



©2013 Life Teen, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this book, including interior design, cover design, and/or icons, may be reproduced or transmitted in any form, by any means (electronic, photocopying, recording, or otherwise) without prior written permission from the publisher. The information contained herein is published and produced by Life Teen, Inc. The resources and practices are in full accordance with the Roman Catholic Church. The Life Teen® name and associated logos are trademarks registered with the United States Patent and Trademark Office. Use of the Life Teen® trademarks without prior permission is forbidden. Permission may be requested by contacting Life Teen, Inc. at 480-820-7001.

CURRICULUM GUIDE

LIFE, LOVE, AND THE PURSUIT

OF HAPPINESS

CURRICULUM GUIDE

CONTENTS:

INTRODUCTION	03
LIFE	06
DEATH	18
HUNGER	28
LOVE	40
LIBERTY	54
THE PURSUIT OF	66
HAPPINESS	

INTRODUCTION

Every day teenagers face a variety of new experiences and challenges. They are given expectations for school, work, and friendships. They are challenged to grow from children into young adults in the four short years of high school, and during that time they will experience new social relationships and responsibilities.

Inevitably, teenagers will face challenges to their sexuality, temptations toward sexual sin, and have questions about what it means to be a man or a woman in our modern world. The world of a teenager both glamorizes sex as the pinnacle of a relationship, but also as something that can be casual and short-term. Teens bounce back and forth between wanting to be an individual and allowing themselves to be objectified. All of this amounts to a very confusing four years of high school.

Thankfully, the Church offers the light of Christ to this world along with the truth about our sexuality, the reason and purpose behind how God designed our bodies, and where our ultimate vocation and destiny lies.

Life, Love, and the Pursuit of Happiness is our new Curriculum Guide that addresses the Church's teachings on sexuality using Blessed John Paul II's work, *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body*. Over these six Life Nights, teenagers will be exposed to this beautiful and liberating teaching.

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

This semester is important for your teenagers, but it is not one that can be taken lightly or planned last minute. As you prepare to introduce your teenagers to the Church's teaching on sexuality it is important to learn and grow in these teachings as a Core Team. There are three important things you need to do prior to implementing this semester:

1. Learn as a Core Team

The Church's teachings on sexuality are liberating, but in our world these teachings are becoming

increasingly controversial. In order to really bring these teachings to life for the teenagers, the Core Team and youth minister need to be passionate and sold out for the truth that the Church proclaims.

The best way to do this is to have the Core Members experience these Life Nights prior to implementing them for the teenagers. The youth minister should consider utilizing the Life Night outlines as "training sessions" for the Core Team. Invite a couple of staff members or parents to help out with implementing these nights for your Core Team. This is more of a time commitment, but it is an important one. Not only will it allow the Core Team to see how the Life Nights will run, but it will also provide a time of personal growth and prayer for Core Members as they are exposed to each topic.

Show the "Theology of the Body Intro for Core" on *Life Teen Video Support: Theology of the Body* to your Core Team. This brief teaching outlines the importance of the semester and some basic teaching points about the Theology of the Body.

2. Ask Questions, Get Answers

Teenagers are going to ask tough questions during this semester. As a Core Team don't be afraid to ask questions and seek out answers from your parish priest or another Catholic authority as well. Asking the tough questions now will allow you to have the answers later. There are many well-written books that discuss the Theology of the Body in a way that is very understandable; consider reading one of these as a Core Team prior to the semester. A few ideas include:

- *Theology of the Body For Beginners*, by Christopher West
- *Good News About Sex and Marriage*, by Christopher West and Archbishop Charles J. Chaput

- *Theology of the Body Explained*, by Michael Waldstein
- *Called to Love*, by Carl Anderson

3. Pray

The devil does not want you to implement this semester. Sexual sin is one of the biggest ways that Satan keeps the world in slavery. Sexual sin brings shame and guilt, and these things often drive people away from Christ out of fear. You may face some spiritual attack as you plan and implement these Life Nights. Don't be discouraged — be ready. Begin praying for the Holy Spirit to move in the hearts of your teenagers well before implementing the semester. Pray for Core Members, the youth minister, and the parish priest as you tackle this important topic.

Most importantly, consider putting together a prayer team to spend time in front of the Blessed Sacrament praying for the teens at your parish during the actual Life Nights. By covering your Life Nights in prayer you can truly be assured of Christ's protection and that the work you are doing will not be your own, but the Holy Spirit through you.

STRUCTURE AND METHOD

This resource has been designed in a very specific manner. Unlike other Curriculum Guides that allow for flexibility in the way that Life Nights are arranged, each Life Night in *Life, Love, and the Pursuit of Happiness* builds on the previous Life Night. It is highly recommended that you implement all six Life Nights in order — the Life Nights do not need to be back-to-back, but should not be re-arranged or taken out of context.

These Life Nights have been designed with the intention that they will give teenagers a basic overview of the Church's teaching about human sexuality using the Theology of the Body, but they are not meant to be exhaustive. You may want to consider having additional Life Nights on topics that you feel your teens need to have covered in depth, or to utilize a longer Theology of the Body resource for teenagers who want to dive deeper into the teachings after completing these six Life Nights.

PARENT NIGHTS

The *Life, Love, and the Pursuit of Happiness* semester has complementary Parent Nights that can be implemented at the same time as the Life Nights. If this is a possibility for your parish, it is highly recommended that you host these nights for parents. If whole families can understand the teachings of Theology of the Body, teenagers will be far more likely to integrate these teachings into their lives and feel supported in doing so.

SMALL GROUPS

In order to hold teens accountable in attending all of the Life Nights and to build a sense of trust in the community, it is recommended you break teens into small groups on the first Life Night and have them stay with those groups through the duration of the semester. This will allow for deeper conversations and a greater sense of openness among the teens.

PASTORAL CARE

This semester will give teenagers a renewed understanding of their bodies, sexuality, and who God is calling them to be. Through the course of these Life Nights this may bring out some issues that teenagers need to address. It is very likely that they will be coming to the Core Team to work through these things. Some of the topics that may be brought up may not have anything to do with sexuality, but drug addiction, body image, and even eating disorders. When teenagers realize who God is calling them to be and the purpose of their bodies, this naturally will happen.

Along with those struggles, teenagers will also face the expected challenges — pre-marital sex, masturbation, pornography, and homosexual actions. Any of these topics can present a challenge for a Core Member who is well prepared, but they will be impossible for a Core Member that is not prepared.

Prior to the semester, take time to review how to pastorally care for teenagers. A great resource to use for this is Life Teen's *Core Training: Pastoral Care*. This can be found online at CatholicYouthMinistry.com. Show the training video, "Pastorally Caring for Teenagers" on the *Life Teen Video Support: Theology of the Body* to your Core Team as well.

During this review it will also be important to review your diocesan and state mandatory reporting policies, safe environment guidelines, and to create an action plan for how to handle various situations as they arise.

It is important to remember that there are challenges to sexuality that may be more prevalent among a specific gender, but sexual sin is becoming increasingly, and unfortunately, common across both genders. Women are becoming just as likely as men to struggle with pornography, and an increasing number of young men are beginning to struggle with eating disorders. When addressing these issues be sure to address both genders, rather than just one.

Finally, as you implement these Life Nights be aware that you may have teens present that experience same-sex attraction. For these teens, it is important to emphasize chastity (as you would with other teens), but also that you are mindful of their unique struggles with chastity and find ways to address them where applicable. If you have teenagers who experience same-sex attraction, create a pastoral plan for these teens prior to the semester so they do not feel isolated or excluded during the Life Nights, but understand that this teaching applies to them as well as the other teens.

HOMOSEXUALITY

This resource contains a Life Night on the topic of homosexuality. This topic is important in our Church today, as many people don't understand the Church's teaching on homosexuality, and may even believe some misconceptions about the teaching.

It is important that you not avoid this Life Night; there is a video teaching for you to use on the topic if a Core Member or the youth minister does not feel prepared to deliver the teaching.

This Life Night challenges many teens' conceptions and understanding of same-sex attraction. As a Core Team it is important to be prepared for these reactions and be ready to deal with them lovingly and with the truth of the Church. Additionally, you may have teens "come out" to Core Members at this Life Night — it is important to have an action plan for this scenario so Core Members can respond in a way that is accepting

of the teen, but not an affirmation of homosexual actions.

Finally, it is important to not take this Life Night out of context. The Church's teaching on homosexuality is best understood within the context of the Theology of the Body, and requires the four Life Nights that precede the topic of homosexuality in order to fully understand the teaching.

This semester is so important to the lives of your teenagers. As you implement it we are praying for you and your parish, and are here to support you in any way that we can. Never hesitate to contact us with questions, glory stories, or for help with a Life Night or pastoral situation. We are here to support you in your mission to teenagers, and thank you for the incredible work that you do!

LIFE

CREATION

LIFE NIGHT OUTLINE

CATECHISM

289-299
343
355-358
369-377

YOUCAT

56-59
61-64
401

KEY TERMS

Original Solitude
Nuptial Meaning of the Body

SCRIPTURE

Genesis 1:27-28
Genesis 2:7-8
Genesis 2:18-24
Matthew 19:1-12

KEY CONCEPTS

• God created humanity, male and female, in His image and likeness. This gives men and women dignity and worth that is to be upheld and honored.

• God created men and women to be complementary to each other; men and women are designed to be a “help” for the other.

• Men and women are equal, but this does not mean they are the same. Each gender has attributes unique to it that reveal the purpose and meaning of the body.

GOAL

This Life Night will introduce the concept of the complementary nature of the sexes and challenge teens to see members of the opposite sex as reflections of God and as a “help” for their own gender.

ABOUT THIS NIGHT

This night begins the Life Night series “Life, Love, and the Pursuit of Happiness,” which has been based around Bl. John Paul II’s audiences, “Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body.” It begins with a fun game that illustrates that men and women complement each other and are better together than they are alone. This game transitions into a video that provides a humorous look at things that do not complement men and women and this provides a foundation for the teaching of the Life Night. The Break gives

teens the opportunity to break open the teaching through small group discussion and allows them to build community and trust with the other teens who will be in their small group this semester. The Send is a time of prayer that will give each gender the opportunity to pray over the other for the grace to live as holy disciples of Christ.

PARENTAL NOTICE

This week at Life Night we discussed the complementary nature of men and women. We began by playing a game that gave us a practical example of how men and women work better together than they do alone, and why men and women need each other. From there we looked at Sacred Scripture and the creation narratives in order to understand why God created men and women and how men and women are made in God’s image in likeness. We challenged the teens

to understand that men and women are given great dignity as creatures made in the image and likeness of God, but this equality does not mean that men and women are the same. Each gender has important differences that complement the other. Because of these differences, each gender is made to be a “helper” for the other. The teens had an opportunity to discuss this in small groups and then closed the night by praying over members of the opposite gender.

This night had a lot of material in it that your teen may still need time to process. The idea that men and women are “equal but different” can be challenging when teens often think that being “equal” means being the “same.” Take time to discuss this distinction with your son or daughter. You can use the following questions to begin a discussion:

- What are some of the unique ways men and women reveal God? How do men and women do this differently? Why do you think that this is important?

- What was one new thing that you learned? How did this Life Night change the way you view the relationship between men and women?

ENVIRONMENT

The environment for this Life Night should be set up with items that complement each other (e.g. ketchup and mustard, peanut butter and jelly, socks and shoes). Have these items hanging up on walls and from the ceiling. Create two large puzzle pieces out of butcher paper and hang them on the wall in the front of the room.

For the opening game have three pads of paper and markers, or small whiteboards and markers, set up at a table in the front of the room. Have a podium off to the side for the game show host. Be creative with the game show stage; the cheesier the better. Have a whiteboard set up to keep score.

GATHER

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

(5 min)

The youth minister should gather all of the teens together and welcome them to the Life Night. He or she should introduce any teens that are attending Life Night for the first time and lead an opening prayer.

BOYS VS. GIRLS

(15 min)

This game demonstrates the complementary nature of the sexes. Invite teens to participate and select teens for three different teams — a team of two girls, a team of two guys, and a team made up of one girl and one guy. Have the teams stand up front behind a game show style table that has several pieces of poster board on it. Each

team will write their answer on these pieces of poster board. It will be possible for every team to get a point on each question.

The questions for the game show are geared toward women specifically or men specifically — this will put the team that is composed of both a male and a female at a distinct advantage. Have a Core Member keep track of the score and at the end of the game declare a winner. This game can be referenced in the teaching for the night.

Use the following questions for the game or create your own:

- What is the common name for an emery board? (*Nail File*)
- Name of an garment worn underneath a light fabric shirt in order to make it opaque. (*Camisole*)
- Name three different styles of dresses. (*A-line, Mermaid, Empire*)

- Describe a “pixie haircut.” (*A very short women’s hairstyle*)
- What is the name of the main character in the “Halo” video game series? (*Master Chief*)
- In what sport is there a cornerback and is this an offensive or defensive position? (*Football, Defense*)
- What is the name of Han Solo’s best friend? (*Chewbacca*)
- If you are standing in Wrigley Field, what city are you in? (*Chicago*)

PROCLAIM

VIDEO: DATING FUTILITY

(5 min)

Transition out of the game and into the teaching with a humorous look at the complementary nature of men and women. This video can be found on *Life Teen Video Support: Theology of the Body*.

“LIFE” TEACHING

(15 min)

The youth minister should give this teaching, which will give a brief introduction to the semester and explain the complementary nature of men and women as revealed by the creation stories.

The teaching for this Life Night can be found on pages 10 to 14.

BREAK

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

(20 min)

The youth minister should divide the teens into small groups of six to eight teens with one Core Member in each group. If it is possible, try to keep the same small groups from week to week during

this semester. You may want to consider having gender based small groups (all boys or all girls) for this semester. The Core Member leading each group should challenge all of the teens to attend every Life Night for the semester. This will help foster a community of trust and support over the coming weeks.

The Core Member should lead an opening prayer to begin the small group, and then use the following questions for discussion:

- How do men and women complement each other? How are these differences good? Where can they cause misunderstanding?
- What does it mean that men and women were created in the image and likeness of God? What do men reveal about God? What do women reveal about God?
- How can we live our lives as better reflections of God?
- What do the gifts and talents you have reveal about God? In what ways are you a unique reflection of the Creator?
- Why is it important that we seek a relationship with God? What can we do to grow closer to Him in our lives?

SEND

NIGHT RECAP

(5 min)

The youth minister should gather all of the teens back together in the sanctuary space of your church building and recap the main points for the Life Night:

- God created humanity, male and female, in His image and likeness. This gives men and women dignity and worth that is to be upheld and honored.
- God created men and women to be complementary to each other; men and women are designed to be a “help” for the other.

- Men and women are equal, but this does not mean they are the same. Each sex has attributes unique to it that reveal the purpose and meaning of the body.

PRAYER OVER MEN/WOMEN

(10 min)

The youth minister should explain that as a Body of Christ we need to support each other. Each gender reveals unique qualities of God and supports the other. God made each gender as a “help” for the other; this means treating each other with respect and honor as well as upholding each other in prayer. The youth minister should then invite all of the women to come to the front of the altar and kneel. Invite a male teen to lead all of the males in a prayer over the women. It is important that you talk to this teen about doing this prior to the Life Night, rather than choosing someone at the last minute. After all of the women have been prayed over, the youth minister should invite the men to come forward and kneel in front of the altar. Invite a female teen to lead a prayer over all of the men. After this, the women should rejoin the men around the altar and close the night by praying a Hail Mary and Ave Maria.

ADAPTING THE LIFE NIGHT

- Have a male and female Core Member work together to give a “tag-team teaching” for the Life Night. This will require more preparation and practice, but will be a good demonstration of how the genders work together to complement each other.

GOING DEEPER

Every Life Night in this series is meant to be a starting point for deeper discussion with your teens. For some teens, this starting point will be sufficient; for others, they will want to dive deeper. Consider meeting with a smaller group of teens to dive more deeply into the teachings of the Theology of the Body as a mid-week activity. There are several resources available to do this that you may want to consider:

- *Worth the Wait*, by Life Teen — This book is a collection of short articles that discuss different aspects of dating and relationships. It is great for a small group book study with teens.

- *Theology of the Body For Teens*, by Ascension Press — This is a curriculum you can use with teens that want to dive more deeply into the Theology of the Body. Can be used with large and small groups of teens.

- *Theology of the Body For Beginners*, by Christopher West — This introductory book can be read by a small group of teens in a discussion group.

- *Humanae Vitae*, by Paul VI (encyclical) — This is a theologically dense encyclical that discusses many of the same topics as Theology of the Body; it would make a great weekly study for a group of dedicated teens.

LIFE

TEACHING

KEY TERM DEFINITIONS

- Original Solitude – Refers to the realization of Adam that he was alone without a companion; also refers to

the solitude of man in his relationship with God over all other animals.

- Nuptial Meaning of the Body – Men and women

complement through their bodies and reveal that we are designed to give ourselves to another person as a self-gift.

“IN THE BEGINNING...”

- Sacred Scripture begins with two narratives about the creation of the world. Each of these narratives is important because each tells us important truths about who God is and why God created life.
- The first creation narrative offers us three profound truths about God and His Creation.
- It begins with chaos — the first lines of the book of Genesis read, “In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth — and the earth was without form or shape, with darkness over the abyss and a mighty wind sweeping over the waters...”
- This is ancient language that indicates a time of disorder and disarray. It is a powerful image that is made more striking by the next line, “Then God said: Let there be light, and there was light.”
- God begins to bring order out of chaos. God has the power to do so; through his Word God creates. This is the first truth: God is the author of creation, and He gives it order, purpose, and meaning. He deliberately wills it.
- Then God creates the heavens and earth, the water and sky, land and sea, plants and animals. He pronounces that all of it is “good.” This is the second truth: we learn that God's creation is good.
- Finally, God creates humanity — male and female — in His image and likeness. God views this final creation and deems it to be “very good.”
- This is the third truth: men and women reflect who God is. This is what makes us “very good” and what makes us different from the

Genesis 1:1-2

Genesis 1:3

**CCC 295
CCC 299**

**Genesis 1:4-25
CCC 299**

**CCC 343
Genesis 1:26-28**

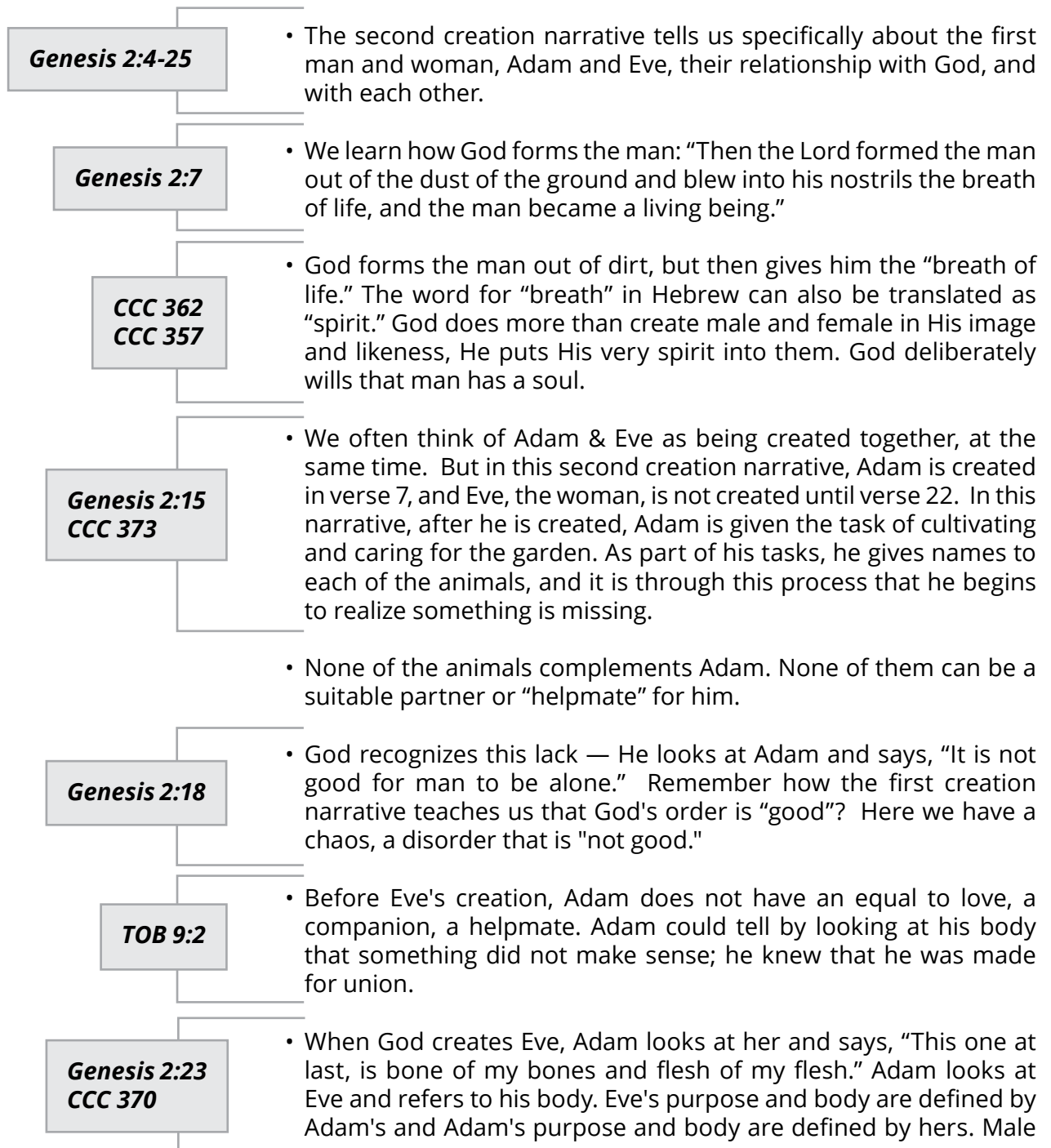
**CCC 355
TOB 6:2**

animals and plants. We are reflections of God, and God made us to be in relationship with Him.

- It is important to note that men and women reflect God when taken together. To understand this more deeply, we need to look ahead at the next creation narrative.

“IT IS NOT GOOD FOR MAN TO BE ALONE...”

- Throughout the first story of creation we learn that God is a God of order — He creates order out of chaos. We also learn that all that God creates is good. The second creation narrative gives us a closer look at the “very good” order that is created with the beginning of humanity.



and female cannot exist alone because each one's body defines the other.

- *Invite a male teen to the front of the room to stand in front of a mirror.*
- Adam, while alone before God and without a suitable helper could only look at his own body. It is like looking into a mirror, we see our reflection, but not our complement. We cannot interact with it, it cannot challenge us or help us to grow, it doesn't complete us.
- *Have a female teen come forward and stand in front of the male instead of the mirror.*
- But when Adam and Eve look at each other, they are seeing both a reflection and a complement of the other. They see another person, like them but someone that is also distinctly different. Adam and Eve see each other and are able to define who they are and what they were made for by seeing each other.
- *Have teens sit down.*
- The body of a male does not make sense without the body of the female — and vice versa. We say that male and female “complement” each other. Each has been created as a “help” for the other.

For this visual demonstration you will need to have a full length mirror set up in the front of the room.

CCC 371-372

- The very next verse of the scripture makes reference to the two bodies coming together to form one body. Genesis states, “That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one flesh.”
- Creation describes the first marriage in Scripture — Adam and Eve become husband and wife. Their bodies make sense together and Adam and Eve truly find the fullness of their life by giving themselves to one another. This is known as the **nuptial meaning of the body**.
- Through this union we gain a deeper understanding of how man and woman can reflect God.

**Genesis 2:24
CCC 1605**

**Gaudium et Spes 24:3
TOB 13:1
CCC 372
Key Term**

COMPLEMENTARITY OF THE SEXES

- It is important to point out that God made man as “male and female.”
- Adam, by himself, did not make sense. There was something missing. We call this time before Eve was created “**original solitude**.” It was the time that Adam stood in creation as a creature with a unique relationship to God apart from the animals, and alone as a person in the world in need of a companion.
- The order of creation is only complete when the two genders complement each other. There is no superiority of one gender

Genesis 1:27

**TOB 5:4, 6
Key Term**

CCC 369

over the other. The very way in which Eve is created tells us that they are equal to one another.

Genesis 2:21-22

- God makes Eve out of the rib of Adam — which comes from the middle of his body.
- If Eve were made out of Adam’s head — she would be higher than, or superior to Adam. If she were made out of his foot, she would be lower than or inferior to him.
- But Eve is made out of Adam’s middle — a sign of their equality.
- The key is to remember that that equality does not mean “the same.” Too often in our culture, we believe that we have to prove equality by proving that we can do anything that the other gender can do.
- God never intended this. God wanted there to be differences between the sexes because these differences say something about God.
- If God had created male and female the same, they could not complement each other. Two identical things cannot also be complementary.

Have two large puzzle pieces for this demonstration.

- Think of two puzzle pieces. If they are the same they cannot fit together, and we can't complete the picture, but every puzzle piece complements another piece; and it is in this way that we are able to understand the entire picture that is being put together.
- Both men and women are created in God's image — but He characterizes them as male and female to express that there are distinct differences between the two.
- If both are created in the image of God, then God intended each of them to speak something different about His image.

WHAT DO THE SEXES REVEAL ABOUT GOD?

- Let's look at the nuptial meaning of the body a little closer. In the act of physical union (sex) in marriage — the man's body is designed with a specific role. He gives a part of himself to create life within a woman.

John 6:53

- This is the role of the Bridegroom — and it is the same role that was modeled for us by Christ. He gave of himself that we might have life within us. That role didn't end on Calvary, however, as Christ regularly initiates the act of salvation by His grace. He enters into us at Mass and we have life within us because of Him.

CCC 1652

- Now look at the nuptial meaning of the woman’s body: In the act of physical union in marriage, her body opens to receive the man and she receives life within her. She carries that life and brings it into the world.

- Through child bearing woman is the only creation that God has ever made that brings God's own image and spirit into the world. That role was modeled for us by Mary.

- At the Annunciation, she accepted and received the Word of God and then at the birth of Jesus, she brought His life into the world. Just like Christ's role didn't end with his death, Mary's role didn't end with his birth. She continues to bring Christ and his grace into our world — the perfect fulfillment of the role of woman.

CCC 969

- Male and female are each made in the image and likeness of God, and each have an equally important and yet very different role in bringing God's life into the world. When they are working together and in harmony with the very meaning of their bodies, man and woman are co-creators with God in creating more unique people who are also fashioned in the image and likeness of God. No other creation can ever claim to share more fully in God's role as Creator. Not even the angels are given this honor and responsibility.

**Genesis 1:29
CCC 1652**

- Looking at a man and a woman we can see that they are equally important in creation, and they are different. God intended these differences to complement one another. Adam's body does not make sense without Eve. In the same way, man and woman today do not make sense without each other. The two sexes complement one another.

- As Adam says, "At last this is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh." His flesh (his body) reveals its purpose only when he sees Eve's body.

Genesis 2:23

- God created you as a man or a woman for a reason, and you have a unique role in revealing God to the world. You also are called to be a "help" for members of the opposite gender to help them be holy in your friendships, dating relationships, and for many of you — marriage. This is just the beginning of God's plan for us — and over the next few Life Nights we are going to dive more deeply into God's plan for our sexuality.

LIFE NIGHT CHECKLIST

CORE PLANNING TEAM:

DATE OF LIFE NIGHT:

ONE MONTH PRIOR TO THE NIGHT:

- Give copies of the Life Night to each of the members of the planning team. Each person should read the Scripture and Catechism references as well as review the planning guide before the brainstorming meeting.
- Get the planning team together for a brainstorming meeting (this should last no longer than 1 hour). The team prays and discusses where the teens are in their faith journey in relation to this topic. Then using this planning guide as a starting point, the team adapts the Life Night to meet the needs of the teens and the parish. Create a detailed outline with any changes and/or adjustments.
- Assign the person responsible for each part of the Life Night:

Environment _____

Boys vs. Girls _____

Dating Futility (video) _____

Small Group Discussion _____

Prayer over Men/Women _____

TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO LIFE NIGHT:

- Turn in a detailed outline of the Life Night to the youth minister. Allow the youth minister to give feedback and make any necessary changes.
- Create a list of needed supplies and materials. Assign a person to be responsible for collecting and/or purchasing the materials needed.
- Decide the people that will be doing the following things. Make sure they have a copy of the script and/or teaching outline. Inform them of any practices and/or deadlines.

Teaching _____

WEEK OF THE LIFE NIGHT:

- Written outline of the teaching is given to the youth minister and practiced.
- Run a dress rehearsal of the Life Night. Youth minister gives feedback.
- Create environment and collect needed supplies.
- E-mail entire Core Team an overview of the night and small group questions.

DAY OF THE LIFE NIGHT:

- Set up the environment. Make sure the room is clean and presentable.
- Set up audio and video. Test the video clips to make sure both picture and sound work.
- Walk the entire Core Team through the Life Night. Make sure all transitions are ready and everyone knows their roles.
- Pray! Pray for the teens attending the Life Night. Pray for God's will to be done through the night. Pray over those involved.

LIFE NIGHT EVALUATION

INSTRUCTIONS:

Use the following questions to discuss and evaluate your Life Night.

1. On a scale of 1-10, how well did this Life Night accomplish the goal we set? Explain.

2. What was the strongest aspect of this Life Night?

3. What kind of follow-up do we need to do after this Life Night?

4. What can we improve for future Life Nights? How can we accomplish this?

1. On a scale of 1-10, how well did this Life Night accomplish the goal we set? Explain.

2. What was the strongest aspect of this Life Night?

3. What kind of follow-up do we need to do after this Life Night?

4. What can we improve for future Life Nights? How can we accomplish this?

1. On a scale of 1-10, how well did this Life Night accomplish the goal we set? Explain.

2. What was the strongest aspect of this Life Night?

3. What kind of follow-up do we need to do after this Life Night?

4. What can we improve for future Life Nights? How can we accomplish this?

1. On a scale of 1-10, how well did this Life Night accomplish the goal we set? Explain.

2. What was the strongest aspect of this Life Night?

3. What kind of follow-up do we need to do after this Life Night?

4. What can we improve for future Life Nights? How can we accomplish this?

DEATH

THE FALL, ORIGINAL SIN

LIFE NIGHT OUTLINE

CATECHISM

386–389
396–409
1264

YOUCAT

67-70
200

KEY TERMS

Concupiscence
Original Sin
Original Justice

SCRIPTURE

Genesis 3:1-24

Romans 3:23-26
Romans 5:12-18

CHURCH DOCUMENTS

Gaudium et Spes 13 (Pastoral Constitution, Vatican II)

KEY CONCEPTS

- Humanity can only live in friendship with God by free submission to God. This freedom was put to the test in the Garden of Eden with the command not to

eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

- Adam and Eve disobeyed God’s command, abusing their freedom. This first sin caused the loss of original holiness and disrupted original justice.
- Sin and death entered the world through original sin, and as a consequence they are transmitted to all descendants of Adam.

GOAL

The goal of this Life Night is to explain the effects of the Fall of Adam and Eve and the doctrine of original sin. This Life Night will challenge the teens to recognize the effects of original sin on God’s intended plan for the world, and recognize the necessity of Christ in their redemption.

ABOUT THIS NIGHT

This Life Night is the second night of the *Life, Love, and the Pursuit of Happiness* curriculum, and continues where the first Life Night, “Life” left off — in the Garden of Eden. The night begins with an exciting announcement from the youth minister and a simple rule that ultimately gets broken. This transitions into a teaching about the Fall and original sin. During the Break teenagers will have an opportunity to discuss the effects of original

sin and concupiscence within the world today. During the Send, the teenagers will renew their baptismal promises and be reminded that Christ has won the victory over sin and death, and that our hope is Him.

PARENTAL NOTICE

This week at Life Night we continued to discuss the creation narratives in the Book of Genesis, and picked up where we left off last week with Adam and Eve. This week we discussed the Fall; this is the moment when Adam and Eve chose to disobey God’s commands and chose themselves over God. It resulted in the first sin, which we call “original sin.” The effects of original sin were that humanity’s relationship with God was distorted, as were man and woman’s relationship with each other. The teens discussed the effects that this

has on our world today, the most severe being the reality that everyone will one day die. We also learned that through Christ we have redemption and that in our baptism the stain of original sin was washed away, but the effects of sin (called concupiscence) still remain. We must strive to be holy in order to avoid sin, and live as God has called us to live.

Take some time to discuss this Life Night with your son or daughter. A couple of questions that you can use for discussion are:

- What are some of the effects of original sin that you see in our world? Are there things that we can do to bring Christ to those situations or people?
- Why is having a relationship with Christ important for our family? What can we do as a family to strengthen our relationship with Christ?

ENVIRONMENT

The environment for this night should be set up like a garden. Decorate the room with plants and flowers (real or fake). String Christmas lights around the room to give it a festive feeling. As teens enter have upbeat music playing and all of the Core Members very excited. In the front of the room on a small table have a red button. This button will be replaced by a basin of water for the Send portion of the Life Night.

Mass Announcement: Prior to the Life Night, the youth minister should make an announcement at the end of Mass that there is big news that is going to be shared at the Life Night that evening, inviting all teens to attend. Make this a big deal and go over the top about how life-changing this news is going to be for all of the teens.

GATHER

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

(5 min)

The youth minister should welcome all of the teens to the Life Night and introduce any teens that are attending for the first time. Lead an opening prayer to begin the Life Night.

BIG NEWS

(15 min)

The youth minister should begin by telling the teens that there is a big announcement coming during the Life Night, but first explain that there is one rule that the teens need to adhere to: They cannot push the red button in the front of the room. Some teens may ask why they aren't allowed to push it; the youth minister should not offer any explanation but simply repeat that the button is off limits.

The youth minister should then reveal that the youth group has been awarded a large monetary grant by the International Catholic Youth Ministry Federation (not a real thing, but the teens won't know that). He or she should go on to explain that the teens will need to brainstorm ways that they can use the money in the upcoming year. The youth minister should break the teens into small groups to brainstorm possible uses for this money (if you set small groups for the semester, they should divide into these groups). Task the teens with coming up with as many practical uses for the money as possible in ten minutes, then dismiss them all from the main room.

TRASHED

(5 min)

While the teens are outside of the room, the youth minister with two Core Members who are not in a small group should "trash" the main room. Toilet paper the trees, put bags of garbage around the room, tip over plants, etc. This will represent the fallen state of humanity after original sin. This should be completed before the teens walk back in.

As the teens arrive, there should be a much more somber tone in the room. Once everyone has been seated, the youth minister should explain that somebody broke the one rule of the Life Night and pushed the button. Because of this, everything is ruined – the grant money is gone, and the main meeting space has been trashed. That act of disobedience, though seemingly small, has tremendous implications. This will lead into the teaching for the Life Night.

PROCLAIM

“DEATH” TEACHING

(15 min)

The youth minister should give the teaching for the Life Night. The focus of the teaching is on the Fall of Adam and Eve and original sin. An outline for the teaching can be found on pages 22 to 25.

BREAK

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

(25 min)

Have the teens break back into their small groups. Each small group leader should begin with an opening prayer, and then use the following questions for discussion:

- What are some of the effects of the Fall and original sin that we can still see today? How do these things impact us? What can we do to resist the inclination to sin (concupiscence)?
- Why do you think Adam and Eve chose themselves over God? What temptations do teenagers face that challenge them to choose against God?
- How has original sin distorted the world’s view of sexuality? What damage has it done? What can we do to help reverse that damage?

SEND

RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL PROMISES

(10 min)

The youth minister should gather all of the small groups back together to close the night. If possible, invite your parish priest to be present for the closing of the Life Night. The youth minister should explain to the teens:

The Fall is not the end of the story — it is only the beginning. Christ came to redeem humanity and save us from sin. When Jesus was crucified, his sacrifice opened the gates of heaven and mercy back to us. Though this won us salvation, it did not remove the effects of original sin and physical suffering. Our heart will still be a battlefield between the longing for God and our inclination to sin.

Christ gave us the Sacrament of Baptism to erase the stain of original sin, and to give us the grace to stand firm in the battle against sin. When we were baptized we were made a new creation in Christ. The grace we received is still present in us, it is there to help us choose Christ rather than sin.

At this time invite the parish priest to bless a basin of water and lead the teens in a renewal of baptismal promises. After the renewal, have the teens come forward and bless themselves with holy water (or, if the priest or deacon is present, have him sprinkle the teens with the holy water) as a reminder of their baptism and of the freedom they have in Christ.

Close the Life Night by praying a Hail Mary and Ave Maria.

ADAPTING THIS LIFE NIGHT

- For the Gather, rather than having the teens brainstorm ideas for the imaginary grant money, consider using this alternative game: Have the teens get into small groups and form a single file line, with each teen standing about two feet apart. Give each teen a small cup, and give the teen at the front of the line a ping-pong ball. Tell the teens that they will be doing a relay race and will need to pass the ping-pong ball to the back of the line only using the cups without

moving from their spot in line. The teens should be able to do this fairly easily. After the first round, blindfold every teen in line and have them repeat the activity — this second round will be much harder.

Explain to the teens that this is the effect of original sin. Adam and Eve became “handicapped” and were no longer able to see as clearly as before — the original justice they had enjoyed was now gone. This game can also transition well into the Proclaim for the Life Night.

- For the Gather, create a humorous video to show a teen sneaking back into the main room and pushing the button. Show the video to the group and preface it as “surveillance footage” of the rule being broken. Ask the teen why he or she pushed the button, and have them reply that they “just had to see what happened.” Use this exchange to transition into the teaching.
- This is a great night for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Invite several priests to be present to hear teenagers’ confessions during the Break/Send. Invite your music minister to lead worship while teens receive the sacrament.

GOING DEEPER

- For teenagers who want to go deeper in small group, consider using the following questions:
 - Pride caused original sin because Adam & Eve wanted to become “like gods.” Do you think this mindset still exists today? Why? How do people try to make themselves “like gods?” What is the end result?
 - The nuptial meaning of the body was distorted in the Fall — how do you see this affecting male and female relationships today? In your school? In the world? With your friends?
 - Where are areas of temptation in your life? How do you resist them? What “promises” do these sins make that they cannot fulfill?
 - *Read Philippians 2:5-11.* How was Christ different than Adam? What do we need to do to emulate the example of Christ and avoid the example of Adam and Eve?
- Teens and Core Team that wish to dive more deeply into the nature of Christ’s redemption after this night should consider reading *Redemptor Hominis* (Bl. John Paul II, encyclical), which outlines Christ’s redeeming mission for humanity.

Notes

DEATH

TEACHING

KEY TERM DEFINITIONS

- Concupiscence – The inclination to sin; human desires which remain disordered due to the consequences of original sin, even after Baptism.
- Original Sin – The sin by which the first human beings disobeyed the commandment of God, choosing to follow their own will rather than God. As a consequence, they became subject to death, losing original holiness.
- Original Justice – The original state of harmony and justice that existed between male and female, humanity and God, and humanity and creation, before the Fall.

IT WAS ALL GOOD IN THE GARDEN

- The story of creation tells us that God creates order out of chaos, that what God creates is good, and that God created male and female in His image and likeness. These are important realities for us because they mean that we are created with tremendous dignity and worth.
- We also know from reading the second creation narrative that men and women complement each other – they were designed to be a “helper” for one another. Adam and Eve live in harmony with God and with creation, and with one another. This is called **original justice**.
- Original justice allowed Adam and Eve to love one another and God totally and without reservation. We read something interesting at the very end of that second creation narrative — Adam and Eve were naked, but were not ashamed.
- It is an interesting note, and it tells us a lot about the state of things in the garden. In our culture we wear clothing to cover up because it protects our dignity. Did you ever think about why, though?
- If people walked around without clothing, others would immediately objectify them — we know that this happens even when people do walk around with clothing. Wearing clothing protects our dignity by preventing people from completely objectifying us.
- This is what makes the line “they were both naked, yet they felt no shame,” so important. Adam and Eve looked at each other without

Genesis 1:26-28
Genesis 1:1-2

Genesis 2:20-24
Key Term

CCC 376-378
TOB 13:1
Genesis 2:25

TOB 15:1-2
CCC 372

lust or the desire to use the other for selfish gain. They simply saw in one another the reflection of God.

- The selfless love Adam and Eve had for each other was a direct result of the justice and freedom that existed in the Garden of Eden. However, that justice and freedom only existed through Adam & Eve's free choice to submit and be obedient to the order God had created. God put a tree in the garden that represented this order called "The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil." Adam and Eve were allowed to eat from any tree in the garden, except this one.
- This one rule is important — by choosing to obey it Adam and Eve are choosing to love God and freely submit to His will. Adam and Eve had to choose to live in friendship with God and the order of creation; without choice, love cannot exist. As long as they choose God, original justice can be maintained.

CCC 377
CCC 396
Genesis 2:16-17

THE FALL — DISTORTIONS IN DESIGN

- Adam and Eve, though they lived in harmony with God, creation, and each other, were tempted to eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. They were told that if they ate from the tree they would be "like gods."

- Eve ate from the tree, and then Adam. The Book of Genesis says that "the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked." Adam and Eve abused the freedom that was given to them by God, and distorted His order by choosing to disobey Him.
- This is called **original sin**. In this first sin humanity preferred itself over God, and wanted to be like God, but without submitting to God.
- Adam, Eve and all of humanity lost something amazing in the Fall.
- After Adam and Eve eat the fruit, their perspective on the body immediately changes. They lost the original justice in which they existed, and cover themselves up because they feel shame. They also become afraid of God — original sin has distorted their view of Him as well.
- Adam and Eve, after they ate the fruit, no longer saw the full person — instead they lusted for each other's bodies.
- Shame — which many mistakenly consider to be a bad thing — is actually a default mechanism of the body. When we are being objectified, we feel shame and cover ourselves to protect ourselves from objectification. Shame also tells us when we have sinned and encourages us to repentance.

Genesis 3:7

Key Term
CCC 398

Romans 5:18

CCC 399-400
Genesis 3:6-7

TOB 32:5

TOB 11:3-5

- This is what Adam and Eve did — they put on clothes so that they would be able to see each other as full persons. They felt shame and protected themselves by covering up.
- However, shame was never part of God’s plan. God intended for us to be able to look at the human body and see the full person.
- This event is called the Fall. After the original sin, humanity has fallen from holiness and original justice; God explains the tragic consequences of this — He explains that our hearts will now be a battleground between the rightly ordered desires of sexuality and selfish, lustful desires. Men would now be prone to abuse or use women for selfish gain, and women will seek to possess men.
- This inclination to sin is called **concupiscence**. It exists in the human heart because of the Fall.
- Adam and Eve also lost harmony with all of creation and the original unity between each other. Death makes its entrance into human history. Adam and Eve find themselves in a suddenly hostile world.
- Original sin wreaked havoc on God’s original design for our bodies and all of creation, and those effects are still seen today. Because of original sin, men and women still struggle with concupiscence, which distorts God’s design.
- Though this condition exists, it is not impossible to overcome. Through the Fall, God promised a savior — one that would redeem the body. This savior is Jesus Christ — and it is through his example that we will come to reclaim the nuptial meaning of the body and understand God’s plan for our sexuality.

Genesis 3:7-11

**CCC 397-399
Genesis 3:16-19
CCC 401**

**CCC 1264
TOB 26:2
Key Term**

CCC 400

TOB 28:4

**CCC 405
CCC 410**

BAPTISM AND ORIGINAL SIN

- Just as Adam’s decision to disobey God brought death, Jesus’ perfect obedience to God the Father brought life. Jesus became obedient and accepted the wages of sin, which is death. He suffered that death on a cross.
- Jesus’ free choice of love through his death reverses Adam’s decision and original sin, which has been transmitted to all of us. Everyone shared in Adam’s sin, but everyone can also share in the life Christ has gained for us.
- Christ established the Church to transmit this grace and life through the Sacraments — the first of which is the Sacrament of Baptism.
- Baptism washes away the stain of original sin and gives us grace that, when nurtured, will carry us toward heaven. It gives us a share in God’s divine life.

**Romans 5:12-18
Philippians 2:5-11**

CCC 411

CCC 1210

CCC 1263

CCC 1264

- The effect of original sin, concupiscence, still remains after baptism. The world has become a battleground, but baptism gives us the grace to resist temptation and choose to be obedient to what God asks of us — namely, to be holy.
- We can see the effects of the Fall all around us — in pornography, pre-marital sex, hooking up, and other distortions in God’s design for sex. Like the tree in the garden, all of these things promise us that we can be “like gods,” having mastery over our own bodies and desires. But these promises don’t deliver — when we give in to distortions in our sexuality we actually become slaves to our passion. This is not what God had intended.

Galatians 5:1

- We can resist the effects of the Fall with God’s grace and by continually seeking to turn to Christ. The Fall is not the end of the story — it is only the beginning. Through Christ we can repent from our sins, have the grace to avoid sin, and reclaim God’s plan for our sexuality.

LIFE NIGHT CHECKLIST

CORE PLANNING TEAM:

DATE OF LIFE NIGHT:

ONE MONTH PRIOR TO THE NIGHT:

- Give copies of the Life Night to each of the members of the planning team. Each person should read the Scripture and Catechism references as well as review the planning guide before the brainstorming meeting.
- Get the planning team together for a brainstorming meeting (this should last no longer than 1 hour). The team prays and discusses where the teens are in their faith journey in relation to this topic. Then using this planning guide as a starting point, the team adapts the Life Night to meet the needs of the teens and the parish. Create a detailed outline with any changes and/or adjustments.
- Assign the person responsible for each part of the Life Night:

Environment _____

Big News/Trashed _____

Small Group Discussion _____

Renewal of Baptismal Promises _____

TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO LIFE NIGHT:

- Turn in a detailed outline of the Life Night to the youth minister. Allow the youth minister to give feedback and make any necessary changes.
- Create a list of needed supplies and materials. Assign a person to be responsible for collecting and/or purchasing the materials needed.
- Decide the people that will be doing the following things. Make sure they have a copy of the script and/or teaching outline. Inform them of any practices and/or deadlines.

Teaching _____

WEEK OF THE LIFE NIGHT:

- Written outline of the teaching is given to the youth minister and practiced.
- Run a dress rehearsal of the Life Night. Youth minister gives feedback.
- Create environment and collect needed supplies.
- E-mail entire Core Team an overview of the night and small group questions.

DAY OF THE LIFE NIGHT:

- Set up the environment. Make sure the room is clean and presentable.
- Set up audio and video. Test the video clips to make sure both picture and sound work.
- Walk the entire Core Team through the Life Night. Make sure all transitions are ready and everyone knows their roles.
- Pray! Pray for the teens attending the Life Night. Pray for God's will to be done through the night. Pray over those involved.



LIFE NIGHT EVALUATION

INSTRUCTIONS:

Use the following questions to discuss and evaluate your Life Night.

1. On a scale of 1-10, how well did this Life Night accomplish the goal we set? Explain.

2. What was the strongest aspect of this Life Night?

3. What kind of follow-up do we need to do after this Life Night?

4. What can we improve for future Life Nights? How can we accomplish this?

1. On a scale of 1-10, how well did this Life Night accomplish the goal we set? Explain.

2. What was the strongest aspect of this Life Night?

3. What kind of follow-up do we need to do after this Life Night?

4. What can we improve for future Life Nights? How can we accomplish this?

1. On a scale of 1-10, how well did this Life Night accomplish the goal we set? Explain.

2. What was the strongest aspect of this Life Night?

3. What kind of follow-up do we need to do after this Life Night?

4. What can we improve for future Life Nights? How can we accomplish this?

1. On a scale of 1-10, how well did this Life Night accomplish the goal we set? Explain.

2. What was the strongest aspect of this Life Night?

3. What kind of follow-up do we need to do after this Life Night?

4. What can we improve for future Life Nights? How can we accomplish this?

HUNGER

CONCUPISCENCE, LUST, SPIRITUAL HUNGER LIFE NIGHT OUTLINE

CATECHISM

357-358
2514-2527
2337-2356

YOUCAT

315-317
400
404-410

KEY TERMS

Chastity
Lust
Temperance

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 5:27-30
Matthew 15:19-20
John 8:1-8
Romans 13:8-14
Galatians 5:19
1 John 2:16

KEY CONCEPTS

- Chastity is the successful integration of sexuality within the person; it is an inner unity of man in his bodily and spiritual being.

- Lust is the disordered desire for sexual pleasure, which is sought for selfish reasons outside its unifying and procreative purposes.
- Chastity is a moral virtue, it blossoms in friendship and leads to spiritual communion.

GOAL

The goal of this Life Night is to introduce teens to the virtue of chastity as it stands in opposition to concupiscence. It will challenge teens to recognize their desire for relationships, and to act on that desire in a healthy and chaste way.

ABOUT THIS NIGHT

This Life Night introduces the virtue of chastity to the teenagers and explains how it can help them overcome concupiscence and experience true freedom. The Life Night begins with a meal that everyone experiences differently. This meal illustrates the three responses we can have to our desire for relationships — starvation, junk food, and a banquet. After the meal teens will process their experience and then hear a teaching about chastity and how the virtue allows us to control

our desires and have a healthy relationship with God and others. This teaching leads into men's and women's-only sessions where teens will discuss the challenges they face to living chastely and ways to avoid sin. Teens will have an opportunity to pray over each other during these sessions, and will close the night as a large group in prayer.

PARENTAL NOTICE

This week at Life Night we discussed our spiritual hunger for community and relationships and the positive and negative ways that we express that hunger. We challenged the teens to realize that, although the world may say that it is best to feed our hunger for relationships with sexual relationships and experiences, ultimately this hurts us spiritually, emotionally, and even

physically. We introduced the virtue of chastity, which is the integration of our sexuality into our spirit and body, allowing the spirit to control our body and desires. This is a very counter-cultural idea to many teenagers, but is very important because it allows us to practice true freedom. During the Life Night we broke up into men's and women's groups to discuss the specific challenges to chastity faced by each gender. We closed the night with a time of prayer, allowing the men and women to pray with each other for continued strength in their lives to resist temptation.

This is an important topic to talk about with your teenager, as there are many temptations that teens face in their lives that threaten chastity. Below are a couple of questions to get your discussion started:

- What are some of the biggest things that threaten teenagers' chastity today? Why?
- What can we do as a family to support each other spiritually? What can we do to strengthen prayer in our community?

ENVIRONMENT

The environment for this Life Night should be set up as a dining hall. Divide the room into three sections using white tape on the floor. Leave the first section completely empty. Don't put chairs, table, or food in it. The second section should have folding tables set up in it with piles of junk food on each. In the final section, have one or two tables set up with candles, tablecloths, plates and silverware. This final section should look like seating in a fancy restaurant.

GATHER

FEAST OR FAMINE

As the teenagers gather into the main meeting space they should be divided into three groups. The first group should be led to a section that is taped off from the rest of the room. These teens should be instructed to stay behind the taped line for the Gather activity. The second group should be seated at tables that have a lot of junk food on them. Have bags of potato chips, cookies, cans of soda, etc. set out on each of these tables. The final group of teens should be smaller, only six to eight. A couple of Core Members can escort these teens to the fancy tables and explain to them that their food will be ready shortly.

Prepare a full meal for this final group of teens. Ask a couple of parents to help prepare good food for these teens to eat, and have some Core Members serve it to them. It is important not to do this right away, though. As these teens wait, have some vegetables set out on the table for them to eat in the meantime.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

(5 min)

The youth minister should gather all of the teens together and welcome any teens that are attending Life Night for the first time. He or she should lead an opening prayer to begin the Life Night.

EAT UP

(20 min)

The youth minister should then allow the teens to have time to eat and socialize. Instruct the teens that they are not allowed to move from their section, so teens who are in the "taped off" section can socialize but not leave the section. Have Core Members spread throughout each section to talk with the teens. Have some music playing as the teens eat.

PROCLAIM

LARGE GROUP PROCESSING

(5 min)

The youth minister should begin a large group discussion while the Core Members remove food from the main meeting space. The following questions can be used to facilitate a discussion:

- What did you enjoy about this meal?
- What, if anything, made it difficult? Why?
- Do you wish that you were in a different section? Why?

"HUNGER" TEACHING

(10 min)

The youth minister should use the responses of the teens to transition into the teaching for the Life Night. This teaching focuses on our desire to be in community and our hunger for relationships, and the impact concupiscence has on that hunger. An outline for the teaching can be found on pages 32 to 36.

OPTIONAL VIDEO TEACHING

(10 min)

In place of a live teaching, you may choose to use the video teaching "Hunger" found on *Video Support: Theology of the Body*. The youth minister can use this teaching to transition into men's and women's sessions.

BREAK

MEN'S / WOMEN'S SESSIONS

(20 min)

Divide the teens by gender for large group discussions. Be sure to delegate a Core Member to lead each session prior to the Life Night, and give them the Proclaim outline and discussion questions ahead of time. The Core Member leading the session should lead an opening

prayer, and then use the following questions to begin a large group discussion:

- What makes it difficult as a man/woman to wait for the "banquet"? Is it worth waiting for? Why?
- What are some of the "junk foods" that are temptations for men/women? How do these hurt us spiritually?
- How do things like pornography, pre-marital sex, and masturbation destroy the intention of sex? Why are these "junk foods" so prevalent in today's world?
- How do we avoid starving ourselves? What kinds of positive relationships do we need to form in order to fulfill our need for community? How do we keep boundaries on those relationships? Why is it important for us to have strong relationships with people of the same gender?
- What can we do as a community of men/women to support each other in chastity?

PRAYER PARTNERS

(10 min)

Within the men's and women's session meeting spaces, have the teens get into small groups of three to four teens. The Core Member leading the session should explain that we need to uphold one another in prayer, and that the men's/women's session is going to be closed by praying with each other. Invite each teen to tell their small group what they need prayer for in order to live a chaste life. The other members of the small group should pray out loud for that person, asking Christ to give him or her the grace to live chastely and to seek holiness. This should be repeated for each member of the group. The Core Member leading the session should close with a final prayer.

HUNGER

TEACHING

KEY TERM DEFINITIONS

- Chastity – Chastity is the remedy to the deadly sin of lust. Those who are chaste are morally clean in their thoughts, words, and actions. The integration of our sexuality within our

person that allows us to be unified body and soul is called chastity.

- Lust – Lust, one of the seven deadly sins, is the disordered desire for sexual pleasure that seeks its own selfish gain.

- Temperance – The virtue that moderates the desire for pleasure. Temperance enables us to keep from doing what is wrong, even when we have strong feelings for it.

THE HEART IS A BATTLEFIELD

- In the beginning, there was a garden where God placed a man and a woman. He gave them dominion over the whole garden, but one rule: They were not allowed to eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.
- The man and the woman were tempted, however, into disobeying God. This first act of disobedience is called original sin, and because of it, the world that existed in harmony was thrown into disorder.
- This disorder spread to all humanity. Every one was implicated in Adam and Eve’s sin. Through the first sin, death and sin entered and filled the world.
- The result is that the human heart became a battlefield between the original design that God had for us, and concupiscence — the inclination to sin. We are pulled in two different directions, one direction toward God and the other toward our selfish desires.
- We are pulled toward God because we were created to love and to serve God. This is our purpose and we can never get rid of that. It is our deepest longing; we long to return to God.
- Our hunger for union with God was expressed by St. Augustine, who wrote, “O Lord, our hearts are restless until they rest in you.” Even if we don’t realize it, our hearts desire communion with God.

Genesis 2:17

**Genesis 3:1-6
CCC 399**

**CCC 401-402
Romans 3:23**

**CCC 2516
Romans 7:15-19**

**CCC 358
CCC 2515**

**Confessions,
Book 1, Chapter 1**

1 Corinthians 12:12-13
Genesis 2:18

- Because we were created in community, our hearts also desire communion with other people as well. It is not good for us to be alone; we need other people to be in relationship with.

CCC 376

- These two desires are written on our heart, and before the Fall they were rightly ordered — they made sense. After the Fall, these desires become distorted by concupiscence.

Genesis 3:1-5

- Concupiscence pulls us toward ourselves instead of into genuine relationships with God or others. It distorts these desires. It whispers the same lie as the serpent in the garden. It tells us that we should be able to make our own decisions, that we should be able to determine right and wrong — that we should be like God.

CCC 2514
1 John 2:16

- Concupiscence can take three forms — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. This is important to understand when it comes to our sexuality.

LUST VS. LOVE

Matthew 5:27-28
Exodus 20:14

- Jesus speaks directly about lust during the Sermon on the Mount. He begins by calling the minds of the people to the sixth commandment: Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Matthew 5:28

- Then Jesus helps people understand that this commandment goes beyond a physical action. He tells the people, “I say to you, everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

Key Word
CCC 2351

- **Lust** is the disordered desire for sexual pleasure that seeks its own selfish gain. Lust is the opposite of love because it turns someone into an object to be used for someone's pleasure, rather than a person made in the image and likeness of God.

TOB 39:2-4

- Lust is a result of concupiscence. We were made for union and community, but lust makes us selfish by viewing another person as an object to be gained, rather than a person to be received as a gift.

CCC 2354
Proverbs 6:25

- Lust of the eyes comes when we objectify people by their appearance. Pornography is built on this idea — it turns people into products rather than persons. Lust of the eyes can also happen when we objectify other people through our words or our gaze.

- This is challenging because it seems like in our world there are so many opportunities for lust. Since we live in fallen world, a world tainted by original sin, we are going to face temptations to lust.

- Additionally, we are hardwired to desire union with other people; we want to give ourselves and be received by others. We want union with God — we want to be loved. This desire for love is a good and holy desire.

- Lust is the opposite of love, but it is a convincing counterfeit. We can easily convince ourselves that we are finding what we are looking for by giving into lust and calling it “love.”
- So how do we manage these desires in the battlefield of our heart? How do we sort out our desire to love and be loved from lust?

THREE RESPONSES TO HUNGER

- Think of our desire to love and be loved as a hunger. When people get hungry, there are a few things that they can do:

1. Starvation

- Some of us, for different reasons, may have been told that our desire to love and be loved is a bad thing; that it will only lead to sex and sin. We feel guilty about this, so we avoid it.
- This isn’t how God created us. As a teenager, you are called to abstain from sex — that is, not engage in it. Sex happens in the context of marriage, but there is a difference between abstinence and denial.
- Abstinence acknowledges that sometimes there will be temptations, but we are going to make a conscious decision to avoid them. When we know what we are fighting, we can fend off attacks. We can choose to find appropriate expressions of love in our family and friendships instead.
- Denial represses our desire for love, and rather than trying to order our lives so that we can fight temptation, we completely ignore it.
- The problem with starving our hunger rather than confronting it is that the hunger never goes away, instead it grows and grows internally until we cannot wait any more. Starvation eventually leads to the second way that we can deal with hunger.

TOB 44:5-6

**CCC 2349
CCC 2360-2362
Matthew 19:5**

TOB 45:3

**TOB 45:4
Deus Caritas Est 5**

2. Junk Food

- Which is easier when you are hungry: Waiting to get home to cook a meal for an hour, or going through a fast-food drive through?
- Obviously, going through the drive through is much easier and quicker. But, which will make you feel better afterwards? If you cook for yourself you can be healthier, but if you are eating a ¼ lb cheeseburger and fries with a large soda, you may be feeling a little sluggish.
- If you keep making that decision, eventually your overall health starts to suffer. The more often you choose the junk food, the more the rest of your body starts to suffer.

TOB 48:5
Romans 1:21-25
CCC 2351-2354

- Instead of “starving” themselves, some people completely give into lust. They indulge their sexual desires through hookups, premarital sex, pornography, and masturbation.
- These “quick fixes” are like junk food. They are easy, but not healthy. Spiritually these things will wear us down, make us sick spiritually and physically, and eventually can even kill us.
- The challenge is that these things are available now and are presented as more appealing than eating something healthy. They don’t require any self control, and we can get them anytime we want them.
- Like the first way of dealing with hunger, this one leaves us feeling empty. Our bodies weren’t created for junk food — it won’t give us what we are really seeking. We need something more.

3. Eating Healthy and the Banquet

- Our third response to our desire is to eat healthy for what our body needs at our stage in life. We are made for communion, both with God and with others; if we deny that we starve, and if we indulge it we get sick.
- If we recognize it, though, and feed that desire in appropriate ways, we grow and become healthy. In order to do this, we need to know how to appropriately express our sexuality at different stages of our life.

Key Word
CCC 2337

- The integration of our sexuality within our person that allows us to be unified body and soul is called **chastity**. Every person, regardless of their state of life, is called to chastity.

CCC 2338-2339
Galatians 5:1

- Chastity helps us keep our desires in check — it keeps us from starving and from eating a bunch of junk food. It is the self mastery of our soul over the body. Chastity allows us to be truly free.
- So how does chastity allow us to express our longing for love and still be free from sin?
- Think of the food you ate as you grew up — it looked different depending on your age. Ultimately, we are meant for a wedding banquet in our lives — this is the fulfillment of our vocation.
- Sex in marriage is that wedding banquet. It is everything sex should be – it is total, free, fruitful, and faithful. It allows the total self-gift of one person to another.
- Likewise, people who are called to celibacy also have a wedding banquet. They give themselves totally to God and find their happiness and fulfillment there.

- But not all of us are ready for that wedding banquet — just like a young child wouldn't eat the "grown up food" at a fancy restaurant.
- Chastity requires anyone who isn't married to abstain from sexual activity. Some days this may seem impossible, and it is impossible if we ignore our desire to seek and give love and decide to starve ourselves. We must replace sexual activity with something else.
- That "something else" is called "disinterested friendship." It is friendship that is not seeking self-gain, but seeks to support the other person. It is friendship that doesn't have a sexual component, but is concerned for another person's holiness. We can do this through loving our families and friends and through serving others.
- Our longing for community can be expressed in a healthy way when we have holy friendships that are focused more on what the other person needs than on ourselves — it is like eating a lot of vegetables and fruits so we can grow strong as individuals in our relationship with God and with others before we enter the feast.
- Additionally, if we know that we are waiting for something really good, we won't mind passing on the junk food that we are offered. We know that something really good is coming. This is the difference between chastity and starvation: A person who is starving refuses food indefinitely, but a person who abstains knows that something better is coming and can wait.

CCC 2347

CHASTITY AS FREEDOM

- Chastity allows us to be free. If we give in to lust and if we allow concupiscence to win the battle in our heart we become its slave.
- There are many people who are slaves to their passions, who sleep around and use people. Are they really free? Those people are seeking a relationship with God and a meaningful relationship with other people, but are looking in all the wrong places. They are not finding what they seek.
- Chastity allows us to find our purpose. It allows us to protect ourselves and the precious gift we can give to others. It keeps us from becoming an object and from allowing other people to become an object for us.
- Chastity is our response to concupiscence. It is the way we rightly order our desires in our heart, and keep from binging on fast food or starving ourselves to death.
- Chastity is also a grace; it is a gift from God. We need to ask God for it and be open to receiving it. Like many of the virtues, the more often we practice it, the more we will receive it. Chastity isn't simply about overcoming lust, it is about being truly free and truly fulfilled.

CCC 2339

LIFE NIGHT CHECKLIST

CORE PLANNING TEAM:

DATE OF LIFE NIGHT:

ONE MONTH PRIOR TO THE NIGHT:

- Give copies of the Life Night to each of the members of the planning team. Each person should read the Scripture and Catechism references as well as review the planning guide before the brainstorming meeting.
- Get the planning team together for a brainstorming meeting (this should last no longer than 1 hour). The team prays and discusses where the teens are in their faith journey in relation to this topic. Then using this planning guide as a starting point, the team adapts the Life Night to meet the needs of the teens and the parish. Create a detailed outline with any changes and/or adjustments.
- Assign the person responsible for each part of the Life Night:

Environment _____

Feast or Famine/Eat Up _____

Large Group Processing _____

Men's/Women's Sessions _____

TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO LIFE NIGHT:

- Turn in a detailed outline of the Life Night to the youth minister. Allow the youth minister to give feedback and make any necessary changes.
- Create a list of needed supplies and materials. Assign a person to be responsible for collecting and/or purchasing the materials needed.
- Decide the people that will be doing the following things. Make sure they have a copy of the script and/or teaching outline. Inform them of any practices and/or deadlines.

Teaching _____

WEEK OF THE LIFE NIGHT:

- Written outline of the teaching is given to the youth minister and practiced.
- Run a dress rehearsal of the Life Night. Youth minister gives feedback.
- Create environment and collect needed supplies.
- E-mail entire Core Team an overview of the night and small group questions.

DAY OF THE LIFE NIGHT:

- Set up the environment. Make sure the room is clean and presentable.
- Set up audio and video. Test the video clips to make sure both picture and sound work.
- Walk the entire Core Team through the Life Night. Make sure all transitions are ready and everyone knows their roles.
- Pray! Pray for the teens attending the Life Night. Pray for God's will to be done through the night. Pray over those involved.

LIFE NIGHT EVALUATION

INSTRUCTIONS:

Use the following questions to discuss and evaluate your Life Night.

1. On a scale of 1-10, how well did this Life Night accomplish the goal we set? Explain.

2. What was the strongest aspect of this Life Night?

3. What kind of follow-up do we need to do after this Life Night?

4. What can we improve for future Life Nights? How can we accomplish this?

1. On a scale of 1-10, how well did this Life Night accomplish the goal we set? Explain.

2. What was the strongest aspect of this Life Night?

3. What kind of follow-up do we need to do after this Life Night?

4. What can we improve for future Life Nights? How can we accomplish this?

1. On a scale of 1-10, how well did this Life Night accomplish the goal we set? Explain.

2. What was the strongest aspect of this Life Night?

3. What kind of follow-up do we need to do after this Life Night?

4. What can we improve for future Life Nights? How can we accomplish this?

1. On a scale of 1-10, how well did this Life Night accomplish the goal we set? Explain.

2. What was the strongest aspect of this Life Night?

3. What kind of follow-up do we need to do after this Life Night?

4. What can we improve for future Life Nights? How can we accomplish this?

LOVE

LOVE AS SELF-GIFT, DEFINITION OF LOVE LIFE NIGHT OUTLINE

CATECHISM

218-221
1603-1605
1822-1829
2360-2369

YOUCAT

2
76
309
402-403

KEY TERMS

Agape
Utilitarianism
Conjugal Love

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 22:37-39
John 13:34-35
John 15:10-13
Romans 5:5-8
1 Corinthians 13:1-13
1 John 3:10-18
1 John 4:7-21

CHURCH DOCUMENTS

Deus Caritas Est 3-8 (Pope Benedict XVI, encyclical)

KEY CONCEPTS

• Every person is called to reflect the love of God in the

Trinity; we are called to the two great commandments — to love God and to love our neighbor.

- Love is fully expressed as self-gift and sacrifice. This kind of love is called “agape” love and is modeled by Christ.
- Sex is an expression of conjugal love in marriage. For sex to be a full expression of love it must be free, total, fruitful, and faithful.

GOAL

The goal of this Life Night is to help teenagers understand the definition of true love, especially as it is expressed within the Sacrament of Marriage. This night will encourage teens not to settle for a lesser form of affection and will challenge them to live the two great commandments of love.

ABOUT THIS NIGHT

This Life Night begins with a challenge for the teenagers to define love by listening to popular music. This Gather activity asks teens to listen to music and discuss how each song portrays love, and if they think this is an accurate description of love. This leads into a humorous video that

features a camera crew “hunting” for love. The teaching for the Life Night distinguishes between several kinds of love, and why we need to be striving toward a love that gives ourselves to others in sacrifice. It will break open why sex can only take place within marriage between a man and a woman as an expression of conjugal love. The Break and Send for this Life Night allow teenagers to experience Christ’s love through the Eucharist and veneration of the cross.

PARENTAL NOTICE

This week at Life Night we talked about love and the many different ways that we understand love and even use the word “love.” The Life Night

began with a discussion about the theme of love in various modern songs. We then discussed the competing ideas we have about love and the real definition of love that we can find in Christ. We also discussed how this love is expressed within the Sacrament of Marriage through sex, and how sex outside of marriage is a counterfeit of true love. The teens had an opportunity to journal about their relationship with Christ before we closed the night in a time of Eucharistic Adoration. This night may have been very powerful or challenging for your teenage son or daughter – it is important to take some time to discuss it with them and process what they may be feeling. It is also a great time to affirm your love for him or her as a parent. Here are a few questions to begin the discussion:

- How do you think most teenagers define love? Do you think this is accurate?

- Do you trust in the love Christ has for you? Why or why not?
- Who has been an example of self-sacrificial love for you? Why?

ENVIRONMENT

The environment for this Life Night is all about love. Find as many cliché decorations as you can for this. If possible, find some old valentines day decorations to put up around the room, or, purchase wedding decorations to put up around the room. Using an online translator, translate the word “love” into several languages and write it on butcher paper to hang up around the room. Have Core Members passing out valentines day candy (if it is in season) to teens as they walk into the room. Have a clean romantic comedy playing on a screen as teens enter the main meeting space.

GATHER

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

(5 min)

The youth minister should gather all of the teens together into the main meeting space and welcome any teens that are attending Life Night for the first time. Lead an opening prayer to begin the Life Night.

LOVE SONGS

(20 min)

The opening activity will require some preparation and research before the Life Night. The youth minister and Core Team will need to research five to seven popular “love” songs that teens will be familiar with. Each one of these songs needs to be cued up to play a 90 second clip for the teens to listen to. Teens will be listening to each clip and answering a series of questions about the song and how it defines “love.” Try to have a mix of songs that completely miss the mark, and some that come closer to how Christ modeled love. This

will lead to a large group discussion that flows into the teaching for the Life Night.

The youth minister should break the teens into small groups (if you are using the same small groups for this semester curriculum, have the teens get into their assigned small groups). Explain that you need to find a solid definition of love and need the small groups to help you out. Explain that “love” is used in so many ways, that it is difficult to know exactly what it means. In order to properly define “love” the teens are going to listen to several popular songs that talk about “love” and write down three things about each song:

- How does this song define love?
- Is this kind of love total (it gives all of a person), freely given and received, faithful, and fruitful?
- Do you think this song accurately describes what love should be? Why or why not?

Play the song clips for the teens and allow each group time to answer the questions for each song. After all of the clips have been played, the youth minister should lead a brief discussion with

the teens about how each song defined love and if it was accurate or not. This will transition into the video for the Life Night.

PROCLAIM

VIDEO: LOVE HUNT

(5 min)

This video features a film crew in search of real life examples of love. Though they are unable to find what they are looking for, they accidentally catch what they had been missing the entire day. It can be found on *Life Teen Video Support: Theology of the Body*.

"LOVE" TEACHING

(10 min)

The youth minister or a Core Member should give this teaching about the true definition of love, and how that definition needs to form all of our relationships. This teaching can be found on pages 44 to 49.

BREAK

JOURNALING

(10 min)

Pass out pens and copies of the journaling handout on page 50 to the teenagers. Allow them to have a time of journaling reflecting on the questions presented to them. These questions will help teenagers reflect on Christ's love for them during the Send.

SEND

EUCCHARISTIC EXPOSITION WITH VENERATION OF THE CROSS

(25 min)

The teens should move into the sanctuary space of the church for a time of Eucharistic Adoration with Veneration of the Cross. Ask your parish priest or deacon to be present to lead Eucharistic Adoration and give Benediction well in advance of the Life Night, as well as your music minister to lead worship.

The youth minister should explain to the teens that Christ gave us two great signs of his love — the Eucharist and the Cross — and that both are tied together. Explain to the teens that on Good Friday we venerate the Cross as a recognition of the love Christ has for us, and that during Eucharistic Adoration the teens will have an opportunity to come forward and venerate the cross by simply touching it or kissing it, while they say a prayer offering up areas of their life where they need to allow Christ to love them more.

Have the cross set up front near the monstrance and allow the teens time to pray with periods of silence, inviting teens to come forward to venerate the Cross when they feel ready. Close the time of prayer with the Divine Praises, Benediction, and a Hail Mary and Ave Maria.

ADAPTING THIS LIFE NIGHT

- If you have a projector and screen, in addition to song clips find one or two movie clips for the Gather as well, and have teens process them in the same way they process all of the songs.
- Allow for a longer time of Eucharistic Adoration by having teens journal while they are praying before the Blessed Sacrament.
- Create your own video for the Proclaim by interviewing teenagers, parishioners, and parents, asking them the question, "What is love?" Go to a school or church event and ask them to define love – then edit it down to show to your group.

LOVE

TEACHING

KEY TERM DEFINITIONS

- Utilitarianism – Reducing a relationship with a person to merely their utilities or usefulness.

- Agape – Unconditional, total self-gift of one to another. This is the highest form of love.

- Conjugal Love – Sex as an expression of love within the Sacrament of Marriage when it is free, total, fruitful, and faithful.

THE “L” WORD

- Love is a word that is used very frequently. We hear it all the time in television and the media. We use it in the same sentence to refer to our mother and our favorite food. We may even hear it commonly used by our classmates in the hallway at school.
- There is a lot of confusion about the meaning of love — partly because the world “love” has many different meanings.
- The Greeks understood that there were different kinds of love and varying levels of depth. Because of this, they had four different definitions for love.

Deus Caritas Est 2

EROS — PASSIONATE LOVE

- The first form of love is called *eros* — it's an earthly love, which is related to appetite or connected to our passions.
- This type of love relates to the senses; it is an emotional response to something we see (hear, taste, smell, feel) that has value. It is a love that just seems to happen on it's own. The ancient Greeks considered it to be a “divine madness” or intoxication. You could call it the feeling of being “madly in love.”
- Unfortunately, it's becoming more and more common for people to believe that *eros* is the only or best form of love. They depend solely on passions, feelings, and emotions in order to experience love. This kind of selfishness is what turns the beautiful feeling of being “in love” into lust, and leaves both people feeling unfulfilled.

TOB 47:1-6

Deus Caritas Est 4

**TOB 39:5
CCC 2351**

- When *eros* becomes self-centered, lust quickly follows. Lust is the disordered desire for sexual pleasure that seeks to satisfy selfish desires.
- Think of a one-night stand. Two people use each other for enjoyment and then disregard each other when the enjoyment ends. Then they go searching for someone else. Lust becomes a way of life.

Key Term

- This is referred to as **utilitarianism**. It is reducing a person to an object to be used, rather than a person to be loved.
- According to Bl. John Paul II, the opposite of love is not hate, it is utilitarianism. It is using another person as an object, and then disregarding them.

PHILIA — BROTHERLY LOVE

- The second Greek term for love is called *philia*, which refers to brotherly love or friendship.
- This is most common among friends or siblings. It is freely chosen and is usually built around common values.
- For example, you may have friends that you play golf with. The common value that you share is you like golf.
- If, one day, your friends stop playing golf, your friendship will either (1) end or (2) find a new common value, or (3) develop into something deeper than just shared interests.
- For this reason, *philia* can be fickle or fade. Think of friendships that have ended because a person moves away, or because you have a falling out; this is the reality of this kind of love.
- When *philia* becomes the highest form of love we shoot for, or when it is tainted by our selfishness, we find ourselves unfulfilled, lonely, and missing out on the greatest form of love God has planned for us.
- While most of us have *philia* relationships, there is still one higher form of love that we all long for and seek.

AGAPE LOVE

- The highest form of love that is referred to in the Bible is the Greek term *agape*. This is a supernatural love that is unconditional and self-sacrificing.

Key Term
1 Corinthians 13:4-7

- **Agape** love is a total self-gift of one to another. It is selfless in nature and seeks the good of the other. St. Paul describes this love in his first letter to the Corinthians. He bases his understanding of this form of love on Christ.

- We see the ultimate example of *agape* love in the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. Jesus sacrifices His entire body and life for the purposes of freeing humanity from their sins. He offers a total self-gift to us in complete sacrifice. This is the true measure of love that pours forth from God and the desire for this love has been implanted on our hearts.

Romans 5:8
CCC 1825

THE IMAGE OF LOVE

- *Agape* love is the type of love that every person seeks and is longing for. We long to give ourselves totally and completely to another and our lives do not make sense until we do.

CCC 1604
CCC 1823

- This is because we are made in the image of God.
- God is a communion of self-giving love. As St. John says, "God is love..."

Genesis 1:27
CCC 2331
1 John 4:16

- In the Holy Trinity, God the Father gives Himself as a perfect and complete self-gift to God the Son. The Son does likewise with the Father and the love between them is so powerful that it is a third person — the Holy Spirit.

CCC 255
John 17:10

- In this way, God is a Trinity — a communion of persons.
- Because we are made in the image of God — we are made in the image of love. This is why every human person craves relationships.
- We desire relationships and love — but not just any love. We desire to be loved in a selfless unconditional gift of self. We desire to live a life that reflects the perfect love of the Trinity.

CCC 2331

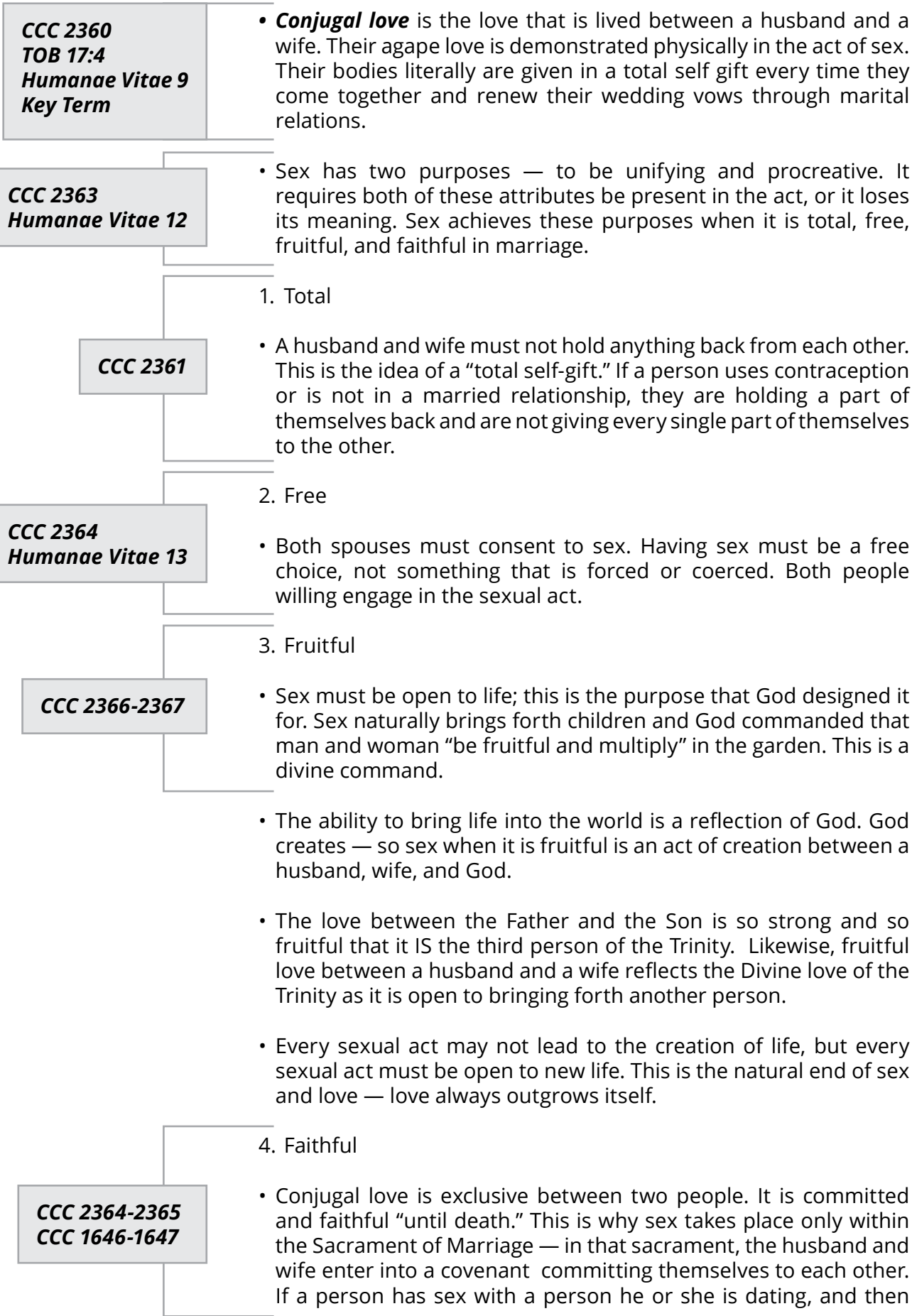
- We desire love that gives life to our lives — just as the love between God the Father and God the Son is called God the Holy Spirit.
- The love that we desire should be alive and create life in our lives.
- All of us have been called to love — we are called to love God with our whole heart, mind, and soul, and to love our neighbor as ourselves.

Matthew 22:37-40

- This is every person's call; the way in which we give and receive this love looks different depending on our state of life.

EXPRESSING AGAPE

- There are two particular forms of *agape* love that are common in our families today:
- *Storge love* is the natural affection between a parent and a child. This is an example of *agape* love. This is the kind of love that gets a parent out of bed at 3 AM to take care of their sick child, or to sacrifice their own lives for that of their family.



breaks up, the sex wasn't total or faithful, and likely not fruitful if that couple was using contraception.

- These four qualities — total, free, fruitful, and faithful — are promised in the wedding vows during the Sacrament of Marriage.

[If time allows, read through these vows. The priest asks if the couple is freely choosing marriage (free), if they will love each other for the rest of their lives (faithful), if they will accept children from God (fruitful), and during the vows the bride and groom give themselves totally to each other.]

BODY LANGUAGE

- Our bodies speak a language. We know that male and female were created for each other; this is the nuptial meaning of the body. Sex as an act allows our bodies to speak.
- Sex, when it is total, faithful, fruitful, and free speaks a language of love, of *agape*. In the context of the Sacrament of Marriage, sex can be everything God created it to be.
- God created sex to be good. As humans, we have been given *eros* love; the passion that attracts us to another person. This is important within the Sacrament of Marriage, but it must be purified by *agape*. We desire our spouse, but even more so, we desire what is best for them.
- This is the language our bodies speak — *eros*, passion, purified by *agape*. It allows us to completely give ourselves to another person because we would die for them. We give our bodies to another person in sex because we could also give our lives for them as Christ gave His life for us.
- When *eros* is not purified by *agape*, our bodies tell a lie. We engage in an action that should represent our desire to give our whole selves to another person, but we still hold back parts of ourselves, or even all of ourselves.
- Sex outside of marriage, or sex that is not total, free, fruitful, or faithful, is a lie. It speaks a language of lust — even if we are saying we love someone with our words, our body says something else.
- Sex is meant to be an expression of life-giving, conjugal love. It is through this action that new human life comes about.
- It only makes perfect sense when it is part of a selfless, life giving love between a man and a woman. It only makes sense in the context of *agape* love.
- How do you know when you have reached this point with a person? When you know you are ready to commit your entire life to a person and give everything for a person — that is when you are ready for sex.

TOB 10:1-4

Deus Caritas Est 5

Deus Caritas Est 6

Deus Caritas Est 5

CCC 2353

- When you are capable of supporting the life that may come about from the physical act of your love — you are ready. When you are capable of supporting another person and your future family, emotionally, physically and spiritually, until death do you part — you are ready.
- When you are capable and willing to stand in front of the person, their families and God Himself and commit to love the person for the rest of your life, in good times and bad and sickness and health.
- This is the Sacrament of Marriage. Sex is a renewal of the marriage vows. If you are not married, you are not ready for sex. In marriage *agape* and *eros* meet, our bodies speak the truth, and we can truly give and be given to another person.
- Love is the ultimate purpose of our life and our life's mission and goal. It requires the utmost care and attention for us to achieve. We must not sell love short by settling for something less than the ultimate love that we are created for — created by Love Himself.

THE LOVE OF GOD

INSTRUCTIONS:

Use the questions below to reflect on love in your life. Take your time and pray through each question before you respond.

Do your current relationships fit the definition of "love" that Christ gave us?

What holds you back from loving God above everything else?

Are you willing to let God love you more, even if that means making changes in your life that may hurt? Why or why not?



LIFE NIGHT CHECKLIST

CORE PLANNING TEAM:

DATE OF LIFE NIGHT:

ONE MONTH PRIOR TO THE NIGHT:

- Give copies of the Life Night to each of the members of the planning team. Each person should read the Scripture and Catechism references as well as review the planning guide before the brainstorming meeting.
- Get the planning team together for a brainstorming meeting (this should last no longer than 1 hour). The team prays and discusses where the teens are in their faith journey in relation to this topic. Then using this planning guide as a starting point, the team adapts the Life Night to meet the needs of the teens and the parish. Create a detailed outline with any changes and/or adjustments.
- Assign the person responsible for each part of the Life Night:

Environment _____

Love Songs _____

Love Hunt (Video) _____

Journaling _____

Adoration/Veneration _____

TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO LIFE NIGHT:

- Turn in a detailed outline of the Life Night to the youth minister. Allow the youth minister to give feedback and make any necessary changes.
- Create a list of needed supplies and materials. Assign a person to be responsible for collecting and/or purchasing the materials needed.
- Decide the people that will be doing the following things. Make sure they have a copy of the script and/or teaching outline. Inform them of any practices and/or deadlines.

Teaching _____

WEEK OF THE LIFE NIGHT:

- Written outline of the teaching is given to the youth minister and practiced.
- Run a dress rehearsal of the Life Night. Youth minister gives feedback.
- Create environment and collect needed supplies.
- E-mail entire Core Team an overview of the night and small group questions.

DAY OF THE LIFE NIGHT:

- Set up the environment. Make sure the room is clean and presentable.
- Set up audio and video. Test the video clips to make sure both picture and sound work.
- Walk the entire Core Team through the Life Night. Make sure all transitions are ready and everyone knows their roles.
- Pray! Pray for the teens attending the Life Night. Pray for God's will to be done through the night. Pray over those involved.

LIFE NIGHT EVALUATION

INSTRUCTIONS:

Use the following questions to discuss and evaluate your Life Night.

<p>1. On a scale of 1-10, how well did this Life Night accomplish the goal we set? Explain.</p> <p>2. What was the strongest aspect of this Life Night?</p> <p>3. What kind of follow-up do we need to do after this Life Night?</p> <p>4. What can we improve for future Life Nights? How can we accomplish this?</p>	<p>1. On a scale of 1-10, how well did this Life Night accomplish the goal we set? Explain.</p> <p>2. What was the strongest aspect of this Life Night?</p> <p>3. What kind of follow-up do we need to do after this Life Night?</p> <p>4. What can we improve for future Life Nights? How can we accomplish this?</p>
<p>1. On a scale of 1-10, how well did this Life Night accomplish the goal we set? Explain.</p> <p>2. What was the strongest aspect of this Life Night?</p> <p>3. What kind of follow-up do we need to do after this Life Night?</p> <p>4. What can we improve for future Life Nights? How can we accomplish this?</p>	<p>1. On a scale of 1-10, how well did this Life Night accomplish the goal we set? Explain.</p> <p>2. What was the strongest aspect of this Life Night?</p> <p>3. What kind of follow-up do we need to do after this Life Night?</p> <p>4. What can we improve for future Life Nights? How can we accomplish this?</p>

LIBERTY

HOMOSEXUALITY AND FREEDOM

LIFE NIGHT OUTLINE

CATECHISM

387
1730-1733
2337-2349
2357-2358

YOUCAT

65
415-418

KEY TERMS

Continence
Grave Sin
Freedom

SCRIPTURE

Genesis 1:26-28
Genesis 2:18
Matthew 5:7-8
Matthew 19:3-12
Romans 1:27
1 Timothy 1:9-10

CHURCH DOCUMENTS

Considerations Regarding Proposals to Give Legal Recognition to Unions Between Homosexual Persons (Congregation For the Doctrine of the Faith, Vatican, 2003)

Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons (Congregation For the Doctrine of the Faith, Vatican, 1986)

KEY CONCEPTS

- Every baptized person is called to chastity. Chastity is lived out differently

depending on a person's state of life.

- Homosexual actions are a disordered expression of sexuality, that is, they are not open to the transmission of life. People who have a homosexual inclination or who struggle with same-sex attraction are called to celibacy.
- A number of men and women experience same-sex attraction; they must be treated with respect and compassion. This does not mean accepting homosexual actions, but accepting each individual person and calling them to holiness.

GOAL

The goal for this night is to present the Church's teaching on homosexuality in a loving and pastoral way within the context of the Theology of the Body. This Life Night will challenge teenagers to see that freedom is found in obeying God's will, rather than working against it.

ABOUT THIS NIGHT

This Life Night addresses the important topic of homosexuality within the context of the Theology of the Body. It is within this context that teenagers will most effectively understand the Church's teaching, so it is recommended you do not use this Life Night outside of the Theology of the Body curriculum (please see *Pastoral Note*).

The Life Night begins with a small group activity that challenges teenagers to come up with a definition of “freedom.” This sets up a large group discussion that will challenge teenagers to question how they understand freedom as the ability to do whatever they wish, rather than what is right. The teaching uses the responses that the teenagers give to open up a discussion about the Church’s teaching on homosexuality. There are two options for the Break: The first is to have a panel discussion with various members of your parish community. This panel can field questions about sexuality in general from the teens. The second option is to have a large group discussion with the teenagers about the Church’s teaching on homosexuality and respond to any questions or concerns the teenagers may have. The Send for the Life Night is a prayer around the altar for an increased understanding of the sanctity of marriage in our world, especially among married couples.

Pastoral Note:

This topic is extremely sensitive and is often approached in a non-pastoral way. This Life Night requires a great deal of advanced preparation, prayer, and research. It should not be done outside of the context of the prior four Life Nights in this curriculum (Life, Death, Hunger, Love). The teaching for this Life Night builds on these concepts, and if the prior four Life Nights have not been implemented, there will be too much material to cover.

It is also extremely important to be sensitive to teenagers’ experiences with other teens that are attracted to members of the same gender, or teens that may experience same-sex attraction themselves. This Life Night can evoke a wide range of emotions, so it is important that Christ’s love for all people is repeatedly affirmed along with the Church’s love for all people — and that this love includes calling people toward holiness. Teenagers should not leave the Life Night feeling condemned. The Core Team should be prepared with prayer prior to this Life Night, and be ready to field any questions or responses from the teenagers.

One of these responses may be teens “coming out” to Core Members. It is important to have an action plan on how to handle this situation prior to the Life Night so Core Members are prepared

for this scenario. Take time to talk with Core Members about how to respond pastorally with the truth of the Church to a teenager “coming out.” The response should include

- Listening to the teen
- Responding with compassion and charity
- Encouraging the teen to reflect on how God is calling him or her to holiness within that same sex attraction and inviting the teen into the Truth of the Church
- Committing to talk with the teen over the coming weeks

This may look slightly different in every parish; it is important that in these discussions you remain affirming of the person, without being affirming of homosexual actions. These are challenging conversations to have, and it will help to discuss them prior to the Life Night so Core Members are prepared to respond in a positive manner.

PARENTAL NOTICE

This week at Life Night we discussed a very challenging topic — homosexuality. Part of the Church’s mission is to teach on anything that impacts our lives and our holiness. Many times these teachings are easy to understand, such as service to the poor or social justice. Sometimes, though, those teachings are more difficult to understand. For many people, the Church’s teaching on homosexuality, and sexuality in general, is challenging. Seeking to understand the Church’s teaching on sexuality can help us see that these teachings are not restricting but, they are liberating. This week we discussed homosexuality within the context of creation, God’s plan for our sexuality, and Christ’s love for us. The teenagers had an opportunity for a large group discussion where they could process this teaching and ask questions. For some of them, this may have been a challenging night. For this reason it is important to follow up with them to discuss the topic. If you find yourself also struggling with the Church’s teaching on this topic, it is important to ask questions and seek understanding. Oftentimes we misunderstand a Church teaching because it may have been presented to us poorly, or because we heard a sound bite that did not accurately represent the

Church. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact the youth ministry office or the parish.

Note for Youth Minister: There is a Parent Night that is designed to complement this Life Night. It is highly recommended that you implement this Parent Night at the same time as or prior to this Life Night. It will help clear up any misconceptions or misunderstandings parents have, and will equip them to respond to any questions teenagers may have after this Life Night.

If you cannot have a Parent Night, it is important to send home the outline of this Life Night along with the teaching to parents prior to the Life Night itself, along with a note explaining why you are

covering this topic. It is important for parents to know that their teens will be discussing the topic of homosexuality and for them to know what the Church teaches.

ENVIRONMENT

The environment for this Life Night should be simple. In the middle of the room have a large cross or crucifix set up. Have paper and pens available for each small group to use during the Gather activity. The Send for the Life Night takes place in the sanctuary space of your church, so be sure to reserve this in advance of the night. If it is not possible for you to use this space, have candles available to light on either side of the cross during the Send portion of the Life Night.

GATHER

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION (5 min)

The youth minister should gather all of the teens together and welcome any teens that are attending Life Night for the first time. Lead an opening prayer to begin the night.

SMALL GROUP BRAINSTORM (15 min)

The youth minister should divide all of the teens into small groups and have them brainstorm a definition for "freedom." He or she should explain that the teens must give some examples that support their definition, and how a person can truly tell if he or she is "free."

After the small groups have had some time to brainstorm, the youth minister should have groups share their definitions. The youth minister can use these to start a brief discussion using the following questions:

- How did you come up with a definition of freedom?
- Who else could be affected by this definition of freedom?
- Who defines freedom? Is there an objective way to understand it?

PROCLAIM

"LIBERTY" TEACHING (10 min)

The youth minister or pastor should give the teaching for this Life Night. It is extremely important that the presenter be well-versed in the Church's teaching. He or she must not only deliver the truth about our sexuality and its purpose, but also do so in a loving and pastoral way.

An outline for the teaching can be found on pages 59 to 63.

OR

"LIBERTY" VIDEO TEACHING

(10 min)

Instead of having the youth minister or pastor give the teaching for the Life Night, you may use the teaching found on *Life Support Video Support: Theology of the Body*.

BREAK

PANEL DISCUSSION

(35 min)

The Break for this Life Night can be done in a couple of different ways. The first is to have a panel discussion with your parish priest, a religious brother or sister, the youth minister, or another person who is well versed in the Church's teaching about sexuality. Teenagers can ask questions of the panel and receive answers, or they can write down questions anonymously to have answered by the panel.

This option works well for a group that may have questions about homosexuality, contraception, premarital sex, and other issues relating to sex. Be sure to prepare your panel for these questions ahead of time so that all answers are in faithful to Church teaching.

OR

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

(35 min)

The second option is to have a large group discussion with the teenagers about homosexuality. It is not recommended that small groups are used for these discussions, as the possibility exists of discussions veering away from Church teaching, or of teenagers becoming upset and disrupting the small group. The youth minister should facilitate this discussion using the following questions:

- Why is chastity a struggle for teenagers? What sacrifices do we need to make in order to live chaste lives? What rewards are there?

- Why is true freedom not the ability to do whatever we want? How are we more "free" by following God's plan and the boundaries that He has given us?

- How can we be more compassionate and loving to those who are judged or outcast by society? What things can we do in our daily lives that uphold the dignity of all human life?

- How does our culture currently view homosexuality? How can the Church lovingly respond to this without distorting the meaning of sexuality?

- What can you do to live more chastely in your own life? Why is it so important to live a chaste life, even if it is a struggle?

SEND

PRAYER FOR MARRIAGE

(10 min)

The youth should gather in the sanctuary space of the church for the closing prayer of this Life Night. If possible, have all of the teens gather around the altar. The youth minister should lead the teens in a prayer for marriage and everything that threatens it. Explain:

Jesus was confronted by a group of Pharisees in Matthew 19 about divorce and marriage. In the exchange, Jesus affirmed that marriage was created by God "from the beginning" and was designed to be between a man and a woman. This union of "one flesh" was not meant to be dissolved. Unfortunately, in our world we have lost the understanding of marriage. Many married couples do not live in relationships that are free, total, fruitful, and faithful. Spouses sometimes hurt each other and are unfaithful - in some cases relationships even become abusive. Marriage is one of the foundations of our society because it was given by God as a reflection of God. Since God is the author of marriage, we don't have the ability to change the definition. When we distort marriage — we distort our perception of who God is and how God loves us.

It is important that we pray that God's intention for marriage can be realized by all people — both heterosexual and homosexual — that we ask Christ to heal those relationships that are broken and strained, and for him to give comfort to those who struggle to understand marriage as created by God.

The youth minister should then invite the teens to pray for each intention with a Hail Mary as a group. Use the following intentions as a starting point, and feel free to add any of your own:

- For all married couples, that they would have marriages that are faithful, fruitful, free, and total...Hail Mary...
- For all families struggling with divorce, that they may find healing and comfort in Christ...Hail Mary...
- For all couples that are cohabitating, that they may begin to live chastely and discern the call to marriage more deeply...Hail Mary...
- For spouses that struggle with infidelity, that they may re-commit to each other and be reconciled in their relationships...Hail Mary...
- For all married couples who are victims of abuse, that they may find the help that they need in order to live in healthy, safe relationships...Hail Mary...
- For all people who struggle with same-sex attraction, that they may be assured of Christ's love for them, and be given the grace to live chaste lives in the Lord...Hail Mary...
- For those who suffer from an addiction to pornography or other unhealthy sexual behaviors, that Christ's healing grace may enter their lives and break them free from the bonds of those addictions...Hail Mary...

Close the Life Night by praying for all of the teens and their future vocation, and a final Hail Mary and sung Ave Maria.

ADAPTING THE LIFE NIGHT

- Prior to the Life Night encourage teenagers to write down any questions they may have about the Church's teaching on human sexuality and collect them. Go through these questions and use them for the panel discussion; be sure to share them with the panelists so they are adequately prepared for the questions.
- Pass out chastity commitment cards at the end of the Life Night and have a time of commitment for the teens. Challenge them all to live chastely in their lives, and to keep the card as a reminder of their commitment.

GOING DEEPER

- Teenagers may have a lot of questions after this Life Night; have Core Members committed to addressing these questions after the Life Night with teens. Be sure to prepare these Core Members prior to the Life Night on any questions they may have.
- Challenge teenagers to offer up a rosary over the next week for couples preparing for marriage. If possible, assign each teenager a couple to pray for that will be getting married at the parish (contact the Marriage Preparation Coordinator at your parish for some of these names).

LIBERTY

TEACHING

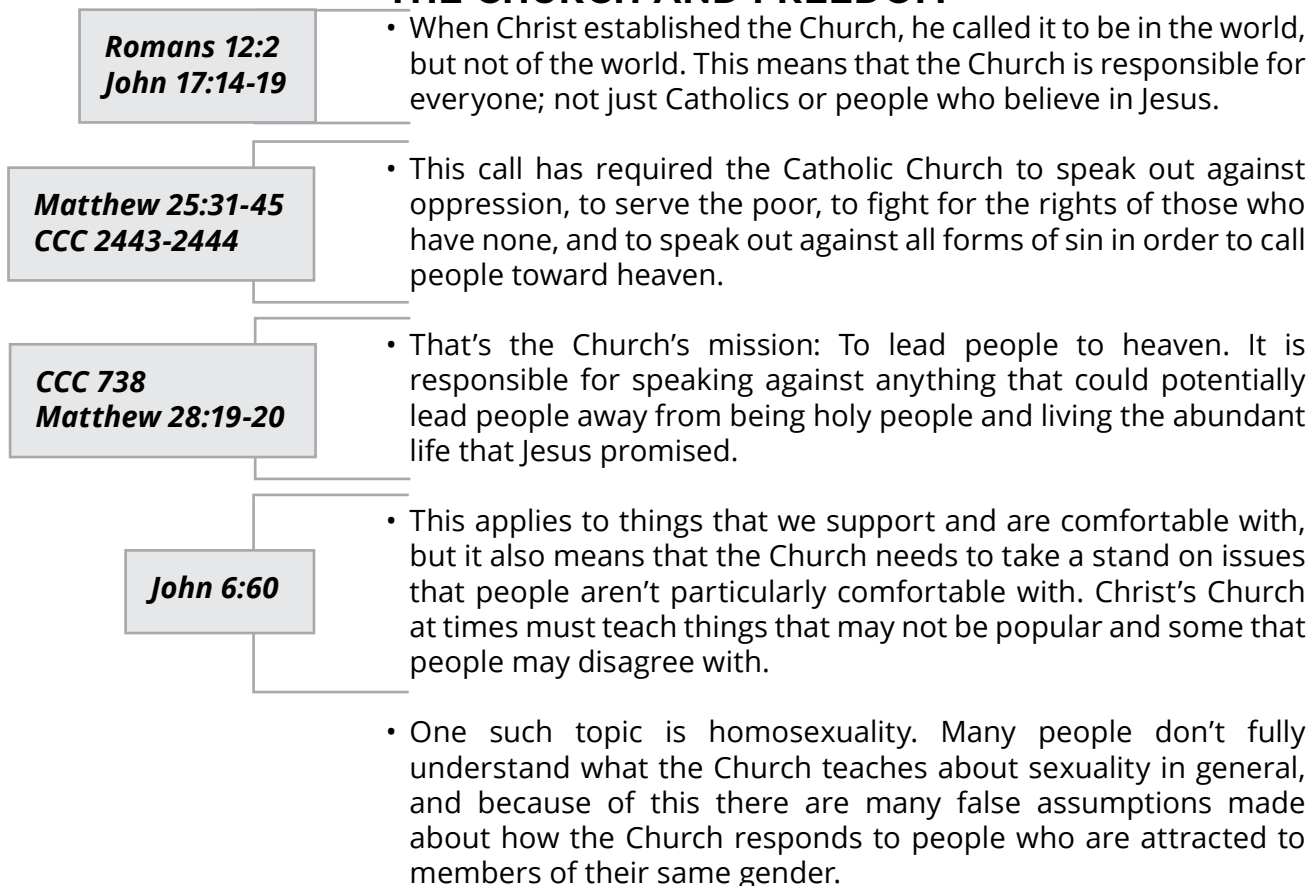
KEY TERM DEFINITIONS

- Continenence – Total abstinence from sexual activity.
- Grave Sin – A serious offense against Christ that goes against His teaching

and the Church’s teaching. If we fully understand that what we are doing is a grave sin, and we consent to it — it becomes a mortal sin. This is a sin that we absolutely have to go to confession for, because it seriously harms our relationship with God.

- Freedom – “Freedom consists in not doing what we like, but in having the right to do what we ought.” In terms of sexuality, freedom is truly found in doing God’s will and following God’s plan for our sexuality.

THE CHURCH AND FREEDOM



- Often times the response to this teaching — and many of the Church’s teachings on sexuality — is that people should be free to make their own choices. The idea is that through this “freedom” people will truly find happiness. Bl. John Paul II said that, “freedom consists in not doing what we like, but in having the right to do what we ought.”
- In this regard, **freedom** is truly found in doing God’s will and following God’s plan for our sexuality.
- Some people who experience same sex attraction may hear this and feel like the Church doesn’t love them, or like God doesn’t love them because of their sexual orientation. This is not the case.

**CCC 1730-1733
Galatians 5:1
Veritatis Spondor 64**

Key Term

THE CHURCH AND HOMOSEXUALITY

- In order to understand the Church’s teaching on homosexuality, we need to first know that the Church is all about love — it is all about the two great commandments that Jesus gave us: The love of God, and the love of neighbor.
- Everyone is called to this love. The Church, as the Bride of Christ, loves everyone as Christ loves them. Nothing can make Christ or the Church stop loving a person — regardless of their past sin, sexual orientation, or gender. Christ and the Church love us so much, though, that they constantly call us out of our sin and toward holiness.
- Part of calling people toward holiness is helping them avoid things that would impact their journey to heaven — part of love is helping people avoid sin. Jesus himself says in Luke 17:3, “Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him.”
- We may be uncomfortable with calling people out on their sins, especially when we have our own. Remember, there is a difference between judging someone and rebuking them — judgment is done out of an intent to hurt someone, and Jesus warns against this. Rebukes, though, are done out of love. Jesus does ask us to do this.
- As a community we need to help each other be holy, and call one another to “sin no more.” The Church believes in this love of community.
- The Church also believes in married love. We call this “conjugal love” and it is a form of loving your neighbor. Conjugal love must have four qualities — it must be total; that is to say that we hold nothing back from that other person. It must be free — we can’t be forced into it; it must be faithful — we commit only to that person; and it must be fruitful — we must be open to new life in the form of a child coming from that relationship.

Mark 12:28-31

**CCC 2331
CCC 221
CCC 478
Galatians 2:20
John 3:16**

**Luke 17:3
Proverbs 27:5
2 Timothy 4:2
James 5:20**

**Matthew 7:1
Matthew 18:15-17**

**1 Corinthians 12:12-26
CCC 791**

**Humanae Vitae 8-9
CCC 2361
Matthew 19:3-9**

CCC 2360
CCC 2363
Humanae Vitae 12

This is important in helping teenagers understand that marriage as a whole is under attack. It isn't simply homosexual marriage that threatens it, but adulterous marriages, marriages that are for sport, and the tragedy of divorce. If they don't understand this, they may struggle to see why the Church speaks out against homosexual marriages.

Humanae Vitae 9
CCC 2352-2354

Key Term
CCC 1854-1855
CCC 1857-1860
1 John 5:16-17

CCC 1858
CCC 2357

- Sex is specific to conjugal love — to the Sacrament of Marriage. It is the only place where sex can be fully expressed as faithful, total, free, and fruitful. It allows sex to fulfill its two purposes — to unify and to procreate.
- It is important to stop for a moment here to understand that before contraception was introduced, people understood the purpose of sex in marriage was to create children and unify a couple. The view of marriage was one of faithfulness. Once the procreative aspect was removed through contraception things changed.
- As a result, your generation has seen plenty of examples of things that do not live up to the expectations of marriage. We know that there are plenty of bad examples of marriage in our world today – from marriages that aren't faithful and last only weeks, to marriages that involve two unhappy spouses who have affairs. This is not how marriage was meant to be — and it wasn't always this way.
- If sex takes place in an environment that is not free, total, faithful, or fruitful it becomes disordered — that means it no longer has its intended meaning. This can take the form of premarital sex, hooking up, masturbation, or other sexual behaviors that remove any of the four qualities needed for sex to be experienced as God intended it. When we misuse this great gift, it becomes a grave sin.
- A **grave sin** is a serious offense against Christ and goes against His teaching and the Church's teaching. All sin is a disorder — it is a disruption of the natural order that God created. If we fully understand that what we are doing is a grave sin, and we consent to it — it becomes a mortal sin. This is a sin that we absolutely have to go to confession for, because it so seriously harms our relationship with God, that our eternity in heaven is in jeopardy.
- Homosexual actions are grave sins because they are not open to life, and they are not "total," because two partners cannot give one another their fertility. They are a misrepresentation of the sexual act. Men and women were created to be complementary — they work together with God to create new life. The love between a man and a woman within the Sacrament of Marriage is a love that reflects the life-giving love of the Trinity. A homosexual union cannot bring forth new life.
- The Church calls homosexual action disordered; this means that these actions are contrary to the order that God created because they cannot bring life. It doesn't mean that a person himself is disordered, but that these sexual actions are.

SACRIFICE, LOVE, AND FREEDOM

- Many people hear this and start to get upset — it doesn't seem fair to deny two people who love each other the ability to have sex or to get married. The Church's teaching about homosexuality isn't based on limiting people's freedom — it is about calling people to the life Christ called us to live: it isn't saying others are less, but it is calling everyone to more.

- The Church calls people to a love based on sacrifice — to *agape*. In the absence of sacrifice, any form of love loses its depth. Imagine having a friend who was diabetic, and you see that person eating a bunch of candy. You know that their choices are going to make them very sick — it could even kill that person. Would you say something? What if that person responded to you that you needed to mind your own business and let them make their own choices. Would you tackle them to get them to stop eating if it meant saving their life?

CCC 1822

- *Agape* love would. Because *agape* love would know that, even though the person thinks they are utilizing their freedom by eating whatever they want, they are really binding themselves to a bleak future. *Agape* love would be more concerned about a friend's life than what that friend thinks of you or whether or not that friend is mad at you.

- Some of you may be uncomfortable with hearing all of this right now; you may be feeling that the Church is not showing real compassion toward people who experience same-sex attraction.

- We need to understand what compassion truly means, though. The root word "passion" comes from the Latin word "pati" which means "to suffer." When we show compassion, we suffer with someone. This is exactly what the Church does for persons with homosexual inclinations.

- This is why the Church speaks out on the issue of homosexuality. The Church loves everyone because Christ loves everyone, and it wants everyone to live in freedom. But this sometimes means sacrifices.

Romans 5:10
Mark 8:34-38
John 19:17

- A person who was born diabetic will always need to be careful about what he or she eats. A person who is homosexual may always struggle with temptations toward same-sex attraction. This is part of the cross they are called to carry. Jesus knows about carrying a cross, so He doesn't abandon those people, nor does the Church. In fact, all of us have crosses to carry — they all just look different. The Church shows "compassion" in this way — it truly walks with and suffers with all of its members, including those who experience homosexual inclinations.

CCC 2358-2359
CCC 2348-2349
Key Term

- Christ calls people who identify as homosexuality to **continence** — this means total abstinence from sexual activity. Anyone living outside the Sacrament of Marriage — heterosexual or homosexual — is called to continence; it is part of the larger virtue of chastity. Even married people are called to chastity within their marriage.

CCC 2337
Romans 8:13

- Chastity is the successful integration of our sexuality and thus the inner unity of a person in his or her bodily and spiritual being. This means that our body and our soul are working in right order — this means our spirit leading our flesh. It allows us to be masters over our desires and passions, rather than letting them dominate us. St. Paul writes to the Romans, “if you live according to the flesh, you will die, but if by the spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.”

- A person who is homosexual can find comfort by receiving grace in the sacraments, especially Eucharist and Reconciliation, and by finding support in the Church community. He or she is still called, as all of us are, to the two great commandments — to love God and to love his or her neighbor. Through this love homosexual persons can experience great friendship, connection, and joy without the burden of sexual sin.

- As a Church, we need to be compassionate to our brothers and sisters who experience homosexual inclinations and same-sex attraction. They are fully deserving of the dignity that they have been given as children of God.

- If tonight you are experiencing feelings of same-sex attraction, know that the Church does not hate you or condemn you. Christ loves you, and like all of us, calls us to self-sacrifice even when it is difficult. The Church walks with you in that journey.

- There is true freedom in this self-sacrifice. It is the freedom to not be defined by our passions or temptations, but to be defined as a child of God. Everyone is called to this freedom — regardless of our sexual orientation. Ultimately, it is that freedom that will make us sharers in the abundant life that Christ spoke about, and in heaven.

LIFE NIGHT CHECKLIST

CORE PLANNING TEAM:

DATE OF LIFE NIGHT:

ONE MONTH PRIOR TO THE NIGHT:

- Give copies of the Life Night to each of the members of the planning team. Each person should read the Scripture and Catechism references as well as review the planning guide before the brainstorming meeting.
- Get the planning team together for a brainstorming meeting (this should last no longer than 1 hour). The team prays and discusses where the teens are in their faith journey in relation to this topic. Then using this planning guide as a starting point, the team adapts the Life Night to meet the needs of the teens and the parish. Create a detailed outline with any changes and/or adjustments.
- Assign the person responsible for each part of the Life Night:

Environment _____

Small Group Brainstorm _____

Panel/Large Group Discussion _____

Prayer for Marriage _____

TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO LIFE NIGHT:

- Turn in a detailed outline of the Life Night to the youth minister. Allow the youth minister to give feedback and make any necessary changes.
- Create a list of needed supplies and materials. Assign a person to be responsible for collecting and/or purchasing the materials needed.
- Decide the people that will be doing the following things. Make sure they have a copy of the script and/or teaching outline. Inform them of any practices and/or deadlines.

Teaching _____

WEEK OF THE LIFE NIGHT:

- Written outline of the teaching is given to the youth minister and practiced.
- Run a dress rehearsal of the Life Night. Youth minister gives feedback.
- Create environment and collect needed supplies.
- E-mail entire Core Team an overview of the night and small group questions.

DAY OF THE LIFE NIGHT:

- Set up the environment. Make sure the room is clean and presentable.
- Set up audio and video. Test the video clips to make sure both picture and sound work.
- Walk the entire Core Team through the Life Night. Make sure all transitions are ready and everyone knows their roles.
- Pray! Pray for the teens attending the Life Night. Pray for God's will to be done through the night. Pray over those involved.

LIFE NIGHT EVALUATION

INSTRUCTIONS:

Use the following questions to discuss and evaluate your Life Night.

1. On a scale of 1-10, how well did this Life Night accomplish the goal we set? Explain.

2. What was the strongest aspect of this Life Night?

3. What kind of follow-up do we need to do after this Life Night?

4. What can we improve for future Life Nights? How can we accomplish this?

1. On a scale of 1-10, how well did this Life Night accomplish the goal we set? Explain.

2. What was the strongest aspect of this Life Night?

3. What kind of follow-up do we need to do after this Life Night?

4. What can we improve for future Life Nights? How can we accomplish this?

1. On a scale of 1-10, how well did this Life Night accomplish the goal we set? Explain.

2. What was the strongest aspect of this Life Night?

3. What kind of follow-up do we need to do after this Life Night?

4. What can we improve for future Life Nights? How can we accomplish this?

1. On a scale of 1-10, how well did this Life Night accomplish the goal we set? Explain.

2. What was the strongest aspect of this Life Night?

3. What kind of follow-up do we need to do after this Life Night?

4. What can we improve for future Life Nights? How can we accomplish this?

THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

MARRIAGE AND CELIBACY FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD LIFE NIGHT OUTLINE

CATECHISM

922-924
1601-1605
1612-1620
2360-2374

YOUCAT

260-265
258
416-419

KEY TERMS

Celibacy
Heaven
Vocation

SCRIPTURE

Genesis 1:26-28
Matthew 19:3-12
Mark 12:18-25
1 Corinthians 7:1-11

CHURCH DOCUMENTS

Humanae Vitae 8-9 (Pope Paul VI, encyclical)

KEY CONCEPTS

- The vocation of every person is to love and to give themselves fully to another and to be received fully by another.

- In the Sacrament of Marriage, a husband and a wife give themselves fully to each other as self-gift. In this way they are a reflection of the Most Holy Trinity as a relationship of love.
- In priesthood, religious life, or consecrated single life, a person makes a gift of himself or herself fully to God. This is called “celibacy for the kingdom,” and is a foreshadowing of what our relationship with God will be like in heaven.

GOAL

The goal for this Life Night is to help teenagers understand how the vocations of marriage, holy orders, and the consecrated life all lead us to fulfillment in Christ. It will challenge teens to discern their vocation and how they will offer their lives as a self-gift.

ABOUT THIS NIGHT

This Life Night concludes the Life Night series “Life, Love, and the Pursuit of Happiness.” The Life Night begins with a fun game that challenges students to figure out their “secret” identity and then find their pair. The Proclaim and Break for this Life Night are combined into two sessions — the first is about the Sacrament of Marriage, and the second is about celibacy for the kingdom of God, specifically in the Sacrament of Holy Orders and in

religious life. Teenagers will switch between these two sessions, will have an opportunity to hear a teaching and testimony, and then ask questions. The Send for this night is a time of prayer for the teens' future vocations and a challenge to be open to God's will in their lives.

PARENTAL NOTICE

This week at Life Night we discussed marriage and celibacy. Teenagers are often very familiar with the former, as there are many examples (both good and bad) around them in every day life and in mass media. The latter, celibacy for the Kingdom of God, is perhaps more unfamiliar and may even sound crazy to some teenagers (and adults). At the Life Night we discussed how both of these vocations are paths to our happiness and ultimately to heaven, and each one represents a unique gift of self; in marriage, to a spouse, and in celibacy, to God. Teenagers had an opportunity to hear a testimony from a married couple and from a priest, religious brother or sister, or consecrated virgin, and then ask questions. We closed the Life Night with a prayer for each teen's vocation.

Take some time to talk about this Life Night with your teenage son or daughter:

- What did you learn tonight about celibacy for the Kingdom of God? Why is this important for the Church?
- How is marriage designed to build up the Church? Do you think there are more good or bad examples of marriage in the world today? Why?

ENVIRONMENT

For this Life Night you will need to split your room in half. In the middle of the front of the room place a large cross and a representation of an altar. To one side of the altar, decorate the front of the room with wedding decorations. Put streamers, fake wedding bells, and other representations of the Sacrament of Marriage on that side. On the opposite side, place symbols of the priesthood and religious life, as well as signs of service. Some examples are the vestments a priest wears at Mass, a religious habit, and some tools as a sign of service. Above the cross, create a sign with butcher paper that reads "The Path to Happiness."

GATHER

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

(5 min)

The youth minister should gather all of the teens together and welcome any teens who are attending Life Night for the first time. Lead a brief opening prayer and begin the Life Night.

FAMOUS PAIRS

(10 min)

Prior to the Life Night, think of several famous married couples (real or fictional) that your teens would know. Write each spouse's name on a separate sheet of paper. Mix up all of the names

and have Core Members tape them to the backs of the teenagers at the Life Night.

The object of the game is for every teen to find their matching partner, but the challenge is that they will not know what name they have on their back. In order to figure this out, teens will need to walk around the room asking other people "yes" or "no" questions about the person on his or her back, e.g., "Am I a fictional character," "Am I still living," "Am I a happy person?" Once teens figure out who they are, they should try to find the person who has the name of their spouse.

Have a prize ready for the first few teens that successfully find their pairs. Set a time limit to the game and play until every pair has been found or time runs out.

PROCLAIM/ BREAK

The Proclaim and Break for this night are combined into two sessions that teens will attend. These sessions focus on marriage and celibacy for the kingdom. Split teens up by classes, e.g. have all the upperclassmen go to the marriage session first, and the underclassman go to the celibacy session first, then switch. Each session has a short teaching, a testimony, and a time for questions.

It is important that you find people to provide the testimonies for each session well in advance of the night, as the question and answer session in each is based off these testimonies. Be sure to pick people who passionately live out their vocation and can field questions teenagers may have about marriage and the priesthood, religious, or consecrated single life.

SESSION I - MARRIAGE

(30 min)

Teaching: The Joy of Marriage (10 min)

The youth minister or a married Core Member should give this teaching about the Sacrament of Marriage as a vocation and how we give ourselves to another in marriage. An outline for this talk can be found on pages 70 to 72.

Married Couple Testimony (5 min)

Ask a couple that has been married for several years to give this testimony to the teens. It should focus on how each spouse serves the other and make sacrifices for the other out of love. It should focus on the joys and struggles of marriage, and how each spouse desires to lead the other to heaven.

Question and Answer (15 min)

Allow the teenagers a period of time to ask questions of the married couple. It can be helpful to have a couple of teenagers ready with questions to ask to get the ball rolling. Be sure to let your married couple know that this will be happening ahead of time so they can be prepared.

SESSION II - CELIBACY FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD

(30 min)

Teaching: All For the Kingdom (10 min)

Ask your parish priest to give the teaching for this session. If he is also giving the testimony, he can combine the two into one talk. An outline for the teaching can be found on pages 73 to 75.

Priest and Religious Testimony (5 min)

Prior to the night invite your parish priest and religious brothers or sisters to be present to give their testimony. Though often not mentioned, the consecrated life can be lived outside of a religious order as well. If your diocese has any consecrated virgins or widows, see if they would be willing to come as well. If possible, have your parish priest give the teaching and then a different guest speaker give the testimony. The testimony should focus on the joy of serving Christ with their entire lives, how their vocation is fundamentally different than marriage, and how they find fulfillment of love in their vocation apart from marriage.

Question and Answer (15 min)

After the testimonies allow a time for questions and answers. Teenagers will likely have many questions, so be sure you leave enough time for this. If possible, have the priests, religious and consecrated stay for a little while after the night to answer any other questions teens may have.

SEND

CLOSING PRAYER FOR VOCATION

(5 min)

The youth minister should gather all of the teens back together in the main meeting space to close in prayer. He or she should explain that everyone has a vocation, and that whatever our vocation is, it will lead to our fulfillment and happiness. The youth minister should stress that we need to be open to whatever God is calling us toward, and continually pray that God's will done. Use the following text to wrap up the night.

We all have a call. Our vocation was given to us by God, and even if we don't know exactly what it is right now, it is a gift. Through our vocation we will find great joy and fulfillment, but we also know that there will be sacrifice. Our ultimate vocation is to love – we are made to be given to another as a gift. Some of us will do that through marriage, others, through consecrated single life or the priesthood. Whatever we are called to, our vocation goes through the cross and is sustained through the Eucharist. This is where we find our true happiness and joy – in the vocation that Christ has given us. Even though it may seem a long way off, it is never too early to start praying about our vocation and striving to live a holy life. A simple prayer every day can open up our hearts to God's will, and remind us of our call to love those around us, and to love God with our whole heart.

Close the night by passing out the Vocation Prayer Card found on page 76. Invite the teens to pray this prayer together, and then close the Life Night by praying a Hail Mary and Ave Maria together as a group.

ADAPTING THE LIFE NIGHT

- For smaller groups, consider having the entire group move from the first session to the second session together, rather than splitting everyone apart.

- Replace the opening game with a video that your Core Team creates. Ask several married couples at your parish what it takes to make marriage work. Many of the answers will be both insightful and humorous. Edit the video down and show it at the beginning of the Life Night.

GOING DEEPER

- This is a great Life Night to encourage vocational discernment to the priesthood or religious life with your teenagers. If possible, have your diocesan vocations director and the director of vocations for a religious community present to answer any questions from teens after the Life Night.
- Plan a “discernment” night or retreat for your high school seniors. Offer the teens time to pray and reflect on God’s call to them – this can be especially effective toward the end of the school year as seniors prepare for college, the military, or to enter the work force.

Notes

THE JOY OF MARRIAGE

TEACHING

KEY TERM DEFINITIONS

- Vocation – The calling or destiny we have in this life and hereafter; God created us to love and to serve Him. The fulfillment of our vocation is eternal happiness.

MARRIAGE AS A VOCATION

- [Every person has a vocation, or calling, that God gives to them. The first vocation, which we all have, is our universal call to holiness and love. This means that we are called to love God with our whole heart, mind, and strength, and to love our neighbor as ourselves.
- Being holy means striving to live in a right relationship with God and with one another; when we selflessly love others as Christ taught, and when we honor God with our lives and hearts, we live holy lives.
- How we live out our vocation to love and holiness has various forms for each person. There are four primary vocations — married life, holy orders, religious life, and consecrated single life. The first two are given in sacraments, and the last two are blessed by the Church.
- Our **vocation** is how we will live out our salvation; it is how we were designed by God to live out our calling to love and holiness. For each person, this may be different. Our vocation is ultimately where we will find true fulfillment and happiness, because it is the plan that God has for our lives.]

The bracketed text should only be given to the first group of teens; the second group of teens will have already heard this introduction in the previous session.

Key Term

- The vocation that many of us are most familiar with is marriage. We see marriages in the media, we know many people who are married, and we have both good and bad examples of what marriage should be.

Genesis 1:26-28
CCC 372
Matthew 19:5-6
CCC 1603 – 1605
Humanae Vitae 8

- Marriage is a part of God’s plan. From “the beginning” God created man and woman to be in a relationship with each other that was blessed by God and that brings forth new life. A man and a woman come together and become “one flesh,” and in this union they become co-creators with God.

CCC 2360
Humanae Vitae 9

- A married couple expresses love through sex that is total, free, fruitful, and faithful. Sex in marriage involves not just the bodies, but the souls of the husband and wife. Every time a married couple engages in sexual intercourse, they renew their marriage vows.

MARRIAGE AND SACRIFICE

CCC 2363

- Sex is good within the Sacrament of Marriage when it achieves its intended purpose: sex is designed by God to be unifying and procreative. Basic biology reveals this to us as well.

- When a couple engages in sexual intercourse, several chemicals are released in the brain that not only produce pleasure, but bond two people together intimately. After having sex, a man and a woman’s relationship is changed in a very real way.

- We also know that sex naturally leads to children. This aspect of procreation is a very basic reality of sexual intercourse.

Genesis 1:28

- This should not surprise us, since God designed sex this way. From the beginning he told the man and the woman to “be fruitful and multiply.”

Humanae Vitae 12
CCC 2377

- If we remove one or both of these aspects from sex it becomes disordered and not good. This happens definitely outside of the Sacrament of Marriage, but also can happen within it. Just because a couple is married does not mean that they are engaging in sex for the right reasons.

- The foundation of the Sacrament of Marriage, and of sex, is ultimately sacrifice. St. Paul talks about the relationship between a husband and wife in his letter to the Ephesians:

- *Read Ephesians 5:21-33*

Ephesians 5:21-22

- At first we may be taken back at the command for a woman to “submit” to her husband, but we need to read the passage in its entirety. St. Paul is asking both the husband and wife to submit to each other — it is only through this mutual submission that marriage can work.

- One person in marriage cannot be the “boss” or the “master.” If that spouse refuses to make sacrifices for the other, then marriage is not good and often falls apart. The same is true of sex.
- Sex is a self-gift of the spouses to each other. This is how our bodies were designed — it is the nuptial meaning of the body. We were made to give ourselves as a gift to another. In marriage, this happens through sex — but if one spouse holds something back — whether it is physically, emotionally, or spiritually — sex no longer is a gift of self but an empty action.
- The reason why sex is so important is because it reveals something about Christ. St. Paul in his letter to the Ephesians didn’t just talk about marriage — he used it as an analogy for Christ and the Church.

CCC 2364

Ephesians 5:25

MARRIAGE AND HEAVEN

- Marriage on earth reveals to us the love Christ has for the Church. St. Paul asks husbands to “love their wives as Christ loved the Church.” This call is to husbands to give their lives for their wives in sacrifice as Christ sacrificed for the Church.
- When we see a marriage that exists like this, a husband and wife who completely give themselves to each other and who make sacrifices for each other, we get a glimpse of Christ’s love for the Church. This is why marriage is a sacrament — it is a visible sign of invisible grace.
- The other sacraments of the Church also can be understood within the context of marriage. Christ gives himself to us in the sacrament totally and freely; Christ is faithful to us as a Church and the fruit of the sacraments is grace.
- For this reason, marriage is tremendously important for our Church. Through marriages families are created and children are raised in the faith. The responsibility of the spouses in marriage is to help the other get to heaven by sacrificing for each other, the way that Christ sacrificed himself for the Church.

CCC 1616-1617
Ephesians 5:23-32

CELIBACY FOR THE KINGDOM

TEACHING

KEY TERM DEFINITIONS

- Vocation – The calling or destiny we have in this life and hereafter; God created us to love and to serve Him. The fulfillment of our vocation is eternal happiness.

- Celibacy for the Kingdom of God – The state or condition of those who have chosen to remain unmarried in order to give themselves entirely to God and to the service of His people.

- Heaven – Eternal life with God; communion of life and love with the Trinity and all the blessed. The supreme state of happiness.

The bracketed text should only be given to the first group of teens; the second group of teens will have already heard this introduction in the previous session.

Key Term

CELIBACY FOR THE KINGDOM AS A VOCATION

- [Every person has a vocation, or calling, that God gives to them. The first vocation, which we all have, is our universal call to holiness and love. This means that we are called to love God with our whole heart, mind, and strength, and to love our neighbor as ourselves.
- Being holy means striving to live in a right relationship with God and with one another; when we selflessly love others as Christ taught, and when we honor God with our lives and hearts, we live lives of holiness.
- How we live out that vocation to love and holiness has various forms for each person. There are four primary vocations — married life, holy orders, religious life, and consecrated single life. The first two are given in sacraments, and the last two are blessed by the Church.
- Our **vocation** is how we will out our salvation; it is how we were designed by God to live out our calling to love and holiness. For each person, this may be different. Our vocation is ultimately where we will find true fulfillment and happiness, because it is the plan that God has for our lives.]

- Many of us may feel called to marriage, but what if someone asked you to give up marriage and sex so you could give your whole life to Christ? Our world may think that idea is crazy — but many people renounce (that means give-up) marriage so they can dedicate their whole lives to Christ.

Key Term
Matthew 19:12

- The call to renounce sex and marriage so a person can dedicate themselves fully to God is called “**celibacy for the kingdom.**”

TOB 73:3
CCC 1579
CCC 915
CCC 2349

- This is a special call from God; not everyone is called to celibacy. Men who are called to the priesthood make a promise to be celibate so they can fully serve God and the Body of Christ. Religious brothers and sisters make a vow of celibacy and live in community. In addition, there are some people who choose not to get married and live celibately outside of a religious community so they can serve people and be in an exclusive relationship with Christ.

- Just like a married couple gives themselves completely to each other, a person who chooses to be celibate for the kingdom gives himself or herself completely to Christ.

CELIBACY AND SACRIFICE

- Celibacy involves sacrifice. A person who chooses to be celibate gives up a spouse, family, and sex. This sacrifice is not done without great reward, however.

1 Corinthians 7:8
TOB 75:2

- Every person is designed to give themselves as a gift to another; in marriage this is done between spouses. Celibacy allows a person to give themselves as a gift completely to God.

Gaudium et Spes 24:3

- Although there is a sacrifice in this, there are tremendous blessings as well. A person who is celibate for the Kingdom of God shares a special relationship with Christ and can be dedicated to serving the Lord and the Church. He or she has more time to dedicate to prayer.

TOB 77:3
CCC 922

- Not everyone is called to celibacy. Jesus speaks about this after talking to the Pharisees about marriage. He says that some people have “renounced marriage for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Whoever can accept this ought to accept it.”

Matthew 19:3-12

- Jesus is identifying celibacy for the kingdom as a special calling, something extraordinary that not everyone is called toward. But, for those who are called toward it, this path is liberating and will bring true fulfillment.

TOB 77:2

- St. Paul was called to celibacy, and in his first letter to the Corinthians echoes Christ's call to imitate this lifestyle if people can. Why would St. Paul recommend something that would make people unhappy? On the contrary, St. Paul was inviting people into a deep relationship with Christ and asking them to discern if they were called to renounce marriage for the sake of this relationship.

1 Corinthians 7:1-11

CELIBACY AND HEAVEN

- Celibacy reveals heaven to us in a unique way. The reason why St. Paul was adamant about people discerning this calling was because it foreshadows what our relationship with Christ will be like in heaven.

Mark 12:18-25

- Jesus, when asked about the resurrection of our bodies and heaven, responds that in heaven we will “neither marry nor [be] given in marriage.”

**Key Term
CCC 1024**

- **Heaven** is the ultimate end and fulfillment of all our deepest human longings — it is a state of supreme happiness. Heaven is perfect life with the Most Holy Trinity.
- What that means is that in heaven we have an exclusive relationship with God, and this ties us to everyone else. There is no need for marriage because we are restored to perfect unity with our Creator and with the rest of creation.
- Celibacy for the kingdom of heaven foreshadows this intimate union with God. This is why St. Paul advocated for it; by renouncing marriage some people were going to do better to prepare themselves and, by their example, those around them for heaven.
- This doesn't mean that marriage is a bad thing or is less than celibacy, each are different and important — but every person is given a unique calling that we need to discern. Some people in this room may be called to become priests, religious brothers and sisters, or consecrated singles and if this is your call, it will be your ultimate path to happiness and fulfillment, not despair and ruin.

PRAYER FOR VOCATION

Lord, help me to be holy. Guide my heart to continually discern where you are calling me, and help me to be open to whatever my vocation may be. Let your will be done in my life, and give me the grace and courage to honor you in all my actions and choices. I ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

**PRAYER FOR VOCATION**

Lord, help me to be holy. Guide my heart to continually discern where you are calling me, and help me to be open to whatever my vocation may be. Let your will be done in my life, and give me the grace and courage to honor you in all my actions and choices. I ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

**PRAYER FOR VOCATION**

Lord, help me to be holy. Guide my heart to continually discern where you are calling me, and help me to be open to whatever my vocation may be. Let your will be done in my life, and give me the grace and courage to honor you in all my actions and choices. I ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

**PRAYER FOR VOCATION**

Lord, help me to be holy. Guide my heart to continually discern where you are calling me, and help me to be open to whatever my vocation may be. Let your will be done in my life, and give me the grace and courage to honor you in all my actions and choices. I ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

**PRAYER FOR VOCATION**

Lord, help me to be holy. Guide my heart to continually discern where you are calling me, and help me to be open to whatever my vocation may be. Let your will be done in my life, and give me the grace and courage to honor you in all my actions and choices. I ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

**PRAYER FOR VOCATION**

Lord, help me to be holy. Guide my heart to continually discern where you are calling me, and help me to be open to whatever my vocation may be. Let your will be done in my life, and give me the grace and courage to honor you in all my actions and choices. I ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

**PRAYER FOR VOCATION**

Lord, help me to be holy. Guide my heart to continually discern where you are calling me, and help me to be open to whatever my vocation may be. Let your will be done in my life, and give me the grace and courage to honor you in all my actions and choices. I ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

**PRAYER FOR VOCATION**

Lord, help me to be holy. Guide my heart to continually discern where you are calling me, and help me to be open to whatever my vocation may be. Let your will be done in my life, and give me the grace and courage to honor you in all my actions and choices. I ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.



LIFE NIGHT CHECKLIST

CORE PLANNING TEAM:

DATE OF LIFE NIGHT:

ONE MONTH PRIOR TO THE NIGHT:

- Give copies of the Life Night to each of the members of the planning team. Each person should read the Scripture and Catechism references as well as review the planning guide before the brainstorming meeting.
- Get the planning team together for a brainstorming meeting (this should last no longer than 1 hour). The team prays and discusses where the teens are in their faith journey in relation to this topic. Then using this planning guide as a starting point, the team adapts the Life Night to meet the needs of the teens and the parish. Create a detailed outline with any changes and/or adjustments.
- Assign the person responsible for each part of the Life Night:

Environment _____

Famous Pairs _____

Marriage Q&A _____

Marriage Testimony _____

Celibacy Q&A _____

Celibacy Testimony _____

PrayerforVocation _____

TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO LIFE NIGHT:

- Turn in a detailed outline of the Life Night to the youth minister. Allow the youth minister to give feedback and make any necessary changes.
- Create a list of needed supplies and materials. Assign a person to be responsible for collecting and/or purchasing the materials needed.
- Decide the people that will be doing the following things. Make sure they have a copy of the script and/or teaching outline. Inform them of any practices and/or deadlines.

Teaching (Marriage) _____

Teaching (Celibacy) _____

WEEK OF THE LIFE NIGHT:

- Written outline of the teaching is given to the youth minister and practiced.
- Run a dress rehearsal of the Life Night. Youth minister gives feedback.
- Create environment/collect needed supplies.
- E-mail entire Core Team an overview of the night and small group questions.

DAY OF THE LIFE NIGHT:

- Set up the environment. Make sure the room is clean and presentable.
- Set up audio and video. Test the video clips to make sure both picture and sound work.
- Walk the entire Core Team through the Life Night. Make sure all transitions are ready and everyone knows their roles.
- Pray! Pray for the teens attending the Life Night. Pray for God's will to be done through the night. Pray over those involved.

LIFE NIGHT EVALUATION

INSTRUCTIONS:

Use the following questions to discuss and evaluate your Life Night.

1. On a scale of 1-10, how well did this Life Night accomplish the goal we set? Explain.

2. What was the strongest aspect of this Life Night?

3. What kind of follow-up do we need to do after this Life Night?

4. What can we improve for future Life Nights? How can we accomplish this?

1. On a scale of 1-10, how well did this Life Night accomplish the goal we set? Explain.

2. What was the strongest aspect of this Life Night?

3. What kind of follow-up do we need to do after this Life Night?

4. What can we improve for future Life Nights? How can we accomplish this?

1. On a scale of 1-10, how well did this Life Night accomplish the goal we set? Explain.

2. What was the strongest aspect of this Life Night?

3. What kind of follow-up do we need to do after this Life Night?

4. What can we improve for future Life Nights? How can we accomplish this?

1. On a scale of 1-10, how well did this Life Night accomplish the goal we set? Explain.

2. What was the strongest aspect of this Life Night?

3. What kind of follow-up do we need to do after this Life Night?

4. What can we improve for future Life Nights? How can we accomplish this?

EVALUATION

THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS



