



INVITED

A LIFE NIGHT ON THE MYSTICAL BODY OF CHRIST

GOAL

The goal of *Invited* is to help the teens grasp the reality of the Mystical Body of Christ in a way that sparks a desire to belong in the Church. It explains the role and importance of Baptism and the Eucharist in the Body of Christ.

KEY CONCEPTS

- Jesus chooses you, invites you, and pursues you.
- Baptism is the sacrament by which we accept God's invitation to join the Church, the Body of Christ.
- God invites us to sustain our relationship with Him and the Church by becoming food for us in the Eucharist, thus uniting us to Him and His Body, the Church.

KEY TERMS:

Baptism
Eucharist
Mystical Body
of Christ

SCRIPTURE:

Luke 22:17-20
John 6:56
John 15:16
1 Corinthians 10:16-17

CATECHISM:

1262-1271
1391-1396

ABOUT THIS LIFE NIGHT

The Gather begins with an invitation for the teens to get to know one another and then has several teens act out invitations to different events in an increasingly silly way. The Proclaim explains Baptism as the invitation to be part of the Body of Christ and the Eucharist as our way to continue to accept that invitation. The Break is an individual reflection that allows the teens to think about invitations of faith they have received and extended. The Send is a time for the teens to pray with one another and offer gratitude for the invitations God has extended to them.

ENVIRONMENT

Place carpet squares, chairs, or markers on the ground in the main meeting space in a way that pairs teens off. Seal the *About Me Questionnaire* in envelopes that say, “You’re invited!” on the front and place an envelope and writing utensil on each seat. The questionnaire can be found on the *September 2018 Life Teen USB* and online at lifeteen.com under Life Support: *September 2018*.

Project the *Invited* environment image, which can be found on the *September 2018 Life Teen USB* and online at lifeteen.com under Life Support: *September 2018*.

MEDIA SUGGESTIONS

“Come to Me,” Bethel Music (*The Loft Sessions*, Kingsway Music, 2012)

“You Came (Lazarus),” Bethel Music (*Starlight*, Bethel Music, 2017)

“Reckless Love,” Cory Asbury (*Reckless Love*, Bethel Music, 2018)

SOCIAL MEDIA HASHTAGS: #LT_Invited

AS YOU GET STARTED...

For a deeper Send, consider concluding the Life Night with Eucharistic Adoration. Gather the teens in the chapel or church for an individual reflection during the Break and transition into the Send by exposing the Blessed Sacrament. If you are unable to move to a chapel or church, set up an altar in the main meeting space when creating the environment for the Life Night.

As an additional challenge, ask the teens to extend an invitation to one friend for the next Life Night, Life Night series, or Social Life Night.

HISPANIC INCULTURATION

By Stephanie Espinoza

Contributors: Juan Aznaran, Stephanie Salinas, Andrea Vasquez-Tejada

Cultural Insights:

During the Gather, consider adding a *quinceañera*, the *mañanitas* on the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, or a *Día de los Muertos* celebration to the invitation options.

LIFE NIGHT: INVITED

GATHER

About Me (10 min)

Gather the teens in the main meeting space and have them sit in pairs in the order they enter. Welcome them to the Life Night, introduce any teens or Core Members attending for the first time, and begin in prayer.

Ask the teens to open the envelopes on their seats. Invite them to fill out the *About Me Questionnaire* for the teen sitting next to them. The teens ask their partners the questions and write down the answers on the survey. Have the Core Members collect the questionnaires and let the teens know that they will be used at the next Life Night.

Plus One (15 min)

Invite six teens to come to the front of the main meeting space and divide them into pairs. Invite a pair of Core Members to participate as well. Explain that one person in each pair will be the inviter and the other the invitee. Prior to the Life Night, write several events on slips of paper and put them in a hat. The following are sample events to get you started, but be sure to add events specific to your teens:

- The movies
- Prom
- Graduation
- Grandma's surprise 90th birthday party
- Church (*give this event to the pair of Core Members and have them rehearse a poorly done invitation to church prior to the Life Night*)

The inviters pull a piece of paper from the hat and try to convince the invitee to join them at the event. Give the teens a few minutes to act out the invitation and then say, "*That was good, but now do it incorporating this prop,*" and hand each inviter a prop (an umbrella, a piece of luggage, a shower curtain, a bouquet of fake flowers, ski goggles, a cup of coffee, etc.).

After they act out the invitation with the prop, say, "*That was good, but now do it like you are (insert the name of a different celebrity for each teen).*"

After they act out the invitation as the celebrity, say, "*That was good, but now do it without using the words 'you' and 'me.'*"

The challenges build upon each other. The inviters end up inviting the invitees to a specific event with a prop, as a celebrity, and without using the words "you" and "me." The invitees choose whether or not they will attend the event after each round by saying, "yes, they will go," or, "no, they will not go."

Transition into the Proclaim by commenting, in a humorous way, on the invitations. Mention how poorly we may have been invited to church or have invited others to church. Introduce the idea that even though we may have been invited poorly, or invited others poorly, God has invited us and will continue to invite us to be members of His Church.

PROCLAIM

"Invited" Teaching (15 min)

The *Proclaim Outline* and *Proclaim Details* can be found on pages 32 to 39.

BREAK

Invited Journal Reflection (15 min)

Instruct the teens to spread out throughout the main meeting space. Create a peaceful and prayerful environment

by dimming the lights and playing instrumental worship music. Consider projecting an image of Jesus. Pass out the *Invited Journal Reflection* handout and a writing utensil to each teen. Handouts can be found on the *September 2018 Life Teen USB* and online at lifeteen.com under Life Support: *September 2018*. Invite the teens to silently reflect on the questions.

SEND

Prayer of Gratitude (20 min)

Transition into a time of prayer by instructing the teens to find their partner from the beginning of the Life Night. Pass out the *Prayer of Gratitude* handout, which can be found on the *September 2018 Life Teen USB* and online at lifeteen.com under Life Support: *September 2018*.

Invite the teens to share with their partner the ways in which God has invited and is continuing to invite them to know Him. Encourage them to talk about the people and experiences they are grateful for and areas in which they would like to grow in gratitude for the way God is working in their lives.

After several minutes, invite them to pray with one another using the *Prayer of Gratitude* handout, or by creating a prayer of their own. End the time of prayer by encouraging the teens to pray for their partner throughout the week. Conclude the Life Night by praying the Glory Be as a group.

Have Core Members hold bowls of holy water by the exits of the meeting space. Invite the teens to intentionally bless themselves as reminder of their baptism as they exit.

Notes: _____



INVITED

KEY TERMS

Baptism: The first Sacrament of Initiation in which a believer receives the remission of original and personal sin, begins a new life in Christ and the Holy Spirit, and is incorporated into the Church, the Body of Christ.

Eucharist: The Holy Eucharist completes Christian initiation into the Body of Christ (along with Baptism and Confirmation), and is the ritual, sacramental action of thanksgiving to God.

Mystical Body of Christ: The Church is called the (Mystical) Body of Christ because of the intimate communion Jesus shares with His disciples; the metaphor of a body, whose head is Christ and whose members are the faithful, provides an image which keeps in focus both the unity and diversity of the Church.

TEACHING POINTS

WEIRD THINGS CATHOLICS DO

- Catholics grow up doing a lot of things that simply become habit. For someone who is just being introduced to Catholic practices, though, it appears that we do some weird things.
- *Project and read a list of weird things Catholics do, such as wearing ashes on our foreheads and paying to light a candle. Use dipping our hands in a communal bowl of water for the final example.*
- Most of us have used holy water our whole lives. If you are Catholic and living your faith intentionally, it's not considered a weird practice, but rather, a huge blessing.

- Holy water aids us in overcoming temptation and the works of the devil. If we are properly disposed, it can cleanse us from venial sins and temporal punishments.
- Most importantly, holy water reminds us of our baptism, the moment our parents accepted an invitation on our behalf to a relationship with God and His Church.

INITIATED

- God invites each of us to become a member of His Church. When we are baptized, we enter into a relationship where we are fully known and loved, and we gain a family — the Church.
- When we are baptized, we are adopted by God, become His daughter or son, and are united to one another as brothers and sisters. No matter what our earthly family looks like, we now have an eternal family. We belong.
- *Consider sharing a story about the time you were first invited into a relationship with Christ through the Church.*
- When we become members of the Body of Christ, we become intimately and mystically united with Jesus and one another. It is a union different than any other. Within the Mystical Body of Christ are the baptized on Earth, those in purgatory, and the saints in heaven.

SUSTAINED

- Once we are baptized, we are always baptized. However, we must sustain our relationship with the Church by saying “yes” to invitations to a deeper relationship with Jesus and His Body. We do this through active participation in the life of the Church, most importantly the celebration of the Mass and reception of the Eucharist.
- We become united to Jesus when receive Him in the Eucharist. The Eucharist augments our union with Christ and separates us from sin. Because we are more united to Christ and distanced from sin, we are more closely united to our community members.

- *Share a story about a time when you were nourished or strengthened by the Eucharist.*

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- *Project and read John 15:16.*
- Jesus chose you. He invited you and continues to invite you to be known and loved within His family. Sometimes we think we are the ones doing all of the work, but that is backward. Jesus chooses you, invites you, and pursues you first.
- We renew our commitment to this family every time we accept His invitation to receive His Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity in the Eucharist. Every good act and inspiration to turn to God is initiated by God.
- You accept His invitation every time you are inspired to pray or spend time with Him in the Sacred Scriptures. You accept His invitation when you show up for Mass every Sunday.
- When we recognize that God always initiates and extends the invitation to a relationship where we are known and loved, we should be grateful. As our gratitude grows, we begin to realize that God is unceasingly inviting us into a relationship with Him.
- We never have to be isolated. If we are, it is because we are choosing to ignore the invitation from God in our life.

Notes: _____



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TEACHING

WEIRD THINGS CATHOLICS DO

Catholics grow up doing a lot of things that simply become habit. We don't think twice about them. We rarely question them or try to learn why we do them. For someone who is just being introduced to Catholic practices, though, it can appear that we do some weird things.

Project and read the following list, adapting it as needed:

Ten Weird Things Catholics Do

1. Go vegetarian on Fridays.
2. Get down on one knee before we sit in a pew.
3. Dig up bodies to see if they have decomposed.
4. Fast for an hour before receiving the Eucharist because we need to "prepare space."
5. Transport human bones (relics) so everyone can experience them.
6. Wear ashes on our forehead on Ash Wednesday.
7. Say some parts of the Mass in Latin and other parts in English.
8. Eat the body and blood of Jesus.
9. Pay money to light a candle.
10. Dip our hands in a communal bowl of water as we enter a church.

Have you ever thought about the holy water at the entrance of the church? When you think about it, it's really quite gross. Everyone's hands, which have touched runny noses, dirty shoes, bathroom doors, greasy hair, and oily faces, have been in there! It is something most of us have done our whole lives. If you are not Catholic, it may seem pretty

weird to dip your hand in holy water and then put it on your face, but if you are Catholic and are living your faith intentionally, you know it's a huge blessing.

Holy water helps us overcome temptation and the works of the devil. The prayer used to bless holy water petitions God so that "every delusion and wickedness of the devil, and all unclean spirits, may fly and depart." The devil flees the moment holy water touches us!

Order of the Blessing of Holy Water

Holy water can also cleanse us from venial sins and temporal punishments if we are properly disposed. Being properly disposed means we are not in state of mortal sin, desire to love God more, and want to detach ourselves from sin. When you bless yourself with holy water with this intention, you are forgiven. Similarly, if you were to die, you would not have any punishment for sins committed before dipping your hand into holy water!

Most importantly, holy water reminds us of our baptism, the moment we accepted our invitation to a relationship with God and His Church. If we were baptized as infants, our parents accepted this invitation for us and promised to raise us with an awareness of this great invitation.

INITIATED

God invites each of us into a relationship where we are known and loved. When we are baptized, we gain a family — the Church. We may think of the Church as a place we simply go on Sundays, but this definition falls short. At its depth, the Church is a people — the Body of Christ. When we are baptized, we are adopted by God, become His daughter or son, and are united to one another as brothers and sisters. No matter what our earthly family looks like, we now have an eternal family. We belong.

CCC 1262-1271

Consider sharing a story about the time you were first invited into a relationship with Christ through the Church.

When we become members of the Body of Christ, we become intimately united with Jesus and one another. We call it a mystical union because it is different than any other union we can experience. The bond is greater than the bond between our biological or adopted family. It's greater than the bond we experience with our closest friends. It's even greater than the bond between a husband and wife. It is a union that even death cannot separate. Within the Mystical Body of Christ are the baptized on Earth, those in purgatory, and the saints in heaven. We are all united in a mystical way and will one day be fully united in heaven.

CCC 954

SUSTAINED

As we all know, belonging to a family is so much more than a “one and done” event. Once you are baptized, you are always baptized and will always belong to the Church. However, our relationship with Christ and our spiritual family must be sustained. We must continue to say “yes” to invitations to a deeper relationship with Jesus and His Body, the Church. We do this through active participation in the life of the Church, most importantly through the celebration of the Mass and reception of the Eucharist, which is the body and blood of Jesus.

It sounds weird — Catholics eat the body and blood of Jesus. It's a shocking reality that caused Jesus to lose many followers. God wants to nourish and strengthen us, so He becomes food for us to eat. We become united to Jesus when receive Him in the Eucharist. We become so united to Him that He dwells within our very being. The Eucharist augments our union with Christ and separates us from sin. Because we are more united to Christ and distanced from sin, we are more closely united to our community members.

CCC 1391-1396; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17; John 6:56-66

Share a story about a time when you were nourished or strengthened by the Eucharist. Share how the Eucharist separated you from sin, strengthened you to live out holiness, and drew you into greater union with those around you.

CCC 874

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Project and read John 15:16.

Jesus chose you. He invited you and continues to invite you to be known and loved within His family. Sometimes we think we are the ones doing all of the work — we are the ones pursuing God by coming to Life Teen, praying every day, and inviting others to church. The idea that we are the ones initiating is backward, though. Jesus chooses you, invites you, and pursues you first. While we definitively accepted this invitation at our baptism, we renew our commitment every time we receive His Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity in the Eucharist.

Every good act and inspiration to turn to God is initiated by God. You accept His invitation every time you are inspired to pray or spend time with Him in the Sacred Scriptures. You accept His invitation when you come to Mass every Sunday.

When we recognize that God always initiates and extends the invitation, we should become grateful. As our gratitude grows, we begin to realize that God is unceasingly inviting us into a relationship with Him. We never have to be isolated. If we are, it is because we are choosing to ignore the invitation from God in our life.

Close the Proclaim with a prayer, using the following or something similar:

God, we thank you for choosing us and revealing yourself to us. Thank you for inviting us into your Church and for continuing to invite us to receive you in the Eucharist and be an active member of your Church. Help us respond to your invitation, daily. Amen.



GOAL: The goal of *Invited* is to help the teens grasp the reality of the Mystical Body of Christ in a way that sparks a desire to belong in the Church. It explains the role and importance of Baptism and the Eucharist in the Body of Christ.

About Me:

Plus One:

“Invited” Teaching:

Invited Journal Reflection:

Prayer of Gratitude:

Notes:

[illegible]