

PARENT NIGHT OVERVIEW

DOMESTIC CHURCH

LIVING A SACRAMENTAL FAMILY LIFE

GOAL

The goal of this night is to help the parents foster a growing faith in their children at home, while also introducing them to the various resources available to them and encouraging conversation with other Catholic parents.

KEY CONCEPTS

- Parents are the primary catechists in a child's life, and the more a family discusses their faith, prays, and participates in the Sacraments, the stronger the family and the faith of its members become.
- The Mass is the most important thing a parent can do for their teen. When teens attend Mass regularly with one parent, there is over a 70% chance they will continue to attend on their own when they move out. If both parents attend with them, that number jumps to over 90%.
- Love is the best way to share the faith. True love is a decision we make every day to will the good of the other person, whether that's easy or hard, and whether it involves tough conversations or space to process.

KEY TERMS:

Catechesis
Sacrament
Domestic Church

SCRIPTURE:

Deuteronomy 6:6-9
Luke 2:41-52
Ephesians 6:4

CATECHISM:

2204
2205
2223

ABOUT THIS PARENT NIGHT

The night will flow just like a regular life night for the parents to see how their children are being formed each week. The gather will provide an opportunity for the parents to break the ice with each other and get to know some new parents. The proclaim focuses on catching the parents up with what we've learned this year, while also introducing them to Chris, Rachel, and the resources available to them. The break gives the parents an opportunity to meet the Core Team and discuss where they are at in their parenting journey. The send gives the parents a time to pray for their teens intentionally in front of the Eucharist.

ENVIRONMENT

The hall will be set up like a regular Life Night. The comfy chairs will be set up in front of the "stage", and some contemporary Christian soft rock music will be playing through the speakers.

GATHER

Welcome and Opening Prayer (5 min)

Gather the parents in the gather area in the hall. Chris and Rachel will introduce themselves, and Chris will explain an overview of the night. Chris or Rachel will lead everyone in an opening prayer, concluding with a Hail Mary.

Parent Bingo (15 min)

Every parent will get a copy of the Parent Bingo handout. Instruct them to go around asking other parents a question from the bingo board. Once they have filled out five boxes in a row, they can shout, "Bingo!". First five people to get bingo win a rosary, and whoever fills out the most squares wins a Carmelite chapel gift store certificate.

PROCLAIM

(20 Minutes)

KEY TERMS:

Catechesis: "The process of transmitting the Gospel, as the Christian community has received it, understands it, celebrates it, lives it, and communicates it in many ways." (GDC 105)

Sacrament: An efficacious sign of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us through the work of the Holy Spirit.

Domestic Church: The Christian family. It is a community of faith, hope, and charity. (CCC 2204)

TEACHING POINTS:

What is Life Teen?

As of this year, our parishes use a program called Life Teen for faith formation for grades 7-12. Life Teen is a Catholic youth ministry organization who's goal is to bring teens closer to Christ through the Eucharist, Mary, and relational ministry. A model of relational ministry focuses on small group discussion instead of classroom instruction, mentor relationships with Core Team members, and regular prayer. Life Nights are the way in which catechesis occurs, breaking down into the Gather, Proclaim, Break, Send model, and all students in high school can attend and bring any friends they would like. There are social nights, catechetical nights, and issue nights. Our Confirmation prep program utilizes Life Teen's Confirmation program, Purpose, as the basis for catechesis. Confirmation prep is identical to Life Nights in every aspect, except that the content being covered is more directly focused on preparation for the Sacrament and a life of missionary discipleship.

How do we have a personal relationship with God?

The first step in anyone's faith journey is to have a personal encounter with Jesus Christ. No matter where you, your spouse, or your teen is at right now, the next step is tell God that you want Him to be the most important thing in your life. Invite Him in, ask Him for help, and trust Him. We grow our relationship with God the same way we grow any human relationship: with quality time and open, honest communication. The more time we spend in prayer, learning His Word and teachings, and discussing our own journey with Him, the better will we know Him and see Him revealing Himself to us everyday. The most beautiful and important way He does this is in the sacraments.

What is the importance of the Sacraments?

The Church has seven sacraments, three of which are sacraments of initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist. At Baptism, a person enters into communion with the Church, the Body of Christ. When Jesus was baptized by John, we see an important revelation where God the Father, through the Holy Spirit, declares that Jesus of Nazareth is His son.

"...And when Jesus was baptized, he went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened...behold, a voice from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

(Matthew 3:13-17)

At baptism, original sin is washed away, and an indelible spiritual sign is imprinted on the baptized Christian. This grace is irrevocable, unrepeatable, and eternally permanent. It is necessary for salvation, and grants the Christian their primary vocation, or calling, from God to live the life He has gifted them with.

Confirmation is the fulfillment of the grace received at baptism. It is not a graduation or the end of anything, but rather a fulfillment of the vows made at baptism, and a time for anyone who was baptized as an infant to make the vows and publicly profess their faith on their own accord.

"Confirmation perfects Baptismal grace; it is the sacrament which gives us the Holy Spirit in order to root us more deeply in the divine filiation, [and] incorporate us more firmly into Christ, strengthen our bond with the Church..."

Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1316

The Eucharist is the source and summit of our life as Christians. St. Augustine once said that if angels could be jealous of humans, it would be for our ability to receive the Eucharist. At the Passover, Jesus instituted the Eucharist as the new and everlasting covenant for us to receive His true presence in our lives every time we partake in Communion at Mass. When the priest consecrates the host at Mass, the bread and wine become Jesus Christ's body, blood, soul, and divinity in what appears to us as bread and wine. This is not just a symbol. This is central to the Catholic faith.

"This is my body which is given for you. Do this in memory of me...This chalice which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood."

Luke 22:14-23

This is why the Mass is the most important part of our lives as Christians. Mass isn't about what we get out of it, but it is about worship—what we give to God. It's a beautiful gift that we get to receive the Eucharist, and the music, homily, scripture readings, and fellowship can all be a great, enjoyable part of the Mass, but that's not what it's about. It's about lifting our souls to God, and telling him, "Here I am, Lord." At a presentation from the Archdiocese of Boston, a statistic was shared with us that the single most deciding factor in a young adult's Mass attendance was that of their parents when they were in high school. If a teen attends Mass regularly with at least one parent, there is over a 70% chance they will continue to attend on their own after high school. When the father is present, that chance jumps to over 90%.

The last sacrament we've discussed in depth this year is Confession. After baptism, we undoubtedly will sin again. That's innately human. As followers of Christ, we are called to repent, seek forgiveness, and grow in virtue. Through the priest in Confession, God grants us forgiveness and the Grace we need for salvation and a life

of holiness. There is nothing that can take God's love away from us, and Confession is always kept private, thanks to the seal of Confession.

How do I foster my teen's faith?

Rachel will talk about this part. Insert Here:

What resources are available?

Life Teen parent life blogs (tci.church/parentlife/), any formation events Rachel has, etc. Mom blogs, podcasts, etc. (Pints With Aquinas, Catching Foxes, etc.)

BREAK

Small Group Discussion (15 min)

We will have the parents break up into small groups of 6-7. If any Core Team members are present, I would like to have one with each group if possible. The following questions will be projected for them to discuss:

- What are some of the hardest things about raising teenagers?
- What are some of the best parts?
- How does your family incorporate faith each day? each week?
- What needs to be a bigger priority for your family?
- How can you make those priorities more consistent?
- What helps you share the faith with your teens?

SEND

Lectio Divina (15 min)

One of the ways to pray we have introduced to the teens this year is Lectio Divina, or "divine reading". Take some time to read through the scripture passage here, Luke 2:41-52, about Mary and Joseph finding Jesus in the Temple as a boy. Reflect on the reading, taking into what we've talked about today, and your own personal relationships with God and with your family. The four steps to lectio are:

- 1) *Lectio* (reading) Read through the passage slowly. Take a moment to breath and let the passage sit before reading it again. After reading it a second time, see if any words are standing out to you. If not, ask God to speak to you through His word. Read through again for the third time, and try to pick a word or phrase to pray with.
- 2) *Meditatio* (meditation) Try to put yourself into the passage. How would you react in Mary or Joseph's shoes. What about when you were a child, how would you have responded in Jesus' place? What scenarios in your relationship with your children does this bring up?
- 3) *Oratio* (speaking): Now talk to God. Ask Him what He is trying to tell you and what He wants to do in your life. Ask God any questions you have, knowing that He wants to speak to you.
- 4) *Contemplatio* (contemplation): Now's the time to enter into meditative/contemplative prayer. Try to silence your mind. Let any thoughts coming in to pass, and try to listen for the Holy Spirit. Rarely do we hear words, but we often feel Him stirring in our soul in ideas, desires, thoughts, or emotions. Take this time to let God speak to you.