



**LIFE TEEN**

Leading Teens Closer to Christ  
[www.LifeTeen.com](http://www.LifeTeen.com)

## QUICK GLANCE

### NEXT-GEN

Senior Salute and Freshmen Welcome

#### GOAL

The goal of “Next-Gen” is to honor the graduating seniors, welcome incoming freshmen, and foster the youth group community.

#### SCRIPTURE

Jeremiah 29:11, Psalm 133:1, Matthew 6:33-34, Romans 12:10-15

#### CATECHISM

1879-1881, 2212

#### RESOURCES

Spotify: “LT - Gather Music” (spotify:user:lifeteen)

Spotify: “LT - Break Music” (spotify:user:lifeteen)

Spotify: “LT - Send Music” (spotify:user:lifeteen)

“My Future” (“Happier Than Ever,” Billie Eilish, Darkroom and Interscope Records, 2020)

“Long Live” (“Speak Now,” Taylor Swift, Big Machine Records, 2010)

“Don’t Stop Believing” (“Escape,” Journey, Columbia Records, 1981)

“Graduation (Friends Forever)” (“Vitamin C,” Vitamin C, Elektra Entertainment, 2000)

## GATHER

The teens will welcome the incoming freshmen, engage in a variety of graduation-themed activities, and have a buffet dinner.

## PROCLAIM AND BREAK

The teens will experience the senior class receive gifts and listen to a junior testify to how Life Teen has blessed them.

## SEND

The teens will pray for the seniors, and the seniors will pray for the rest of the group.

## PREP

# NEXT-GEN

Senior Salute and Freshmen Welcome

## SETUP

Everything is black and gold! Go to Walmart, Party City, or Amazon.com and buy graduation decorations.

Set up the four tables needed for the activities in the Gather and the buffet table with black tablecloths. Set up the tables and chairs for dinner. Use black tablecloths and gold paper plates, cups, and utensils. Decorate with twinkle lights.

Inflate black and gold balloons and consider adding large gold balloons with the graduation year or “Congrats Grad.” Display the senior pictures of the graduates on the wall. Post a large sign that reads “Welcome Freshmen!” Play fun, upbeat music.

## SUPPLIES

- Sharpies
- Name tags
- Four rectangular tables
- Tables and chairs set for dinner
- Graduation decorations
- Black tablecloths
- Gold plates
- Eating utensils
- Twinkle lights
- Posterboard
- Senior pictures
- Glue
- Graduation-themed props
- Black backdrop
- Paper bags
- Pens

## ASSIGNMENTS

Use the following list to assign core members to specific tasks:

### Setup:

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### Gather:

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### Proclaim:

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### Break:

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### Send:

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## OUTLINE

# NEXT- GEN

Senior Salute and Freshmen Welcome

## GATHER

### Dinner and Activities (30 min)

In advance, invite incoming freshmen by announcing an end-of-year social, senior honoring, and eighth grade welcoming after Sunday Mass, in the bulletin, on social media, and after Life Nights. Also, encourage teens and core members to invite the eighth graders they or their siblings know.

Have a core member at the door welcoming the teens and explaining the variety of activities available to them during the Gather. Instruct the teen leaders to look out for new faces, introduce themselves to them, and introduce them to others. Be sure the core team is especially attentive to new faces as well. Have Sharpies and name tags available so the incoming freshmen and the group can know each other's names.

Have tables and chairs set up so teens can enjoy a sit-down dinner and have a buffet of food and drinks available. Also, have graduation-themed activities available with a core member at each activity helping to facilitate.

Who's Who? — In advance, find a baby picture of each senior, glue them to a gold poster board, and label them with a number. Have the poster board propped up on a table, and below the poster board, have handouts with a list of the names of the seniors. The goal is to match the picture with the name using the number. Find the "Who's Who?" handout at the conclusion of this Life Night.

### Step It Up

Create a slideshow of the seniors' baby photos.

Photo Booth — Create a photo booth with graduation-themed props. Buy supplies on Amazon.com or Walmart.com by searching for "graduation photo booth props" and "photo booth backdrop." Create a well-lit area, put up the backdrop, and make the props available. Have a core member available to take pictures on the teens' phones.

Eighth Grade WYR — Prior to the Life Night, survey a large group of eighth graders with an assortment of "would you rather" questions. Have a core member read a question and have the group determine which of the options a majority of eighth-graders chose. After each question, highlight one or two eighth graders to give their opinion of which option they chose. Use the following "Would You Rather" questions as needed:

- WYR earn one cent per step or one dollar per jump?
- WYR go a week without brushing your teeth or a week without showering?
- WYR know how to speak every language fluently or be able to play any instrument fluently?
- WYR be able to teleport anywhere once per week or able to reset the day (anytime during the day) once per week?
- WYR give up forever, Instagram or TikTok?
- WYR be forced to give up your favorite song (never listen to it again) or be forced to give up your favorite food (never eat it again)?
- WYR have ten times your intelligence or ten times your strength?
- WYR go 300 years into the future or 300 years into the past?
- WYR sleep without a pillow or sleep without a blanket?
- WYR live in a video game world of your choosing or have an item/character from a video game in the real world?

Senior Affirmation Bags — Have a table with paper bags for each senior with their name on them. Have notecards and pens available, and encourage teens to write affirmations to the seniors.

### **Suggestions**

For a small church community, rotate through the Gather activities and dinner together. Additionally, for groups with a smaller budget, have the core members bring board games like Jenga, Connect Four, Pick Up Stix, and a deck of cards, so teens can casually eat dinner and play games. Have a few core members available to facilitate games.

### **Step It Up**

Consider having a picture slideshow playing in the background during the Gather. Choose photos from the youth group this past school year.

## **PROCLAIM AND BREAK**

### **Core Members Honoring Seniors (25 min)**

In advance, pair a core member with a senior to whom they have been ministering over the year(s). For each pairing, welcome the core member and senior to the front of the main meeting space and project the senior's baby picture. Instruct the teens to mark right or wrong on their "Who's Who?" handout.

Allow the core member a few minutes to affirm the teen. Think about their character. Are they generous, outgoing, hospitable, reflective, or giving? How so? Think about their contributions to the youth group. Are they a leader? Do they reach out to new teens? Do they help clean up after a Life Night? Were they a Confirmation sponsor? What was their contribution to small groups? Also, think about if there are any specific memories from a retreat, bus trip, or service project to highlight. Finally, have the core member announce the plans of their teen — college and major, gap year, work, trade school, or internship.

If the teen is going to college, have the core member encourage the teen to check out the Campus Ministry at their college and give them an informational card about the ministry. If the teen is staying in town, have the core member provide them with the contact information to the young adult or adult ministry at the parish or nearby parish or diocese. The "Ministry Informational

Card" handout can be found at the conclusion of the Life Night. Have the core member conclude by sharing an encouraging Scripture with the senior, also written on their informational card. Use one of the following Scripture passages:

- 2 Timothy 3:14-15
- Jeremiah 1:5
- Isaiah 41:10
- Luke 1:37
- Jeremiah 29:1
- Philippians 4:13
- Matthew 6:33-34
- Micah 6:8
- Isaiah 40:31

### **Step It Up**

Have the core members present a gift to their respective senior. Some ideas:

- "True North" is a book on discernment.
- A framed picture of Jesus for their dorm room or bedroom
- Bible
- Prayer card

### **Who's Who Winner (5 min)**

Ask the teens to tally up how many answers they got correct on their "Who's Who?" handout. The teen with the most correct answers wins and receives a prize.

### **Junior Testimony and Freshmen Welcoming (5 min)**

In advance, ask a junior to prepare a testimony on how Life Teen has blessed them and how they hope Life Teen will bless the incoming freshmen. Prompt them to think about the community, the sense of belonging, the benefits of sharing faith and doubts

with others, and the witness of upperclassmen and core members. Have the teen encourage the incoming freshman to come to Life Teen, go on retreats, and participate in service projects. Have them conclude their testimony by saying, "You are welcome here."

### **Step It Up**

Create a worksheet with prompts to assist the junior in preparing a good testimony. Then, provide the teen an opportunity to practice the testimony once or twice with the youth minister and a few core members before the Life Night.

### **Hispanic Inculturation**

Many Hispanic/Latino teens are the first generation in their families to attend college, whether a four-year institution or a community college. Therefore, consider inviting a first-generation college student to give a testimony in which they speak to the joys and hardships of that reality and how Jesus has supported them. Encourage them to be present during the Life Nights so that teens can have follow-up conversations. If possible, host a separate event for parents in Spanish later in the week to offer advice on how they can support their teens going to college.

## **SEND**

### **Circle Prayer (10 min)**

Invite everyone to stand and form a circle around the seniors. Invite the entire group to extend their hands in prayer. Lead the group in a prayer, asking for the help of the Holy Spirit as the seniors embark on their future plans and entrust them to Mary so that she continually leads them closer to Jesus.

Afterward, invite the seniors to extend their hands in prayer and lead a prayer for the group so that they may continue to grow in authentic community, for the juniors to rise into leadership, and for the incoming freshmen to feel welcomed and find their place within the community.

### **Announcements (5 min)**

Announce the summer schedule and pass out calendars so the teens know how they can plug in throughout the summer. Additionally, remind the eighth graders that they are welcome to attend these events. Finally, instruct the seniors to pick up their affirmation bags before leaving.

### **Hispanic Inculturation**

During the Send, give the first-generation college students extra encouragement. When praying over the seniors, ask for a special grace on those who will be the first in their families to navigate college. Ask the Holy Spirit to be present to them in their new adventure and to strengthen them when they feel isolated or discouraged on the journey.

### **Suggestions**

If a parish priest is available, invite him to lead the prayer and give a blessing. Also, consider asking him to honor a teen he knows in the Proclaim and Break.

# NEXT-GEN

Who's Who?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Right or Wrong

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Right or Wrong

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Right or Wrong

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# NEXT-GEN

## Ministry Information Card

**MINISTRY INFORMATION CARD**  
Name of Ministry: \_\_\_\_\_  
Website: \_\_\_\_\_  
TikTok : \_\_\_\_\_  
Instagram: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Scripture: \_\_\_\_\_  
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