

NOW HIRING

God's Unique Call to Each of Us

LIFE NIGHT OUTLINE

Goal for the Life Night

This night will help teens understand vocations as a specific and unique calling rather than a job or something they can choose. This night will give the teens practical tools to begin to discern their vocations.

Life Night at a Glance

In today's society, a job is central to a person's life. It provides for physical needs and helps define a person's status. This night seeks to help teens understand that a vocation is different from a job or career. The night begins with a skit between Jesus and three different people interviewing for a position. The skit leads into a teaching on the difference between a job or career and a vocation. In small groups, the teens will break open this topic by answering questions related to jobs and vocations. Finally, the teens will begin a novena to St. Joseph for vocations.

Environment

For this Life Night create a "job fair" with four to five booths. Each booth can be labeled after one of the vocations (multiple booths for the same vocation is okay). Have one or two Core Members at each booth dressed in the typical dress of that particular vocation (priest, sister, married couple, etc.) The Core Members should try and recruit/interview the teens as they are gathering into the room like they would someone on a job interview. The Holy Orders booth should not let the girls come to their booth. Each booth should ask the teens to write down their name and email address. At the front of the room, have the scene set for the "Job Opening" skit.

GATHER *12 Minutes*

Welcome and Introductions (5 min)

The youth minister should welcome everyone to the Life Night. He/she should introduce any teens at Life Night for the first time.

Job Opening Skit (7 min)

This skit portrays three different people interviewing with Jesus for a job position. This skit was first published in the Life Night "Sync Up."

The "Job Opening" skit can be found on pages 30-33.

PROCLAIM *18 Minutes*

"God's Calling" Teaching (10 min)

The teaching for this night will focus on the difference between a job and a vocation. It will also give a brief overview of the different vocations in the Church.

The teaching can be found on pages 24-29.

"Mystery Trip" Video (8 min)

As a transition into the small group discussion, play the Mystery Trip trailer. This film was produced by Dumb Ox Productions and documents a group of teens who went on a trip with no details about the journey or destination. It leaves the audience with the question: Can you trust God, even if you don't know where He will lead you?

"Mystery Trip Trailer" can be found on Video Support 8

BREAK *30 Minutes*

Small Groups (30 min)

After the teaching and video, break the teens up into their small groups. The groups will answer questions about the difference between a career and a vocation.

1. What is your dream job? Why?
2. What do the words "discernment" and "vocation" mean to you?
3. Do you trust God with your future? Why or why not?
4. Have you taken the time to think about what vocation God may be calling you to? How can you continue to discern where God is calling you?
5. Is there one vocation that you fear God is calling you to? Why?

CATECHISM REFERENCES:

# 305	# 1578	# 2442
# 898-913	# 1593	
# 916	# 1601- 1666	
# 933	# 2004	
# 1533-1535	# 2230	

SCRIPTURES:

Matthew 5:3-12, 19:8-9, 22:37-40	Ephesians 5:24 Hebrews 13:5 1 Peter 5:7
Luke 12:49 John 15:16	
Romans 12:6-8	
1 Corinthians 12	

SEND 15 Minutes**Recap** (5 min)

Gather all the teens back together. The Core Members should hand each teen a "Novena to St. Joseph" card. The youth minister should recap the night reminding the teens that our vocation is a specific calling from God that requires prayer, trust and offering our lives back to God. It is our vocation that will lead us to eternal life with God, not our jobs or career.

Novena to St. Joseph for Vocation (10 min)

If there ever was a "man of mystery," St. Joseph was it. We know very little about him yet we know that he was a man after God's heart. St. Joseph was visited by an angel and told to take Mary as his wife, even though she was already pregnant. He could have disregarded the angels request, but he took Mary as his wife. He was a man of faith and obedience. He gave up his own plan for God's. St. Joseph was also a carpenter. That was his career. His vocation, his calling, was to be a husband and foster father to Jesus. He is a great example to each of us on what it means to be seek God and be obedient to His call for our lives. We can ask St. Joseph to pray for us and help us open our lives to God's plan for our vocation. The Church is full of many blessings and forms of prayer. One of those forms of prayer is what is called a novena (which comes from the Latin for "nine"). It is a prayer that is recited for nine days with a specific intention. Novenas are normally prayed through the intercession of a saint—like St. Joseph.

Instruct the teens on how to pray the novena. Tell them the novena will begin tonight and end nine days from now. Begin the time of prayer by thanking God for the opportunity to be in relationship with him through our vocation. Ask for an openness of heart to hear God's voice and what vocation He is calling each person to. Close the time of prayer by asking St. Joseph to pray and intercede for the group over the semester, but most especially the next nine days. Pray the novena prayer on the St. Joseph card and close with the Hail Mary and Ave Maria.

St. Joseph novena card can be found on page 34.

Making it Work

- If possible, create a small documentary on the "other lives" of the Core Members. Get video footage of them at work, at home, at play, etc. This could be used as an alternative Gather for the Life Night and a way to introduce the idea that career and vocation are not the same thing.
- If the group is small enough, have a large group discussion instead of small group time during the Break. Encourage the teens to be honest about their dreams, fears and understanding of God's plan for their lives.
- Have a night of sharing and prayer nine days after this Life Night. Close the novena as a group and ask the teens to share what God has revealed to them during the last nine days of prayer.

Community Connection

- Have actual priests, sisters and married couples from the community come and "work" the job fair at the beginning of the Life Night.
- Ask parents to help with the environment for this Life Night.
- It may be a good idea to contact the vocations director for your diocese to come and either give the teaching or be available at the end of the Life Night to talk to those teens who are discerning their vocation.

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To the presenter: The teaching outlines given in this Curriculum Guide cover much more information than can be presented in a 10-minute talk. This is done on purpose. It is the role of presenter to be familiar with the topic and then prayerfully prepare the main points that will be presented to the teens. Use Scripture, Catechism and personal experience to convey the message.

What it is

Have you ever counted the days until your next vacation or break in your work schedule? A good day off or a vacation gives us a chance to focus on and enjoy those other areas of our life that aren't school or work. We all enjoy this time because our jobs aren't what defines us; God calls each of us to more. This calling is known as our *vocation*—a word that comes from a word that means “to call”—and it comes to us by the only one able to call us to greatness: our creator God.

Someone's vocation is not the same as their career or job. A job is something that you have in order to be able to provide for yourself, your family or someone else whom you support. A vocation is much deeper. It is the calling from God that is unique only to you. It is true that we all have the same universal calling from God to be holy, but that is the beginning of God's plan. He wants to be able to work through you in more specific, specialized ways. This is a great thing.

A man or woman may work in retail sales because they have what it takes to sell a product, establish customer relations, follow directions and work with a team to accomplish daily tasks. That same person's *vocation* may be to be a wife or a husband, to be a deacon in the Church, or to remain single, “for the sake of the Kingdom [of God].” The latter examples do not take away from the person's job, but they will enhance it and bring their ordinary work to perfection. These callings go much deeper to the core of who a person is. Being a mom or a dad is significantly more dignified than being a sales representative. How many coffee shop *baristas* have changed lives through iced-venti-caramel-mocha-doubleshot-no whip-lattés?

Matthew 19: 8-9

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It is important to mention that there are times that your personal vocation and your job can be closely connected. For example, if you are called by God to enter into holy matrimony, you may need to contribute financially to help support your family. In that case, a job is secondary to your calling, and doing it well would be following your primary and personal vocation. However, it's important to realize which of these should come first. At times there is a very real need to work harder than you normally would, especially in economically challenging times, but sacrificing the good of your family for the sake of your career is not what God is calling you to do.

Now, the great thing about vocations is that God calls everyone to Himself—we each have a vocation! This is good because we know of God's love for us and His promise never to abandon us. So, what now? We just sit by the phone and wait to get that call from the Lord telling us that it's time to start looking for a spouse or go get measured for our habit? It doesn't quite work that way.

How do you normally make the right choice in life when it comes to something significant? It's usually a good idea to first consider all of your options. You should also consider your personal capabilities, interests, and any other incentives that may help to narrow down your options. For example, when you buy your first car, you're going to check out the newspaper or a website and immediately rule out cars you cannot afford. Then, it's best to consider what you will be paying for. Do you want an environmentally friendly car even if it would cost more? Do you have to have AC? Is a stereo a must? Eventually you will be able to *discern* which is the best option for you and discover which car was best for you all along.

This is an example. With things like a vocation, which will define the rest of your life, more care is needed than that taken for a car purchase. When we talk about discerning our vocation, we cannot do this without opening our hearts to God. It is, after all, a call from Him to us. It is not determining what we *want* to do for the rest of our lives. Jesus tells us and he tells His apostles, "You did not choose me; no, I chose you."

"It is therefore indispensable for each one to seek and to recognize day after day the long path on which the Lord is leading him to his personal encounter with him. Dear friends, question yourselves seriously about your vocation and be ready to answer the Lord who is calling you to take

Hebrews 13:5

John 15:16

World Youth Day XIII Address, no. 8

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the place he has prepared for you from eternity.” This is the path of discernment. Discernment means to separate or to realize something is true apart from an alternative. When we discern our vocation, we discover the path our Lord is calling us to travel with Him.

God is concerned with our lives and wants us to choose him. For this reason, it is good to reflect upon the truth of God’s providence in our lives. Providence is God’s protective care for our lives. Jesus asks us to trust in God’s providence and to rely on Him that he may take care of our lives in the same way that a child trusts a parent. Many times, we worry about the “little things” to the point where we may miss the big picture. Jesus assures us to leave the small things to God. Focusing on our call to serve Him will prepare our hearts for Him to serve us and to take care of our needs. Our first pope repeats the call to “cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.”

For discernment to work at all, prayer is necessary. Through prayer, we come to know God and ourselves in a deeper way. Vatican II reminds us, “Christ...reveals man to himself and makes his supreme calling perfectly clear.” How does Christ do this? The first step is developing a prayer relationship with Him. This relationship cannot be overemphasized. It is the well from which all divine influence in your life can be drawn.

CCC 305

1 Peter 5:7

Gaudium et Spes, 22

What paths are out there?

In the bounty of the Church’s graces, there are many ministries to which a person may be called. St. Paul tells us repeatedly of the many gifts of the Holy Spirit and the responsibility of those to whom they are given. Our Lord confirms this as well. God grants us the use of our free will to choose our life’s work. God does not force you to do anything. There is no love in making someone your slave.

CCC 2004

Romans 12:6-8

1 Corinthians 12 Luke 12:48

CCC 2230

Some vocations may be very obvious because of our familiarity with them such as **Marriage** (being called to serve as a husband or a wife) and **Holy Orders** (being called to serve as a bishop, priest or deacon). Others we may know little or nothing about.

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God may call some people to the **committed single life**. The single life is not a vocation for those who never found the right person to marry and didn't want to enter the religious life. It is a very real calling to remain single for the sake of the Kingdom. Committed single persons are not ordained; they are part of the laity and are called to enrich the Church, as all lay people are called to do, through their holiness and service. They are called to breathe Christ's Good News into all the areas of life through social action.

CCC 898-900
CCC 2442

As you are aware, the many of adults marry and have a family to which all their time, finances and sacrifices are directed. Some adults are not called to this life and may lead the life of a **committed single** person. An adult who is called to the committed single life is able to use his time, talents, and treasure in ways that many people are not able to do because their vocation calls them to do otherwise. A parent is called to provide for their children first. A committed single person is called to provide for the needs of those who have no one to provide for them. This is a very noble calling and one that satisfies a person for their entire life.

Ordination of bishops, priests and deacons is a vocation to which men are called by the gift of God's grace. Though you and I are all members of the priesthood of Christ by virtue of our Baptism and are all able to freely and openly communicate with our God, the ministerial priesthood is a special consecrated ministry within the Church. The Church is the bride of Christ and is ministered to as a husband cares for his wife. It is therefore most fitting that the sacred ministry of the priesthood and diaconate is a vocation in which men serve the bride of Christ as Christ's representative.

CCC 1578, 1593

Another permanent vocation is the call to enter **consecrated life** such as a monk, nun, brother or sister. These men and women are "moved by the Holy Spirit...to follow Christ more nearly, to give themselves to God who is loved above all and, pursuing the perfection of charity in the service of the Kingdom, [and] to signify and proclaim in the Church the glory of the world to come." This commitment may manifest itself in public works or even in secret works depending on their particular religious order or commitment.

CCC 916
CCC 933

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Within the Church there are other callings, which are known as **lay ecclesial movements and ministries**. This covers a broad range of activities within the Church, such as the various roles of the laity in the liturgy, parenting, helping to sanctify one's family, teaching the faith, spreading the Gospel and evangelizing in the world. Some of these movements come in the form of an organization within the Church and some are even approved by the Holy See.

Lay people have this ability in their vocation because they have been baptized as priest, prophet and king through our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of this, they are essential in transforming the world and setting it on fire for the Lord.

CCC 901-913
Luke 12:49

Through the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist, we are ennobled by God to participate in the calling of the entire world into a relationship of holiness with God our Father. Holy Orders and Marriage are Sacraments concerned with the holiness of others specifically. These Sacraments are at the service of communion and have particular missions involved in them. Marriage carries with it the duty to lead your spouse to heaven. Through Holy Orders, a man is called to bring the members of the Church into salvation.

CCC 1533-1535

Some things to remember

As children, we are often asked what we want to be when we grow up. Most schools are set up to train us for a future career. The Church also emphasizes choosing the right job (vocation) for yourself. Does this mean that having the right vocation, job or career essential is for a person's happiness? Surprisingly, no. The foundational call from God is not to a particular vocation, job, career or way of life, but to **universal holiness** and communion with Him. This is the basis of all happiness. Often the key to happiness is using one's gifts fully for God by serving others in Christian love. This is why the Church teaches that "man... cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of himself." However, a refusal to answer God's call may result in a more difficult road to eternal life, or it may even jeopardize one's salvation. This is another reason why discernment is important.

Gaudium et Spes, 24

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We often measure our success in life by the degree of financial security and material comfort. To some, the measure of success may be material or physical comforts, but that is not what Jesus Christ taught nor lived. Personal satisfaction in life finds a firm foundation in our relationship with the Lord and secondly in our relationships with other people. This is the basis of the two greatest commandments, to love God with your whole being and to love your neighbor as yourself. It's not an arbitrary law; it's the key to happiness and holiness. The ultimate goal in life should be holiness; this is where true success lies.

Matthew 22:37-40

In our walk towards holiness, we should keep in mind the Beatitudes that Jesus left us. They will guide our actions and direct our prayer that we may find our Lord and the holiness to which we are being called.

“Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.
Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for
righteousness,
for they will be filled.
Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.
Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called sons of God.
Blessed are those who are persecuted because of
righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:3-12

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

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SKIT

Characters:

Secretary's Voice
Jesus
Young Executive #1
Young Executive #2
Tom

The scene is set to look like a typical office. A desk, a few chairs, maybe a bookcase or two, use whatever supplies your group can put together. A man in white (Jesus) is sitting behind the desk looking at a clipboard when the phone on the desk rings (you can create both this and the following effect by recording the sounds and secretary's voice ahead of time).

JESUS

Yes?

SECRETARY'S VOICE

Your next interview is here.

JESUS

Send him in.

Almost instantly, a young executive bursts through the door. He is well-dressed, carrying a briefcase and looking official but is over enthusiastic and practically sprints to the chair facing the desk. Once there, he grabs Jesus' hand, pumping it up and down wildly.

YOUNG EXEC 1

Thanks for seeing me! I'm glad to be here! Glad to meet you! I think this is going to be great. I already have a great vibe from you, I think we'll make a great team.

JESUS

Can you tell me...

YOUNG EXEC 1

A little about myself? Of course! But here, let me show you my resume (*pulls resume out of his briefcase and throws it across the desk*) See? I can make things happen for you!

JESUS

Ok. But what I really need...

YOUNG EXEC 1

Trust me, I know what you need! You need leadership, right? I got it. You need drive? I got it! I'm here to make a name for myself, to rise to the top, to be a success...

JESUS

But what I'm looking for...

YOUNG EXEC 1

Trust me, I'm what you're looking for! I've got charisma (*stops, grins and poses*). I've got charm (*poses again*). And I've got the ambition to make it all the way to the top.

JESUS

Ambition isn't really...

YOUNG EXEC 1

Isn't enough without the right attitude, right? I know! And believe me, I've got the right attitude. I'm a worker, a thinker. I'm a real go-getter!

JESUS

But...

YOUNG EXEC 1

No buts about it! I'm a go-getter... in fact, I'm going to prove it to you (*jumps up*). I'm going to GO (*points at the door*) and GET the job done!

JESUS

But you don't even know what I want, what I'm looking for...

YOUNG EXEC 1

(*from door*)

I'm going to go! And I'm going to get it! (*Storms from room*).

Jesus sits at his desk for a long minute, regrouping and obviously trying to clear his head. After a significant pause, he crosses out the name on his clipboard and pushes a button on the phone.

JESUS

Please send in the next interview.

The door bursts open again and another young executive walks in. This one is carrying a flip chart under one arm. He goes to Jesus, shakes his hand quickly, then goes to the corner of the desk and starts setting up the flip chart.

JESUS

I don't know if all this is necessary, I just want to talk...

YOUNG EXEC 2

I'm almost ready.

JESUS

But...

YOUNG EXEC 2

Trust me!

JESUS

(*under his breath*)

I hate it when people say that to me.

Young Exec 2 finally finishes setting up the chart and straightens up proudly.

YOUNG EXEC 2

There!

(He turns to Jesus with big, phony grin)

Now, let me show you what I can do for you! *(slaps the first graph on the chart)* This represents where your recruitment was about 25 years ago. Your numbers were good, souls were being saved. You were probably feeling like the King of the World.

JESUS

I am the King of the World.

YOUNG EXEC 2

Exactly. But here...

(flips the page on the chart revealing a graph with figures sloping negatively). This is where recruitment is today. Not so great, huh?

JESUS

I'm not sure recruitment is the right word...

YOUNG EXEC 2

But here, *(flips another page)* here is where we want recruitment to be.

JESUS

That would be great but...

YOUNG EXEC 2

But how are we going to get there? Good question. Luckily, I have just the answer *(flips final page on the chart, revealing a large picture of himself)*. I can help. I already have a plan.

JESUS

What plan?

YOUNG EXEC 2

(thumping the picture dramatically)

Advertising!

JESUS

(dubiously)

This isn't really an advertising type thing...

YOUNG EXEC 2

(ignoring this)

I'm going to get your name out there, on the street.

I'm going to sell, sell, sell!

JESUS

But...

YOUNG EXEC 2

In fact, look what I brought!

(Pulls out a bumper sticker or pin or pennant or anything where a logo will be visible. The item reads "Jesus for President")

I think we're ready to get started!

JESUS

I think you're missing the point.

YOUNG EXEC 2

Look, you're going to have to trust me on this one;
I'm the guy for you.

JESUS

But you don't even know what I really need or what I want from you.
I want you, I do, but...

YOUNG EXEC 2

But what? Not like this? You don't like my plan? Fine! Say no
more! I'm out of here!

With that, Young Exec 2 grabs his flip chart and storms from the room. Jesus sighs, takes a deep breath and scratches another name off the clipboard. Then he clicks the phone one last time.

JESUS

Do I have anyone else?

SECRETARY'S VOICE

Just one more, sir.

A moment later the door opens and a calm young person walks in. He is poised and self-confident but not overbearing. He walks over to the desk and sits down in the chair, waiting for Jesus to introduce himself.

JESUS

Thanks for coming today, Tom.

TOM

Thanks for inviting me.

JESUS

So, what can you do for our organization?

TOM

What do you need?

JESUS

(in a hopeful voice)
Excuse me?

TOM

(shrugs) What do you need? What do you want me to do?
Whatever it is, that's what I'll do. You're in charge.

Jesus puts down the clipboard with a smile.

JESUS

You're hired.



Novena to St. Joseph

Saint Joseph, I, your unworthy child, greet you. You are the faithful protector and intercessor of all who love and venerate you. You know that I have special confidence in you and that, after Jesus and Mary, I place all my hope of salvation in you, for you are especially powerful with God and will never abandon your faithful servants. Therefore I humbly invoke you and commend myself, with all who are dear to me and all that belong to me, to your intercession. I beg of you, by your love for Jesus and Mary, not to abandon me during life and to assist me at the hour of my death.

Glorious Saint Joseph, spouse of the Immaculate Virgin, obtain for me a pure, humble, charitable mind, and perfect resignation to the divine Will. Be my guide, my father, and my model through life that I may merit to die as you did in the arms of Jesus and Mary.

Loving Saint Joseph, faithful follower of Jesus Christ, I raise my heart to you to implore your powerful intercession in obtaining from the Divine Heart of Jesus all the graces necessary for my spiritual and temporal welfare, particularly the grace of a happy death, and the special grace I now implore:

(Mention your request).

Guardian of the Word Incarnate, I feel confident that your prayers in my behalf will be graciously heard before the throne of God. Amen.



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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 _____

Job Opening Skit _____

Novena to S. Joseph _____

Two Weeks Prior to Life Night:

Turn in a detailed outline of the Life Night to the youth minister. Allow the 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 _____

Job Opening Skit Characters:

Secretary's Voice _____

Jesus _____

Young Executive #1 _____

Young Executive #2 _____

Tom _____

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.

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.