

SEALED

The Sacrament of Confirmation

LIFE NIGHT OUTLINE

Goal for the Life Night

Among teens, Confirmation is more often dreaded than celebrated. The goal for this night is to instill an excitement about the Sacrament of Confirmation. This Life Night will break through the common misconceptions in order to reveal the true nature of Confirmation. This night will also help teens understand the importance and power of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

Life Night at a Glance

Most teens see the Sacrament of Confirmation as the “graduation” from religious formation and just another sacramental “hoop” they have to jump through. This night begins with a Confirmation competition game between the upperclassmen and the underclassmen. The game will lead into a teaching on the Sacrament of Confirmation and the Holy Spirit. The teens will then break into seven different groups to learn and discuss one of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit and how each teen can live out the gift better in his or her life. The night will end with a teen witness and give each teen an opportunity to be prayed over to receive the Holy Spirit in a new way.

Environment

The environment for this night is everything Holy Spirit. Cover the walls with red fabric. On the red fabric, attach cutouts of white doves. The doves can be cut out of poster board or foam board. Cut out red, yellow, and orange flames from constructions paper and string the flames together with fishing line. Hang the flames from the ceiling. Be sure that the flames are large enough to take up space. Have one really large white dove in the front of the room. This dove can be made out of a large piece of plywood and painted white. The Core should wear headbands with smaller cutout flames hanging over their heads like halos. Headbands can be purchased at any superstore. Attach the flames to pipe cleaner and attach the pipe cleaner to the headband. Make a few extra headbands and hand them to the teens as they come into Life Night.

GATHER *15 Minutes*

Welcome and Introductions (5 min)

The youth minister gathers the group together and welcomes everyone to the Life Night. He/she introduces any teens at Life Night for the first time.

Confirmation Challenge (10 min)

More often than not, a teen’s experience with Confirmation preparation is all about obligation. They have to go to classes, take a test, pick a saint and sponsor, and “jump through hoops” so they can be confirmed and “graduate” from religious education. Unfortunately, most teens (but not all) go through the motions and complete the requirements and never really learn much about the sacrament. The Gather plays off this common experience of Confirmation-prep.

Set up two tables and on each table have the following items: a whiteboard and whiteboard marker, seven wrapped gifts, seven pieces of cut-up fruit, an unpainted piece of fence and a small can of paint, a large stuffed animal and leash, a book about saints, a test on Confirmation and one Core member. The wrapped gifts can be anything—the point is just to unwrap something. An unpainted piece of fence can be found at any local hardware store. If you cannot find a fence, nail a few piece of wood together for the same effect. The Core member will act as a sponsor. At the end of the table have a hula-hoop. Pick 16 teens – eight underclassmen and eight upperclassmen. Each teen will finish one task, jump through the hula-hoop and tag the next person in line. The upperclassmen and the underclassmen will compete to see who can complete all the tasks the fastest. Have the underclassmen go first and the upperclassman stand outside the room so they cannot see or hear what’s going on. Award the winning team a prize.

Explanation of the tasks can be found on page 45.

A sample Confirmation test can be found on page 46.

CATECHISM REFERENCES:

- # 1285-1321
- # 684
- # 689
- # 727
- # 733-734

SCRIPTURES:

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| Isaiah 11:2, 61:1 | Acts 2:1-4 |
| Psalms 23:5 | Acts 8:14-17 |
| Luke 10:34 | 2 Corinthians 2:15 |
| John 1:33-34 | Revelation 7:2-3 |
| Acts 1:8 | |

Answers:

1. *a*
2. *d*
3. *d*
4. *b*
5. *c*
6. *Initiation*
7. *False*
8. *True*

PROCLAIM 15 minutes

The Party: Episode 3 (2 min)

This semester features a reoccurring video series called “The Party.” Each Life Night of this semester features a new episode in which a teen hosts a party and the guests are personifications of the seven sacraments. These short videos are designed to introduce the teaching for each Life Night in the semester. In Episode 3, the second guest, Chris (representing Confirmation), arrives. The person giving the talk can point out the following ways that he represents the sacrament:

- The name “Chris” – from the word “chrism”
- Wearing red – color of the Holy Spirit
- Lightning bolt on shirt representing the fire of the Holy Spirit
- Brought seven gifts
- Oil on forehead

The Party: Episode 3 can be found on Video Support 5

Teaching (13 min)

Begin the teaching by asking a few of the teens if they ever felt like their Confirmation classes were a bunch of tasks or obligations they had to complete to be confirmed. Ask a few teens to share their experiences.

The teaching can be found on page 41-44.

BREAK 30 minutes

Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit (30 min)

After the teaching, the teens will break up in seven different groups. The youth minister will list the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit and then the teens will chose one of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit they want to learn more about. Have at least one Core member lead each discussion. Spend a few minutes explaining each gift and give the teens an opportunity to ask and answer questions. See CCC 1831 for more information on each gift. Close the small group time in prayer.

WISDOM

The gift of wisdom allows someone to order all things in accordance with God’s will. This gift has an element of contemplation—or a deep thought process of the divine. Even “uneducated souls” like St. Therese of Lisieux can be wise in the ways of the Lord. St. Therese had no formal education but is a Doctor of the Church. The gift of wisdom includes practicality in human acts. Wisdom sees all things with a supernatural value—good, joyful, sorrowful, successful and even painful things.

Questions:

- How does the world define wisdom?
- How can an “uneducated soul” be wise?
- How can contemplating God help someone grow in wisdom?
- Who are some people that have the gift of wisdom?
- What are some practical ways to use the gift of wisdom?

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UNDERSTANDING

The gift of understanding is a gift that gives deeper insight to a revealed truth. This gift allows someone to go beyond the surface of a revealed truth and penetrate into the heart of the truth. For example, many theologians have the gift of understanding and help give us the meaning to symbols and figures in Scripture. The gift of understanding can also help reveal the ways in which God is moving in someone's life. St. Thomas Aquinas said, "In this very life, when the eye of the Spirit is purified by the gift of understanding, one can in a certain way see God."

Questions:

- What are some truths of the faith that you want to know better?
- Who are some people that you know that have the gift of understanding?
- What are some practical ways to use the gift of understanding?

COUNSEL

The gift of counsel helps a person discern what acts are good and should be done and what acts are evil and should be avoided. The discernment of the actions leads a person to ask "will this lead me into holiness or away from holiness?" The gift of counsel helps preserve a good conscience and gives others counsel in matters of personal holiness.

Questions:

- How do you make decisions? What criteria do you base your decisions on?
- Do you allow God to play a part in your decisions?
- Who in your life do you feel has the gift of counsel?
- What are some practical ways to use the gift of counsel?

FORTITUDE

The gift of fortitude allows a person to overcome difficulties and endure pain and suffering with the strength infused by God. In other words, the gift of fortitude helps someone grow stronger in hardship, stand against evil and persevere to everlasting life. Fortitude also carries with it a confidence in the success of suffering. It gives someone the ability to live heroically, suffer with patience and joy and overcome lukewarmness. A modern day example of someone with the gift of fortitude is St. Maximilian Kolbe. He gave his life as an exchange for another, endured the suffering of the concentration camps and a horrible death with the strength infused by God. He had confidence that he would overcome the power of evil and gain everlasting life.

Questions:

- Give an example of a time in your life where you overcame a difficult situation or temptation with God's help.
- What is an area in your life that you are struggling? How can you allow God to bring you strength in that situation?
- Do you truly believe that God is with you no matter how hard the struggles in your life get?
- Who in your life exhibits the gift of fortitude?
- What are some practical ways to live out the gift of fortitude?

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KNOWLEDGE

The gift of knowledge isn't a gift that will make you smarter. The gift of knowledge allows our intellect make the right judgment on how earthly things are related to eternal life and Christian perfection. Knowledge helps show us that the worth and value of earthly things so that they cannot block our union with God. Although earthly materials hold very minimal value, the gift of knowledge helps us use earthy goods in a holy way as instruments for union with God. Knowledge produces three effects: introspection, detachment and repentance. Introspection helps us see the state of our soul by taking time to examine our lives and our choices. Through the gift of knowledge, we detach our lives from material goods to seek God. Knowledge leads us to repent for the times we have misused material things and put them before God, blocking our relationship with him.

Questions:

- What is one of your most prized possessions? Would you be willing to give that up for God?
- What material things do you feel like you need to give up to make more room for God in your life?
- How can earthly things help us in our journey for holiness and heaven?
- What are some practical ways to live out the gift of knowledge?

PIETY

The gift of piety allows a person to give worship to God as Father. Through this gift of worship a person is able to see and love people as God's children. This gift helps us fulfill the commandments: love God above all else and love your neighbor as yourself. Describing someone as "pious" means he or she is devoted to God in a daily life of reverence and prayer. He or she treats others with respect and dignity.

Questions

- Do you always recognize the dignity of every person as children of God and treat them that way?
- Which do you have a harder time following: Loving God above all else or loving our neighbor as yourself?

- Who is someone you know that you would say has the gift of piety?
- What are some practical ways to live out the gift or piety?

FEAR OF THE LORD

The gift of Fear of the Lord is the foundation for all the other gifts of the Spirit. From this gift, all the other gifts arise. Fear of the Lord (also called wonder and awe) allows a person be detached from sin and material goods out of love and reverence for God. Fear of the Lord is not the type of fear where a person loves and serves God because he or she is afraid of punishment or judgment. This fear is motivated by love of God because we are his children. For example, a child should not obey his or her parents out of fear of their punishment but out of love and respect. This gift brings about a sense of adoration and honor for God's majesty and a sense of horror and hatred for sin and all things that separate us from God's love.

Questions

- Do you fear God out of wrath and punishment or out of love and respect?
- Who in your life are you called to love with more honor?
- Who is someone you know that you would say has the gift of fear of the Lord?
- What are some practical ways to live out the gift of fear of the Lord?

SEND *15 minutes*

Teen Witness (5 min)

Invite a teen to give a short witness on his or her experience of the Sacrament of Confirmation. Have him or her focus on what his or her experience of Church and the Holy Spirit was like before receiving the sacrament and how is his or her understanding is different after receiving the sacrament.

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Come, Creator Spirit! (10 min)

The youth minister should recap the night and teaching. He/She should end with the idea that the Sacrament of Confirmation is the last sacrament in the Sacraments of initiation. Being confirmed does not mean our Christian education and journey is complete but just beginning. Often, the journey we are on can seem impossible. We feel like we lack the talent or skill necessary to complete the mission God has set for us. The Holy Spirit poured out in His fullness to us at our Confirmation gives us all the gifts and talents we will ever need to complete God's work. We, like the apostles at Pentecost, are sent out to preach and complete the work of God.

One of the oldest and most solemn prayers to the Holy Spirit in the Church is *Veni, Creator Spiritus* or Come, Creator Spirit. It is used and recited during the octave of Pentecost as well as the election of a pope, the dedication of a church, the consecration of bishops and the ordination of priests. This prayer invokes the Holy Spirit in a powerful way. Have five or six confirmed teens and the Core team spread out around the room. Dim the lights and set a tone of prayer. Open the time of prayer by calling upon the Holy Spirit and reading Acts 2:1-6. Invite the rest of the teens to come forward to one person to be prayed over. As the teens come up for prayer give each teen a lit candle and lay hands on his/her shoulder and pray part of the "Veni, Creator Spiritus" (see below). Encourage the Core and teens to also pray in their own words. After everyone has an opportunity to be prayed over close the night by invoking the intercession of Mary, Spouse of the Spirit. Close the night by praying the Hail Mary and Ave Maria.

VENI, CREATOR SPIRITUS

Come, Holy Spirit, Creator blest,
and in our souls take up Thy rest;
come with Thy grace and heavenly aid
to fill the hearts which Thou hast made.

O comforter, to Thee we cry,
O heavenly gift of God Most High,
O fount of life and fire of love,
and sweet anointing from above.

Now to the Father and the Son,
Who rose from death, be glory given,
with Thou, O Holy Comforter,
henceforth by all in earth and heaven.
Amen.

Community Connection

- Have a parent night on Confirmation as well. Bring the groups together for the Send.
- Have a couple of parents help build the large wooden dove and create the rest of the environment.
- Have a few parents make snacks for the night. The snacks can be cookies cut out and decorated as white doves and red kool-aid. Another great snack could be something spicy like Buffalo wings or chili.
- Invite your priest(s) to lead the Send of the Life Night.

Making It Work

- This night would be a great night to have a few upper class teens to help facilitate the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit groups.
- Run through the Gather competition in advance with the Core team to make sure that it flows and that everyone knows what they are supposed to do.
- If the group is too large for just seven small groups during the Break, have two groups for each gift of the Holy Spirit.

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TEACHING

“An oil smudge is a small price to pay for seven gifts.”

What it is:

The Sacrament of Confirmation, like Baptism and the Eucharist, is a Sacrament of Initiation. It is a necessary sacrament in order to fulfill our baptismal graces. It's often said that the confirmed are viewed as adult members of the Church. This is because Confirmation strengthens us with the Holy Spirit and therefore bonds us with the Church more strongly as a member of the mystical Body of Christ.

At Christ's Baptism in the Jordan River, the Holy Spirit descended upon Him as a sign of His messianic status. Throughout his life on this Earth, Christ shared a limitless union with the Holy Spirit. By Christ's divine nature, He always shared an intimate union with the Spirit, however the Spirit of the Lord is not reserved exclusively for Christ.

By our Baptism, we share in Christ's mission as priest, prophet and king. We are a messianic people upon whom the Spirit of God rests through by our Baptism and is later brought to perfection through Confirmation.

Confirmation entails the anointing of the one being confirmed with Chrism, the holy oil also used at Baptism, signifying the grace of the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament, the oil used for anointing symbolized joy, healing and strength. It was used for practical reasons as well as liturgical ones.

When the apostles heard that the Samaritans had become followers of Jesus and baptized as Christians, but had not yet received the fullness of the gifts of the Spirit, they sent Peter and John to “lay hands” upon the Samaritans that they might receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Through the anointing with Chrism, the one being confirmed is “marked” with a sign of the Holy Spirit. This sign represents the **indelible mark** the sacrament impresses onto the soul of the individual. This new mark upon the soul implies a new ownership. As in Baptism, we are no longer living for ourselves, rather we live for the Lord as His adopted children, Confirmation further intensifies that relationship with the Father. It literally *confirms* us as His own.

Note to the Presenter:

In each of the sacramental teachings, we will attempt to cover the sacraments in three broad topics (what it is, how it is done, how it is lived). How you choose to make these come to life is dependent on the night and on the people you have doing the teaching. This might be a semester that you choose to have teens take a part of the teaching each night. This will allow them to educate themselves (which is great!) and be creative. Perhaps they create a video teaching, perhaps it is done within a skit - let your imagination run with it!

CCC 1285

CCC1286

CCC 1287
Joel 3:1-2
Ezekiel 36:25-28

CCC 1241
CCC 1293

Acts 8:14-17

CCC 1295
CCC 1304
CCC 1272-1274, 1295-1296
Revelation 7:2-3; 9:4
Ezekiel 9:4-6

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TEACHING

By strengthening and bringing our baptismal gifts of grace, we are able to live as better Christians and to grow closer to our Lord.

How it's done:

In the tradition of the Roman Catholic Church, a bishop is the ordinary minister of the Sacrament of Confirmation. In the early Church, Baptism and Confirmation took place at the same liturgy. However, with the increase in infant baptisms, bishops weren't always able to be at every liturgy of Christian initiation. This is partially why Confirmation takes place some time after baptism, in order for the bishop to celebrate the sacrament. This symbolizes the unity of the one being confirmed with the direct representative of the apostles, upon whom the Holy Spirit first fell at Pentecost.

CCC 1313
CCC 1291

When circumstance arises, the bishop may not be able to celebrate and administer the Sacrament of Confirmation at a particular time and place. When this happens, the bishop may grant that a specific priest administer the sacrament in his stead.

CCC 1313

In the tradition of the Eastern Orthodox Church, Confirmation is conferred immediately after Baptism, along with First Holy Communion. This is to emphasize the fullness of sacramental initiation into the Church—Christ's mystical body.

CCC 1292

In danger of death, any priest can administer Confirmation to one who is in need. The Church does not wish for anyone to leave this world without experiencing the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

CCC 1314

Confirmation really begins at the Chrism Mass on Holy Thursday. At that Liturgy, the bishop blesses and consecrates the Chrism to be used in the diocese for that year.

CCC 1297

The person being confirmed should have prepared for the sacrament through proper catechesis prior to the celebration. Also, it is important that those being confirmed are in a state of grace, as they are about to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Their soul should be proper and fitting for reception of the Holy Spirit.

CCC 1310

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To help and to guide the person being confirmed, a spiritual sponsor is chosen by the person being confirmed. It is most fitting that the sponsor be one of the godparents to further emphasize the unity between Baptism and Confirmation.

CCC 1311

During the Rite of Confirmation, the minister of Confirmation (the bishop) asks those who wish to be confirmed to profess their faith. This signifies their belief and understanding of the Catholic faith. The bishop then extends his hands over those who are to be confirmed and invokes the outpouring of the Spirit.

CCC 1298
CCC 1299

After this general calling down of the Holy Spirit, the *essential rite* of Confirmation takes place. This is when the individual is confirmed through the anointing with Chrism upon the forehead of the individual, along with the **laying of hands and the words**: “Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.” When this is finished, a sign of peace is exchanged between the bishop and the confirmed signifying the full unity between the individual and the Church.

CCC 1300

Any baptized person can be Confirmed. It is proper that every Christian receive Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist in order for the full Christian initiation to be complete. In the Roman Catholic tradition, the specific time a person is confirmed is when they have reached the “age of discretion,” usually sometime during adolescence or early adulthood. The specific age varies from diocese to diocese. It is important to remember, as St. Thomas reminds us, that, “age of body does not determine age of soul. Even in childhood man can attain spiritual maturity.”

CCC 1306
CCC 1307
Summa Theologica III, Q. 72.8, ad 2

How it's lived:

The effect of Confirmation is the fulfillment of the gifts of the Holy Spirit from Baptism. These gifts are:

1. Fear of the Lord
2. Counsel
3. Understanding
4. Wisdom
5. Knowledge
6. Piety
7. Courage

CCC 1303

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TEACHING

These gifts overflow from Pentecost and are made available to us by a gift by the same Holy Spirit that brought spiritual gifts to the apostles in the Upper Room. Confirmation renews our love for our divine Father. Confirmation renews our union with Christ. Confirmation refines our union with the church. The sacrament also increases our ability to defend the faith by virtue of the grace received.

CCC 1302
CCC 1303
Lumen Gentium, 11; 12
Council of Florence (1439), DS 1319

These gifts aren't just a nice sentiment for deciding to believe in Jesus. Each person has the spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit bestowed unto them in such a way that God (the Holy Spirit) sees fit.

1 Corinthians 12:1 - 13:13

These are gifts to be used, not gifts to be ignored. St. Thomas says that Confirmation gives us "strength in the spiritual combat," so that those who have received the gift of the Holy Spirit may "bravely confess the faith of Christ even in the face of enemies." That is not something that we can simply ignore. It calls us to live in such a way that puts our gifts to use.

Summa Theologica III, 72, 4

Confirmation gives us the grace to act in the world. St. Thomas continues in the same article to say that, "the confirmed are anointed with Chrism on the forehead, that they may show publicly that they are a Christian, just as the apostles showed themselves in public after receiving the Holy Spirit, unlike before when they remained hidden in the upper room."

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EXPLANATION OF TASKS

Task #1: N-O-I-T-A-M-R-I-F-N-O-C

Host Explanation:

Your preparation for Confirmation has just begun. You must correctly spell backwards the word Confirmation by writing it down on the whiteboard. After you completed this task, jump through the hoop and tag the next person

Task #2: Seven wrapped gifts

Host Explanation:

Your preparation continues. The Holy Spirit has brought you seven gifts. You must unwrap all the gifts before moving on. After you completed this task, jump through the hoop and tag the next person.

Task #3: Seven pieces of fruit

Host Explanation:

You must be hungry! Good thing the Holy Spirit brought fruit. You must eat the seven fruit snacks of the Holy Spirit before moving on. After you completed this task, jump through the hoop and tag the next person.

Task #4: Unpainted Fence

Host Explanation:

Time for service hours. The old lady down the street needs help painting her fence. You must finish the service project by painting the small section of fence. After you completed this task, jump through the hoop and tag the next person.

Task #5: Walk the Dog

Host Explanation:

Woops! You forgot a few more service hours. Your neighbor could sure use your help walking her dogs around the neighborhood. You must take the dogs for a walk around the room to complete your service project hours. After you completed this task, jump through the hoop and tag the next person.

Task #6: Choose a Saint

Host Explanation:

Time to choose a saint name. So many to choose from and so little time! Find a saint and give us a quick report on his or her life. Be sure to include why you chose that saint. After you completed this task, jump through the hoop and tag the next person.

Task #7: Choose a Sponsor

Host Explanation:

Now that you have a saint, it is time to choose a sponsor. But who will it be? Luckily we had a Core Member volunteer for the task. You must ask him/her to be your sponsor and tell them why you want to be confirmed. After you completed this task, jump through the hoop and tag the next person.

Task #8: Confirmation Test

Host Explanation:

Almost done! To finish your Confirmation prep you must pass a simple little test. You must get at least six of the eight questions right to graduate and be an adult in the Church. After you completed this task, jump through the hoop and finish the race for your team.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Confirmation Test

Multiple Choice

1. What is the name of the oil that is used in the Sacrament of Confirmation?
 - a. Chrism
 - b. Oil of the Sick
 - c. Olive oil
 - d. Oil of the Holy Spirit
2. Which of the following is **NOT** an effect of Confirmation?
 - a. it unites us more firmly to Christ
 - b. it increases the gifts of the Holy Spirit in us
 - c. it completes the work of the Holy Spirit given at Baptism
 - d. it designates us as mature adults in the faith
3. Confirmation imprints a(n) _____ mark on the soul.
 - a. Indelible
 - b. Permanent
 - c. Spiritual
 - d. All the above
4. Who is the ordinary minister of the Sacrament of Confirmation?
 - a. Priest
 - b. Bishop
 - c. Deacon
 - d. Holy Spirit
5. Which of the following is **NOT** one of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit?
 - a. Wisdom
 - b. Fear of the Lord
 - c. Humility
 - d. Understanding

Fill in the Blank

6. Confirmation is the third sacrament in the Sacraments of _____.

True or False

7. _____ T/F Confirmation is the end of religious education.
8. _____ T/F The Sacrament of Confirmation can be received only once.

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CHECKLIST

Core Planning Team:

Date of Life Night:

One month prior to the Night:

Give copies of the Life Night to each of the members of the planning team. Each person should read the Scripture and Catechism references as well as review the planning guide before the brainstorming meeting.

Get the planning team together for a brainstorming meeting (this should last no longer than 1 hour). The team prays and discusses where the teens are in their faith journey in relation to this topic. Then using this planning guide as a starting point, the team adapts the Life Night to meet the needs of the teens and the parish. Create a detailed outline with any changes and/or adjustments.

Assign the person responsible for each part of the Life Night:

Environment _____

Introductions _____

Obstacle Course _____

Gifts of the Holy Spirit Small Groups _____

Come, Creator Spirit _____

Two Weeks Prior to Life Night:

Turn in a detailed outline of the Life Night to the youth minister. Allow youth minister to give feedback and make any necessary changes.

Create a list of needed supplies and materials. Assign a person to be responsible for collecting and/or purchasing the materials needed.

Decide the people that will be doing the following things. Make sure they have a copy of the script and/or teaching outline. Inform them of any practices and/or deadlines.

Teaching _____

Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

5. _____ 6. _____

7. _____

Teen Witness _____

Week of the Life Night:

Written outline of the teaching is given to the youth minister and practiced.

Run a dress rehearsal of the Life Night. Youth minister gives feedback.

Create environment and collect needed supplies.

Email the entire Core team an overview of the night.

Day of the Life Night:

Set up the environment. Make sure the room is clean and presentable.

Set up audio and video. Test the video clips to make sure both picture and sound work.

Walk the entire Core team through the Life Night. Make sure all transitions are ready and everyone knows their roles.

Pray! Pray for the teens attending the Night. Pray for God's will to be done through the night. Pray over those involved.