Goal for the Life Night
To give the teens a basic understanding of Scripture that will help promote a desire for teens to read and pray Scripture. This night will give teens the fundamentals to make Scripture less intimidating. The teens will become aware of the overall structure of the Bible so they can see the big picture. Once the big picture is seen, all of the details will make sense.

Life Night at a Glance
The danger about this night is getting too academic, which runs the risk of the teens tuning out the content. The video and the game in the Gather will keep it light and fun. The teaching serves as an introduction to Sacred Scripture. It seeks to answer questions like is it all true? How was it written? When was it written? The Break brings Scripture into the context of the teen’s lives. Finally the Send shows how the Church has traditionally prayed the Scriptures in the Divine Office.

Environment
Try to make your youth room look as much like a library as possible. This will emphasize that the Bible is one book made up of many books that span the centuries. The centerpiece of your “library” should be a giant Bible. You can create the world’s biggest Bible out of cardboard boxes and black construction paper. Have a ribbon coming out of the top for added effect. This library theme can be extended by having all the teens pass by Core members acting like librarians demanding to see their library card. Have the teens use their school ID or else give them a goofy temporary library card on a piece of paper. Have the librarians at a table all of the teens have to pass in order to get into the Life Night. This will create a line that will draw other teens’ attention to your Life Night.

GATHER 15 Minutes

Word on the Street video (5 min)
This video found on Video Support #1. This video is a funny look at how little the average person knows about Scripture.

Bible Trivia Contest (10 min)
After the teens have gotten a chance to laugh at the lack of Bible knowledge other people have, it is their turn to be put to the test. Make sure each has a Bible, a pen, and a piece of paper. Have one of the Core members read each question giving a few moments for the teens to write down their answers. After all the questions are read, go through the correct answers and give a prize to the teen with the most correct answers.

Bible Trivia Challenge
1. What book would interest a plaintiff, a defendant or a woman named Judy? (Answer - Judges)
2. This Old Testament prophet was famous for his cookies. (Answer - Amos)
3. If you were looking for a guy in the New Testament who knew how to make coffee, what book might you look in? (Answer - Hebrews)
4. If you were looking for a new occupation in the Old Testament, what book might you look in? (Answer - Job)
5. If you were looking for a New Testament book written by one of the Brady Bunch kids, which one(s) would you read? (Answer - Peter)
6. If you had to add, subtract, multiply or divide, what Old Testament book would come in handy? (Hint: it’s not Wisdom) (Answer - Numbers)
7. This Old Testament book shares its name with the New York Yankee who hit 60 home runs in 1927. (Answer - Ruth)

PROCLAIM 15 minutes

This talk covers a lot of material. The trick is keeping the teens engaged and awake! Be creative in your presentation; make sure to cover the main points; leave teens with an excitement to read Scripture.

(See teaching on page 15.)
Small Group Bible Study (30 min)
The purpose of this Bible study is twofold. First it will help the teens feel comfortable looking up passages in the Bible. Second it will help the teens see how the Scriptures are relevant to their lives. Make sure that each teen has a Bible for this. Have all of them look up the passage as one person reads it out loud. A Core member will lead the teens through the questions. Encourage honesty and depth during this time.

Bible Study on Trust
Are you a control freak? Are there things you are unwilling to surrender in your life and that you must control at all costs? What are some of the situations that you feel you must control?

Are you really able to control anything in your life? Isn’t God ultimately in control anyway?

Read and pray - 2 Corinthians 1:9

Do you rely more on yourself than on God on a daily basis? Why or why not?

Read and pray - Proverbs 3:5

Do you get impatient with God and His plans for your life? Why or why not?

Read and pray - Psalms 37:5

Which action in the verse is more challenging to you, the first (commit) or the second (trust/waiting)?

Read and pray - Psalms 9:11

Do you believe the verse from Psalms above? Why or why not?

Liturgy of the Hours - Evening Prayer (15 min)
When the teens are finished with their small group, gather them back together. Give a short explanation of Liturgy of the Hours and how the Church has been living and praying the Scriptures for centuries.

Divide the Life Night up into two separate groups and have a Core member assigned to lead each group. Put the readings up on the projector, or else print out a copy for everyone to have. You can find evening prayer ready for download at www.ebreviary.com. The halves each take turns leading the prayers.

Conclude with a Hail Mary and the Ave Maria.

Community Connection
• Catholic Churches usually have about two or three adult Bible studies going on at any given time. One way to introduce your teens into the larger context of their parish community is to invite these adult bible study groups to your Life Night and maybe even have one of the leaders give the Proclaim.

• Have your parish priest give the explanation for Liturgy of the Hours and lead the teens in praying evening prayer.

Making It Work
• For youth groups that want to go a little deeper, change the Break of the night. Instead of the Bible study have the group look up the following verses and discuss how the Scriptures cannot stand on their own, but rather must be understood in the larger context of the Church.

Hebrews 4:12 - The Power of Scripture
“For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”
2 Timothy 3:16-17 - The Importance of Scripture
“All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”

2 Thessalonians 2:15 - Scripture and Tradition Belong Together
“So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught by us, either by word of mouth or by letter.”

2 Peter 1:20 - Interpreting Scripture Is Not Private
“First of all you must understand this, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by the impulse of man, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.”

1 Timothy 3:14-15 - The Church is the Pillar and Foundation of Truth
“I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these instructions to you so that, if I am delayed, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth.”
When we last met we covered how God reveals who he is to us in the Scriptures, Tradition and ultimately in Jesus Christ. Tonight, we are going to cover a basic introduction to the Bible. Is all that stuff in the Bible true? How and why was the Bible written? Who can claim the Bible as their book when so many different denominations and religions do? We are going to answer all of those questions and maybe more!

Part 1: Who wrote the Bible?

Quick answer: God.

Much Longer Answer: A large number of people over 1,500 years wrote the stories that we read today. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, they wrote exactly what God wanted them to write. The message of the Holy Spirit is infallible, the writers were inspired. Over time these stories were all put together by a “redactor” or editor. Currently there is a large debate over who exactly wrote and put together all of the books, but there is some information we can get from the Catholic Church and what she has held as true for 2,000 years.

Originally, many of the stories in books such as Genesis (Creation, Noah, Abraham) were passed down from one generation to the next as “oral tradition.” Now this isn’t like the game of “Telephone” you play in elementary school. The ability to transmit oral history was a treasured art. It may have been transmitted in song (the Psalms, Song of Songs) or it may have been transmitted through scribes. What we know is that the Holy Spirit that inspired the original authors, also held the books intact as they were passed from one generation to the next and finally written down by Moses.

Most scholars agree that the entire New Testament was written before 100 AD, with Revelation being the last book written. Catholic tradition always held that the Gospels were written in the order they are in Scripture: Matthew, Mark, Luke then John.

33 AD: Christ dies, rises, and ascends into heaven. Pentecost, the Birthday of the Church.
33-39 AD: Matthew is written by Levi (Matthew) the tax collector who became an apostle, with Mark, dictated by Peter the first Pope, filling in the gaps of Matthew’s biography of Christ.
40-50 AD: Luke, St. Paul’s doctor, writes his biography of

www.lifeteen.com has some great resources from the Bible Geek and Fr. J regarding some answers to questions that might be raised regarding this night. This night should follow the night on “Revelation”, but if it doesn’t, it is important that you lay the groundwork with the material that is covered in that night. Basically, “Revelation” should be part I and this night should be part II.

Pontifical Biblical Commission, Interpretation of the Bible in the Church, Part II, B, 1. The Literal Sense. “The literal sense of Scripture is that which has been expressed directly by the inspired human authors. Since it is the fruit of inspiration, this sense is also intended by God, as principal author”

CCC #105-119

Dei Verbum #10

“It is clear, therefore, that sacred tradition, Sacred Scripture and the teaching authority of the Church, in accord with God’s most wise design, are so linked and joined together that one cannot stand without the others, and that all together and each in its own way under the action of the one Holy Spirit contribute effectively to the salvation of souls.”

In regards to a complete historical treatment of the Bible with documentation as to the reliability of oral history and the authorship of the gospels, Dr. Warren H. Carroll’s “Founding of Christendom” is quite extensive and well researched.
Christ, doing research into the lives of John and Mary, the mother of Christ. This is why Luke’s gospel gives us the birth narrative from Mary’s point of view. He goes on to write the sequel: the Acts of the Apostles.

St. Paul, St. Peter, St. John, St. James, and St. Jude write their letters to the different areas the Catholic Church is beginning to grow. When St. John is exiled, he writes his biography of Christ, the gospel of St. John to emphasize the sacramental nature of the life of Christ and to fill in the gaps that were left by the other three. He finally writes Revelation, completing the books that have come down to us today.

Part 2: How was the Bible Compiled?

Quick Answer: The Holy Spirit

Much Longer Answer: By 150 AD, St. Justin was already referring to the four Gospels. The Septuagint at the time of Christ was accepted as the Old Testament and it was generally a given that the books of the New Testament as we have them today were read during the mass every week.

As the Church started to spread around the world, different books and gospels were offered as contributions to the Scriptures, but thanks to the councils of the Church, the “canon” or measuring rod was set.

Fast forward about 1,500 hundred years. At the Council of Trent the Catholic Church locks up for all time what is considered part of Scripture. Why the delay? Because it was never questioned until that time! It was only when the Protestant churches removed parts of the Old Testament that the Deutero-canonical (or second canon) was securely set as a part of the Bible by the Council. These seven books were disputed because later versions of the Jewish Bible did not include them. The Catholic Church accepts the Old Testament as it was at the time of Christ, the Protestant community as a rule accepts the later Old Testament, without the Deutero-canonical. That is why your Bible might be different from your friends! You know what the cool thing is? We have the director’s cut!

Dei Verbum #22
Easy access to Sacred Scripture should be provided for all the Christian faithful. That is why the Church from the very beginning accepted as her own that very ancient Greek translation; of the Old Testament which is called the septuagint; and she has always given a place of honor to other Eastern translations and Latin ones especially the Latin translation known as the vulgate.

Dei Verbum #18
It is common knowledge that among all the scriptures, even those of the New Testament, the Gospels have a special preeminence, and rightly so, for they are the principal witness for the life and teaching of the incarnate Word, our savior. The Church has always and everywhere held and continues to hold that the four Gospels are of apostolic origin. For what the Apostles preached in fulfillment of the commission of Christ, afterwards they themselves and apostolic men, under the inspiration of the divine Spirit, handed on to us in writing: the foundation of faith, namely, the fourfold Gospel, according to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.
Part 3: What Are We Supposed to Believe?

Quick Answer: What God says.

Much Longer Answer: Since we have been given the gift of the Catholic Church by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we can trust in her infallibility and inerrancy when it comes to interpreting the Scriptures faithfully according to the Holy Spirit as she has been doing for over 2,000 years! Keep in mind that the first generation of Christians didn’t have a Bible. Neither did Moses or King David. They had Tradition that helped to guide them as to what the Lord was asking them to do. It was when the first generation of Christians started to die, that the early Church recognized a need to have a “Bible.” It is quite literally our book. The owner’s manual to our soul, our Church. So enough talking… go read it!

There are two parts of the Bible: The Old Testament, which has 46 books, and the New Testament, which has 27 books. The Old Testament was written before the time of Christ and is based on the Septuagint, which is a collection of 46 books translated into Greek by 70 Jewish scholars in Alexandria, Egypt. It tells of the human race’s preparation for the Messiah who would repair the split between God and Man. The New Testament was written after the time of Christ. It contains biographies of Jesus, history and letters of the early Catholic Church.
So what are the 10 most important things to know about the Bible?

1. The Bible is the infallible and inerrant Word of God
2. The Bible is one of the three ways that God reveals Himself to us.
3. The Bible shows us how to fill the God-shaped hole inside us.
4. The Bible is 73 separate books that tell us one complete story of Salvation History that we need to know in order to be saved.
5. The Bible is the best way to know Jesus, the high point of Revelation.
6. The Bible is written in ancient language, telling eternal truths.
7. The Bible tells of the covenants that God makes with the human race in order bring us into union with Him.
8. The Bible has been correctly interpreted by the Magisterium of the Church for 2000 years.
9. The Bible contains the Old Testament, based on the Septuagint, which tells of the preparation for the Messiah.
10. The Bible contains the New Testament, which tells of the Messiah and his Church.
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 _______________________________________

   Video and Trivia Game ______________________________

   Teaching __________________________________________

   Small Group Bible Discussion ________________________

   Divine Office Evening Prayer _______________________

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.

   Bible Trivia Host _________________________________

   Teaching __________________________________________

   Evening Prayer Leaders (2) _______________________

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.

☐ Create environment and collect needed supplies

☐ E-mail entire Core team an overview of the night and the small group Bible Discussion

Day of the Life Night:

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

☐ Set up audio and video needs. Test the video clip 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.