

PLANNING YOUR LIFE TEEN CALENDAR (USING NEW AND PREVIOUS LIFE TEEN RESOURCES)

We are hearing the buzz and seeing Instagram explode with *Merciful, Alive and Dangerous*, and, for some youth groups that move faster than a speeding bullet, the *(Censored)* images. Nevertheless, some of you are taking it slow, using the Life Night Curriculum that is familiar to you, enjoying a little Paschal Mystery here and tossing some Issue and Social Nights in between. Both are great options. But I bet you want to know the best way to plan your calendar using the latest Life Night Series model that we introduced in September 2015. Allow me to be your guide.

CALENDARING THE SERIES MODEL

All our Life Night Series are written in four-parts and are best executed in order. It is encouraged to do all four Life Nights consecutively for four-weeks in a row. This will allow the nights to gain momentum and flow from one to the next with ease and increased understanding.

Prior to starting a Series we encourage you to do Kick-Off Social Night to have some fun and build community. Then break open the Series you have planned for four-weeks straight. Following the fourth Life Night of the Series, do an Issue Night that can take the topic deeper or address an Issue that teens are facing in your community. If a Liturgical season is approaching, use the Life Night Search feature to look up Life Nights on Lent, Passion Sunday, Easter, Pentecost, Advent, Christmas, or the Triduum.

The most important thing to do is understand where your teens are catechetically, emotionally, and spiritually and what they are capable of handling. If this is your first time using Life Teen and you have never had a youth group at your parish, you might not start with the Sex Positive series. You might choose to start with *Merciful* or *(Censored)* to introduce them to the Person of Christ and Scripture.

USING SUMMIT

Summit, Life Teen's lectionary-based discipleship group, is one of our newest resources and for some brand new ministries, might be a nice starting point for your youth group as you build your Core Team. It will allow you to meet your teens, start to get to know them in a smaller group, and break open the Sunday readings with a little less planning than a full Life Night Series Model will take.

We have seen some parishes doing one to two weeks of Summit in between a Life Night Series to introduce small Discipleship groups in sizes of 8-10 teens to their parish. This can help break up the typical Life Night routine. Most parishes have gone on to start a weekly mid-week Summit Discipleship Group to strengthen their weekly Life Teen Ministry.

Summit is a powerful resource to connect your teens to Scripture as well as the Mass, making them more engaged and fully participative in the Liturgy.

USING PAST LIFE NIGHT CURRICULUM GUIDES

All our previous Life Night Curriculum Guides based on the USCCB Curriculum Framework for High School Catechesis are excellent and can and should still be used to catechize your high school teens. There are three types of Life Nights that Life Teen offers:

CATECHETICAL – Our Catechetical Life Night consist of Curriculum Guides and Series and cover the USCCB Catechetical Framework for High School Catechesis.

ISSUE – Our Issue Life Nights address a variety of issues that teens encounter in high school and puts a Catholic perspective on how to address the issue they face.

SOCIAL – Our Social Nights help build community and provide pre-evangelization opportunities for teens to gather, play, and pray.

The previous Curriculum Guides are best used when they are spread out over a two to three month timeframe. Typically you will have a combination of two-Catechetical, one Issue and one Social Life Night in a month. We encourage that ministries meets weekly to create consistence, foster trust, and build community.

Please keep in mind that all our new Life Night Series continue to be based on the USCCB Curriculum Framework and are color coded on each Series book binding so we have not departed from this important catechetical framework.

IMPLEMENTING UNLEASHED

Finally, if your Life Teen ministry has been around for a while, you are sure to have some upper classmen who have already shown their commitment to following Christ as His disciple. More than likely, they also want to be challenge in their understanding of the Catholic Faith. Unleashed was created exactly for this group of teens.

The discussions and activities found in Unleashed are written for small groups of between 6-8 teens. Each small group should have two facilitators to lead assigned groups and not change throughout the year, or, ideally, the life of the Unleashed Group. It is highly recommended that teenagers either request to be involved or are invited to be involved. Utilizing Unleashed for teenagers that are not yet evangelized will render the resource ineffective.

Unleashed works best in conjunction with a weekly large group like Life Nights as well as Life Teen's Summit lectionary-based discipleship group. Unleashed groups can meet at coffee shops, at restaurants during lunch hours, or even at a high school (if your school will permit the group to meet and adults from the parish to be present). Basically, we recommend gathering outside homes, as this resource will encourage your upperclassmen to live their faith in a more dynamic way.

YOU CAN DO IT - WE CAN HELP

No matter which resources you plan on implementing in your ministry, Life Teen Parish Coaches are here to assist you in planning your calendar. Please let us know if you need any help and we will happily schedule a time to calendar your Life Teen or Edge semester with you. We know we have a lot of resources for you to use and that can feel overwhelming as you get started. Allow us to simplify your life and give us a call (or email). Like Home Depot's motto, "You Can Do It - We Can Help!"

SAMPLE CALENDARS

SEX POSITIVE AND MORALITY SEMESTER SAMPLE CALENDAR

Week 1: A Kick Off Life Night

Week 2: Freedom and Failure: God's Plan for Happiness

Week 3: Pathways and Providence: The Beatitudes

Week 4: Do's and Don'ts: 10 Commandments

Week 5: Keys and Knots: Church Teaching and Authority

Week 6: A Social Life Night

Week 7: Holy Desire: Truth, Beauty, and Goodness in Sexuality

Week 8: Sex Is More: The Fullness of Sexuality

Week 9: Distorted: Distortions of Sexuality

Week 10: Live Love Now: Self-Giving Love and Chastity

Week 11: A Social Life Night

Week 12: Discipline and Disaster: Virtue and Holiness

Week 13: An Issue or Safe Environment Life Night

Week 14: A Social Life Night

(CENSORED) AND PASCHAL MYSTERY SEMESTER SAMPLE CALENDAR

Week 1: A Kick Off Life Night

Week 2: How It Starts: Creation and the Creator

Week 3: Meet The Parents: Adam, Eve, and Original Sin

Week 4: Secure Promise: Covenants and God's Promise

Week 5: A Social Life Night

Week 6: Beggar: Jesus and the Poor

Week 7: Exorcist: Jesus As Healer

Week 8: Criminal: The Persecuted Christ

Week 9: King: Christ The King

Week 10: A Social Life Night

Week 11: An Issue or Safe Environment Life Night

Week 12: Not So Surprise Ending: The Resurrection of Christ

Week 13: The Sequel: Discipleship and Holiness

Week 14: A Social Life Night

ALIVE AND DANGEROUS AND SCRIPTURE SEMESTER SAMPLE CALENDAR

Week 1: A Kick Off Life Night

Week 2: Alive: Our Call Towards Love

Week 3: Overfed Yet Starving: Substitutes to God's Love

Week 4: Counterfeit: Counterfeits to God's Love

Week 5: Dangerous: Our Call to Holiness

Week 6: A Social Life Night

Week 7: Word of Mouth: Origins of the Bible

Week 8: The Family Bible: Catholics and the Bible

Week 9: Vacation Bible School: The Pentateuch
Week 10: A Social Life Night
Week 11: An Issue or Safe Environment Life Night
Week 12: Divine Music: The Psalms

Week 13: Tweeting #Jesus: The New Testament Epistles
Week 14: A Social Life Night

MERCIFUL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE SEMESTER SAMPLE CALENDAR

Week 1: A Kick Off Life Night
Week 2: Misericordia: Forgiveness and Mercy
Week 3: Work The Work: Living the Works of Mercy
Week 4: Filled First: Receiving Mercy

Week 5: Trust: Trusting in God's Mercy
Week 6: A Social Life Night
Week 7: Social - Light: Social Nature of Humanity
Week 8: Protect This House: Dignity, Rights, and Responsibilities

Week 9: Free!: Freedom of Religion
Week 10: A Social Life Night
Week 11: So Much More: Wealth and Materialism
Week 12: God Save The Queen: Government and Social Justice

Week 13: Brother's Keeper: Solidarity and Common Good
Week 14: A Social Life Night

