

TACSC's *Monthly Menagerie of Ideas*



Growing Leaders Since 1982

May 2005



A monthly collection of LEADERSHIP activities...

THANK YOU for visiting TACSC's MONTHLY MENAGERIE OF IDEAS. Every month you will find more ways to boost leadership, morale and involvement at your school!

If you would like to submit an article for www.tacsc.org or for TACSC's Leadership Times, please email us at tacsc@tacsc.org. We want to hear what is happening at YOUR school!

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TACSC's Monthly Menagerie of Ideas

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The Association of Catholic Student Councils

WE GROW LEADERS™

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NEXT MONTH:

Officer In-Service: Religious Activities Part II

Officer In-Service- Religious Activities Part I

Widen Your Horizon - By Sara Stricker

To people involved in Student Council, the **Commissioner of Religious Activities** job is to create opportunities for students to experience God on all grade levels. That is a very narrow horizon that leads people to underestimate this important position. Making sure everyone connects with God is a big responsibility. It involves working with principals, teachers, priests, and committees to develop a variety of activities throughout the school year.



If you are already the **Commissioner of Religious Activities** for your Student Council, you may believe your job consists of creating one or two prayer services. This is the most common activity, and a great way to connect with God through readings, blessings, the Eucharist, the homily, and prayers. But God belongs to everyone, so shouldn't each person be allowed to praise God in his or her own way?

There are other alternatives. For example, it has been said that when you sing to God it is like praying twice. So what about throwing a "Jammin' for Jesus Pep Rally?" Fun and religious songs could be played. Psalms 47:1 says "*Clap your hands for joy, all peoples, Praise God with loud songs.*" A prayer service doesn't always have to be quiet and solemn.

As the **Commissioner of Religious Activities** for your school, you need to accept new ideas. New ideas lead to new activities, ensuring that everyone experiences God. Widen your horizon and you will think of new ways to praise God.

It is best to plan these activities around the liturgical seasons. This will give you a framework and guide you in creating new ideas. You can choose one theme and carry it throughout the school year, or change from season to season. Here are the liturgical seasons:

The liturgical calendar is full of wonderful religious holidays. It gives the **Commissioner of Religious Activities** many opportunities to plan creative activities that show God belongs to everyone!

Fall

September:

Reunite, Welcome,
Beginnings
Labor Day
Holy Childhood Day
Grandparent's Day

October:

Rosary Month
World Food Day
Columbus Day
Halloween

November:

All Saint's Day
All Soul's Day
Veteran's Day
Christ the King
Thanksgiving

Winter

December:

Advent
Our Lady of Guadalupe
Immaculate Conception
Christmas
Holy Family

January:

New Year's
Epiphany
Baptism
Martin Luther King Day

February:

President's Day
Saint Valentine's Day

March:

Lent
Saint Patrick's Day
Palm Sunday

Spring

April:

Holy Thursday
Good Friday
Easter
Earth Day

May:

Memorial Day
Mother's Day
Month of Mary
Ascension Thursday

June:

Pentecost
Flag Day
Father's Day
Farewell

Next Month:
**How to Form a Religious Activities
Committee and Plan Liturgies!**
Don't Miss It!

Holiday Activity - Catching the Spirit of Pentecost

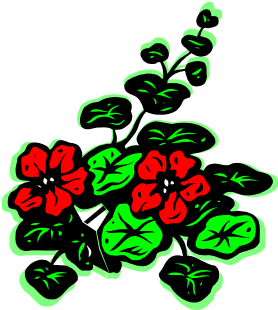
Pentecost or Whitsunday is a great feast. Ethel Marbach (<http://www.catholicculture.org/lit/activities/>) explains the significance of this celebration.



The night of **Pentecost**, like Easter night, is considered by many to be one of the great "blessed nights" of the year. Ascending hilltops and mountains in the early dawn is called "catching the Holy Spirit," which symbolically expresses the thought that only by means of prayer can the graces of the Holy Spirit be caught.

The superstitious ascribed a special power of healing to the dew that fell that night, and walked barefoot through it at dawning.

In Germany, banquets are held (*Pfingstgelage*) and a **Pentecost** Bride (May Queen) is chosen (*Pfingstbraut*) and whips are cracked all through Whitsunday night (*Pfingstschnalzen*.) The red peony is designated the Rose of Pentecost (*Pfingstrose*) and the oriole becomes the Pentecost bird (*Pfingstvogel*).



To celebrate **Pentecost** in YOUR school cut out red flowers and birds with "I'm filled with the Holy Spirit" printed on them and pass them out to every person in school including the teachers, administration and staff.

Have a **Pentecost** Assembly and make red jello, red punch, red licorice, and cinnamon candy for everyone to share. After the assembly all the classes can mingle and enjoy the red treats!

Recognition Project - Memorial Day

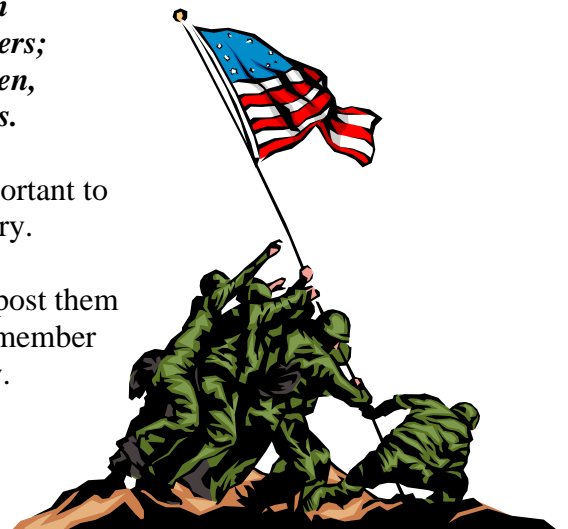
To help your students celebrate Memorial Day with a deeper understanding of its history and importance, you might begin by sharing these lines, from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, about soldiers who died in battle:

*Your silent tents of green
We deck with fragrant flowers;
Yours has the suffering been,
The memory shall be ours.*

Invite students to discuss the meaning of the poem and why it is important to remember the men and women who have died fighting for our country.

Have students write prayers for the soldiers - past and present - and post them in the hallways and in classrooms. Each morning, a student council member can read one prayer at the beginning and at the end of the school day.

Share these prayers all month in memory of the men and women who protect our country.



Service Project -

Help Your Teachers Clean!

School is almost out for the Summer! This is an exciting thought and one I'm sure you've been dreaming about for a while. But there is much work to be done before you leave for the break. I bet your teachers are ready for the Summer, too! And they have a lot of cleaning and organizing to accomplish before they get to relax.



Why not help them with their work so EVERYONE can get a great start to Summer? There are books to count, desks to clean, papers to recycle...the list goes on indefinitely! Your teachers would sure appreciate a helping hand. Have each student council member visit a class and encourage students to sign up -- after the student council does, of course! There will be a lot of helpers for each class. And work is so much more fun when a group of people share the chores. Try to have students sign up for different grade levels and mix students up so everyone meets new friends.

Prayer Service - National Prayer Day

In 1775 the First Continental Congress proclaimed National Prayer Day but it wasn't until 1952 that congress set aside the first Thursday in May as its official observance. All over the United States people will be gathering together to join in prayer.

When we pray we can talk to God about anything we want we can pray anywhere we want. We can tell how wonderful He is and thank Him for our world. We can ask him to help us be better followers of Jesus, and tell him we are sorry for whatever we have done wrong.



Thank you for visiting the
MENAGERIE OF IDEAS at www.tacsc.org.

See you next month!