

CELEBRATING YOUR GIFTS

by Patrick M. Mulcahy

PURPOSE

To have each youth look at the failures and successes of his or her life, with emphasis on successes and the knowledge that he or she is a talented individual chosen by God for a part of his plan.

PREPARATION

You will need a Bible, paper and pencil for each person. Gather a few rolls of toilet paper.

OPENING

Open with the game All You Need. Have the group sit in a circle and pass the rolls of toilet paper. Tell the youth they are to take as much as they think they'll need for the duration of the meeting. Explain there is no toilet paper in the bathrooms (because you just took it) and they should take some "just in case." After the participants have taken a supply, explain they now need to share one thing about themselves with the group for each piece of toilet paper they have in their possession.

THE "MEAT" OF THE MEETING

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-31. Discuss the fact that all people have talents and gifts and God intends them to use the gifts for his plan. It doesn't matter what the gifts are, all are important. Distribute paper and pencils.

Each person is to write the three greatest successes and three worst failures of the past year. Allow a few minutes for this. The leader should do this, too. Discuss and openly share the participants' answers. Emphasize that failures are only temporary setbacks. We pick up and go on utilizing our talents and successes.

On the other side of the paper, have the youth list all their talents. They should consider: sports, music, scholastic ability, community service, public speaking, acting, dancing, sewing, cooking, crafts, painting, sketching, sculpting, writing, organizing, leadership and anything else.

Each person should share and discuss his or her list. Stress that all the talents are great and are gifts from God and should be used for the best possible goal.

RESPONSE (OR CLOSING)

Divide into groups of six to eight. Ask each team to quickly write and prepare a funny skit—in the style of a television commercial. The skit should emphasize the bad things commercials say about people to get them to buy products. The commercials should be geared to people who need help with body odor, bad breath, ugly teeth, slippery dentures, sinus trouble, athlete's foot, iron-poor blood, dandruff, acne, age spots or

whatever. The youth then explain how their product can help.

The commercials should be 30 seconds to one minute. Afterward, talk about the silliness of many commercials. Emphasize that to make money, the commercials de-

grade people and make a major case of small problems. Commercials such as these often can create feelings of insecurity.

Thank God that he doesn't think of us as commercials often portray people.