

# **FIRST AID**

**A LIFE NIGHT ON THE  
SACRAMENTS OF HEALING**

# QUICK GLANCE

## ABOUT THIS LIFE NIGHT

This Life Night is all about healing. When Jesus walked on this earth, he displayed his divine power to restore the whole human person — body and soul. That same power was shared with his Apostles and their successors. Through the Sacraments of Healing, Jesus comes to meet and heal each of us. The goal of this Life Night is to show teens that Christ's healing power is present in the sacraments and encourage them to take advantage of this healing whenever they need it.

## MAIN POINTS

1. Jesus, the Divine Physician, healed people's bodies and souls throughout his ministry. This mission of healing was passed to his Apostles.
2. Through the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick, we encounter Christ's healing power, which restores our souls and, sometimes, our bodies.
3. God wants our renewal and healing. Frequently receiving his grace through the sacraments heals us from the wounds of sin and leads us to new life.

## SCRIPTURE

Matthew 10:7-8 | Mark 2:1-12 | John 20:22-23 | James 5:14-15

## CATECHISM

1420-1422 | 1440-1446 | 1484 | 1496 | 1499 | 1503-1511 | 1532

## KEY TERMS

Grace | Healing

## SAINTS

St. John Vianney | St. Pantaleon

## RESOURCES

### Articles

Fr. Wade Menezes, “9 Chief Benefits of Confession” (ncregister.com)

Sr. Marie Simon-Pierre, “My Miraculous Cure” (thedivinemercy.org)

### Handout

“Prayer of Absolution” handout

### Music

Spotify: “LS - To the Heights”

### Video

“Miracles Are Real” (lifeteen.com)

## GOAL

The goal of this Life Night is to show teens that Christ’s healing power is present in the sacraments and encourage them to take advantage of this healing whenever they need it.

## ENVIRONMENT

This Life Night continues to build on the “To the Heights” environment. See the Getting Ready section for more details.

## GATHER

### **Dr. Dodgeball**

Teens face off in a version of dodgeball with a fun twist. This high-energy activity gets teens moving and hints at the content for the Life Night. An alternate Gather is offered for parishes that don’t have the space or desire to play dodgeball.

## PROCLAIM

### **Talk: First Aid**

This talk focuses on the healing power of Jesus available to us through the Sacraments of Healing. It starts by unpacking the radical healing Jesus offered to people during his public ministry. That authority to heal was shared with his Apostles and passed on to their successors. Through the sacraments — particularly the Anointing of the Sick and Confession — Jesus wants us to encounter that same healing power so that we can be renewed and restored in our relationship with him.

## BREAK

### **Prayer of Absolution and Small Group Discussion**

Teens reflect on the Prayer of Absolution offered by the priest during confession. They bring these thoughts to a small group discussion focused on the need for healing and ways they can receive that healing through the Church.

**SEND**

## Healing Hands Reflection

Teens are led through an Ignatian meditation in which they imagine themselves being healed by Jesus. This exercise allows teens to practice a potentially new method of prayer, and it personalizes the healing Jesus wants to offer each of them through a powerful prayer experience.

## NOTES

# GETTING READY

**LIFE NIGHT DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

## FOUR WEEKS BEFORE

- Read through the entire Life Night.
- Pray with the Scripture and Catechism references.
- Consult the Resources suggestions.
- Select a presenter for the Proclaim and contact them this week.
- Select a core member or teen leader to offer a testimony about healing at the end of the Proclaim.
- Send the Proclaim Teaching Guide to the presenter.

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## TWO WEEKS BEFORE

- Assign core members to the tasks on the Core Meeting Worksheet.
- Check in with the Proclaim presenter and ask for an outline and slides, if applicable.
- Schedule practice time with the presenter if needed.

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## ONE WEEK BEFORE

- Distribute the Life Night outline to the core members.
- Pray with the core members over the Life Night.
- Review the highlights of the Life Night.
- Explain the core assignments.
- Encourage the core members to review the discussion questions and pray for their small groups.
- Check in with the core member or teen leader selected to offer a testimony about healing.

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## THE WEEK OF THE LIFE NIGHT

- Advertise the Life Night on the parish youth group's social media channels.
- Schedule the Parent Letter email as a follow-up to the Life Night.
- Make a plan for the Life Night Environment using the suggestions below.
- Gather the supplies needed for the Life Night.
- Inform core members of their roles during the session and provide them with the required materials and instructions.
- Download, print, and make copies of the "Prayer of Absolution" handout found online at [lifeteen.com](http://lifeteen.com).
- Pray for the teens who will be present and experience the Life Night.

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## THE DAY OF THE LIFE NIGHT

- Test all audio-video elements of the Life Night.
- Decorate the youth room using the Environment instructions below.
- Project an Environment image found online at [lifeteen.com](http://lifeteen.com).
- Play the "LS - To the Heights" Spotify playlist as teens gather.

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## ENVIRONMENT

Reference the previous Life Night environments in this Life Night Planning Guide to ensure you have all the necessary pieces for the “To the Heights” campsite environment:

Display the mountain backdrop, fake trees, and fire pit.

Create a campsite with a large tent with sleeping bags inside. Display a lantern, headlamp, hiking stick, and hiking boots. Place a small camping table near the tent and lay a topographic map, compass, and binoculars on top of the table alongside a radio and some walkie-talkies. Add one or two hiking packs to the campsite area. Lay out roasting sticks and campfire supplies.

Place camping chairs around the “fire.” Hide a piece of the bear costume from Life Night 6, “Wild Life,” somewhere within the campsite. Clothespin postcards from national parks and exotic locations onto a clothesline or scatter them around the campsite. Turn on the twinkling string lights above the campsite.

In addition, for this Life Night:

Add a first aid kit to the camp scene. As needed, add other items such as medical tape, wraps, a splint, or a tourniquet.

## SUPPLIES

	Dodgeballs
	Tape, sports cones, or rope to mark a midway point for dodgeball
	“Prayer of Absolution” handout, one per person
	Writing utensils, one per person

# LIFE NIGHT PLANNER

## SCHEDULE

TO-DO

## ROOM LAYOUT

# CORE MEETING WORKSHEET

Use this outline for your core team meeting before the Youth Mass. The core meeting follows the Gather-Proclaim-Break-Send structure.

**CORE MEETING START TIME:** \_\_\_\_\_

## GATHER

- Begin with a brief social time and rapid high points/low points of the week from each core member.
- Pray with your core team and include one of the Scripture passages from the Life Night.

Scripture choice: \_\_\_\_\_

## PROCLAIM

- Review the Life Night outline.
- Assign core members to the tasks for this Life Night and write their names in the Core Assignments chart on the next page.

## BREAK

- Review the Life Night small group questions with a core member discussion. Spend about 15 minutes on this section.
- Take questions.

## SEND

- Conclude the meeting with a Hail Mary.
- Set up final details for the Life Night.
- Arrive early to the Youth Mass to greet teens as they arrive.

## CORE ASSIGNMENTS

<b>Setup</b>	1.	2.	3.
	4.	5.	6.
<b>Check-In</b>	1.	2.	3.
<b>Audio-Video</b>			
<b>Opening Prayer</b>			
<b>Proclaim Presenter</b>			
<b>Closing Prayer</b>			

## NOTES

# GATHER

## WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER 5 min

Gather in the main meeting space and welcome the teens to the Life Night. Introduce any teens attending for the first time, and begin in prayer.

## DR. DODGEBALL 15 min

Divide the teens into two even teams. Explain that they will be playing dodgeball with a twist. Have each team designate one person as their “doctor.” They should not tell the other team who their doctor is.

Line up each team on different sides of the room and set the balls in a line midway between both teams. Aim for around one ball for every five players. Count down from three to begin the game. Teens throw the balls back and forth at each other without crossing the middle line. Whenever someone gets hit with a ball, they have to sit down. If someone catches a ball thrown at them, the person who threw it must sit down.

Teens can get back into the game when their doctor tags them. When the team’s doctor is eliminated, there is no way for anyone else on their team to get back in the game. Once a team’s doctor is eliminated, players who get out on that team should move out of the playing area rather than sit down. When one team gets all the players of the other team out, the game is over.

The strategy is to disguise and protect the team doctors. One way to do this is by having multiple people surround or tag each person who gets out, so the opposing team doesn’t know who the doctor actually is. The doctor should also try to be discreet about getting people back in the game.

## SUGGESTIONS

This game will work better in a larger space. Consider playing outside if you have a suitable area.

For a very large group, have each team choose multiple doctors.

## ALTERNATE GATHER: SEARCHING STORIES

Bring two volunteers to the front of the room. Designate one person as the storyteller and the other as the guesser. Project one word on a screen or written out on a large notepad so that the audience and storyteller can see it, but the guesser cannot.

The goal of this game is for the storyteller to get the guesser to say the projected word. The storyteller tells a story three words at a time, and the guesser fills in the fourth word. The story has to make sense, so the storyteller has to shape it as the guesser fills in words. The guesser should try to take clues from what the storyteller is saying to select the correct word.

Example: The word is **cast**.

- Storyteller: “Once upon a...”
- Guesser: “time”
- Storyteller: “there was a...”
- Guesser: “boy”
- Storyteller: “playing in the...”
- Guesser: “yard.”
- Storyteller: “He fell on...”
- Guesser “rocks”
- Storyteller: “and broke his...”
- Guesser: “arm”
- Storyteller: “He needed a...”
- Guesser: “cast”

It may take some time to reach the keyword. Allow the story to continue to play out if it is entertaining, being mindful of the crowd’s engagement. Assist the storyteller and guesser as needed. Try to select creative participants who you think would perform well in this game. Play multiple rounds, using the keywords below or coming up with your own.

- Cast
- Healing
- Hospital
- Forgiveness
- Doctor
- Pain

# PROCLAIM

## GETTING STARTED

This Teaching Guide is not just an outline; it's a tool to help you craft a powerful and personalized talk that will leave a lasting impact. Whether you use any suggested media or find your own, make sure it's visually engaging, attention-grabbing, and thought-provoking. Consult the Going Deeper section at the back of this resource and highlight the points that most resonate with your teens. Whenever presenting in front of a group, use a Bible or Catechism to read any passage rather than a digital copy or paper printout.

Beyond these guidelines, the most important thing is to be yourself and let the Holy Spirit guide you. Practice your talk, pour your heart into it, and trust that your authenticity and humility have the power to make a difference in the lives of these teens. This guide is just the beginning — the rest is up to you!

## MAIN POINTS

1. Jesus, the Divine Physician, healed people's bodies and souls throughout his ministry. This mission of healing was passed to his Apostles.
2. Through the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick, we encounter Christ's healing power, which restores our souls and, sometimes, our bodies.
3. God wants our renewal and healing. Frequently receiving his grace through the sacraments heals us from the wounds of sin and leads us to new life.

## KEY TERMS

**Grace** - The free and undeserved gift that God gives us to respond to our vocation to become his adopted children. As sanctifying grace, God shares his divine life and friendship with us in a habitual gift, a stable and supernatural disposition that enables the soul to live with God, to act by his love. As actual grace, God gives us the help to conform our lives to his will. Sacramental grace and special graces are gifts of the Holy Spirit to help us live out our Christian vocation. (**CCC 1996-2000, 2003**)

**Healing** - Restoring that which was sick or hurt to health. Jesus, the Divine Physician, has the power to heal both our soul and body. (**CCC 1503**)

### **Main Point 1:**

**Jesus, the Divine Physician, healed people's bodies and souls throughout his ministry. This mission of healing was passed to his Apostles.**

- Have you ever thought about how wild some of the stories from the Gospels are? Take, for example, the story of Jesus healing the paralytic man.

### **SCRIPTURE**

Project and read **Mark 2:1-12** or invite a leadership teen to read it.

- Jesus is teaching in a crowded house. The people are so packed that no one can reach him. Some men try to bring their paralyzed friend before Jesus because they have heard that Jesus has the power to heal. However, they can't get through to Jesus, so they decide to tear apart the roof and lower the man down into Jesus' presence.
- Upon seeing the man and the faith of his friends, Jesus forgives the man's sins. Some nearby religious leaders accuse Jesus of blasphemy because only God can forgive sins. In order to validate his power, Jesus also commands the man to get up and walk. The man does so, and everyone is astounded.
- We sometimes lose the shock value of Jesus' actions because we are familiar with the stories. If we try to put ourselves in this situation, we realize how amazing this event must have been.
- Imagine for a moment that you are at an unusually crowded Mass one Sunday. The parish has to use overflow seating, and some people still have to stand. The church is completely packed. Father begins his homily, and about five minutes in, you hear some commotion in the back of the church. Some people are wheeling a paralyzed person all the way up to the priest. The priest says he forgives the man's sins and then commands him to walk. To everyone's surprise, the man gets up and walks.
- What would your response be? Astonishment? Disbelief? Confusion? Maybe even a touch of fear and wonder?
- Above all, one question would linger in your mind: Who is this priest who has the authority to forgive sins and heal?
- This is the sort of situation many people in the Gospels faced. During his public ministry, Jesus healed people in various ways. Each time, the crowds were left astonished. There was a supernatural power at work in Jesus.

- Not only did they have to reckon with physical healings, but Jesus also claimed to forgive sins. Only God can forgive sins, yet with a power unknown to anyone else, Jesus stood in God's place and forgave the wrongs that people did.
- These realities were key parts of Jesus' ministry. They show us that Jesus is concerned with our complete well-being. He came to restore the whole human person — body and soul. In God's kingdom, life and healing reign supreme. (**CCC 1503**)
- Here is the craziest part. The same power that was present in Jesus was also given to his Apostles. As Jesus healed people's ailments and forgave their sins, he commanded his Apostles to do the same. (**Mark 10:78, Mark 16:15-18**)
- We see this happening throughout the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. Peter, John, Paul, and others heal the sick, cast out demons, and offer forgiveness of sins in the name of Jesus. (**Mark 6:12-13, Acts 3:1-7, Acts 14:8-10**)

**Main Point 2:**

**Through the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick, we encounter Christ's healing power, which restores our souls and, sometimes, our bodies.**

- The ministry of healing given to the Apostles was passed on throughout the generations to their successors, the bishops. This ministry of healing is a fundamental aspect of the Church and our faith. (**CCC 1442**)
- The Catechism puts it like this:

**CATECHISM**

Project and read the following from **CCC 1421**:

“The Lord Jesus Christ, physician of our souls and bodies, who forgave the sins of the paralytic and restored him to bodily health, has willed that his Church continue, in the power of the Holy Spirit, his work of healing and salvation, even among her own members.”

- The Church is supposed to continue the work of healing that Jesus initiated in his public ministry. Through the sacraments and the working of the Holy Spirit, we see this happening every day. The question is: do we appreciate what's happening right in front of us?
- We tend to view physical healing as a greater miracle than spiritual healing. People walk in and out of the confessional, receiving forgiveness for their sins, and we don't bat an eye. However, if someone were to walk in on crutches and walk out healed, we would be amazed.

**(Going Deeper #1: “Physical Healing”)**

- The reality is that spiritual healing is greater than physical healing. This is exactly what Jesus reveals when he heals the paralytic.
- The man's friends are expecting Jesus to heal his paralysis. That's the whole reason they work so hard to get their friend into Jesus' presence. But what Jesus says in response astonishes everyone. He doesn't first tell the man to get up and walk. Rather, he says something completely unexpected: “My son, your sins are forgiven.” (**Mark 2:5**)
- How amazing a moment that must have been for the man! He came seeking healing for his leg and instead received healing for his soul. What he'd done wrong, the ways he's failed and hurt others, the darkness and pain in his heart were all forgiven.
- The greatest malady is not a physical ailment; it's evil and sin. Jesus renews us from within. The one who is capable of healing the body is also capable of doing the much more difficult and amazing thing: healing the soul. (**CCC 1488**)
- Doctors today can heal broken legs and countless diseases or ailments with the right medicine and a healthy dose of time. However, they can never forgive sins. They have no remedy for the illness of the soul.
- Jesus comes to restore and renew our relationship with God by forgiving our sins and giving us the strength to love and trust God even in the midst of suffering. He goes to the root of the problem. Like a skilled doctor, he wants to remove the source of the infection. Sin taints everything. By helping us overcome it, Jesus sets us on the path to true healing. This happens through the sacraments. (**CCC 1505**)

- Every priest who has been ordained by the successors of the Apostles is given a share in their authority. In the name of Jesus and by his power, they forgive sins and offer healing through the sacraments.
- Two sacraments in particular are associated with healing. In fact, we refer to them as the Sacraments of Healing. They are the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick.
- Anointing sick people with oil is an ancient practice within the Church. During his earthly ministry, Jesus sent out his disciples to anoint the sick with oil. Many of them were healed. In the early Christian communities, we hear about Christians anointing and praying for one another.

**(Mark 6:12-13, James 5:14-15)**

- The Church continues these practices through the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. This sacrament is offered to anyone who, on account of age or infirmity, is in some grave danger.

**(CCC 1514-1515)**

- The Anointing of the Sick strengthens the recipient with the Holy Spirit. It enables them to unite their suffering with Jesus and endure trials with peace and courage. At times, this sacrament may even lead to physical healing. (**CCC 1532**)
- In the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we come face-to-face with Jesus in the person of the priest. Acting through the priest, Jesus forgives our sins just as he forgave the sins of the paralyzed man and the other people he encountered during his ministry.

### Main Point 3:

**God wants our renewal and healing. Frequently receiving his grace through the sacraments heals us from the wounds of sin and leads us to new life.**

- We believe that grace is poured out upon us in the sacraments. Through them, we really encounter Jesus' healing power. They are not just symbols; they actually transform us.
- Jesus desires to meet us in these sacraments. His healing hand is always extended to us. He knows we are sick and in need of a physician. When we are willing to show him our wounds and ask for healing, he lovingly binds and takes care of us.
- We cannot receive the Anointing of the Sick unless we are in grave danger. However, we can encounter Christ's healing power in the Sacrament of Reconciliation as frequently as we need to.  
**(CCC 1457-1458, 1464, 1514-1515)**
- Even if we haven't committed a mortal sin, it's still a good practice to go to Confession regularly.  
**(Going Deeper #2: "Mortal vs. Venial Sins")**
- The healing we experience in Confession is multifaceted. On a natural level, it is beneficial to share our struggles and failures with someone else in a supportive environment.
- Confession also helps alleviate feelings of guilt and shame. When we sin, we rightly feel like we messed up and are ashamed of our behavior. These feelings help us know we did something wrong and lead us to ask for forgiveness. However, God doesn't want us to dwell in this shame. Through Confession, we encounter God's profound love that reaches us even in the midst of our sins and are assured that we are forgiven. **(Going Deeper #3: "Scrupulosity")**
- Along with this, we also experience a sense of liberation. Confession reminds us that we are not slaves to sin but beloved sons and daughters who are always welcomed back into our Father's arms. It gives us the strength to live out of this identity and resist temptation in the future.
- Sin separates us from God and the Church. It ruptures our relationship with God and cuts us off from the community of believers. When we sin, we hurt the people around us and the whole Body of Christ. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a way to heal and rectify both our relationship with God and with

others. Through it, we are reconciled to God and restored to communion with the Church. It's a way of acknowledging our wrongs and asking forgiveness from those we hurt. (**CCC 1440**)

- Confession is a powerful tool for overcoming patterns of sin. You may find yourself confessing the same sins over and over. However, with God's grace and the desire to amend your life, consistency coupled with the grace of the sacraments can help you overcome your struggles.
- Jesus desires to heal and renew us. Through the sacraments he offers us freedom from our past wrongs and regrets, peace in place of anxiety and guilt, new life and grace that helps us live as children of God, dominion and order in place of disorder, the strength to grow in virtue and resist temptation, and above all, a purer and more ardent love for God. (**CCC 1496**)
- Jesus gave the Church the Sacraments of Healing because he knew we would need them. His mercy is greater than our sins; his healing is the only remedy for our wounds. The only path from sickness to health is being open to the hands of the healer.

Close the talk by inviting a pre-selected core member or teen leader to share a personal testimony about the healing they experienced through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

# BREAK

## **PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION REFLECTION** 5 min

Give each teen the “Prayer of Absolution” handout and a writing utensil. Invite them to take some time to read and meditate on the Prayer of Absolution that the priest offers during Confession. Encourage them to write down what stands out to them about each phrase.

## **SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION** 20 min

Gather the teens into their small groups, where the core member begins in prayer and transitions into a small group discussion. Use the following questions as a guide, but be aware of where the Holy Spirit leads the discussion. Take your time, and do not feel rushed to cover all the questions.

### **SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS**

Whip Around Question: If you were a doctor, what would you specialize in?

1. Is it hard to admit that you might need healing? Why or why not?
2. Jesus once said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.” (**Mark 2:17**)

How does that statement make you feel?

3. Do you think of our church more as a place of perfect believers or a place where people come to be healed? What gives you that impression?
4. What do you think about the Sacrament of Reconciliation? How do you feel after going to Confession compared to before?
5. What stood out to you from the Prayer of Absolution? What do you think God is showing you through that?

# SEND

## HEALING HANDS REFLECTION 10 min

Gather everyone back in the main meeting space. Invite them to take a comfortable position and close their eyes. Dim the lights and play low, instrumental music in the background.

Introduce the prayer with the following.

*We're going to take a few moments to try a type of prayer called Ignatian meditation, in which you imagine yourself in a story from Scripture. I invite you to close your eyes and listen attentively.*

Begin with the Sign of the Cross.

*First, listen as we read the passage that follows. Try to track the overall narrative and understand the basic flow of the story.*

Read **Matthew 8:1-3** aloud slowly.

*Now, we'll try to imagine ourselves in the story. Let's start by picturing the scene in our minds. Where are you? What do the surroundings look like? Are you alone? Are there other people there with you? What's the weather like? Take some time to envision the scene now.*

Pause for a moment.

*Imagine yourself in the position of the leper. You have been completely cut off from your community. No one dares to touch or come near you. You can't go to social or religious gatherings. You have to announce your unclean presence when anyone comes near. You have been forced to live isolated and alone. How do you feel? What is in your heart? What burdens do you carry?*

Pause for a moment.

*In your mind's eye, look down at your hands. What do they look like? Are they covered in sores, wounds, and bandages? What signs of sickness are evident?*

Pause for a moment.

*Now, you hear a small crowd approaching. It's not clear how many people are present. Listen to the voices approaching. What do you feel as you hear people drawing near? Are you afraid to be seen? Do you feel a sense of shame or frustration?*

Pause for a moment.

*Imagine the crowd coming into view, all surrounding one man — Jesus. How many people are there? What are they wearing? What does Jesus look like? What is he doing? What happens in your heart as you watch him draw near?*

Pause for a moment.

*The crowd notices you. How do they respond? What do the looks on their faces communicate? How do you feel being seen by all of them?*

Pause for a moment.

*Jesus steps forward from the crowd and looks at you. Meet his gaze with your eyes. What do you see? What do you feel? How does he look at you?*

Pause for a moment.

*Envision running up to Jesus' feet and kneeling down. Feel your heart racing. You speak the words of the leper, "Lord, if you will, you can make me clean." Feel the time elapse between your words and Jesus' response.*

Pause for a moment.

*See Jesus reach out his hand and touch you. Let him meet you in the midst of your isolation and hurt. Feel the tenderness of his hands as he shows how much he loves you, not just with words but with actions. Everyone else keeps their distance, but he comes close. As he does so, he replies, "I will; be clean." Sit with Jesus in that moment. What do you feel? What goes through your mind? What happens to your body?*

Pause for a few moments.

*Jesus comes to each of us in our sickness, pain, hurt, and sinfulness. He is no stranger to those who are wounded and needy. The Divine Physician longs to heal us; we just need to open ourselves to him. Take a moment in silence to speak to Jesus, telling him where you need healing and inviting him into those areas of your life.*

Pause for an extended period of time. Then, close with the following prayer.

*Lord Jesus,  
You invite each of us to come before you with our needs.  
You offer mercy and healing to all those who humbly seek you.  
Heal our wounded hearts, cleanse our sick souls, shower your mercy and grace upon us.  
As you never tire of healing us, may we never tire of seeking your healing.  
Amen.*

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS** 5 min

Share the Confession times at your parish along with a brief overview of how to go to Confession. Then, make any other announcements for your program and dismiss the teens.

# AFTER THE LIFE NIGHT

Most core members are tired at the end of the session, but be sure to do two things upon the completion of a Life Night.

## **FIRST, CLEANUP**

Try to foster a spirit of teamwork and generosity among your core team. One of the fastest ways to a divided core team is for one or two members to neglect cleanup. No one is done for the night until everyone is done cleaning up. If a core member is not helping clean up, presume goodwill on their part. If it becomes a consistent problem, address it with them rather than letting issues fester.

Be mindful of any relational ministry that may be happening or teens that need to talk. Sometimes, teens can be deeply moved by a Life Night and may need to continue to process with a trusted adult. During cleanup, your team should continue to be available and interruptible for any teens. You never want to shove teens out the door for the sake of cleaning up.

## **SECOND, EVALUATE**

After all the teens have left, appreciate what God has accomplished through the Life Night. Share any praise reports. Identify who or what needs follow-up. Set a timer and invite the group to share in these five categories of the Life Night: Pros, Cons, Questions, Comments, and Concerns. Remind the core team that evaluations are intended to improve the teens' experiences at Life Teen and are not critical judgments of a youth minister's or core member's performance. As you discuss, encourage the core team to consider each of the Life Night movements of Gather, Proclaim, Break, and Send, or pass out/ email the evaluation forms. Conclude your time together in prayer and praise to God.

# LIFE NIGHT EVALUATION

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

## GOAL

The goal of this Life Night is to show teens that Christ's healing power is present in the sacraments and encourage them to take advantage of this healing whenever they need it.

Did not accomplish

Nailed it

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

What was the strongest aspect of this Life Night?

Gather

Proclaim

Break

Send

Environment

Optional: Please explain further.

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

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

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# GOING DEEPER

## FIRST AID

### A Life Night on the Sacraments of Healing

#### #1: Physical Healing

Jesus' power to restore our bodies to physical health is still very much at work in the world. Sometimes, this happens through the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, but there are many other ways that people receive miraculous physical healings. Whether it's through the prayer of fellow Christians gifted with a charism for healing, visiting a sacred site like the shrine at Our Lady of Lourdes, or asking for the intercession of the saints, God's grace is constantly restoring people to health.

For a personal story of this experience, consider sharing part of the "Miracles Are Real" video referenced in the Resources section or researching and sharing the healing of Sr. Marie Pierre. Information about Sr. Marie Pierre can be found at the website noted in the Resources section.

#### #2: Mortal vs. Venial Sins

Not all sins are equal. The Catholic Church acknowledges two types of sins: mortal and venial. Mortal sin is a serious choice that knowingly damages your friendship with God. Venial sin does not break that friendship completely, but it weakens it and can make it harder to hear God's voice.

Mortal sin destroys charity in our hearts and separates us from God. When we go to confession, we receive God's mercy and grace, and our relationship with him is restored. When we commit a mortal sin, it is absolutely essential to seek healing in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. A person in a state of mortal sin cannot receive Holy Communion until their relationship with God and the community has been restored through the sacrament.

Venial sins weaken charity. They are smaller offences that make it harder for us to grow in virtue and to love God and others the way we ought to. Confession helps us guard against venial sin and strengthens us with God's grace. Each time we go to confession, we let God heal us and renew and strengthen our ability to love him and live by his commands. **(CCC 1854-1864)**

### **#3: Scrupulosity**

Sometimes, people can become obsessed with sin. They are constantly anxious about whether a certain behavior was a mortal or venial sin, unsure about whether they had fully confessed all their mortal sins in a previous confession, unable to distinguish temptation from actually committing a sin, or experience similar struggles. This condition is called scrupulosity, and it's a serious struggle for many Catholics.

There is a healthy concern that every person should have regarding sin. We should try to avoid it, confess mortal sins when we commit them, and be vigilant and aware of temptations. At the same time, it is absolutely essential that we recognize that God's love is greater than any sin. Our sins should never eclipse the abundant mercy, grace, and love that God bestows on each of us. When sin becomes the central focus of all our spiritual and emotional energy instead of God's love, it's a good indicator that something is off, and we might want to look for help.

If you find yourself wrestling with scrupulosity, try to find a regular confessor who is aware of your struggles and can guide you through them. Pray for a greater understanding and experience of God's love and mercy. If necessary, connect with a professional Catholic therapist who has experience walking with people in this area. Find a good and faithful mentor who can meet with you regularly to talk about life and help you sort out what's going on in your mind and soul. Above all, don't keep quiet and simply struggle with this alone.