

LIFE TEEN

Leading Teens Closer to Christ
www.LifeTeen.com

ALIVE AND DANGEROUS

A LIFE NIGHT SERIES ON BEING FULLY ALIVE

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ABOUT THIS SERIES

Each one of us was created from love, for love, to love. Teenagers feel this desire to love and to be loved but struggle with defining it and acting upon it.

Only God can satisfy this desire. However, we choose, time and time again, things other than God to fill this void. We settle for substitutes and counterfeits of God's love.

If we choose to turn to God with this desire, we can live extraordinary lives. Our lives can be full of adventure, healthy risk and reward, and fulfillment. Our lives can be radically generous and loving.

Jesus Christ came that we might have life and have it abundantly (John 10:10). Jesus Christ came so that we could know the Father and the Holy Spirit and live in communion with the three persons of the Holy Trinity (Matthew 11:27). It is in this relationship where we find the fulfillment of all desire. *Alive and Dangerous* explores this desire for love and how it is fulfilled in God.

STRUCTURE AND METHOD

Alive and Dangerous is a four-part series and is best if the Life Nights are executed in order.

If this is the first programming of your calendar year, implement a Social or Kick-Off Life Night before beginning the series.

The Life Nights easily flow from one to the next. However, if you would like to take a certain topic further you can either schedule an additional mid-week Life Night or add a Life Night to the series itself. Suggestions for additional Life Night's are found in the *As You Get Started* section.

Between *Alive and Dangerous* and the next Life Night Series or Curriculum Guide, offer a Social Life Night to break up the series.

Alive and Dangerous is written to be relevant and engaging. It discusses current trends and behaviors while applying the truth and richness of Sacred Scripture and the tradition of the Church. It is important to keep returning to the main themes by pointing the teens to God's love, which alone can satisfy, and to the call to live an extraordinary life. Each Life Night can and should be adapted to fit the culture and needs of your youth ministry program.

CORE PREPARATION

Alive and Dangerous addresses the importance of making counter-cultural decisions to live a life that is satisfied in the love of God and extraordinary. Before the series begins, give your Core Members a challenge that will make them uncomfortable, but in the end, leads them to a more extraordinary week. For example, challenge them to give up social media for a week. When tempted to check an app, instruct them to pray for a specific intention instead. Alternatively, challenge them to give up screens for a night. Instead of screen time, they can go on an adventure like:

- rock climbing
- a bike ride
- a walk in the park

Alive and Dangerous also encourages prayer and the practice of *lectio divina* as part of living an extraordinary life and being satisfied in Jesus. In advance, teach or re-teach *lectio divina* to your Core Members so they can in turn teach and give witness to God speaking to them personally through His Word.

INTRODUCTORY MATERIAL

Each Life Night begins with a *Goal*, *Key Concepts*, *Key Terms* and *Scripture* and *Catechism* references. These sections work together to provide an overview of the content and themes of the Life Night.

ABOUT THIS LIFE NIGHT

About This Life Night briefly describes the *Gather, Proclaim, Break* and *Send*. It provides a step-by-step framework for the Life Night.

ENVIRONMENT

The *Environment* section offers ideas on how to create a meeting space that supports the content and main themes of the Life Night. Not only can the environment be part of the evangelization and catechetical process, but also the effort and creativity put into it can make the teens feel valued and welcomed.

MEDIA SUGGESTIONS

Media Suggestions provides music and video clip suggestions that creatively support the content and main themes of the Life Nights. While planning, take a look at the *Media Suggestions* and consider weaving a video clip or song into the Life Night. Media communicates with our hearts and minds in a unique, powerful way – especially the hearts and minds of teenagers.

AS YOU GET STARTED

As You Get Started offers adaptations to keep in mind as you read through and plan the Life Night.

HISPANIC INCULTURATION

Across the United States, the Hispanic population in Catholic parishes is large and growing. According to the *National Study of Catholic Parishes with Hispanic Ministry*, 38 to 40 percent of adult Catholics self-identify as Hispanic. Additionally, Hispanics account for 71 percent of growth of the Catholic population in the United States since 1960.

To meet this growing need, Life Teen has added a *Hispanic Inculturation* section to Life Nights. This section was developed by a group of dedicated youth ministers who serve at largely Hispanic parishes throughout the United States and Mexico.

We recognize that not all Hispanic communities are the same. It is our hope that this section assists youth ministers in adapting to the needs of their specific community by providing insight into the Hispanic culture.

PROCLAIM

In this series, you will find two versions of the Proclaim teaching for each Life Night. The first is an outline of content. Use this outline to add in your own testimony, imagery, and personality. This Proclaim Outline lays the main points for the teaching quickly so the person giving the Proclaim can expand upon them. The Proclaim Details teaching offers a more detailed version of the teaching with examples, images, and suggested expansion on the key points. Use them both to help write a Proclaim that fits your youth group and local community.

SMALL GROUPS

We recommend that teens are divided into gender-specific small groups during the first Life Night of the series and stay in those groups for the duration of the series. Gender-specific small groups allow the teens to be more vulnerable and genuine because it eliminates the need to impress a romantic interest. Do your best to have the same Core Members leading the same small groups at each Life Night. This will lead to greater trust and deeper small group discussions.

“*Whip Around*” questions are included in the small group discussion questions. These questions require a quick, one word or phrase answer. Choose one teen to answer first and then travel clockwise until all the teens answer. These questions help teens get comfortable responding in small group.

HANDOUTS

All the handouts for Life Nights are on the *September 2015 Life Teen USB*. The handouts are formatted for you

to easily print and copy on standard letter-size paper. Please be diligent in accessing and looking these over while planning the Life Nights.

SOCIAL MEDIA RECAP AND PACKAGE

The Social Media Recap and Package provides Instagram images, hashtags, and tweets that both you and your teens can use to engage in social media throughout the week. They recap the main themes and remind teens of the important aspects of the Life Night. Find these at the end of every Life Night and on the *September 2015 Life Teen USB*.

PARENT UPDATE

The *Parent Update* contains *Content Overview* and *Conversation Starters* for each Life Night. The *Parent Update* not only includes and equips the parents in the formation and catechesis of their teens, but also provides them with an opportunity for ongoing conversion and catechesis.

The *Parent Update* is available in both English and Spanish. If you have a bilingual community, we recommend double side printing the *Parent Update* in both English and Spanish. Teens, and sometimes even Core Members, have the tendency to grab any handout, not necessarily the right handout. We want the right handout to get in the hands of parents. Also, if the word gets out in your community that you are handing out bilingual materials the Spanish speaking community will feel more welcomed and encouraged to be involved.

USCCB FRAMEWORK

For parishes using the USCCB framework for high school catechesis, this series will work with your Scripture semester.

Notes: _____



LIFE NIGHT OVERVIEW

ALIVE

A LIFE NIGHT ON OUR CALL TOWARD LOVE

GOAL

The goal of *Alive* is to explore why we were created. It discusses how we were created from love and for love, and that we are created to love. The Life Night challenges teenagers to be satisfied in God's love and live extraordinary lives.

KEY CONCEPTS

- Beneath our everyday desires to do well in school and sports or to hang out with friends, there's a much deeper desire. We desire to be known, loved, and to be extraordinary.
- The Trinity is the mystery of one God in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In His very essence, God is a relationship of love.
- It is out of love that God created us. We are created from love, for love, to love God and others. Only God's love and will for our lives can satisfy our desire to be known, loved, and extraordinary.

KEY TERMS:

Holy Trinity
Love
Grace

SCRIPTURE:

Psalm 63:1-3
Mathew 11:27
John 10:10
1 John 4:8

CATECHISM:

27, 68
253-255
1776
1996
2559-2565

ABOUT THIS LIFE NIGHT

This Life Night begins with a two-part Gather. The small group icebreaker, "*Would You Rather*," builds community and lays the foundation for deeper small group discussions. The activity, "*Name That Movie*," has the teens guessing movie titles by listening to the movie's theme song and transitions into the Proclaim. The Proclaim explores our desires and how to be satisfied and live extraordinary lives in Jesus Christ. The Break is a small group discussion that will help the teens recognize their desires and discover that Jesus is the fulfillment of all desire. The Send teaches *lectio divina*, a prayer that helps us grow in a relationship with Jesus Christ through meditations on Sacred Scripture.

ENVIRONMENT

The environment for this Life Night feels epic. As the teens enter have the soundtracks of epic movies (Dark Night, Hunger Games, The Avengers, Transformers) playing loudly. Have the lights dimmed and put the *Alive and Dangerous* slide on the projector screen.

Instruct the Core Members to come dressed as their favorite hero. Encourage them to use items from their own closet to come up with a creative representation of their character. Once the teens figure out that one Core Member is dressed as a hero, they can have fun guessing whom the other Core Members are dressed as.

MEDIA SUGGESTIONS

Soul Pancake: "Kid President's Letter To A Person On Their First Day Here."
(youtube.com)

Paytonisnotarobot: "Ultimate Super Hero Montage."
(youtube.com)

SOCIAL MEDIA HASHTAGS: #alive #fleemediocrity

AS YOU GET STARTED...

For a *larger than life* Environment, choose one movie and use Google Image or Pinterest to search party decorations for that movie. For example, search “divergent party decorations.” Use these ideas to transform your meeting space into a different world. Have your Core Members dress as characters from that one movie.

For a *more current Proclaim*, switch out the movies and characters mentioned to movies you hear your teens talking about or movies that were recently released.

If you want to *challenge* your teens, encourage them to look for and act on opportunities to love throughout the week, e.g. sitting with a lonely teen on the bus, giving food or water to a homeless person they pass by, patiently listening to a friend who needs attention and care. Begin the small group at the next Life Night by talking about their experience of loving others.

HISPANIC INCULTURATION

By Ivan Garcia

The Hispanic family is larger than the traditional, nuclear family. The immediate family extends to grandma, grandpa, aunts, uncles, and cousins. Hispanics are family oriented. The family works together for the success and happiness of everyone in their community. Because of their generous and communal upbringing, it will be easy for Hispanic teens to grasp that they were created to love God and others. However, it might be difficult for them to understand and live out the personal nature of prayer and the call to become extraordinary as individuals

Hispanic families often pray in community. They go to Mass, pray the rosary and other communal prayers together. Sometimes it is out of routine, and sometimes it is out of genuine devotion. *Alive* teaches personal, silent prayer, which is counter-cultural for a Hispanic teen.

During the Proclaim or Send, encourage the teens to make communal prayer personal, by choosing to enter into it with genuine devotion and intention of investing in their own relationship with Jesus. For example, the teens can use a rosary pamphlet to reflect on the life of Christ while praying the rosary with their community.

In addition to engaging in communal prayer, encourage the teens to find a rhythm of personal prayer that will help them grow in their personal relationship with Jesus.

Furthermore, because of the centrality of family, it might be difficult for the teens to understand and live out the call to be extraordinary.

Excelling as an individual, or becoming extraordinary, is not readily supported by the Hispanic family. The family generally improves together. If a teen works hard, saves money and buys a car, the whole family benefits from the extra car. The teen may now pick up siblings from school or let mom or dad borrow the car to get to work. It is good to remember that the family helped the teen get the job, and get to and from the job before they bought the car. This is the give and take of the Hispanic family.

Adapt the Proclaim to be more family oriented by mentioning that not only are teens called to be extraordinary, but everyone in their family is also called to live an extraordinary life. Invite the teens to be an example of extraordinary living in their families and lead the way for the whole family living in relationship with God.

Also in the Proclaim, mention well-liked Hispanic heroes like, Chapuline Colorado and El Chavo de Ocho, who are known for their comedic rescues. The speaker may reference current soccer players that are admired by teens like, Ronaldinho, Leo Messi, Pele, and Cristiano Ronaldo.

LIFE NIGHT: **ALIVE**

GATHER

Welcome and Prayer (5 min)

Gather the teens into the main meeting space. Welcome them to the Life Night and begin in prayer.

Small Group: “Would You Rather?” (10 min)

This Life Night begins with a small group icebreaker to help small groups get to know each other early in the series. Divide the teens into permanent, gender-specific small groups.

“Would You Rather” encourages every teen to talk while building trust and community. Core Members facilitate and also play this game. Core Members instruct the teens to go around in a circle and answer the following “would you rather” questions (add your own, as well):

Would you rather...?

Be Tris (Divergent) or Katniss (Hunger Games)?

Be Wolverine or Cyclops (X-Men)?

Be able to fly or be able to be invisible?

Have no Internet or no cell phone?

Watch a win compilation or fail compilation on YouTube?

Date a celebrity of your choice or your crush?

Find true love or 10 million dollars?

Have a rewind button or pause button for your life?

Activity: “Name That Movie!” (10 min)

Have the teens stay in their small groups and bring their attention to the front of the room. This game is not played in small groups, but there is no need to move the teens.

Play the theme song from a popular movie. Instruct the teens to listen and guess the name of the movie based on the song. To guess, the teens must raise their hands and

be called on. The first teen to guess correctly wins a piece of candy. This process is repeated with a different theme song each time. Before the Life Night, prepare the music by either purchasing or streaming and cueing the main scores of the following movies. A lengthy selection of songs is needed because these movies are well known and will be guessed quickly.

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| • Batman Begins | • Star Wars |
| • Captain America | • PAN |
| • Guardians of the Galaxy | • Gladiator |
| • Spiderman | • Minions |
| • Dark Knight | • Superman |
| • Avengers | • Divergent Series |
| • X-Men | • Transformers |
| • The Hunger Games Series | • Pirates of Caribbean |
| • Sherlock Holmes | • Iron Man |
| • The Last Samurai | • Batman VS Superman:
Dawn of Justice |

PROCLAIM

“Alive” Teaching (15 min)

The youth minister gives this teaching. It explores our desires, teaches how to be satisfied in God, and how to live extraordinary lives. Outlines for the teaching are found on pages 17 to 23.

BREAK

Small Group Discussion (15 min)

Have the teens get in the same small groups they were in earlier in the Life Night. The Core Member opens in prayer and leads the small group discussion using the following questions:

- *Whip Around:* Choose one word that describes how that talk made you feel? For example, the talk made me feel _____. (Encouraged, inspired, doubtful, bored, etc...)

- If you were to be a real life hero, what would your story be?
- What do you desire? What longings are on your heart?
- How does being “created from love” affect you?
- How does being “created for love” affect you?
- How does Saint Pope John Paul II’s definition of love differ from the common definition of love?
- How can you become extraordinary?

SEND

Lectio Divina (20 min)

The youth minister instructs the teens to find a quiet spot to pray inside the main meeting space. Encourage the teens to choose a spot away from distractions like friends and open doors. The Core Members then pass out the *lectio divina* handout found on the *September 2015 USB* drive or online at LifeTeen.com.

The youth minister explains that *lectio divina* is a type of prayer that lends itself to hearing God’s voice through His Word. By praying *lectio divina*, we can enter into a relationship with Jesus and hear him speak to us personally.

Begin a time of silence so the teens can pray through the *lectio divina* handout. After the teens have finished praying, encourage them to take the handout home and establish a habit of praying *lectio divina* once a week with the Sunday Mass readings.

Notes: _____



PROCLAIM OUTLINE

ALIVE

KEY WORDS

The Trinity: The mystery of one God in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In His very essence, God is a relationship of love.

Love: To love God above all else simply because He is God, and to love others as ourselves by seeking their ultimate good.

Grace: Free and undeserved help from God to respond to the call to become His children. It is participation in the life of the Trinity.

TEACHING POINTS

DESIRE

- Beneath our everyday desires to do well in school and sports or to hang out with friends, there’s a much deeper desire to be loved and be extraordinary.
- *(The speaker shares how he/she discovered their desire to be known, loved and to be extraordinary and how God has and will continue to fulfill that desire.)*
- By understanding that we were created to love and know God, we can become who we were created to be and live extraordinary lives.

CREATED FROM LOVE, FOR LOVE

- God is a mystery, three persons, one God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is one divine substance with three distinct natures. (CCC 253-255)



ALIVE

TEACHING

DESIRE

Many popular movies and stories begin with a desire and a longing for something more. The protagonists want to become more than what they already are so they can serve the common good. In *Batman Begins*, Bruce Wayne travels to the Far East to train in the martial arts so he can rid Gotham City of crime. In *Iron Man*, Tony Stark invents a suit that empowers him to fight terrorism.

Tris Prior in the *Divergent Series* discovers that her strengths are not limited to the strengths found in only one of five factions, but that she has the strengths found in all of them. The series chronicles her journey to becoming who she is, more complete, so that she can save the factions from obliteration.

Sometimes we hear a story, see a movie, hear a song, and it awakens something in us... an ache, a yearning. Beneath our everyday desires to do well in school and sports or to hang out with friends, there's a much deeper desire.

We desire to be known, loved, and to be extraordinary. Our hearts long for this. If we close our eyes, slow our thoughts, focus on our hearts, and are brave enough to feel it, we sense a burning desire for more.

(The speaker shares how he/she discovered their desire to be known, loved and to be extraordinary and how God has and will continue to fulfill that desire.)

- God is love. To have love, you need three things: You need to have a lover, a beloved, and the relationship between the two. (1 John 4:8)
- The Father loves the Son and the Son loves the Father. Their love creates a third person, the Holy Spirit.
- It is out of this relationship of love that we were created.
- We need to take time to develop our relationship with God, just like other relationships in our lives.

CREATED TO LOVE

- Saint Pope John Paul II gives us an important definition of love as an action, not a feeling. This action is to seek the good of others. (Theology of the Body 13:4)
- Love that seeks the good of others looks different in different relationships.
- We need grace to live out God's love. Grace is the free and undeserved help that God gives us to respond to His call to love others. (CCC 1996)

EXTRAORDINARY LIFE IN JESUS

- Jesus Christ came that we might have life and have it abundantly. It is in Christ where we find the fulfillment of all desire. (John 10:10, Matthew 11:27)
- By believing that we were created from love, for love, to love, we can begin our journey with Jesus to become satisfied in Him and live extraordinary lives. (CCC 68)

By understanding that we were created from love, for love, to love, we can begin our journey to be satisfied in God, become who we were created to be, and live extraordinary lives.

CREATED FROM LOVE, FOR LOVE

God is a mystery, three persons, one God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is one divine substance with three distinct natures.

CCC 253-255

Each person of the Trinity is not part God. The Father is not 1/3 God. The Son is not 1/3 God. The Holy Spirit is not 1/3 God. Each person is fully God. The Father is God. The Son is God. The Holy Spirit is God.

God is love. To have love, you need three things: You need to have a lover, a beloved, and the relationship between the two.

1 John 4:8

The Father loves the Son and gives Himself totally to the Son. The Son receives the gift of the Father's love and reciprocates it back to the Father. The love between them is so profound that it is itself the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit.

It is out of this relationship of love that we were created. We were also created to live in relationship with the Holy Trinity. This design is written on our hearts. As Saint Augustine said, "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you."

Confessions 1:1

It is the love of God and only the love of God that satisfies us.

CCC 27

Like our relationships with our friends and family, we need to take the time to develop a meaningful relationship with God. We have to hang out and talk. We have to let Him into our lives, even the dark places. We call this prayer.

We can develop different relationships with different persons of the Trinity.

CCC 2565

God is our Father. He cares about, protects, and provides for His children. We can receive His love and live in a relationship with Him by asking Him to take care of us and by trusting in Him.

God is our Savior and Brother. Jesus became man to be with us and lead us to the Father. We can receive His love and live in a relationship with Him by having faith and following Him.

God is our Sanctifier. The Holy Spirit helps us become holy. He draws us to prayer. He directs and advises our actions. We can receive His love and live in a relationship with Him by listening for and responding to His promptings.

Because we were created from the love of God, for the love of God, we can only be satisfied in a relationship with God. If we fail to do so, we end up grasping at worldly things that will continually disappoint us.

Saint Pope John Paul II encourages us to turn to God for satisfaction: "It is Jesus in fact that you seek when you dream of happiness; he is waiting for you when nothing else you find satisfies you; he is the beauty to which you are so attracted; it is he who provoked you with that thirst for fullness that will not let you settle for compromise; it is he who urges you to shed the masks of a false life; it is he who reads in your heart your most genuine choices, the choices that others try to stifle."- Saint Pope John Paul II, World Youth Day 2000, Vigil of Prayer. (*Consider projecting this quote on a slide during the Proclaim.*)

CREATED TO LOVE

We were created with a purpose, to love. When we think of love, we are reminded of the dizzying and ecstatic feelings associated with being in love. Saint Pope John Paul II gave us a different definition of love. He defines love as an action, not a feeling. This action is to seek the good of others.

Theology of the Body 13:4

Love that seeks the good of others looks different in different relationships. We love our siblings by going to their sports games and helping them with homework. We love our friends by listening to them. We love our neighbors in need by feeding the hungry.

If we are created from love, for love, and we live in that love, we then receive the grace needed to truly love others. Grace is the free and undeserved help that God gives us to respond to His call to love others.

CCC 1996

By living in a relationship with God, our lives start to look and feel different. We are talking to God. We are turning to Him and trusting in Him. We are taking risks. Instead of bouncing from social event to social event, we are enjoying a relationship with God. Instead of ignoring the new kid eating lunch alone, we have the courage to sit and talk to him. Instead of zoning out and watching TV for hours, we serve our brothers and sisters in need. All of this flows from our relationship with God and the grace we have received.

CCC 1776

EXTRAORDINARY LIFE IN JESUS

Jesus Christ came that we might have life and have it abundantly. Jesus Christ came so that we could know the Father and the Spirit and live in communion with the three persons of the Trinity. It is here and only here where we find the fulfillment of all desire.

John 10:10, Matthew 11:27

Jesus Christ came that we might have extraordinary lives. Lives that are not ordinary but full of adventure, risk, reward, disappointment, satisfaction, and, most importantly, full of love.

By believing that we were created from love, for love, to love, we can begin our journey with Jesus to become satisfied in Him and live extraordinary lives.

CCC 68

This series explores our desire for God, our call to live extraordinary lives and, obstacles that get in our way. God’s love satisfies us and sends us forth with grace. He is our strength, our Ironman suit, and our divergent nature.

Notes: _____



CORE TEAM OVERVIEW

ALIVE: A Life Night on our call toward love.

GOAL: The goal of *Alive* is to explore why we were created. It discusses how we were created from love and for love, and that we are created to love. The Life Night challenges teenagers to be satisfied in God's love and live extraordinary lives.

GATHER (25 MINS):

Welcome and Prayer: _____

Small Group: _____

“Would You Rather?”

This exercise encourages every teen to talk while building trust and community. Core Members facilitate and also play this game. Core Members instruct the teens to go around in a circle and answer the following “would you rather” questions (add your own, as well):

- Would you rather...?
- *Be Tris (Divergent) or Katniss (Hunger Games)?*
- *Be Wolverine or Cyclops (X-Men)?*
- *Be able to fly or be able to be invisible?*
- *Have no Internet or no cell phone?*
- *Watch a win compilation or fail compilation on YouTube?*
- *Date a celebrity of your choice or your crush?*
- *Find true love or 10 million dollars?*
- *Have a rewind button or pause button for your life?*

Activity - Name That Movie!:

PROCLAIM (15 MINS):

“Alive” Teaching: _____

BREAK (15 MINS):

Small Group Discussion: _____

- Whip Around: Choose one word that describes how that talk made you feel? For example, the talk made me feel _____. (Encouraged, inspired, doubtful, bored, etc...)
- If you were to be a real life hero, what would your story be?
- What do you desire? What longings are on your heart?
- How does being “created from love” affect you?
- How does being “created for love” affect you?
- How does Saint Pope John Paul II’s definition of love differ from the common definition of love?
- How can you become extraordinary?

SEND (20 MINS):

Lectio Divina: _____

Notes: _____



OVERFED YET STARVING

A LIFE NIGHT ON SUBSTITUTES TO GOD'S LOVE

GOAL

The goal of *Overfed Yet Starving* is to bring awareness to substitutes of God's love that keep us overfed yet starving. The Life Night introduces the teens to ways they can be satisfied by the extraordinary, the Bread of Life, in Eucharistic Adoration, as opposed to ordinary substitutes, like streaming TV and social media.

KEY CONCEPTS

- Unfortunately, many of us don't know how to respond to our ache for God. Instead of turning to God and being satisfied in Him, we turn to lesser substitutes like streaming TV and social media.
- God has provided for and satisfied His people throughout salvation history, and He continues to satisfy us today. We must stop the cycle of consuming things that do not satisfy and turn to Jesus, the Bread of Life, to be satisfied.
- Experiencing God and the satisfaction that comes from a relationship with Him is not limited to prayer. God's presence can also be found in our relationships with others and recreation.

KEY TERMS:

Satisfaction
Prayer
Recreation

SCRIPTURE:

Exodus 16:15,18
Psalm 63:1,6
Matthew 15:37
John 4:7-41
John 6:35
Romans 8:22-23

CATECHISM:

27
32-33
1391-1396
1718

ABOUT THIS LIFE NIGHT

As the teens arrive, they are welcomed and encouraged to participate in one of the many recreational activities offered. There is only one rule; no cell phone use allowed. The Proclaim focuses on how God satisfied His people throughout salvation history and how He continues to satisfy us today. It also brings awareness to behaviors that we think we enjoy but, in reality, may prevent us from being truly satisfied. During the Break, the teens identify and set limits for these behaviors. The Life Night ends with a time of Eucharistic Adoration and the opportunity to be satisfied by the Bread of Life.

ENVIRONMENT

The environment for this Life Night is relaxed with a variety of recreational activities. Have a few tables set up with board games and a few tables with snacks and drinks. Get a game of basketball, Frisbee, or soccer started outside. Put the *Overfed Yet Starving* slide on the projector and play contemporary music in the background.

MEDIA SUGGESTIONS

Blimey Cow: "Messy Monday's: Mindless Consumers. "
(youtube video)

Hadoka: "Put Down Your Phone"
(youtube video)

Life Teen Video Support September 2014:
"Created To Adore"
(lifeteen.com)

SOCIAL MEDIA HASHTAGS: #overfedyetstarving
#breadoflife

AS YOU GET STARTED...

For a smaller youth group, for the Gather, instead of having a variety of recreational activities, choose one sport, like soccer or Frisbee.

To go deeper, during the Proclaim, have a Core Member give a testimony about desiring God and being satisfied in Him.

The Send, Adoration, *could include music*. If you have a music minister, consider inviting him/her to lead worship with periods of silence. In advance, inform him/her of the content of the Life Night so he/she can choose fitting songs. Or consider preparing and playing a playlist of songs that reinforce the idea of being satisfied in Jesus. For example, *Restless* by Audrey Assad or *Consumed By Grace* by Marian Grace.

For teens that want more direction in learning how to pray, offer an additional session on how to pray. Choose one type of prayer and teach it thoroughly. Some suggested types of prayer are; ACTS, (Adoration, Contrition, Thanksgiving, Supplication) lectio divina, and Ignatian Prayer.

HISPANIC INCULTURATION

By Ivan Garcia

During the Proclaim, encourage the teens to establish meaningful relationships with family members. Meaningful relationships are relationships that make us better people and help us make good decisions. They require effort and honesty. It is easy to sit around and talk about nothing important. It is easy to be on the phone during family time. Like consuming, these activities only wear us down. Encourage meaningful relationships that build us up.

It is also easier for a mom or dad to allow a teen go to Church more or pray more if their child shares those experiences with them. By sharing, the teen makes the

family feel included and part of their journey. Feeling excluded or in the dark, will only lead to family members feeling suspicious or jealous.

Often, Hispanic teens will be discouraged from attending multiple events at the parish because it takes away from the time they could be spending with their family. However, many Hispanic families will allow the teen to go an extra parish event if they take a sibling or cousin because they are still spending time with the family. If one of your teens expresses disappointment because they can't come to an event, remind them that can invite a sibling or cousin to join them.

Notes: _____

LIFE NIGHT: **OVERFED YET STARVING**

GATHER

Welcome (5 min)

As the teens arrive, welcome them to the Life Night and usher them to the recreational activities.

Recreation (15 min)

This Life Night begins with a period of recreation. Teens can choose to play a board game, basketball, Frisbee, or other space and weather-appropriate activities that the Core Team facilitates. They can also choose to socialize and snack. The one thing they are not allowed to do is use their phones. Core Members will call teenagers out if they see them using a phone during this time.

This period of recreation ties into the Proclaim and demonstrates the difference between recreation and consuming worldly substitutes. It is our hope that the teens experience a feeling of renewal and maybe even the presence of Christ during this period of recreation.

PROCLAIM

“Overfed Yet Starving” Teaching (15 min)

This teaching focuses on how God has satisfied His people throughout salvation history and how He continues to satisfy us today. Outlines for the teaching can be found on pages 33-39.

BREAK

Small Group Worksheet and Discussion (15 min)

Instruct the teens to get into their small groups and silently fill out the “Consumed Worksheet” found on the *September 2015 USB* drive or online at LifeTeen.com. This worksheet instructs the teens to look into what and how

much they consume on a daily basis and set limits for the future. It then gives them the opportunity to brainstorm recreational and prayer activities to turn to instead.

Once completed, the teens share their estimates, limits, activities, and have a small group discussion.

- *Whip Around:* Are you surprised by your total estimated consumption?
- How do you feel about making limits for yourself? Do you want to? Do you not want to?
- Do you think by increasing recreation and prayer and decreasing consuming your life will be more extraordinary?
- Have you ever experienced the presence of Christ in prayer? When?
- Have you ever experienced the presence of Christ in recreation? How?

SEND

Silent Eucharistic Adoration (20 min)

This Life Night ends with a time of silent Eucharistic Adoration. Remind the teens that throughout salvation history God has nourished and satisfied His people. The Eucharist is the Bread of Life. The Eucharist nourishes and satisfies God’s people today. In faith, we can ask, “Jesus, help me be satisfied in you.”

Invite your parish priest or deacon to be present to lead Eucharistic Adoration. Ask him to encourage the teens to pray, “Jesus, help me be satisfied in you.”

Closing Prayer (5 min)

Close the night by praying the Anima Christi together.

The Anima Christi is a prayer from around the 14th century that is still widely used after receiving the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ in Holy Communion. It is a beautiful reflection on the many ways the Body and Blood of Jesus satisfies us.

The Anima Christi

Soul of Christ, sanctify me
Body of Christ, save me
Blood of Christ, inebriate me
Water from Christ's side, wash me
Passion of Christ, strengthen me
O good Jesus, hear me
Within Thy wounds hide me
Suffer me not to be separated from Thee
From the malicious enemy defend me
In the hour of my death call me
And bid me come unto Thee
That I may praise Thee with Thy saints
and with Thy angels
Forever and ever
Amen

Notes: _____



PROCLAIM OUTLINE

OVERFED YET STARVING

KEY WORDS

Satisfaction: The joy and peace found from living in a relationship with God

Prayer: The habit of conversing with God, that is the foundation of the Christian's relationship with Him. The raising of our minds and hearts to God, from the depths of a humble, thirsty, yearning heart.

Recreation: Activities that renew and restore the person.

TEACHING POINTS

THE ACHE

- We were created from the love of God and we were made to receive this love. Without God, we are left unsatisfied.
- Often, we turn to lesser substitutes for God's love and the more we consume them the emptier we feel. (CCC 27, 1718)

GOD SATISFIES

- Use the following scriptural examples for times that God satisfied His people: (Exodus 16:15,18, Psalm 63:1,6, Matthew 15:37, John 6:35)
- Jesus meets a Samaritan Woman at a well that is unsatisfied with substitutes to God's love. Jesus tells her that only His love can fill her desire. (John 4:7-41)

- Like the woman at the well, we must turn to Christ instead of lesser substitutes. We must develop the habit of prayer.

PRAYER

- There are many ways to pray and they vary from silent adoration to loud praise. We pray in a special way through the sacraments.
- At its core, prayer is the raising of our minds and hearts to God from the depths of a humble, yearning heart. (CCC 2559)
- Experiencing God and His satisfaction is not limited to prayer. God's presence can also be found in our relationships with others and the outdoors. This is called recreation. (CCC 32,33, Romans 1:19-20)

RECREATION

- The stem of the word, "recreation", is "create." Recreation re-energizes us and re-creates us.
- To be extraordinary, we need to be satisfied with the extraordinary—not the ordinary. We must stop the cycle of endless consuming and start turning to Jesus, the Bread of Life, to be satisfied.



PROCLAIM DETAILS

OVERFED YET STARVING

TEACHING

THE ACHE

God is love. We were created from this love and we were made to receive this love. By living in a relationship with God, we can be completely satisfied in His love. Without God, we are left with an ache and yearn to be satisfied.

Even though the ache is painful, it is good because it reminds us to turn to God and live in Him.

Unfortunately, many of us do not know how to respond to the ache. Instead of turning to God and being satisfied in Him, we turn to lesser substitutes. We consume; we eat, drink, shop, stream TV, and by the end of the day, we find that we are overfed yet still starving.

CCC 27, 1718

It is acceptable to eat, drink, shop and stream in moderation. We want to become aware that too much of these things in isolation and for the wrong reasons can be detrimental.

Think about our Netflix use. How many episodes do we watch at a time? We click "Next Episode" so much that we have multiple terms for describing this behavior. "I marathon watched *The Walking Dead*." "I am going to spend all Saturday binge watching *Once*."

How do you feel after binge watching TV?
How do you feel after hours of playing video games?
How do you feel after eating too much?

How do you feel after sharing a meal with friends?
How do you feel after going for a hike?
How do you feel after praying?

There is a difference between what satisfies and what doesn't and that difference is God. God, His presence, His plan, His life satisfies. Over and over again in Scripture, God satisfies.

GOD SATISFIES

When the Israelites are fleeing Egypt and are wandering in the desert starving, God satisfies. "This is the bread which the Lord has given you to eat...everyone had enough to eat."

Exodus 16:15,18

When King David is living in exile, in the desert, he cries out to God and God satisfies. "O God, you are my God, for you I long; for you my soul is thirsting. My body pines for you like a dry, weary, land without water... My soul shall be satisfied as with a Banquet."

Psalms 63:1, 6

When the crowds had followed Jesus for over three days with nothing to eat, "They ate and were satisfied."

Matt 15:37

Jesus Himself is the Bread of Life, and He satisfies. "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."

John 6:35

(Consider preparing a slideshow and presenting the above Scripture passages on a screen during this part of the teaching.)

In the Gospel of John, we read the story of the woman at the well. During Jesus's public ministry, He passed

through the town of Samaria and stopped at a well for a drink. It was midday and hot. There He met a woman. She was bitter, "How can you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman for a drink?"

In their conversation, it becomes clear that she had several previous relationships with men that served as substitutes for a relationship with God. This woman struggled with responding to her ache for God and was wounded from living a life without God.

Jesus offers her a solution. He gives her the opportunity to drink living water, "everyone who drinks this water will never thirst again." Jesus offers to fill her with His very self and be satisfied in Him. He is the living water. He is the Bread of Life.

John 4:7-41

Like the woman at the well, we must learn how to respond to the God-ache. Instead of turning to lesser substitutes, we must grow in our ability to turn to God and be satisfied in Him. We must develop the habit of prayer.

PRAYER

Prayer can demonstrate itself in a variety of ways. Prayer can be *lectio divina*, like we experienced at the last Life Night. Prayer can be silence and stillness before the Eucharistic presence of Jesus, like we will experience tonight.

The Eucharist is a continuation of the incarnational presence of Christ. In the Eucharist we encounter Jesus, face to face.

At its core, prayer is the raising of our minds and hearts to God from the depths of a humble, yearning heart. We are beggars before God.

CCC 2559

Experiencing God and His satisfaction is not limited to prayer. God’s presence can also be found in our relationships with others and the outdoors. This is called recreation.

CCC 32,33, Romans 1:19-20

By living in a relationship with God, our lives start to look and feel different. We are talking to God. We are turning to Him and trusting in Him. We are taking risks. Instead of bouncing from social event to social event, we are enjoying a relationship with God. Instead of ignoring the new kid eating lunch alone, we have the courage to sit and talk to him. Instead of zoning out and watching TV for hours, we serve our brothers and sisters in need. All of this flows from our relationship with God and the grace we have received.

CCC 1776

RECREATION

The stem of the word, “recreation”, is “create.” Recreation literally means, re-create. When we share a meal with friends and family, when we go hiking, when we play soccer, we are renewed because we are experiencing God in others and the outdoors.

Recreation is not a competitive sports team. The goal of competitive sports is to practice and improve skills. The goal of recreation is to be renewed and to experience the person of Christ. Ultimately, Sunday, the day of rest, has been set-aside for the sole purpose of recreating. Do you truly recreate on Sunday? Or is it just another day with a list of things to do?

Recreation is differing than consuming. Recreation renews us. Consuming wears on us. We consume in hopes of filling, and because we are trying to fill an infinite desire with finite goods, we find ourselves in an unending cycle that only makes us more tired.

EXTRAORDINARY LIVING

By living in a relationship with God, we live in the Spirit, and the fruits of the Spirit are “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control...”

Romans 8:22-23

To be extraordinary, we need to be satisfied with the extraordinary—not the ordinary. We must stop the cycle of endless consuming and start turning to Jesus, the Bread of Life, to be satisfied.

It is time to make decisions that will lead to a better relationship with God. It is time to limit our use of social media, television, and other similar activities and increase our prayer and recreation. God alone can satisfy our deepest longings. By living in the Spirit, we have love, joy, and peace; we live satisfying, extraordinary lives.

Notes: _____



GOAL: The goal of *Overfed Yet Starving* is to bring awareness to substitutes of God's love that keep us overfed yet starving. The Life Night introduces the teens to ways they can be satisfied by the extraordinary, the Bread of Life, in Eucharistic Adoration, as opposed to the ordinary substitutes, like streaming TV and social media.

Welcome and Prayer: _____

Recreation: _____

“Overfed Yet Starving” Teaching:

Worksheet and Small Group Discussion: _____

Have the teens silently fill out the “*Consumed*” worksheet in their small group. Once completed, the teens share their estimates, limits, activities, and have a small group discussion.

- Whip Around: Are you surprised by your total estimated consumption?
- How do you feel about making limits for yourself? Do you want to? Do you not want to?
- Do you think by increasing recreation and prayer and decreasing consuming your life will be more extraordinary?
- Have you ever experienced the presence of Christ in prayer? When?
- Have you ever experienced the presence of Christ in recreation? How?

Silent Eucharistic Adoration : _____
Closing Prayer (Anima Christi) : _____



COUNTERFEIT

A LIFE NIGHT ON COUNTERFEITS OF GOD'S LOVE

GOAL

The goal of *Counterfeit* is to discuss human sexuality and desire for romantic love from a Trinitarian perspective and bring awareness to the many counterfeits of romantic love that we experience in our day-to-day lives. The Life Night builds hope of being loved and loving others in an extraordinary way.

KEY CONCEPTS

- Hurt and confusion surrounds human sexuality, and many of us settle for counterfeits of God's love.
- God created man male and female and inscribed on their bodies the purpose, and the capacity to mirror God's love.
- The nuptial meaning of the body mirrors God's love and communion, and reveals the extraordinary love we were created for and ultimately long for.

KEY TERMS:

Agape
Lust
Chastity
Disinterested Friendship
Nuptial Meaning of the Body

SCRIPTURE:

John 3:16
1 Corinthians 13:1-13

CATECHISM:

253-256
2331-2356

ABOUT THIS LIFE NIGHT

This Life Night begins with a competition to convince your small group that your favorite love song is the best love song ever. The Proclaim discusses the self-giving love of God and the different types of love we experience in our day-to-day lives. It also discusses God's design of human sexuality and how *agape* love is extraordinary love. The Break gives the teens an opportunity to process and discuss the Proclaim in small groups. The Life Night ends with the opportunity to go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

ENVIRONMENT

The Environment for this Life Night feels like Valentine's Day. Think red, pink, and glitter everywhere. Have paper heart cutouts decorating the walls. Have streamers across the ceiling. If you are having food for this Life Night, make it heart cookies and candies. Choose red and pink tablecloths and cover it with heart confetti. Put the *Counterfeit* slide on the projector. Have love songs playing in the background.

The Life Night concludes with the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Prepare a separate space to be peaceful and prayerful. Dim the lights. Play Taize Prayer or Gregorian chant. Have copies of the "Examination of Conscience" easily accessible. If the sacrament is not in a Church, have separate areas set up as confessionals with clear lines.

MEDIA SUGGESTIONS

Outside da Box: "St. Joseph and St. Maria Goretti."
(outsidedabox.com)

Life Teen Video Support May 2013: "Hunger Teaching"
(lifeteen.com)

Life Teen Video Support May 2012: "Examination of Conscience."
(lifeteen.com)

SOCIAL MEDIA HASHTAGS: #agape #refusetosettle

AS YOU GET STARTED...

To further explain the agape love found in the consecrated life, during the Proclaim, invite a priest, religious, or consecrated single to share how they live out agape love and disinterested friendships. This can give insight on how the teens can live out agape love now.

For a deeper Break, turn the small group questions into journal questions and give the teens personal reflection time.

If there are not enough priests for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, for the Send, guide the teens through an "Examination of Conscience" and encourage them to go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation during the week. Be sure to announce or even hand out the Reconciliation schedule.

To further discuss difficult topics like sex before marriage and pornography, offer follow up men's and women's groups. Here are some recommended resources to help plan a follow-up group.

- **Life Night: Hunger** (Life, Love, and the Pursuit of Happiness. May 2013.)
- **Life Night: Love** (Life, Love, and the Pursuit of Happiness. May 2013.)
- **Book: Victory** by Matt Fradd and Mark Hart (May 2015.)

HISPANIC INCULTURATION

By Ramona Robin

For various reasons - time, paperwork, money, fear of commitment, or priority - a large percentage of Hispanic couples are not sacramentally married. Unfortunately, these couples are not modeling the sacramental foundation of love

for the teens. Both the teens and the couples themselves have forgotten the benefits of the Sacrament of Matrimony.

Offer an additional Life Night on the Sacrament of Matrimony that focuses on why it is good to get married in the Church. Share the reasons why the Sacrament of Matrimony is worth the time, money, and paperwork. Share the reasons why it is worth it to make it a priority. Here are some recommended resources to help plan a follow-up Life Night on the benefits of the Sacrament of Matrimony.

- **Life Night: The Pursuit of Happiness** (Life, Love, and the Pursuit of Happiness. May 2013.)
- **Life Night: What You Want** (Vocations. May 2012.)
- **Life Night: For Better or Worse** (Vocations. September 2009.)

Be sure the speaker presents with bold compassion, remaining faithful to truth of the Church while turning minds and hearts to the merciful love of God.

LIFE NIGHT: COUNTERFEIT

GATHER

Welcome and Prayer (5 min)

Gather the teens into the main meeting space. Welcome them to the Life Night and begin in prayer.

The Best Love Song Ever (15 min)

Instruct the teens to get into small groups. Once in small groups, they each get five minutes to choose any love song and create a convincing argument as to why it is the best love song ever. Encourage them to use their phones to listen to music and look up lyrics. Provide pen and paper so they can take notes and write down their thoughts.

After five minutes, the teens share with their small groups their song choice and argument as to why it is the best love song ever. The Core Member then chooses the teen with the most convincing argument to present to the large group.

For the large group presentation, the Core Member from each small group can help the youth minister pull up the song on YouTube so the entire group can listen to a 20 to 40 second clip. Be cautious of inappropriate music videos and lyrics.

After the selected teens finish presenting, the youth minister discusses what they agreed and disagreed with about the best love songs and then shares his/her argument for the best love song ever. Make sure the argument supports love as seeking the good of the other. This transitions into the teaching.

PROCLAIM

“Counterfeit” Teaching (15 min)

This teaching discusses the self-giving love of God and the different types of love we experience in our day-to-day lives. It also discusses God’s design of human sexuality and how *agape* love is extraordinary love.

BREAK

Small Group Discussion (15 min)

Have the teens break into their small groups. The Core Member opens in prayer and leads the small group discussion.

- *Whip Around:* What did you take away from the talk?
- *Whip Around:* Who do you love with *philia* type love?
- Do you love anyone with *agape* type love? Who?
- Have you ever experienced the presence of Christ in prayer? When?
- Have you ever experienced *agape* love? From who? How?
- How can the different types of loves work together in a relationship? How can you see them working together in your relationships?
- How can you live your life integrating *agape* type love? Prayer? Disinterested friendships? Intentional dating?

SEND

Sacrament of Reconciliation (30 min)

The youth minister transitions into the Send using the following:

Disordered human sexuality has wounded many of us. This Life Night ends with an opportunity to be healed from past mistakes. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a sacrament of healing. It restores our relationship with God, others, and ourselves.

The youth minister instructs the teens to pick up an “Examination of Conscience,” piece of paper, pen and then guides the teens through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Have Core Members of the same gender available to pray with teens as they leave the confessional. Remind them to focus on the greatness of God’s love and mercy and how the teens have been made clean and whole in Him.

After the teens receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, they can go to the chapel to do penance and pray.

In advance, ask your parish priest(s) to come and administer the Sacrament of Reconciliation and inform them of the content of the Life Night. If you have a large youth group, ask your priest if they are willing to stay past the normal end time of a Life Night. You could also ask your priest to invite neighboring parish priests to join him hearing confessions.

When the parents drop off their teens, or in the announcements after Mass, let them know that their teens may want to stay late to participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Notes: _____



COUNTERFEIT

KEY WORDS

- Agape:** Self-sacrificial, divine love.
- Nuptial Meaning of the Body:** The very design of our body orients us toward a marital (nuptial) relationship.
- Lust:** The disordered desire for sexual pleasure that is sought for selfish reasons.
- Chastity:** The virtue of self-mastery over one’s sexuality.
- Disinterested Friendship :** A friendship that does not have a sexual component, but seeks to support the other person.

TEACHING POINTS

NUPTIAL MEANING OF THE BODY

- God created male and female and inscribed on their bodies the purpose and the capacity to mirror God’s love. This is called the nuptial meaning of the body. (CCC 2331)
- Sex within marriage mirrors the Trinitarian love of God. It is the total gift of self to another person and is open to the creation of life.
- We were created to be given as a self gift and to receive others as a self gift.
- Unfortunately, hurt and confusion surrounds human sexuality and many of us settle for counterfeits of love.

TYPES OF LOVE

- *Eros* is a passionate, emotional, and intense love that arouses romantic feelings.
- *Philia* is the love between friends.
- *Agape* is the perfect love of God. It is self-giving love. It seeks the good of the other. The ultimate expression of this love is Christ on the cross. (John 3:16)
- The love between husband and wife mirrors this love. The love of a priest and religious for Christ and the Church also mirrors this love.
- Lust is a counterfeit of love it is self-take as opposed to self-gift.
- Chastity is the virtue of self-mastery over one's sexuality. Every person is called to chastity. (CCC 2339)

COUNTERFEIT LOVES

- Counterfeit love can take on a variety of forms from irresponsible dating and hooking up to pornography. (CCC 2351)
- If we've accepted this kind of love, God's mercy is available to restore us through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

LIVING AGAPE LOVE NOW

- We do not have to wait until we are married to experience a certain sense of *agape* love. We can live selfless love now.
- We first do this by loving God with our whole mind, body, and heart.
- We also do this by loving our neighbor as ourselves. and seeking their holiness.



PROCLAIM DETAILS

COUNTERFEIT

TEACHING

NUPTIAL MEANING OF THE BODY

God is love. From this love, we were created, and for this love we are made. To have love, you need three things. You need to have a lover, a beloved, and the relationship between the two.

CCC 253-256

The Father loves the Son and gives Himself totally to the Son. The Son receives the gift of the Father's love and reciprocates it back to the Father. The love between them is so profound that it is itself the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit.

God created man, "male and female He created them," and inscribed on their bodies the purpose and the capacity to mirror God's love.

CCC 2331

The nuptial meaning of the body means the very design of our body orients us toward a marital (nuptial) relationship. The man is obviously meant for the woman, and the woman for the man.

Conjugal love, sex within marriage, mirrors the Trinitarian love of God. It is the mutual gift of self to the beloved and reception of the beloved. It says, with the language of the body, "I give all of me to you, now and forever."

Priests, religious, and singles also live out the nuptial meaning of the body. They give of themselves to the Church and God's people.

Love and communion with others, which mirrors God's love and communion, is the extraordinary love we were created for and ultimately long for in our relationship with God and/or a Spouse.

Unfortunately, hurt and confusion surrounds human sexuality and many of us settle for counterfeits of God's love.

TYPES OF LOVE

We use the word "love" to describe our love of all sorts of things. We love Taylor Swift. We love pizza. We love our friends and family. Isn't this confusing? Don't we love our friends and family differently than how we love pizza?

The Greeks understood that there were different types of love at varying levels of depth. Because of this, they had different words for love: *eros*, *philia*, and *agape*.

TOB 47:1-6

Eros is a passionate, emotional, and intense love that arouses romantic feelings. It triggers that ecstatic high of being "in love."

Eros is dangerous because it may not last. It can quickly become more focused on the self rather than the other. If one person no longer feels "in love" than they will stop loving their partner.

Philia is the love between friends. This love can be found in friendships that are built around shared interests like school, sports, or theatre.

Agape is the perfect love of God. It is self-giving love. It seeks the good of the other. We see the ultimate expression of *agape* love in the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. Jesus gave His life so that we might live.

John 3:16

The love between husband and wife mirrors this love. The spouse's love each other and give themselves totally to one another. The love of a priest and religious for Christ and the Church also mirrors this love. They love and give themselves totally to Christ and the Church.

Agape love is a lasting love. When the feelings of love are gone, the decision to love remains. *Agape* love is truly extraordinary.

The types of love are not separate, but work together. Best friends have both *philia* and *agape*. A marriage has *philia*, *eros* and *agape*. In fact, *agape* forms *eros*. It makes *eros* ordered to the good of the beloved.

Lust is a counterfeit of love. It is *eros* without *agape*. It seeks to satisfy selfish desires. It is self-take as opposed to self-gift. It turns someone into an object of use for someone else's pleasure, rather than a person to be loved.

To properly utilize and live out these types of love, we must develop the virtue of chastity.

Chastity is the virtue of self-mastery over one's sexuality. By having self-control, we govern our passions and find peace. It is also through chastity that we train to give ourselves as a total gift to our beloved through conjugal love within the Sacrament of Matrimony or totally to Christ through the priesthood or religious life.

CCC 2339

Also, when we look at the nature of sex - what sex is and what sex does - we see it is procreative. Sex is the act that

creates new life. Sex is also unitive; it binds two people together through chemicals released in the brain. These chemicals include, serotonin, which gives us the feeling of serenity and bliss. Dopamine releases a pleasure high. Oxytocin is a bonding agent that creates trust and generosity between partners. For these reasons, sex is designed for the Sacrament of Matrimony and the security of the life-long commitment the vows create. Sex outside of marriage is harmful because bonds are made only to be painfully broken and new life may be created without the security and love of marriage and family.

COUNTERFEIT LOVES

In today's world, counterfeit love can take on a variety of forms. It can look like dating relationships that go too far physically or a girl or guy jumping from one relationship to the next. It can also include the addictive habit of pornography.

CCC 2351

If you've already engaged in counterfeit love, don't give up hope. God loves you and is calling you to live in His love.

If you want to start again, Reconciliation is always available. It is the sacrament of healing. It makes us whole. It also cleanses us from our sin, gives us a new start, and restores our relationship with God.

Also, be prepared to change. Stop putting yourself in situations that have previously caused you to sin and start seeking accountability. Most sexual sin happens in secret.

Accountability gives us a way to bring what happens in darkness to the light. We are less likely to do something bad, if we have an accountability partner who will make us talk about it.

We can also find freedom from counterfeit love by dating with the intention of discerning marriage. Normally, we are

attracted to a girl or guy so we date them and enjoy dating them until the feelings go away. This is more like *eros* than *agape* and usually ends in heartbreak.

Intentional dating has the end of marriage in mind. The couple is always asking, "Can I see myself marrying this person?" If the answer is "no", the couple stops seeing each other and prevents unnecessary heartbreak. The hard truth is that the dating relationships can only end in one of two ways; a break-up or marriage.

LIVING AGAPE LOVE NOW

We do not have to wait until we are married to experience a certain sense of *agape* love. The complete giving of ourselves through the sexual act is always reserved for marriage, but we can start learning how to live now with selfless love.

The first way we live it is by entering into the life and love of the Most Holy Trinity through prayer. We let God pour His love out on us. Only after we are filled up with God's love, can we go forth and love others with that same powerful, self-giving love.

Loving others with *agape* love, outside of marriage, is called disinterested friendship. It is a friendship that does not have a sexual component, but seeks to support the other person.

We can live this out by having patience, listening, and giving advice to friends. We can also serve in different capacities like helping at a food kitchen or reading at Mass.

Now that you are aware of counterfeits of God's love, refuse to settle for it. We were created from love, for love, to love. Live and love as you were created.

To be extraordinary, we need to be satisfied with the extraordinary—not the ordinary. *Agape* love is an extraordinary way of loving and being loved.



CORE TEAM OVERVIEW

CONTERFEIT: A Life Night on counterfeits of God's love.

GOAL: The goal of *Counterfeit* is to discuss human sexuality and desire for romantic love from a Trinitarian perspective and bring awareness to the many counterfeits of romantic love that we experience in our day-to-day lives. The Life Night builds hope of being loved and loving others in an extraordinary way.

GATHER (20 MINS):

Welcome and Prayer:

The Best Love Song Ever: _____

PROCLAIM (15 MINS):

“Counterfeit” Teaching:

BREAK (15 MINS):

Small Group Discussion:

The Core Member opens in prayer, asks the teens if they have any questions about the Proclaim, answers their questions, and then leads the small group discussion using the following questions:

- *Whip Around:* What did you take away from the talk?
- *Whip Around:* Who do you love with *philia* type love?
- Do you love anyone with *agape* type love? Who?
- Have you ever experienced the presence of Christ in prayer? When?
- Have you ever experienced *agape* love? From who? How?
- How can the different types of loves work together in a relationship? How can you see them working together in your relationships?
- How can you live your life integrating *agape* type love? Prayer? Disinterested friendships? Intentional dating?

SEND (20 MINS):

Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Priest(s):

Make sure you have enough copies of the “Examination of Conscience” for each teen.

Notes: _____



LIFE NIGHT OVERVIEW

DANGEROUS

A LIFE NIGHT ON OUR CALL TO HOLINESS

GOAL

The goal of *Dangerous* is for the teens to understand holiness as being set apart for God and dangerous to the status quo because it challenges mediocrity and inspires extraordinary living.

KEY CONCEPTS

- When we live in the love of God and reject worldly substitutes and counterfeits of love, we begin our journey of becoming holy.
- Holiness means to be set apart for God. It is dangerous to the status quo because the presence of holy people challenges mediocrity and inspires extraordinary living.
- St. Stephen's holiness and witness to Christ challenged the status quo. Because of this, he was persecuted and killed. We are called to withstand persecution through testimony sharing and remaining faithful in prayer.

KEY TERMS:

Holiness
Persecution
Martyrdom
Testimony

SCRIPTURE:

John 15:1-12
Acts 6-8
Hebrews 4:12
1 Peter 3:13-17

CATECHISM:

2471- 2473

ABOUT THIS LIFE NIGHT

This Life Night begins with a game of Reverse Tag that demonstrates how we can be singled out when we live for Christ. It relates to the Proclaim, which teaches the Martyrdom of St. Stephen and prepares the teens to withstand persecution through testimony sharing and remaining faithful in prayer. The Break gives the teens the opportunity to pray through, prepare, and share testimonies with each other. The Send introduces them to St. Patrick's Breastplate, a prayer to live in the love of the Holy Trinity and live extraordinary lives.

ENVIRONMENT

The environment for this Life Night is high energy and fun. Look for ways to make it extraordinary as opposed to ordinary. If you are using tablecloths, choose brightly colored ones as opposed to normal ones. If you are having pizza, choose Supreme or Meat Lovers as opposed to ordinary cheese. If you have a snack table, offer Double Stuffed Oreo's, Flamin' Hot Lays, Double Chocolate Chip Cookies, Extra Cheddar Cheez Itz and the like.

Put the *Dangerous* slide on the projector screen. Play inspiring, high-energy music that would be found on a workout playlist. As the teens enter, greet them enthusiastically with high fives.

MEDIA SUGGESTIONS

One Billion Stories: "Father John Nepil Experiences Suffering on his Path to Knowledge of God."
(onebillionstories.com)

Outside da Box: "The Comfortable Couch."
(outsidedabox.com)

SOCIAL MEDIA HASHTAGS: #Dangerous #SetApart

AS YOU GET STARTED...

*For a smaller youth group, for the Gather, instead of playing Reverse Tag, the youth minister could provide a few *Where's Waldo* books and the teens could find Waldo. In *Where's Waldo*, Waldo is singled out and different because he wears a red and white striped shirt.*

To go deeper, in the Proclaim, you could talk more about the value of persecution by discussing Romans 5:1-6 and James 1:1-4. You could also talk about the value of persevering in prayer like the *Persistent Widow* in Luke 18.

If your teens are not ready to prepare and practice a testimony, cue up and watch a few testimonies from Catholic speakers on YouTube.

Keep your eyes and ears open for a teen that would be willing to share his/her testimony with the entire group at the end of the Life Night or the next Life Night. Ask him/her in advance so he/she has time to prepare.

HISPANIC INCULTURATION

By Christopher and Meagan Martinez

In some Hispanic communities, teasing is a language of love. If anyone does anything the least bit different, they get teased for it. Teasing is meant in lighthearted jest, however, it still can hurt and prevent teens from growing in ways they feel called to grow.

In the Proclaim, remind the teens that sometimes the intention behind the teasing is a good one. Encourage them to share with the person how their teasing is making them feel and politely ask them to stop.

On the other hand, teasing or slander might be their persecution. It is common for a youth minister to hear that their Hispanic teens are in trouble because “they are at church all the time” or being accused of “forgetting where

they came from.” Be sure to remind these teens that they are not being selfish; they are building their relationship with Jesus. Also, encourage them to include their family on their journey. If an issue continues, invite their parents to meet you and talk about the youth ministry program.

Furthermore, Hispanics value family and work hard for the good of the family. The greatest good of the family is to be in relationship with God. Working hard to be intentional with family time, to invest in meaningful relationships with family member, and to share testimonies with them are some of the best things a teen can do for their family.

Notes: _____

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins or other markings on the paper.

LIFE NIGHT: **DANGEROUS**

GATHER

Welcome and Prayer (5 min)

Gather the teens into the main meeting space. Welcome them to the Life Night and begin in prayer.

Reverse Tag (15 min)

In this version of tag, instead of the person who is “it” chasing after everyone, everyone chases after that person. Whoever tags “it” then becomes “it” and then gets chased. To add incentive, after a teen is “it”, they find the youth minister and receive a prize.

This game is fun and related to the Proclaim. When we live for Christ, we become singled out, set apart, holy. Our lives become dangerous. In Reverse Tag, being “it” is dangerous because that one person is singled out, and everyone is chasing them.

PROCLAIM

“Dangerous” Teaching (15 min)

The Proclaim defines holiness as being set apart for God and explains that it is dangerous because it challenges the status quo and inspires extraordinary living. It also prepares the teens to withstand persecution through testimony sharing and remaining faithful in prayer.

BREAK

Small Group Testimony Preparation and Sharing (30 min)

Have the teens get into their small groups. Open in prayer. Then, pass out the *Testify* handout to each teen, telling them that they have about 15 minutes of silence to prepare their testimony. Let them know that they will

be sharing it with the small group. Remind them that everyone has a testimony because God pursues all of us; just because you do not have a dramatic conversion story does not mean that you do not have a story to share.

Have pens and paper available. The *Testify* handout is found on the *September 2015 Life Teen USB*.

When the teens have finished preparing their testimonies, the Core Member begins the testimony sharing by sharing his/her testimony. The teens then take their turn sharing their testimonies.

SEND

St. Patrick’s Breastplate (10 min)

Conclude the Life Night by introducing the teens to St. Patrick’s Breastplate. As the youth minister shares a brief history of the prayer, the Core Members pass out the prayer cards found on the *September 2015 Life Teen USB*.

St. Patrick’s Breastplate is a prayer attributed to one of Ireland’s most beloved missionary saints. According to tradition, St. Patrick wrote it in 433 AD for divine protection before successfully converting the Irish King and his subjects from paganism to Christianity.

Going forth from the *Alive and Dangerous* series, we can begin our day by praying this prayer to live in the love of the Trinity and live extraordinary lives.

The youth minister then leads the teens in praying St. Patrick’s Breastplate.

Notes: _____



DANGEROUS

KEY WORDS

Holiness: Being set apart for God.

Persecution: The affliction and suffering one faces as a result of testifying to Christ.

Martyrdom: The supreme witness given to the faith in Christ. It means bearing witness to Christ even unto death.

Testimony: A personal story about an encounter with Christ.

TEACHING POINTS

WE ARE DANGEROUS

- When we live in the love of God, are satisfied in Him, and reject worldly substitutes and counterfeits of love, we live dangerous lives.
- Our lives are dangerous because our lives are different when lived in Christ.
- Saying, “no” to counterfeits allows us to say, “yes” to abundant life in Christ.
- This is called “holiness.” It means to be set apart for God.
- By being holy and living differently, we proclaim the Gospel of Jesus and the freedom He offers with our lives.

ST. STEPHEN – THE DANGEROUS

- St. Stephen was the first Christian martyr. His life made people uncomfortable because it challenged them. (Acts 6:8)
- When people met St. Stephen, they were faced with a choice. Do I continue believing what I believe and living like I live, or do I change? (Acts 6:10)
- Rather than confront the choice, they stoned him to death.

DANGEROUS LIVING LEADS TO PERSECUTION

- Persecution is when we suffer for what we believe in our faith. (CCC 2471-2473)
- When we are persecuted, we are given the opportunity to humbly and lovingly witness to our belief in Christ and way of life through testimony.
- A testimony is a personal story of an encounter with God. It answers the question, “why do you live like you live?” We must prepare our testimony and always be ready to share it. (1 Peter 3:15)

DANGEROUS LIVING IS EXTRAORDINARY LIVING

- When we live our faith, we become holy. Being holy is dangerous because it can change lives positively. We must not be afraid of opposition, because heaven is worth it.



DANGEROUS

TEACHING

WE ARE DANGEROUS

When we live in the love of God, are satisfied in Him, and reject worldly substitutes and counterfeits of love, we live dangerous lives.

Our lives are dangerous because our lives are different. We reject the things most people accept. We say “no” to the mindless consumption of Netflix and video games, we say “no” to sex before marriage, and we say “no” to pornography. Furthermore, even with saying “no,” we radiate astounding peace and joy.

Our “no” allows us to say “yes” to other exciting things; things that make our lives extraordinary.

(Give examples of the adventures you’ve had with Jesus and the things you’ve had the opportunity to say “yes” to because of living in Him. This can range from big trips like mission trips, retreats, and conference to more intimate moments of prayer and conversation.)

By living with Jesus, we become dangerous to the status quo. Our presence challenges mediocrity and inspires extraordinary living.

This is also called holiness. In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word “Kadosch,” holy, means being separated from the worldly. We can see this definition demonstrated by looking at the layout of the Jewish Temple.

The Temple held the presence of God; it held holiness itself. Because of this, it had several layers of separation between the holiness of God and the sinfulness of man. There was an outer court, inner court, holy place, and holy of holies. With each layer, fewer people had access. Only the high priest could enter the holy of holies and only once a year.

The holy of holies held the presence of God and was separated from the holy place with a veil. The word “veil” in Hebrew means, a divider or separator that hides. The veil shielded a holy God from sinful man. The whole Temple structure set the holiness of God apart from the sinfulness of man.

In today’s Catholic understanding, holiness continues to mean set apart. We are set apart from the world, for God.

By being holy and living differently, we cause people to come face to face with how they are living and to ask themselves “am I living right, am I missing something?” If they are missing Christ and aren’t willing to change, this question makes them uncomfortable and can result in them persecuting those who have caused them to rethink their life.

ST. STEPHEN - THE DANGEROUS

One of the first people to be persecuted for their faith was St. Stephen. He was dangerous. His preaching made people uncomfortable, and they put him to death for what he believed. He was the first martyr of the faith.

Acts 6-8

The story of St. Stephen occurs in the period of the early Church. Christ had recently died, resurrected, and ascended into Heaven. The Holy Spirit had come and empowered the Apostles to share the Good News. The Word of God was spreading, and the numbers of the disciples were growing. For some, it was easy to believe and follow Jesus. For

others, like the religious leaders, it was much more difficult. St. Stephen was a follower of Christ who devoted his life to serving the poor and widowed. He was also an effective preacher of the Good News, and God was working many signs and wonders through him. When people met St. Stephen, they were faced with a choice. Do I continue believing what I believe and living like I live, or do I change?

Acts 6:10

Religious leaders came forward to debate him, but they could not win, they “could not withstand the wisdom and the spirit in which he spoke.” This infuriated them. They wanted to defeat his preaching of Christ, so they didn’t have to change their ways.

Acts 6:11-15

The religious leaders were so infuriated that they convinced the people to call St. Stephen a blasphemer and send him to trial. “They stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes, accosted him, seized him and brought him before the Sanhedrin.”

Acts 7:54-60

During the trial, the people brought false witness against St. Stephen, and he responded by boldly defending his faith in Christ. The people did not want to hear his defense. They “cried out in a loud voice, covered their ears, and rushed upon him together. They threw him out of the city, and began to stone him... As they were stoning Stephen, he called out, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.’ Then he fell to his knees and cried out in a loud voice, ‘Lord do not hold this sin against them; and when he said this, he fell asleep.’”

Acts 7:57-60

We may never face trial and death for our faith, but by being holy and living dangerously, we will face persecution.

DANGEROUS LIVING LEADS TO PERSECUTION

Persecution is when we suffer for what we believe. We may get teased for being a Christian. We may get broken up with because our girlfriend/boyfriend doesn’t understand our convictions. We may get called a prude for living chastely. We may lose friends because we want to do things differently.

CCC 2471-2473

The witness of the Apostles, early Christians, St. Stephen, and the martyrs made the early Church grow in numbers. An ancient theologian once said that “the blood of the martyrs” is the seed of the Church. Our witness will do the same.

Tertullian Apologeticus, Chapter 50

St. Paul wrote that even though we may suffer for righteousness, we are blessed, and should always be ready to give an explanation for the hope in Christ that we have.

1 Peter 3:13-17

When we are persecuted, we are given the opportunity to humbly and lovingly witness to our belief in Christ and way of life through testimony.

A testimony is a personal story of an encounter with God. It answers the question, “why do you live like you live?” A testimony starts by explaining who you were and what your life was like before Christ. It then continues by sharing the turning points in your relationship with Christ. What happened to bring you closer to Him? How did you meet Him? What was the experience like? It ends by sharing how you are more peaceful and joyful as a result of being closer to Christ.

By sharing our testimonies, we help people discover how God is already working in their lives and give them an example of how to grow in their relationship with Christ.

Testimonies build hope and faith: “If it happened to him, maybe it can happen to me?”

When persecuted for our faith, sharing a testimony is an effective way to stand up for what we believe. It is humble, honest, and aimed at sharing the love we have received with others.

Our words are most effective if followed by actions that communicate the same message. Our testimonies have greater effectiveness if surrounded by a life of loving actions.

When we face persecution, it is also important to remain in prayer, to remain in a relationship with God. In the Gospel of John, Jesus instructs us to, “Remain in me, as I remain in you.... As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love.” By remaining in Him and His love, our joy is complete, and we receive the grace to persevere in faith.

John 15:1-12

DANGEROUS LIVING IS EXTRAORDINARY LIVING

Jesus’s sacrificial death on the Cross made holiness available to all, not just the high priest who had access to the holy of holies. When Jesus died, the veil was torn in half, from top to bottom. Only God could have done such an incredible feat because the veil was too high for human hands to reach and too thick for human hands to tear. Modern replicas represent the veil as 60 feet tall, 30 feet wide and four inches thick.

As the veil was torn, the holy of holies was exposed. God’s presence was poured out to the whole world, to all people. We now have access to the holiness of God. We too can become holy and live extraordinary lives.

To be extraordinary, we need to be satisfied with the extraordinary—not the ordinary. We need to know and

believe that we were created from love, for love, to love, and that we can only be satisfied in God’s love. We need to turn to Him in prayer. We need to reject worldly substitutes and counterfeits of God’s love. We need to live differently and be holy.

Hebrews 4:12

This is what a life set apart for God looks like. It is a way of living that is alive and dangerous.

Notes: _____



CORE TEAM OVERVIEW

DANGEROUS: A Life Night on our call to holiness.

GOAL: The goal of *Dangerous* is for the teens to understand holiness as being set apart for God and dangerous to the status quo because it challenges mediocrity and inspires extraordinary living.

GATHER (20 MINS):

Welcome and Prayer: _____

Reverse Tag: _____

PROCLAIM (15 MINS):

“Dangerous” Teaching: _____

BREAK (30 MINS):

Small Group Testimony Preparation

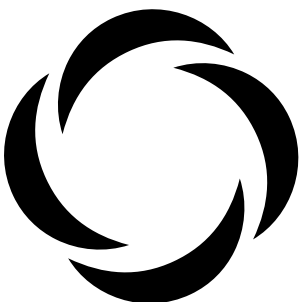
and Sharing: _____

Have copies of the the *Testify* handout as well as paper and pens for each teen

SEND (10 MINS):

St. Patrick’s Breastplate: _____

Notes: _____



LIFE TEEN

Leading Teens Closer to Christ

www.LifeTeen.com