

PURPOSE OF TALKS

GOALS

"Goals" emphasizes the need for goals. It is purely a secular talk designed to help residents want a better life with uplifting and practical goals.

GOD IS CALLING*

"God is Calling" serves as the keynote address for the message of REC. The speaker emphasizes we must "die" to ourselves by unselfishness and self-discipline and then we can grow in our love for God and one another. Wheat letters are introduced and explained as tangible evidence of the care, concern and sacrifice of fellow Christians for the benefit of the residents.

PRODIGAL

"Prodigal" brings the scripture reading to life for the residents through the speaker's personal version of the story.

CHANGE OF HEART*

"Change of Heart" tells the story of an individual accepting the relationship that God offers to them. It begins with our change of heart as we realize God's gift is not earned by merit but bestowed to us by His freely offered grace. God accepts our unacceptability when we understand He receives us in our current state and steadily moves us closer to Him. The important part of this talk is our acceptance of God by saying "yes" to His will.

DISCOVERY

"Discovery" conveys to the residents that the Christian life is an ongoing journey of discovery, learning and growth in our relationship with Jesus. It demonstrates the journey as an exciting path as we learn more about Jesus, ourselves and our relationship to Him. This is accomplished by listening, sharing, reading and studying the Scripture.

GOD IS LOVE

The residents have had an encounter with Christ and now we introduce them to the person of Jesus Christ in "God is Love." We must dispel false notions they might have about God before we are able to introduce them to a loving God which is the focal point of the mature faith.

MEANS OF GRACE*

"Means of Grace" takes a serious look at the sacramental moments in our lives and the way we corporately celebrate God's grace.

PRAYER

"Prayer" emphasizes the importance of communicating with God through enriching spiritual lives, receiving guidance and growing in discernment.

CHRISTIAN IN THE WORLD

"Christian in the World" is the last formal talk during the weekend. The speaker begins by quickly reviewing the themes of the three days: die with Christ, rise with Christ and go with Christ. Residents are anxious to be active Christians but may hesitate because of obstacles encountered in prison life. This talk should encourage them that they can be a Christian in their world and explain how this can be accomplished in daily prison life.

BEYOND REC

"Beyond REC" is given by the Lay Director. This talk introduces the concept of the fourth day. The talk focuses on helps and hindrances to the REC program with an emphasis on group reunions. No notes are taken during this talk.

*indicates a talk to be given by clergy

WHAT IS WHEAT?

Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds." John 12:24

The residents will receive many small paper items of wheat in a decorated bag upon recompleting the REC weekend. The bag includes poems, scripture passages, bookmarks, and other encouraging words presented in creative ways to give the residents a small "gift" and to sow a seed of God's love.

Team members are asked to contribute two pieces of wheat and one wheat letter for each resident and alumni attending the weekend. The wheat letter should be written to "Dear Brother in Christ" or "Dear Sister in Christ" and copied for all participating residents. Wheat must be completed, folded where necessary and submitted to the Wheat Team on or before the third team formation meeting.

Table leaders are asked to write a personal note of encouragement to each resident at their table, which is given with the wheat bags on Sunday. The stationary and envelopes will be provided by the Wheat Team on Saturday of the weekend.

