



WHAT'S THE CATCH?

SACRAMENTS AND GRACE

EDGE NIGHT OUTLINE

CATECHISM

1996 - 1999

2000 - 2003

YOUCAT

172 - 174

338 - 339

SCRIPTURE

John 1:12 -14

John 10:10

Romans 5:15

1 Corinthians 2:8 -9

Ephesians 2:7 -10

Hebrews 4:16

KEY CONCEPTS

GOAL OF THIS NIGHT

The goal for this Edge Night is to give the youth an appreciation for the wonder and awe of the Sacraments. They should come to a deeper understanding that grace is a free gift from God that is offered to us and is necessary for us to live lives to the full. This night is also an introduction to the Sacraments and will briefly introduce the idea that each Sacrament has graces to help us at each stage of our lives.

ABOUT THIS NIGHT

This night should be a fun first night of the semester. It will hit on the main theme for the semester, which is the role of grace in the Sacraments and the importance of that grace. Emphasize the fact that we get excited to open presents on our birthdays and on Christmas and should be even more excited to receive the gift of grace in the Sacraments.

This night will begin with a fun relay race and some funny YouTube videos of kids opening presents. Then there will be a teaching on the importance of grace and how we receive it in every Sacrament as free, undeserved help from God. Then there will be a time for small groups and the night will end in prayer and an ice cream sundae party.

Before the Night

Wrap clothes and accessories for the relay race at the beginning of the night. You need to have at least one item for each youth in attendance so be sure to collect enough things either from donations or a thrift store. Buy all the supplies for an ice cream sundae bar. Make sure to have the tables set up and all the toppings and ice cream put out before the youth are sent over at the end of the night.

PARENTAL NOTICE

Tonight we talked about grace and how it is a free gift of God that is given to us to help us throughout our lives and to bring us into a deeper union with Him. We also discussed how graces are given to us through the Sacraments and how each Sacrament has graces to help us in each stage of our lives, with the Eucharist being the summit. Here are some questions to ask your youth:

- What is grace?
- How do we receive grace?
- Why are the Sacraments so important?

ENVIRONMENT

The theme for the night is free gifts. Decorate the room with wrapped presents, wrapping paper, bows, or “winning” lotto tickets. Put up posters that just say “Free” on them.

GATHER

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

(5 min)

As the youth enter, have fun, upbeat music playing in the background.

The youth minister should gather all the youth together, welcome them to Edge Night, and lead an opening prayer. He or she should introduce any youth at Edge Night for the first time. Begin with a prayer and present a brief overview of the session.

PRESENT RELAY RACE

(10 min)

Break the youth into small groups. Set up a table of presents for each small group at one side of the room. Instruct the small groups to line up on the opposite side of the room directly across from one of the tables of presents. The presents on the table can be random pieces of clothing, sunglasses, hair ties, head bands, shoes, etc.; just make sure that they are all wrapped.

This will be a relay race. Instruct the small groups to pick one youth from their group to stand by the table to be dressed up. The relay race begins with the first person in line. He or she will run to the opposite side of the room where the present table is set up. Instruct him or her to pick one present, unwrap it, and put it on the youth standing by the table. After he or she has completed this task, he or she runs back to line and the next person in line does the same. The first team to unwrap all their presents and dress up their small group member wins.

FUNNY GIFT REACTION VIDEOS

(5 min)

Play one of the funny videos from the Media Suggestions.

YouTube: “Cute Little Girl Cries From Happiness On Her Birthday” by Mario Polo

YouTube: “Wii Cry Baby” by ViralWatch

PROCLAIM

"WHAT'S THE CATCH?"

(15 min)

Scripture Proclamation

John 10:10

People like free things, and everyone loves receiving gifts. Sometimes, though, gifts have a catch; even Santa hangs the naughty list or a stocking full of coal over your head if you don't behave. Or things are only free if we buy something else. Sometimes we have to do a task in order to get a gift. For example, our parents will only give us ice cream if we do our chores. Even on game shows after people receive these huge fancy "free" things they usually have to pay taxes on them, which are usually very expensive. There are very few times in our lives that we are given free gifts with no strings attached.

What we are talking about this semester is the Sacraments. Who can name all seven of the Sacraments? (Give the youth a chance to name them.) The Sacraments are visible signs of something deeper, of something God is doing in our lives, which is invisible. For example, the visible sign of Reconciliation is a confessional and a priest but what is invisible is our soul being cleaned as we are absolved of our sins.

GRACE

One of the invisible things that happens in every Sacrament is receiving grace. Grace is the free, undeserved help from God and is one of the greatest gifts we will ever receive (CCC 1996). Grace is God stepping into our lives and helping us in our greatest times of need, especially in helping us to avoid sin and grow in holiness.

There is no catch; God loves you so much that even though we don't deserve it He will give us grace (Romans 5:15). But there is also grace that comes from every Sacrament called "sanctifying grace," which is a participation in the life of God. Sanctifying grace gives us the ability to live and act in keeping with God's will for us, and it perfects our souls and enables us to live with God (CCC 1997, 2000).

Romans 5:15

CCC 1996 - 1997

CCC 2000

SO WHAT?

You might be wondering why you should care about grace. Well, first of all, if we want to be happy, if we really want to live life to the full, we need grace. God created us to be filled with His love and His help; He created us to be filled with grace and we won't ever find true happiness without it (CCC 2001). Grace is a participation in

CCC 1997

CCC 2001

God's life and having God's life within us (CCC 1997). Grace is a free gift from God that we do not deserve. Grace is the one gift in our lives that does not have fine print, we do not have to do anything but be open and receive. God loves us so much that He does anything He can to help us so that we can make it to heaven and live in eternal happiness with Him! So, shouldn't we be more excited about receiving grace than any Christmas gift?

SACRAMENTAL GRACES

So how do we receive this grace? Where can we find these free gifts of God? In every Sacrament! Every single Sacrament has a different grace to help us along the way depending on what stage we are at in our lives. In the Sacrament of Baptism we receive sanctifying grace for the first time, which allows the possibility for us to make it to heaven and opens us up to receive all other graces in our lives. The Sacrament of the Eucharist gives us the grace to be in greater communion with God and to have a fuller life, and it sustains us throughout our lives. The Sacrament of Reconciliation restores our relationship with God and gives us the grace to avoid sin. In the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick the person receives the grace to make it through suffering and pain. In the Sacrament of Confirmation we receive the grace to live out our faith fearlessly, and in the Sacrament of Holy Orders and Matrimony we receive the graces needed to live out our different vocations, or states of life (CCC 2002-2003).

CCC 2002 - 2003

Grace is not like some magical strength spell, but it increases God in our lives and thus we are able to do things we would never have thought possible. With God all things are possible, and when we stay close to Him in the Sacraments and receive all the graces He wants to give us, we will live incredibly joyful and fulfilling lives.

WHAT TO DO?

In order to receive these gifts we have to be present; you cannot expect to get all your Christmas presents without going over to the tree. In the same way you have to show up and receive, you have to go to the Sacraments in order to receive grace (CCC 2002). So what are you going to do? Jesus is standing with His arms open wide stretching out to you with the greatest gift of life with Him and eternal happiness (which is way better than a Wii). Are you just going to ignore Him and walk away? Or are you going to show up and receive the gift and live the most incredible life you could ever

CCC 2002

imagine? The choice is yours.

BREAK

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

(20 min)

Break the youth into their small groups. Begin in prayer and discuss the following questions:

- What is the best Christmas or birthday present you have ever received?
- Have you ever given someone a present they didn't like or want? How did that make you feel?
- In your own words describe what grace is. Why is it important?
- Why are the Sacraments so important? What graces do we receive in each Sacrament?
- Why do you think God gives us grace?
- How do you think Jesus feels when we complain about receiving the free gifts He wants to give us?

SEND

CLOSING PRAYER

(5 min)

Bring all the small groups back to the large group and say a prayer together. Be sure to pray in thanksgiving for the free gift of grace God gives to us in the Sacraments and for strength to continue to show up to accept and receive the gifts.

ICE CREAM SUNDAES

(15 min)

Set up tables for an ice cream sundae bar. Transition into this by saying you have a free gift and surprise for all the youth and it is ice cream sundaes!

Take this time to engage with the youth; it's also a great opportunity for your Core Team to get to know more youth and grow in community. Play some fun music and encourage the youth to talk to five people they didn't already know. Challenge them to find at least five other youth who like the same ice cream or toppings that they do.

SUMMARY CHALLENGE

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

- Grace is a free gift from God.
- We receive grace in the Sacraments.
- Grace is a participation in the life of God.
- "I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

CONCLUSION

ADAPTING THIS NIGHT

Ask parishioners to donate any old left over wrapping paper for the Gather activity.

At the end of the present relay race have the youth who were dressed up do a mini fashion show.

If you do not have access to YouTube to play the funny videos, ask a few Core Members or youth to tell about their favorite gift they have received.

GOING DEEPER