

GENERAL ADMISSION

SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION EDGE NIGHT OUTLINE

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 26:26-28
Matthew 28:18-19
John 3:5
Acts 2:1-4
Acts 8:14-17
John 6:51-58

CATECHISM

1212-1216
1272
1285
1293-1301
1303
1322-1324

1333
1391-1396

YOUCAT

193
195
198
200-201
203
205
208
211
217
221

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Admission tickets
- Raffle Tickets
- Basketballs
- Basketball hoops
- Toy Fish (approx. 8)
- Fish bowls (approx. 24)
- Music — see Media Suggestions
- Mini pool
- Ring toss
- Various sized bottles
- Large Bucket
- Rubber Ducks (approx. 20)
- Prizes (candy, bubbles, etc.)

GOAL

The goal of this night is for the middle school youth to have a greater understanding of the Sacraments of Initiation and how they work together to form the foundation of the Christian life. While each Sacrament will be briefly discussed, the emphasis of the night is on the graces received in each Sacrament, how they affect our lives, and why they are so important.

EDGE NIGHT AT A GLANCE

Using an “Admission” theme, this Edge Night will explore the Sacraments of Initiation. The night will begin with a few carnival-like games. After a teaching on the three Sacrament of Initiation

— Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation — the youth will have an opportunity to share about the graces they receive from the Sacraments in their lives. The night will end with a time of prayer before the tabernacle.

BEFORE THE NIGHT

Create an admission ticket for the youth for this night and hand them out at the previous night; tell them to bring their ticket with them to this Edge Night. It will be their ticket into the night! (Be sure to have some extra on hand at the Edge Night in case the youth forget their ticket; you don't want them to think they can't come if they don't have one.)

Have raffle tickets separated out and ready to give to each youth. Prepare all the games and materials ahead of time (see Gather for more detail) Get carnival-like prizes: bubbles, chalk, huge inflatable hammer, candy, etc.

ENVIRONMENT

In the main room, create a carnival theme. Have games, stands, barn animals (fake, of course); if possible, have carnival-type food: hot dogs, hamburgers, cotton candy, snow cones, etc. The Core Members should dress as if they were working the carnival. Also, see Media Suggestions for a Ferris wheel video to have playing while the youth play the carnival games.

MEDIA SUGGESTIONS

YouTube: "Get The Thrill of Riding Amusement Park Paratrooper Sea Ray Ferris Wheel" by JTAEMT (sound muted)

Song: "Classic Carnival Circus Calliope Music" on Spotify

Song: "We Are the Beggars" by Ike Ndolo (*We Are the Beggars*, OCP)

Edge Video: "A Tour of the Father's House" (Edge Video Support 11)

Edge Video: "Eucharist Teaching" (Edge Video Support 11)

GATHER

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

(5 min)

Collect the admission tickets at the entrance of the room as the youth come in. Gather them together in a large group and welcome and introduce any new youth. Recognize and celebrate any birthdays. Give a brief overview of the night and open in prayer asking for the Holy Spirit's guidance in understanding and entering into the topic of the night.

CARNIVAL GAMES

(20 min)

Break the youth into their small groups. Have the youth minister briefly explain to everyone what each game is and that they will need one raffle ticket per game. Give each youth 10 raffle tickets (this number will change depending on the youth group size). The youth will be able to play until they run out of raffle tickets, or until time runs out.

Fish Bowl Toss: This is a "fish friendly" game. Only use pretend fish for the fish bowls! Before the carnival, fill 24 fish bowls with water to the

neck of the bowl and arrange them in a triangular pattern. Next choose about eight colorful squirt-fish to add to only eight of the 24 bowls. In order for fish to sink to the bottom, immerse them in the water and squeeze them to release the air and replace with water – the squirt-fish should sit on the bottom of the bowl for this game. Youth are given three balls to try their chance at getting a ball into a fish bowl with a squirt fish in the bottom. If they get their ball into an empty fish bowl or no fish bowl at all, they do not receive a prize.

Duck Pond: Fill a large bucket with water. Get an assortment of rubber ducks and write a number (1-5) on the bottom with a sharpie. If you have 20 rubber ducks, write the number 1 on four ducks, the number 2 on three ducks, the number 3 on two ducks, the number 4 on one duck, and the number 5 on one duck. Once you have written the numbers put the rubber ducks into the bucket of water. The youth pick a duck and look for the number on the bottom. Youth win the prize that corresponds to the number on the duck. Have the better prizes correspond with numbers 4 and 5 since there are fewer ducks with those numbers. Hint: have the prizes displayed to show what prize is won with each number!

Ring Toss: Get 15 various sized plastic bottles; they can be empty liter soda bottles or water

bottles. Also, get six plastic rings large enough to go over the bottles (pool toy rings work well). Set up the bottles a few inches away from each other. Give the youth a designated spot to stand a few feet away from the bottles. Give the youth three plastic rings to toss. The goal is to get at least one of the three rings around one of the bottles. If they do get at least one ring around a bottle, award the youth a prize

Free Throws: Using a basketball and basketball hoop give the youth a designated line to stand at a few feet away from the basketball hoop. They will then be given three shots to try to make a basket. If they make two out of three free-throw shots then they win a prize.

PROCLAIM

SCRIPTURE PROCLAMATION

(5 min)

Matthew 28:18-20

“GENERAL ADMISSION” TEACHING

(10 min)

Instead of one talk, break the talk into three 4-minute stations. Each station will highlight one of the Sacraments of Initiation. The youth minister can introduce and conclude the series of talks.

Youth Minister Intro

How many of you have been to the movies in the last year? How many of you have been to a waterpark or rollercoaster park? What about a fair or carnival? A concert? There is a theme to all of these landmarks...you need something before you walk in. You need an admission ticket or a pass. Today at Edge, we are learning about the Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation. Baptism is the ultimate admission ticket; without it we cannot receive any other Sacrament. Unlike just getting into a park or a concert with an admission ticket, the Sacraments are the way through which we enter into a relationship with Christ and the Church and work our way towards heaven.

Core Member 1: Baptism

The Sacrament of Baptism, the first of the Sacraments of Initiation, is our entrance into the Church. Through Baptism, we are cleansed of original sin and receive sanctifying grace, which is the life of God within our souls. That grace prepares us for the reception of the other Sacraments and helps us to live our lives as Christians.

Christ Himself ordered His disciples to preach the Gospel to all nations and to baptize those who accept the message of the Gospel. In His encounter with Nicodemus (John 3:1-21), Christ made it clear that baptism was necessary for salvation: "Amen, amen I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." For Catholics, the Sacrament is not just something we do; it is the very mark of a Christian, because it brings us into new life in Christ.

The Church has a specific Rite of Baptism, which includes roles for both parents and godparents. The essential parts of baptism are the pouring of water over the head of the person to be baptized (or the immersion of the person in water) and the words "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

The pouring of water and the words said during a baptism are merely physical representations of what is happening in the soul of the person being baptized. There are a few specific things that happen in the soul of every person who is baptized, which are all supernatural graces that bring us to life in God.

- We are washed clean of original sin and our souls are opened to the possibility of heaven because we are not held accountable for the punishment of original sin, which is hell. Original sin stems from the Fall of Adam and Eve (CCC 1263).
- We receive sanctifying grace which allows us to receive all other grace from the other Sacraments (that is why baptism is first).
- Our souls are infused with grace that allows us to believe in God, hope in God, and love God (CCC 1266).

- We are given an indelible (permanent) mark as a Christian and become a part of Christ as a son or daughter of God; nothing can erase this mark and that is why we can only be baptized once (CCC 1265).
- We become a part of the Church (CCC 1267).

Core Member 2: Confirmation

Confirmation is regarded as the perfection of Baptism and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states: "by the sacrament of Confirmation, [the baptized] are more perfectly bound to the Church and are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit. Hence they are, as true witnesses of Christ, more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith by word and deed (1285)."

Many people think of the laying on of hands, which signifies the descent of the Holy Spirit, as the central act in the Sacrament of Confirmation. The essential element, however, is the anointing of the confirmandi (the person being confirmed) with chrism (an aromatic oil that has been consecrated by a bishop), accompanied by the words "Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit." Like in Baptism, these actions are only outward signs of what is happening deeper in our souls.

The Sacrament of Confirmation confers special graces of the Holy Spirit upon the person being confirmed, just as such graces were granted to the apostles on Pentecost. Like Baptism, Confirmation gives us an indelible mark and, therefore, it can only be performed once. Confirmation also increases and deepens all of the graces granted at Baptism.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* lists five effects of Confirmation (1303):

- It roots us more deeply as sons and daughters of God.
- It unites us more firmly to Christ.
- It increases the gifts of the Holy Spirit in us.
- It strengthens our bond with the Church.

- It gives us a special strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the faith by word and action as true witnesses of Christ, to confess the name of Christ boldly, and never to be ashamed of the Cross.

Core Member 3: Eucharist

In Holy Communion something truly incredible happens. Through the words and actions of the priest, by the power of the Holy Spirit, the simple bread and wine that are before him become the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. The Eucharist is the greatest celebration in the Church because it commemorates Christ's death on the cross. Before Christ died He instituted the Eucharist at the Last Supper, and then on the cross He truly gave us His body and blood. It was this action on the cross that is our hope for heaven; we remember this great sacrifice of love when we receive the Eucharist and we are continually given the promise of heaven (John 6:54). This can be challenging for us to believe because we cannot see the bread and wine become the real presence of the body and blood of Christ. The bread still looks like bread and the wine still tastes like wine. The term we use to describe this change is transubstantiation. This means that although the appearance of bread and wine is still the same (accidence), what the bread and wine actually are have changed (substance).

Receiving Holy Communion affects our souls deeply because it brings us into such intimate union with Jesus Christ. Along with this union with Christ, the Eucharist also forgives venial sins, helps us to not commit mortal sins, and increases our unity with the community of the Church. Christ also promises that all those who eat His flesh and drink His blood will have eternal life (John 6:54)! Frequent Communion increases our love for God and for our neighbor, which expresses itself in action, which makes us more like Christ. The Eucharist is the source and the summit of our Catholic faith because it is our greatest unity with Christ (CCC 1324).

Because of the intimate connection of the Sacrament of the Eucharist to our life in Christ, we must be free of any grave or mortal sin before receiving it. If we are aware of having committed a mortal sin, we must participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation first. The Church sees the two Sacraments as connected, and urges us, when

we can, to join frequent Confession with frequent Communion.

Youth Minister: Conclusion

All of these Sacraments build upon each other, beginning with Baptism, and they are all connected. The Sacraments of Initiation are important because they open for us the road to holiness and heaven; they give us the gifts of the Holy Spirit that we need to love and follow Christ and to not be afraid. On our journey of life we too have the Eucharist every week, or even every day, to fill us and nourish us and continually bring us into a deeper union with Christ. We were created to live a blessed life with Christ and the Sacraments of Initiation make this possible and open our lives to the graces and love of God.

BREAK

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

(10 min)

As your small group begins, say a prayer for the group and the questions for that session.

- What was something that you learned tonight?
- How are each of the Sacraments of Initiation different?
- Do you remember your baptism and first communion?
- How has your understanding of faith changed or developed since you received those Sacraments?
- How can you better live out your faith and therefore enter in to the grace that God is offering you?
- Why do you think that the Church calls the Eucharist "the source and summit of the Christian Life"?

SKITS

(15 min)

To drive the point home about the Sacraments, have each small group create a skit that will teach others about the Sacraments of Initiation and inspire others to embrace the Sacramental life more fully. The youth minister and Core should designate one of the Sacraments of Initiation to each group. Be sure that each youth in the group is able to participate.

Have each small group share their skits with the large group. Call up one group to perform, and another group to be on deck to perform immediately after. Continue this process as time allows.

SEND

CLOSING PRAYER

(10 min)

Conclude the night with a time of prayer before the tabernacle in the church or your parish chapel. Explain to the youth where the tabernacle is and how the red candle can help them find it. Explain that the tabernacle is where all of the consecrated hosts are kept, so that is where Christ dwells in the church because He is fully present in the hosts that are His Body, and the red light means that Christ is present.

Have the youth minister lead a closing prayer and encourage the youth to bring all their prayers and intentions before the real presence of Jesus Christ. Close the night by praying together thanking God for the gift of the Sacraments.

SUMMARY CHALLENGE

Before the middle school youth are sent home, they will be challenged to remember:

- The Sacraments of Initiation lay the foundation for our faith journey and help us live as active members of the Church.

- We must also live life with confidence that Christ will provide for our needs through the graces of the Sacrament of Baptism, the Sacrament of the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Confirmation.

TO THE PARENTS OF

The Edge Night for this week focused on the Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation. The night highlighted each Sacrament and how they strengthen us and carry us through our life, so that we are always growing in holiness. Here are a few possible discussion questions for the ride home:

- What are the Sacraments of Initiation?
- What is something new that you learned about these Sacraments?
- How do all the Sacraments of Initiation work together?
- Why is it so important to participate in these Sacraments?

ADAPTATION IDEAS

- If you can't get fish bowls or the plastic fish, get clear water glasses and just put any sort of small object in them. If youth throw a ball into a glass with an object in it they get a prize.
- If you do not have a basketball hoop for the free throws, have a Core Member hold up a hula-hoop and have the youth throw a ball through the hoop.
- If possible, have a youth who is preparing to come into full initiation with the Church give a witness about his or her experience and journey.
- Host a night of prayer for the youth, parents, and their godparents or confirmation sponsor to recommit to their baptismal promises.
- Use the video Eucharist Teaching (See Media Suggestions) in place of the 5 minute teaching on the Eucharist.
- Use the Video "A Tour of My Father's House" (See Media Suggestions) during the Send before taking the youth into the Church.

Notes

EDGE NIGHT CHECKLIST

CORE PLANNING TEAM:

DATE OF EDGE NIGHT:

ONE MONTH PRIOR TO THE NIGHT:

- Give copies of the Edge Night to each of the members of the planning team. Each person should read the Scripture, Catechism, and *YOUCAT* references as well as review the planning guide before the brainstorming meeting.
- Have the planning team meet for a brainstorming meeting (this should last no longer than 1 hour). The team prays and discusses where the youth are in their faith journey in relation to this topic. Using this planning guide as a starting point, the team adapts the Edge Night to meet the needs of the youth and the parish.
- Assign the person responsible for the following:

Environment _____

Before the Night (when needed) _____

Audio/Visual Needs _____

Opening Prayer _____

Scripture Proclamation _____

Proclaim (discuss with YM) _____

Summary Challenge _____

TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO EDGE NIGHT:

- Turn in your notes for the Edge Night to the youth minister. Allow the youth minister to give feedback and make necessary changes.
- Create a list of needed supplies and materials. Assign a person to be responsible for collecting and/or purchasing the items needed.
- Discuss with the youth minister who will be giving the Proclaim/witness for the Edge Night. Be sure that this person is given the script and/or teaching. Inform them of any practices, time limits, and/or deadlines.

WEEK OF THE EDGE NIGHT:

- Person giving Proclaim checks in with youth minister.
- Check that all supplies have been obtained/purchased.
- Create/collect items for environment. Have volunteers ready to help if needed.
- Email Core Team an overview of the Edge Night.

DAY OF THE EDGE NIGHT:

- Set up the environment. Make sure the room is clean and presentable.
- If needed, set up audio/visual equipment. Test the video clips to make sure both picture and sound work.
- Pray! Pray for the youth attending the Edge Night. Pray for God's will to be done through the night. Pray over those involved.

EDGE NIGHT EVALUATION

INSTRUCTIONS:

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

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

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

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

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

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Notes

A large rectangular area with a light gray background, containing 25 horizontal dashed lines for writing notes.