a virtual retreat experience to get to know Jesus better.
- ➔ Use the conversation starters just as springboards to deeper conversations. It’s important for your teens to be able to talk about what they are experiencing, thinking, and feeling.
- ➔ Make this fun! Enjoy it together.

# Post Retreat Follow-up

- ➔ Keep the conversation going!
- ➔ Connect with your teens right away when they finish to get their feedback, thoughts, and feelings.
- ➔ Connect with them again in a week to talk through more processing they've done of the experience.
- ➔ Celebrate an amazing experience together!

## A Final “Thank You!”

Once again, thank you so much for your “yes” to God to follow your call to serve our young Church. The work you do is important and *you matter*.