



LIFE TEEN

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Writer: Lily Hannan, Allison Deuteran, Robert Peñate

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LIFE TEEN
Leading Teens Closer to Christ
www.LifeTeen.com

QUICK GLANCE

ONE CHOICE

The Dignity of the Human Person

GOAL

The goal of “One Choice” is to help teens understand the inherent worth of every person and encourage them to conform their hearts to God’s heart, enabling their words and actions to reflect the dignity of the human person.

KEY TERMS

Pro-Life, Human Dignity, Social Justice

SCRIPTURE

Genesis 1:26-27, 31; Matthew 5:21-22; John 3:16-17, 10:10;
Romans 5:8

CATECHISM

2239, 2258-2262

RESOURCES

Spotify: “LT - Gather Music” (spotify:user:lifeteen)

Spotify: “LT - Break Music” (spotify:user:lifeteen)

Spotify: “LT - Send Music” (spotify:user:lifeteen)

Life Teen: “The Older Brother” (Life Support: September 2017)

Christopher Georges: “My Prayer Time — Instrumental Prayer and Worship Music” (youtube.com)

GOD TV “You Are Beautiful - Mike Young” (youtube.com)

AleissaCaraVEVO: “Alessia Cara - Scars To Your Beautiful” (youtube.com)

GATHER

The Life Night begins with a Gather in which teens create string art to emphasize how attached they get to things of their own creation.

PROCLAIM

The following are the key concepts of the Proclaim:

- An authentic pro-life lifestyle is about making one consistent choice to recognize the inherent dignity of all people and treat all people, no matter the circumstance, with respect by conforming our hearts to God’s heart.
- God chose to create us in His image and likeness. He chose to make us like His very self. In fact, when God created us, He called us “very good.”
- People not only have the right to life but also a right to life to the fullest. Social injustices, anger, hatred, and apathy violate human dignity and a consistent pro-life attitude.

BREAK

The teens break into small groups to brainstorm ways they can be more consistently pro-life in their homes, schools, and communities, and they are encouraged to commit to two of their ideas.

SEND

The teens engage in a Scriptural reflection on how much they are loved.

PREP

ONE CHOICE

The Dignity of the Human Person

SETUP

Decorate the room with pictures and short biographies of various people in the style of “Humans of New York.” Showcase the young and old, the rich and poor, famous athletes, celebrities, and pictures of people from Life Teen, the parish, and the teens’ schools and families. Get these pictures from Google images, Instagram accounts, or Snapchat.

For the Gather, have corkboard or foam board, nails, scissors, colored string or yarn, and copies of the “String Art Template” handout on tables. This handout can be found at the end of this Life Night.

SUPPLIES

- Tables
- Corkboard or foam-board
- Nails
- Scissors
- Colored string or yarn
- String art templates
- Bibles
- Butcher paper
- Markers
- “Pro-Life Commitment Card” handout copies
- “String Art Template” handout copies
- Mirrors, one per person

ASSIGNMENTS

Use the following list to assign core members to specific tasks:

Setup:

Gather:

Proclaim:

Break:

Send:

OUTLINE

ONE CHOICE

The Dignity of the Human Person

GATHER

String Art (25 min)

As teens enter, the core members welcome them and help get them started creating string art. Use the provided templates, which can be found at the end of this Life Night. Consider creating templates unique to the area. Think about local colleges that the seniors may want to attend, local sports teams that the teens may support, or the abbreviation of the parish's name.

Instruct the teens to outline their chosen image with nails, spacing them approximately a half-inch apart. Then, tie one end of a piece of colored string around the first nail and begin to loop it around the others. This can be done in any pattern; it does not have to be uniform. If they get to the end of a piece of string, tie it to the nearest nail and start with a new piece of string.

Suggestions

For a more varied Gather, consider giving teens an assortment of crafts to choose from. Provide sketchbooks, pencils, adult coloring books, colored pencils, Legos, and colored or patterned paper with origami directions.

Transition from the Gather to the Proclaim by instructing the teens to grab their string art and sit near the front of the main meeting space. Let them know they can finish it later if need be. Then, welcome them to the Life Night, begin in prayer, and introduce the core member giving the Proclaim.

PROCLAIM

“One Choice” Proclaim Teaching (15 min)

The teaching can be found on pages 13 to 16. The following key concepts are covered in the teaching:

- An authentic pro-life lifestyle is about making one consistent choice to recognize the inherent dignity of all people and treat all people, no matter the circumstance, with respect by conforming our hearts to God's heart.
- God chose to create us in His image and likeness. He chose to make us like His very self. In fact, when God created us, He called us “very good.”
- People not only have the right to life but also a right to life to the fullest. Social injustices, anger, hatred, and apathy violate human dignity and a consistent pro-life attitude.

BREAK

The Choice to Love Others (20 min)

Divide the teens into small groups of six to eight, with at least one core member in each group. Give each teen a Bible and instruct them to open their Bible to Matthew 25:31-45 and reference this passage throughout the small group. Additionally, project the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy. Transition in the activity by using the following:

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus told His disciples that helping those in need is an essential aspect of the Christian life. He told them to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and visit the ill and imprisoned. Based on the words of Jesus, the Church lists fourteen works of mercy that will help us love others as God does and defend their right to life. Then, we will brainstorm ways to incorporate these works of mercy into our lives in small groups.

Give each small group a large sheet of butcher paper and markers, and instruct them to create three lists. The first list details ways to be pro-life at home. The second list is ways they can be pro-life at school. Finally, a third list details ways

they can be pro-life in their community. Encourage them to be creative and concrete. For example, rather than “Give food to someone hungry,” encourage the teens to have a more concrete plan that names a food pantry or soup kitchen they can volunteer at or plans to have granola bars in the car to give to a person experiencing homelessness.

Once the lists are created, instruct the core members to hand out the Pro-Life Commitment Cards, which can be found at the end of this Life Night. Have each teen choose two items from the lists they just brainstormed and commit to doing them throughout the week. Ask the teens to share what they are committing to and instruct core members to create a group chat to check in during the next few weeks that follow to see if they were able to keep their commitments.

Lastly, hang the posters near the exits of the main meeting space as an additional reminder.

SEND

The Choice to Love Oneself (15 min)

Instruct the teens to spread throughout the main meeting space, giving each other personal space so as to not distract one another. Play prayerful recorded music and distribute small mirrors and pens and paper so they can write down the words or phrases they want to remember most from the reflection. Encourage the teens to actively commit to looking at themselves throughout the entire reflection and not be distracted. Have a priest or a fatherly core member slowly and prayerfully read through the following reflection:

You and I have dignity and value, just like everyone else. And loving ourselves is vital to being able to love others. But we can be our own harshest critics. While it can be easy to see the goodness and beauty in our family and friends, we can struggle to see it in ourselves. But God sees it. And He always tries to tell us just how beautiful and good we are. These are God’s words to all of us.

Project and read Genesis 1:26-27, 31.

My child, I love you. Look at your reflection closely. Can you see why? Do you see how good and beautiful you are? I created you in

my image and likeness. No matter what you do or where you go, I will always love you more than you can imagine. Even if you turn your back on me, even if you go against me, I will never love you less. You are good because I made you, and I made you worthy of being loved.

Project and read Jeremiah 1:5 and Psalm 139:13, 16.

From the very first moment of your existence, I loved you. Before your parents even knew you, I loved you. And I created you for a purpose. I made you because I wanted you and had a plan for you.

Project and read Matthew 10:29-30.

I know you better than anyone else. I know who you are, where you have been, and what you have done. I see the hurt and joy you have experienced. I know your ups and downs, achievements and disappointments, and I love you through it all. I love you because you are worth loving.

Project and read Exodus 19:5.

You are my treasured possession. I have not cast you aside nor forgotten about you. Rather, I care for you each day. I pay attention to your needs and your desires. And though you sometimes doubt it, I have your best interest in mind.

Project and read Jeremiah 29:11.

I have such grand plans for you, so I want to give you many things because I love you. I made you for greatness and have put it within your grasp.

Project and read Revelation 21:3-4.

One day, you will be made perfect because you are worth it. I will remove all those things that cause you suffering because I love you and do not want to see you in pain. You deserve to be loved, which is why I am here to tell you that I love you. I always have, and I always will.

Close the Life Night by praying a Hail Mary as a large group.

PROCLAIM

ONE CHOICE

The Dignity of the Human Person

GETTING STARTED

This teaching is provided to give you an example of how to present this topic in an age-appropriate way, making it relevant to high school teens.

KEY TERMS

Pro-Life: The recognition and respect of the dignity of the human person, regardless of circumstance.

Human Dignity: The belief that because all people are created in God's image, they have fundamental worth.

Social Justice: The rights which flow from human dignity and procedures that guarantee respect.

TEACHING GUIDE

Begin the Proclaim by asking the teens what they think when they hear the term "pro-life." Then, ask them what they think of when they hear the term "pro-choice." Finally, ask them to compare the terms "pro-life" and "anti-abortion." Briefly discuss their comments and then transition into the rest of the teaching.

PRO-LIFE IS A CHOICE

We often hear the terms "pro-life" and "pro-choice" associated with abortion. They are political terms, rallying cries, and are often thrown around without much definition or background.

The Catholic Church offers a pro-life teaching. We believe that all people have the right to life and that governments must support this right. By utilizing our political system — writing to members

of Congress, supporting pro-life initiatives, voting pro-life — we can provide care and resources to the most vulnerable. In fact, it is the duty of the lay faithful to influence politics to serve the common good. (CCC 1913-1915, 2239)

However, being authentically pro-life is not just about making pro-life choices regarding controversial political issues, like abortion. Instead, being authentically pro-life is about making one consistent choice to love and respect all people, regardless of the circumstances, whether it is politically visible or not.

At the core of what it means to be pro-life is the recognition of the inherent human dignity of all people; it is recognizing and respecting that every person we meet is infinitely and immeasurably valuable. This value does not come from whether or not they can survive outside their mother's womb, what they can contribute to society, their grades, sports or art accomplishments, or what brands they wear; it comes from the fact that they are children of God, created by God in His image and likeness. (Genesis 1:26-27)

Project and slowly read Genesis 1:26-27, 31.

In the book of Genesis, God the Father lays the foundation for how much He loves and values us. God chose to create us in His image and likeness. He chose to make us like His very self. He did not have to. He did not create anything else that way. However, He wanted us to be like Him and have dominion over the rest of creation. In fact, when God created us, He called us "very good." (Genesis 1:31)

God reveals our value to us even more in the New Testament. The Incarnation and the Crucifixion show us how much God thinks we are worth. First, think about the Incarnation. The God of the universe, who made everything, chose to become human. He did not decide to become a dog, cat, or even an adorable penguin, but human. Jesus took on growing pains, hunger, thirst, and emotions, and He walked with us. Now, think about the Crucifixion. Jesus became a man, suffered, and died to save us from the separating effects of sin. (John 3:16-17; Romans 5:8)

CREATE AND DESTROY

Ask the following, “How would you feel if I asked you to destroy your string art?” Then, after a few moments of silence, consider destroying your string art project.

Many of us would be hesitant if we were asked to destroy our creations. After all, we put time, effort, and creativity into making it. In a certain way, we put part of ourselves into it. Our art reflects and reveals us. We might even say it has our fingerprint on it. And like our fingerprints, our art is unique. Even if we were to try and re-create our art again, it would probably come out different than the original. Similarly, every human being is one of God’s works of art. He created us and put a part of Himself into us. Each of us reflects and uniquely reveals Him. Every person we meet bears a fingerprint of God.

Project and read CCC 2258.

God created and values every human life. Just like how it would hurt to destroy what we made, it hurts God even more when we do not respect what He has created. (CCC 2258)

THE RIGHT TO (A FULL) LIFE

Furthermore, while Jesus was on Earth, He told us that He had come so that we could have life to the fullest. There is more to life than just surviving. We were made to thrive. (John 10:10)

Share an example from a TV series or movie about characters wanting to do more than survive, but thrive.

Although Jesus died to give us life to the fullest, we live in a world where people still struggle to simply survive. The world suffers mightily from an epidemic of homelessness, hunger, and poverty due to socioeconomic and climate-changing factors. Too often, we are apathetic to their suffering, too focused on ourselves to reach out to someone in greater need. If we ignore the injustices around us, we are not living out our consistent pro-life choice. (Pope Francis: “Laudato Si’,” 20-22)

But it is not just our inaction and apathy that prevent us from being authentically pro-life. Sometimes we act anti-life and are not even aware of it.

Project and read Matthew 5:21-22.

Jesus reminds us that hatred and insults towards others are all common violations of other people’s right to life. When we manipulate, use, bully, or speak out in hatred, we are not authentically pro-life.

Share a story of when you realized how you were treating people was not pro-life.

Being pro-life is not just a label, a sign we hold, a shirt we wear, a post we share, or a homily we hear; it is a lifestyle. It involves valuing what God values — justice and mercy — and enabling our actions and words to always reflect the dignity of every human person. Sometimes being pro-life means volunteering at a food pantry or a homeless shelter or donating items to those in need. Other times being pro-life means showing mercy and compassion to our enemies and those who do not “fit in” our social groups.

Going Deeper

The Church lists seven Spiritual Works of Mercy and seven Corporal Works of Mercy. The Works of Mercy are ways we can help meet each other’s physical and spiritual needs. God’s presence becomes known in caring for each other and living out these Works of Mercy. In fact, God’s presence is so apparent in the Works of Mercy that even people without faith can often recognize their goodness. (CCC 2447)

Invite the teens to list as many of the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy as they can. List any works of mercy the teens did not name. The following are the Corporal Works of Mercy: feed the hungry, give water to the thirsty, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, visit the sick, visit the imprisoned (or ransom the captive), and bury the dead. The following are the Spiritual Works of Mercy: instruct the ignorant, counsel the doubtful, admonish the sinners, bear patiently those who wrong us, forgive offenses, comfort the afflicted, and pray for the living and the dead.

When we care for a person’s physical, spiritual, or emotional needs, our actions must flow from our one choice to love people according to their inherent dignity. If we can choose to do that and commit to it, we will begin to be aware of the opportunities God gives us every day to be pro-life and live a bold and abundant life in Him.

STRING ART TEMPLATE

Cut out the shape and place it over the foam board. Place nails over the dots into the foam board. Weave string back and forth between the dots to create string art. Carefully, tear away the template.



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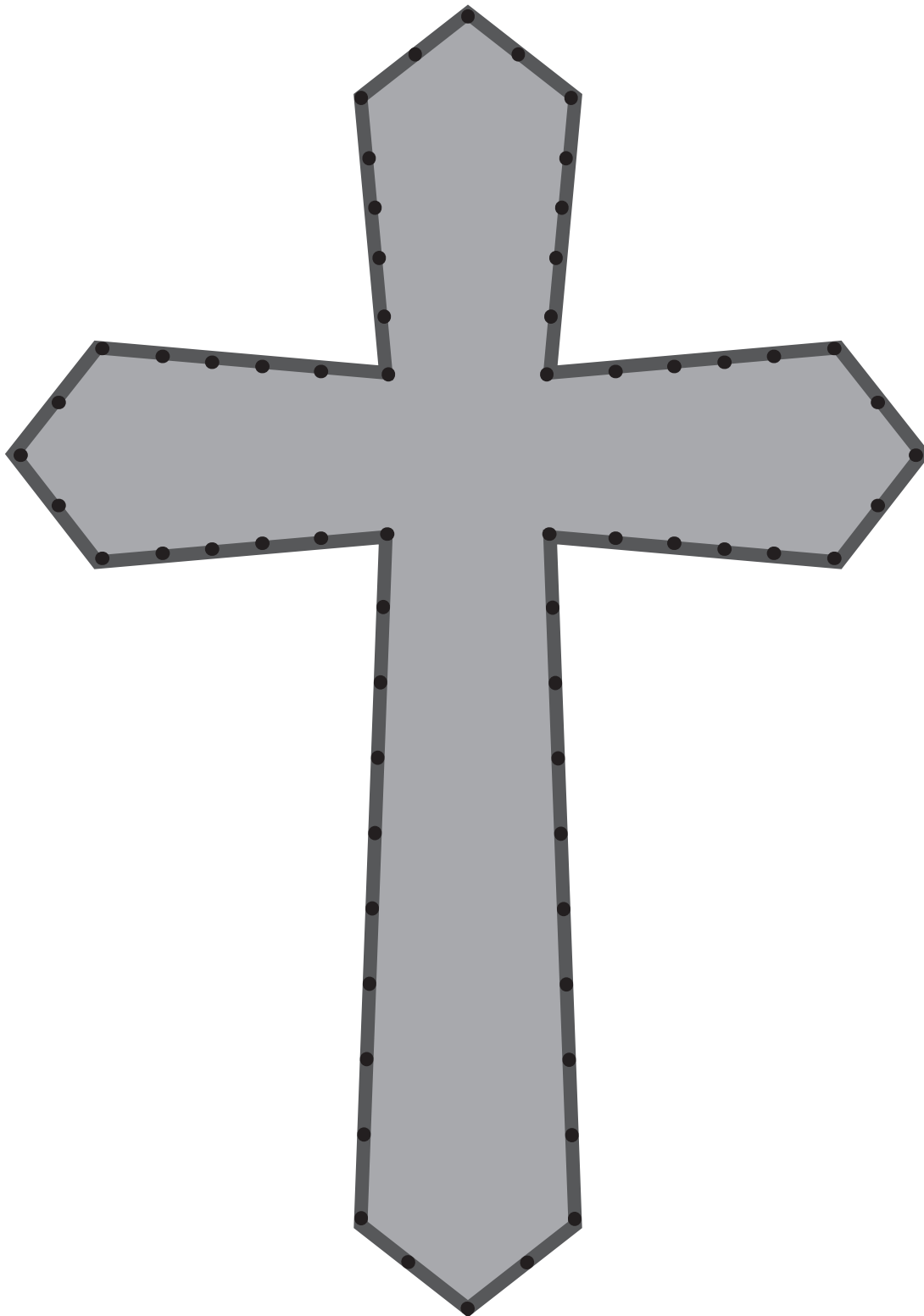
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PRO-LIFE COMMITMENT CARD

This week, I commit to making the choice to be consistently pro-life in the following ways:

- _____

- _____

Signature: _____



PRO-LIFE COMMITMENT CARD

This week, I commit to making the choice to be consistently pro-life in the following ways:

- _____

- _____

Signature: _____



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- _____

Signature: _____



ONE CHOICE

The Dignity of the Human Person

DEAR PARENTS AND FAMILY

At the core of what it means to be pro-life is the recognition of the inherent human dignity of all people; it is recognizing and respecting that every person we meet is infinitely and immeasurably valuable. This value does not come from whether or not they can survive outside their mother's womb, what they can contribute to society, their grades, sports or art accomplishments, or what brands they wear; it comes from the fact that they are children of God, created by God in His image and likeness. (Genesis 1:26-27)

The goal of "One Choice" is to help teens understand the inherent worth of every person and encourage them to conform their hearts to God's heart, enabling their words and actions to reflect the dignity of the human person. The conversation starters below will help you talk to your teen about the content they learned during the Life Night.

KEY CONCEPTS

- An authentic pro-life lifestyle is about making one consistent choice to recognize the inherent dignity of all people and treat all people, no matter the circumstance, with respect by conforming our hearts to God's heart.
- God chose to create us in His image and likeness. He chose to make us like His very self. In fact, when God created us, He called us "very good."
- People not only have the right to life but also a right to life to the fullest. Social injustices, anger, hatred, and apathy violate human dignity and a consistent pro-life attitude.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

"Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.' So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." (Genesis 1:26-27)

CATECHISM REFERENCE

"Human life is sacred because from its beginning it involves the creative action of God and it remains for ever in a special relationship with the Creator, who is its sole end. God alone is the Lord of life from its beginning until its end: no one can under any circumstance claim for himself the right directly to destroy an innocent human being." (CCC 2258)

CONVERSATION STARTERS

Parents: Instead of facilitating a discussion, take time to write your son or daughter a letter. In this letter, explain how much you love them and how valuable they are to you. Make sure not to base this love on something your son or daughter accomplished but by being a beautiful creation of God. That is simply enough!



EDGE

INFRARED

What Happens When I Am Confirmed?

GOAL

Middle school youth learn what happens internally and externally when a person receives the Sacrament of Confirmation and what it means to be a fully initiated Catholic.

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 11:2; 1 Samuel 16:13; Luke 4:19; Acts 1:8, 2:1-41; Romans 8:14-16; Ephesians 1:13; 2 Timothy 1:6

CATECHISM

1303, 1316-1317, 1320, 1322

RESOURCES

- “8 Things You Need to Know About Confirmation” (lifeteen.com)
- Meredith Andrews, “Spirit of the Living God” (spotify.com)
- “Bishop Barron on the Sacrament of Confirmation” (youtube.com)
- “CHOSEN: What Happens At Confirmation” (youtube.com)
- “Confirmation: Strengthened by the Spirit, Called to Action” (usccb.org)
- Mark Hart, “Three Misconceptions of Confirmation” (lifeteen.com)
- Fr. John Muir, “The Sacrament of Confirmation” (youtube.com)

GATHER

A game of new identities playfully introduces concepts of Confirmation. Core members assume roles, and the youth discover these “new” core members are suspects in a mystery. Youth use clues to figure out whodunit! This game incorporates sacramental ideas, such as taking on a saint name and the importance of Christ.

PROCLAIM

The following are the main teaching points of the Proclaim:

- Confirmation completes Baptism by deepening baptismal grace and sealing the gifts of the Holy Spirit in our lives. The outward signs of this interior change are the holy oil, called sacred Chrism, the laying on of the priest’s hands, and the words of the sacrament.
- The Sacrament of Confirmation imprints a spiritual mark on the soul that draws us closer to Christ and strengthens our bond with His Church.
- Confirmation is one of the Sacraments of Initiation that make us fully initiated members of the Church.

BREAK

Youth receive a Sacrament Collector Card containing information about Confirmation. These cards allow them to return home with tangible reminders of the sacrament. Small groups then play a game where they hear definitions and guess which Confirmation-related word fits to familiarize them with the details of the sacrament.

SEND

A prayer activity uses Scripture from Pentecost to allow youth to determine which gifts of the Holy Spirit they are most and least familiar with and ask the Holy Spirit to increase those gifts in their lives. This prayer reminds the youth of the powerful ways the Holy Spirit can work in their lives.

WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Open one envelope each day this week and perform the daily challenge. The entire Edge program will do the same challenge alongside you throughout the week.

INFRARED

What Happens When I Am Confirmed?

PREP

There are three special upcoming opportunities for priest involvement at Edge. Contact your parish priest about participating in a hot wings challenge in the Proclaim for this Edge Night. In addition, make arrangements for Eucharistic Adoration for next week's Edge Night and Anointing of the Sick on the fifth Edge Night of the series.

Contact your music minister or a core member capable of leading worship about playing a praise song during the Send.

Read the instructions for the Holy Spirit displays in the Send portion of this Edge Night. Begin construction and assembly plans. Enlist the help of handy core members to create the displays. Find examples of displays by following "Life_Teen" on Pinterest and accessing the "Edge: Look Closer" board.

Download the "Sacraments Trivia, Week 3" video loop found on the August 2022 Edge USB and online at lifeteen.com under Edge Support: August 2022.

Print and cut the "Character Cards" and "Chrism Clues" handouts found on the August 2022 Edge USB and online at lifeteen.com under Edge Support: August 2022.

Print and cut the Confirmation card from the "Sacrament Collector Card" handout found on the August 2022 Edge USB and online at lifeteen.com under Edge Support: August 2022.

Copy Definition Confirmation from the Break portion of this Edge Night for each core member.

Print and cut the "Weekly Challenge" handout found on the August 2022 Edge USB and online at lifeteen.com under Edge Support: August 2022. Then, prepare the envelope sets for the Weekly Challenge, one per person.

Review the supplies list and collect all the materials needed for the Edge Night.

Search YouTube or Spotify for bouncy instrumental music, sound effects, and mysterious instrumental music for the Gather game in this Edge Night.

PREP

SETUP

Test all audio and video elements of the Edge Night.

Follow the Environment suggestions for the series, keeping the adhesive glow-in-the-dark stars from the first Edge Night and one 3D poster from the second. In addition, for this Edge Night:

1. Print infrared images, mount them on colored construction paper, and post them around the meeting space. Follow Edge on Pinterest to find some suggested images.
2. Hang cut-outs of doves and flames from the ceiling using fishing lines of varying lengths.

Prepare the hot wings.

Set up the Holy Spirit prayer displays for the Send prayer activity. Also, set up a table with a tablecloth in a central location the youth can easily approach within the prayer area. Scatter across the table enough tealight candles for each person to take two. Stage lighters or long matches out of view for core members to use.

Play the "ES - Look Closer" Spotify playlist as youth enter, and project the "Sacraments Trivia, Week 3" video loop found on the August 2022 Edge USB and online at lifeteen.com under Edge Support: August 2022.

SUPPLIES

Prepare the following supplies:

- G: "Character Cards" handout, one per core member
- G: "Chrism Clues" handout, one per youth
- G: Writing utensils, one per person
- G: Counterfeit jar of "chrism" oil
- P: Hot wings, napkins, drinking water
- P: Bible
- B: Confirmation Sacrament Collector Card, one per person
- B: Bowl of M&Ms, one per small group (optional)
- S: Gifts of the Holy Spirit displays
- S: Tealight candles, two per person
- S: Stick lighters or long matches
- S: Weekly Challenge envelope sets, one per youth

INFRARED

What Happens When I Am Confirmed?

GATHER

Preselect a core member to turn off the video loop and project the environment image for this series. The environment image is found on the August 2022 Edge USB and online at lifeteen.com under Edge Support: August 2022.

Edge Night Introduction (5 min)

Welcome the youth and introduce those there for the first time. Invite the preselected core member to begin in prayer. Then, give a brief overview of the Edge Night topic, using the following as an example:

We are learning about the sacraments through the “Look Closer” series. Last week, we learned about the Sacrament of Baptism, and we will learn more about Confirmation and the Holy Spirit through this Edge Night. We read about the Holy Spirit in the Bible. At the beginning of the second chapter of the book of the Acts of the Apostle, the Holy Spirit came to the apostles as strong, rushing wind and tongues of fire. We receive the same Holy Spirit at Confirmation. The presence of the Holy Spirit within us sets our hearts on fire for Christ and His Church.

In this Edge session we are going to use infrared vision to look more closely at the Sacrament of Confirmation. Infrared vision is heat-detecting technology that tracks energy. The hotter an object, the more infrared energy it emits. Since flames often depict the Holy Spirit, we can use the example of infrared vision to attune our senses to where the power of the Holy Spirit is present in our lives.

The Case of the Missing Chrism (15 min)

Before the Edge Night, ask five core members to volunteer to play the characters in this game. Give them each one role assignment from the “Character Cards” handout.

1. Tell the youth there are “new” core members at the Edge Night. Invite everyone to stand and mingle around the room, challenging the youth to find the new core members by talking with each one and finding out their favorite part of Catholicism. The core member volunteers should assume their roles and mingle throughout the group, interspersed with core members who are not playing a role. During the mingling, play bouncy instrumental music.
2. Allow a few minutes for the youth to chat with the core members. Then, cut the music and dramatically announce that the Chrism is missing! A suspenseful sound effect would be a nice touch following the announcement. For an added surprise, invite the pastor to burst into the room and announce that the Chrism is missing. Have the priest take the culprit to Reconciliation once they are found out.

OUTLINE

3. Explain that no one can receive Confirmation until the Chrism is found and that the new core members are suspects.
4. Divide the youth into small groups. Provide each small group with writing utensils and a copy of the “Chrism Clues” handout.
5. Resume mingling. Using the clues on the handout and their conversations with the core members, have the small groups work as teams to determine the culprit. Play mysterious instrumental music.
6. The first small group to correctly guess the culprit wins! Then, have the culprit return a fake bottle of “chrism” and offer the winning small group a prize to make amends.

Suggestions

With a large group, things may feel chaotic, and core members might get swarmed if the youth mingle freely. Consider dividing into small groups at the start of the Gather and rotating the small groups through chatting with each core member.

Step It Up

Encourage the core members to get creative with their characters and provide costumes, wigs, and props for them to incorporate.

PROCLAIM

“Infrared” Teaching Reflection (10 min)

The teaching can be found on pages 58 to 61. The following are the main points covered in the teaching:

- Confirmation completes Baptism by deepening baptismal grace and sealing the gifts of the Holy Spirit in our lives. The outward signs of this interior change are the holy oil, called sacred chrism, the laying on of the priest’s hands, and the words of the sacrament.
- The Sacrament of Confirmation imprints a spiritual mark on the soul that draws us closer to Christ and strengthens our bond with His Church.
- Confirmation is one of the Sacraments of Initiation that make us fully initiated members of the Church.

BREAK

Sacrament Collector Cards (5 min)

Divide the large group into their preassigned small groups. Core members greet the youth and check in with each person. Then, core members distribute the Confirmation Sacrament Collector Cards and discuss the information about Confirmation listed on the back.

Definition Confirmation (10 min)

Read the following definitions one at a time, and have the youth guess the answers.

- The third person of the Trinity, whom we encounter in a new way in Confirmation. (ANSWER: Holy Spirit)
- The day the Holy Spirit came to the apostles, giving them the grace to boldly preach the Gospel. (ANSWER: Pentecost)
- The collective name for the seven virtues listed in Isaiah 11 that grow in us when we allow the Holy Spirit in our lives. (ANSWER: Gifts of the Holy Spirit)
- Oil blessed by a bishop that is used to anoint people during Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders. (ANSWER: Chrism)
- Men who have received the fullness of Holy Orders, oversee a diocese, and are the ordinary ministers of Confirmation. (ANSWER: Bishops)
- The term for someone seeking to receive Confirmation. (ANSWER: Candidate or Confirmandi)
- The person who supports the Confirmation candidate and presents the candidate to the bishop as a true witness of Christ. (ANSWER: Sponsor)
- The term for people in heaven with God. We can ask for their intercession and often take on one of their names at Confirmation. (ANSWER: Saints)

Step It Up

Make this Break more active by providing the youth with a bowl of M&Ms, Skittles, or other small objects. Instead of answering the questions aloud, have them spell their answers out in M&Ms.

Small Group Discussion (10 min)

Use the following questions to foster a discussion within the small group:

- Whip Around Question: Which food-related superpower would you choose: never burning your mouth on hot food or the ability to eat spicy foods with ease?
- Which gift of the Holy Spirit are you most familiar with?
- Which gift of the Holy Spirit are you least familiar with?

- Which saint would/did you choose as your Confirmation saint? Why?
- Whom would/did you choose as a Confirmation sponsor? Why?

Eighth-Grade Adaptation

Use the following questions for a more challenging discussion for eighth-grade youth:

- What would you say to a friend who was unsure whether they wanted to receive Confirmation?
- Do you most often address God the Father, God the Son, or God the Holy Spirit when you pray? Why?
- Describe a time you recognized the Holy Spirit working through you.

Hispanic Inculturation

Many Hispanics have strong devotions to particular saints, such as Our Lady of Guadalupe and St. Jude. Compare this cultural relationship to the saints with a personal relationship with a saint. Encourage your small group members to learn about a new saint who can be a powerful prayer ally.

SEND

Holy Spirit Prayer (15 min)

Before the Edge Night, create one display for each gift of the Holy Spirit. These can be simple posters with the gifts written on them, foam board displays, or small stands made of wood and decorated. Set them surrounding the prayer space.

In the space used for the Send, set up a table with a tablecloth in a central location the youth can easily approach. Then, gather enough tealight candles that each youth can take two. Provide several core members with stick lighters or long matches, and ask them to stand near the displays.

Gather the youth in the prayer space, and invite everyone to sit. Begin with the Sign of the Cross and read Acts 2:1-4. When proclaiming Scripture, read from a Bible rather than a print-out or digital device. Then introduce the prayer activity, using the following as an example:

Tonight, we discussed the gifts of the Holy Spirit: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. We just heard how the Holy Spirit came to the apostles in one of their darkest moments and moved their hearts. When we accept the Holy Spirit into our lives, especially in the Sacrament of Confirmation, He will move our hearts, just like He did for the apostles.

We have displays surrounding us, one for each of the seven gifts: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. Which gift resonates the most with you and makes the most sense to you? Which do you understand the least and need to learn more about? As we listen to this song, you can take two candles and have a core member light them. Place one candle in front of the gift of the Holy Spirit that most resonates with you. Place the second candle in front of the gift of the Holy Spirit you want to learn more about. We will then close in prayer together, asking the Holy Spirit to increase these gifts in us. Take your time during this prayer activity.

Invite the music minister to play “Spirit of the Living God” by Meredith Andrews as the youth quietly reflect, then take their candles, light them, and place them by the displays. Once the song has finished, and everyone has set their candles, close in prayer using the following as an example:

Holy Spirit, thank you for the gifts you give us. For your wisdom and understanding, counsel and fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. Help us open our hearts to these wonderful gifts. Let us look for opportunities to use these gifts as we go about our everyday lives. Make us more aware of the moments when you call us to love you better and share your love with others. Amen.

Conclude with the Sign of the Cross.

Suggestions

If possible, conduct this prayer activity outside, using a fire pit to light the tealight candles. Selecting an outdoor area away from distractions such as pick-up traffic and other parish events occurring on campus is preferable.

Weekly Challenge (5 min)

Instruct core members to pass out the Weekly Challenge envelope sets, one per youth. Then, invite the preselected core members to present the Weekly Challenge:

Open one envelope each day this week and perform the daily challenge. The entire Edge program will do the same challenge alongside you throughout the week.

Dismiss the core members preassigned to parking lot safety.

Make announcements relative to your program.

Dismiss the youth.

INFRARED

What Happens When I Am Confirmed?

GETTING STARTED

This Teaching Guide is a starting point for crafting a talk relevant to middle school youth. It provides bullet points of information and writing areas for presenter notes.

Going Deeper call-out boxes offer further insights to consider, and the Hispanic Inculturation call-out boxes provide suggestions that highlight cultural context.

The presenter's preparation, prayer, and personalization of this outline will add the elements essential to delivering an impactful Proclaim.

TEACHING GUIDE

Heat-Seeking

Begin the Proclaim with a hot wings challenge, a light-hearted way to humanize the parish priest and emphasize the fire/heat imagery of the Holy Spirit. If a priest is not available, invite one or more core members to participate instead. Be sure to have at least two participants and one host.

During the Edge Night, bring the priest and/or core members forward and have them eat hot wings as they answer questions about their experiences receiving Confirmation. These questions are practical and concrete. The theological information will be presented in the main teaching.

1. How old were you and what grade were you in when you received Confirmation? Where were you confirmed?
2. Who was your Confirmation sponsor? How did you select them? What is your relationship with your sponsor today?
3. What saint name did you choose? What drew you to this saint? How do you continue to engage with this saint today?
4. What are your memories of Confirmation preparation or the Mass?
5. How did the Sacrament of Confirmation change you?

Suggestions

Add additional time to the Proclaim section of this Edge Night if you include the hot wings challenge. Then, be sure to have water or milk and napkins for the hot wings participants.

PROCLAIM

- Each sacrament has outward signs that signal something spiritual happening under the surface. Looking closer at the sacraments, we will learn the deeper meanings of the signs.
- Jesus established sacraments as a way to share grace with us throughout our lifetimes. You may recall grace is the life of Jesus in our souls. Jesus made the sacraments to give Himself to us and help us remain in a relationship with Him.

Ask the youth to raise their hands if they have already received Confirmation. Then, invite them to share some memories of the sacrament.

- You may already be somewhat familiar with the Sacrament of Confirmation, so we will review it quickly and then dive into the deeper meanings.

Read John 14:16-17 or preselect a core member or middle school student to read the passage. When proclaiming Scripture, read directly from a Bible. If a core member or youth will read the Scripture proclamation, be sure to give it to them ahead of time so they can proclaim it well.

- In this Scripture passage, Jesus says He will ask God to send the Advocate. This is another name for the Holy Spirit. We know this happened because Jesus asked. We also know God sent the Holy Spirit because we read it in Scripture.
- Many names and symbols refer to the Holy Spirit in Scripture. These include the Advocate, the Paraclete, Spirit, a dove, a rushing wind, and tongues of fire. (Genesis 1:2; Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:10; John 14:26, 15:26; Acts 2:2)
- A group of apostles and disciples were gathered in one place, and the Holy Spirit appeared to them as tongues of fire, empowering them to boldly preach about Jesus. The coming of the Holy Spirit is detailed in the Acts of the Apostles, a book of the Bible that comes after the Gospels.

Read Acts 2:1-4, 14, 22-24.

- The event described in the Acts of the Apostles is called Pentecost. This is the day the Holy Spirit came to dwell with us through the Catholic Church. Therefore, some people refer to Pentecost as the birthday of the Church.
- We received the same Holy Spirit in Confirmation, and the Holy Spirit gives us the grace to live out our faith through service to others.
- We can use the analogy of infrared glasses to understand Confirmation. Infrared lenses help us see in the dark. They use all light available, including light not normally visible to the human eye, to see their surroundings. Confirmation enables us to better see the Holy Spirit at work in the world and our lives.
- When we feel surrounded by darkness, Confirmation's graces guide us toward the Holy Spirit's light. The Holy Spirit's fire always burns within us, encouraging us to live our faith bravely.
- Confirmation completes the work of God that Baptism began within us. The gifts of the Holy Spirit first received at baptism are strengthened by receiving the Holy Spirit in Confirmation. (CCC 1303, 1316)

- Baptism makes us God’s sons and daughters and members of the Church. Confirmation strengthens our bond with God and with the Church. (CCC 1303, 1316)
- We know the sacraments are effective signs of grace. The outward sign of Confirmation is the bishop anointing us with holy oil called Chrism and laying his hands on us in prayer as he says, “Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (CCC 1320)

Make Your Mark

- The bishop marks us with Chrism to signify confirmation’s mark on our souls. The Church calls this an “indelible mark.” (CCC 1317)
- Some sacraments, including Confirmation, can only be received once. These sacraments leave indelible marks on our souls because these sacraments permanently change our souls.

Going Deeper

Ask the youth to guess which two other sacraments give indelible marks and can only be received once. The two other sacraments that leave indelible marks are Baptism and Holy Orders.

- Receiving the indelible mark of Confirmation strengthens our connection to God and the Church. That happens through the sacramental graces of Confirmation.
- This sacrament provides many sacramental graces. Openness to Confirmation’s graces can dramatically impact how we live our faith. (CCC 1303)

Ask the large group to recall the names of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, introduced at the previous Edge Night.

- Confirmation strengthens these gifts within us: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. We grow more like Christ every time we use these gifts. (CCC 1303)
- Wisdom gives us good judgment as we live our faith. Understanding provides deep insight and the ability to discern the truth.
- Counsel helps us give good advice and openly receive sound advice from God and others. Fortitude is courage and unwavering commitment to follow God.
- Knowledge helps us study and learn, especially about our faith. Piety is personal holiness, formed through prayer and growing in virtue.
- Fear of the Lord is not about being afraid! Instead, it is respect for God and humble gratitude for His good gifts.
- Exercising these gifts draws us closer to Christ, and these gifts are ways we can show God’s love to others, building up the Church.

Hispanic Inculturation

Generous and thoughtful gift-giving is a common practice at Latino birthdays, weddings, anniversaries, and holidays. Compare this well-known tradition to the spiritual gifts the Holy Spirit lavishes upon us.

Fully Initiated

Ask the youth if they can define or explain the word “initiation.”

- Initiation means the start of something. It also means allowing someone membership in a group.

Remind the youth that the sacraments are categorized by Sacraments of Initiation, Sacraments of Healing, and Sacraments of Vocation. Ask them to recall which three sacraments are Sacraments of Initiation.

- The Church has three Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. Baptism is a Sacrament of Initiation because it starts our lives as followers of Christ and makes us members of the Church.
- Confirmation is a Sacrament of Initiation because it impacts our membership in the Church. Confirmation is one part of becoming fully initiated members of the Church.

Going Deeper

Using CCC 1322, explain how the Eucharist is also a Sacrament of Initiation.

- This does not mean that we were not members of the Church before receiving Confirmation. Faith before Confirmation is like a bike with training wheels.
- Even with training wheels, we are exercising many important bike-riding skills. But removing the training wheels, we ride the bike without extra support.
- Training wheels supported us as we learned to ride. Before Confirmation, the Church supported us as we grew in faith.
- With Confirmation, the training wheels come off. Confirmation’s sacramental graces enable us to take ownership of our faith, share it, and defend it, like the apostles.
- For those who have received Confirmation, remember the sacramental graces we received. Let us use those graces this week, listening to where the Holy Spirit may be calling us.
- For those who have not been confirmed, remember that the Holy Spirit still loves us and gives us a share in these gifts. Let us ask the Holy Spirit to help us grow in faith as we move toward receiving this sacrament.

