



Dear Parent,

Our Fall Retreat is just around the corner. I wanted to take some time to explain a little more about its theme and what your student can expect to learn at this event. This will also give you a chance to start praying for your child and for us as we prepare to engage in this amazing experience for the sake of your child's spiritual growth.

We see outcasts everyday—people who fit under a different stereotype, don't look like us, like what we like, or believe the same things. It's easy to walk away from the outcast, leaving them forever in that category, but Jesus never did. Instead, he walked into the difficulty of their lives to bring them the ultimate insider experience—belonging in his family. At a quick stop at a well on a hot day, Jesus shows us how it's done. And now we are called to go to the outcasts and bring them in. After all, we all want to fit in and feel like we belong, but we've all felt like outcasts at some point.

That's what FlipSide is all about: God has made it possible for *everyone* to be part of his family. And once we're on the *inside*, he asks us to be on the lookout for others who need an invitation to join.

That's why we've decided our Fall Retreat theme will be *Outcast*. At this event, your child can expect to:

- Look in depth at the story of how Jesus engages with the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4—and how they can engage with the world the way Jesus did.
- Identify what makes someone an outsider, and begin to see themselves and others with God's eyes.
- Be challenged to look beyond social stigmas, differences, and past behaviors, in order to make the first move in bringing someone back into community.
- Learn how Jesus put himself in our shoes so he could offer us grace, and how Jesus' example shows us how to show empathy and grace to others.
- Be confronted with the truth that only God can heal our brokenness. And when we (former outcasts) are transformed by his love, we are compelled to share our stories, inviting other outcasts to join his family.

Closer to the start of Fall Retreat, I will send you a follow-up Parent Guide with two important pieces of information:

- A detailed description of all four of our session topics we will be covering during *Outcast*.
- Follow-up questions you can use to dig deeper with your child at home about the things they learned at Fall Retreat.

We realize that you, as parents, are the primary faith influencers in a young person's life. Thank you for all you do to support and lead your child's spiritual growth. We appreciate your prayers for your child and for the amazing things we know God can do during this event!