

ALL WHO ARE THIRSTY

FAITH — OUR RESPONSE TO GOD

LIFE NIGHT OUTLINE

CATECHISM

142-144
150-158
160-162
1533
1816

YOUCAT

20-24

KEY TERMS

Faith
Grace
Salvation
Religion

SCRIPTURE

Mark 9:14-29
John 3:16-21
John 4:4-42
Hebrews 11:1

CHURCH DOCUMENTS

Evangelii Nuntiandi 13
Familiaris Consortio 50

KEY CONCEPTS

- Faith is our response to God's invitation of love and

a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

- Faith leads to discipleship. When we have faith in Christ, our lives are changed and we want to follow Him.
- Faith and religion are distinct responses to God that work together to maintain our relationship with Him.

GOAL

The goal of this night is to introduce teens to the virtue of faith and the need for their response to God's invitation of love - a love made most clear in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ.

ABOUT THIS NIGHT

This night centers around the story of the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:5-42), and her response of faith when Christ asks her for a drink. Naturally, everything about this Life Night is about thirst! The Life Night begins with a fun

game that will challenge teens to drink water from a cup that is held by a partner using several straws. This game leads into a teaching about faith as our response to Christ's invitation to divine life and the beginning of discipleship. The Break for the night is a small group that will challenge teens to discern where they are allowing Christ's living water into their lives and what things they are putting into themselves spiritually that they need to get rid of. The Life Night ends with a time of praise and worship that will challenge teenagers to empty themselves of all that is not Christ so they can be truly filled with abundant life.

PARENTAL NOTICE

This week at Life Night we began our semester about the Person of Christ by exploring the virtue of faith – what it is and what it demands of us. We explained that to accept the invitation of God’s love in each of our lives, we must respond to Christ’s call to “follow me” (Mark 1:17). We do this by having a personal relationship with Jesus through prayer and the Sacraments of the Church. The night revolved around the story of the Samaritan woman at the well, and her response of faith when Jesus asked her for a drink of water. When she responded to Jesus’ request out of faith, her life was changed forever. We challenged the teens to imitate her response in their lives; Christ asks for all of our joys, pains, dreams, and fears. Take some time to discuss this Life Night with your son or daughter and commit to talking with them throughout this important Life Teen semester.

Some questions for family discussion are:

- What does your relationship with Christ look like? How can we, as a family, build a stronger relationship with Him?
- How does the story of the woman at the well relate to your own life?

- What things do we do as a family that distract us from God? How can we minimize or eliminate those things?

ENVIRONMENT

The environment for this night is all about refreshment. Decorate the room with as much beverage memorabilia as you can find. Get Vintage Coca-Cola or Pepsi signs/posters and get as many brands of (non-alcoholic) drink represented as possible. Create large banners with slogans used by different beverage companies on them, e.g. “The Thirst Quencher,” or “Obey Your Thirst.” Also find as many (empty) cups, cans, bottles, and beverage containers you can, and hang them from the ceiling, put them on windowsills, stage, tables and wherever you can. Set up a couple of water coolers like the kind you would find in an office building, and set up a couple of sports drink coolers that a teen would recognize from the sideline of a sporting event.

For the Send you will need an empty bowl or basin set up in the front of the room. This will be used for the closing prayer.

GATHER

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

(5 min)

The youth minister should gather all the teens together, welcome them to Life Night, and lead an opening prayer. He or she should introduce any teens at Life Night for the first time.

THE LONG STRAW

(10 min)

Have the teens get into pairs. Give each pair of teens the following items:

- 15 straws
- Ten inches of masking tape
- One cup, filled with water

Prior to the night, use tape to mark off two lines in your main meeting space about ten feet (or about three meters) apart. Tell the teens that they will be competing in a contest. The rules of the contest are simple: One teen must stand on one line facing the other teen who will be holding the cup of water on his or her head. The first teen, while standing on or behind the opposite line, must drink all of the water from the cup using the straws provided. In order to do this, they will need to link all of the straws together in a way that will allow the water to flow.

Tell the teens that the first pair to completely finish their cup of water will be awarded a prize.

Each pair may work together to build their “long straw,” but in order to win, they must begin slurping the water through the straw only when they are positioned on the opposite lines.

For an added twist, have additional water available and have the teens refill their cup and then switch places. The first pair that has each teen finish the cup of water through the long straw will win. Have prizes for the pair of winners.

PROCLAIM

“ALL WHO ARE THIRSTY” TEACHING

(15 min)

The teaching for this Life Night focuses on faith as our response to God’s invitation to His Divine Life. This teaching lays a strong foundation for the rest of the semester, so be sure to take enough time to prepare.

An outline for the teaching can be found on pages 18 to 21.

BREAK

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

(25 min)

Break the teens into small groups of six to eight teens and one Core Member. The Core Member leading the group should lead the teens in a short prayer and then use the following questions for discussion:

- What do you think it means to be a disciple?
- In what ways can you relate to the Samaritan woman at the well?
- Do you find it challenging to share your faith with others? Why?
- Why is religious practice important for growing and sustaining our faith in Christ? Why do we

need to have faith in order to properly practice our religion? What happens when you separate faith and religion?

- Why is faith the only appropriate response to God? Where in your life do you feel like God has reached out to you, but you haven’t responded?

SEND

NIGHT WRAP-UP

(5 min)

The youth minister should gather all of the small groups back to the main meeting room and recap the main points of the night:

- Faith is our response to God’s invitation of love and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
- Faith is lived out and professed in a community of other Christian disciples.
- Faith and religion are distinct responses to God that work together to maintain our relationship with Him.

LIVING WATER

(15 min)

Invite your music minister and parish priest to be present for the closing prayer of the Life Night. As teens return from small group, hand each a small cup about half full of water. Instruct the teens not to drink any of the water as they are handed a cup.

The youth minister should explain to the teens that Jesus thirsts for us, and He desires our response to be our full trust in Him. This response is faith. This requires that we give Christ all that we are and become empty so he can fill us with living water. We often settle for things that cannot satisfy us and leave us thirsty, things that make us want more but never fill us. Faith in Christ requires that we empty ourselves so he can fill us up.

Invite the teens to take a few minutes to reflect on the things they are filling their lives up with

other than Christ. Have the music minister play a song, and invite the teens into a time of worship and offering. At the end of the worship song, the youth minister should invite the teens to come forward and offer up the water in their cup as a sign of submitting their lives to Christ. As an act of faith, have them prayerfully pour it into the empty basin near the front of the room. Have the music minister play the refrain from the worship song during this time. After all of the teens have had an opportunity to come forward, invite your priest to bless the water and sprinkle the teens with it in blessing to close the Life Night.

If your priest cannot be present, have a separate bowl of holy water up front for teens to bless themselves with before they leave the Life Night.

Close the night by praying the Hail Mary and Ave Maria.

ADAPTING THE LIFE NIGHT

- For the Gather, break the teens into small groups and give each group a fish bowl full of water and each group member 15 straws. The challenge will be the same, and the small group that finishes their fishbowl first will win the challenge

GOING DEEPER

- Alternative Small Group Questions — *Use the following small group questions for teenagers who want to dive more deeply into the topic:*
 - What excuses do you make to not grow in your faith and share it with others?
 - Why do you think faith needs to be lived out in a religious way? How would you respond to someone who said that religion is a bad thing?
 - Read Mark 9:14-29 with your teens. Then ask: Who do you relate to most in this narrative? Why? How do prayer and fasting relate to faith?
 - Where do you need God's grace to help your "unbelief?"

FURTHER READING

- Consider hosting a study group that discusses Bl. John Paul II's encyclical, *Redemptor Hominis*. This encyclical explores Christ's role as the redeemer of humanity. It is a rich theological work and can be drawn out through the course of the semester, covering a couple of sections each week. This is a great option for juniors and seniors in your youth group, or any teen who wants to dive more deeply into the Person of Christ.

Notes

ALL WHO ARE THIRSTY

TEACHING

KEY TERM DEFINITIONS

- Faith – A gift from God and our response to the whole truth that God has revealed to us through the Church and Jesus Christ.
- Grace – A free and undeserved gift that God gives us to become His adopted children.
- Religion – A set of beliefs and practices followed by people who have committed themselves to God.
- Salvation – The forgiveness of our sins and healed friendship with God, which God alone can do.

INTRODUCTION

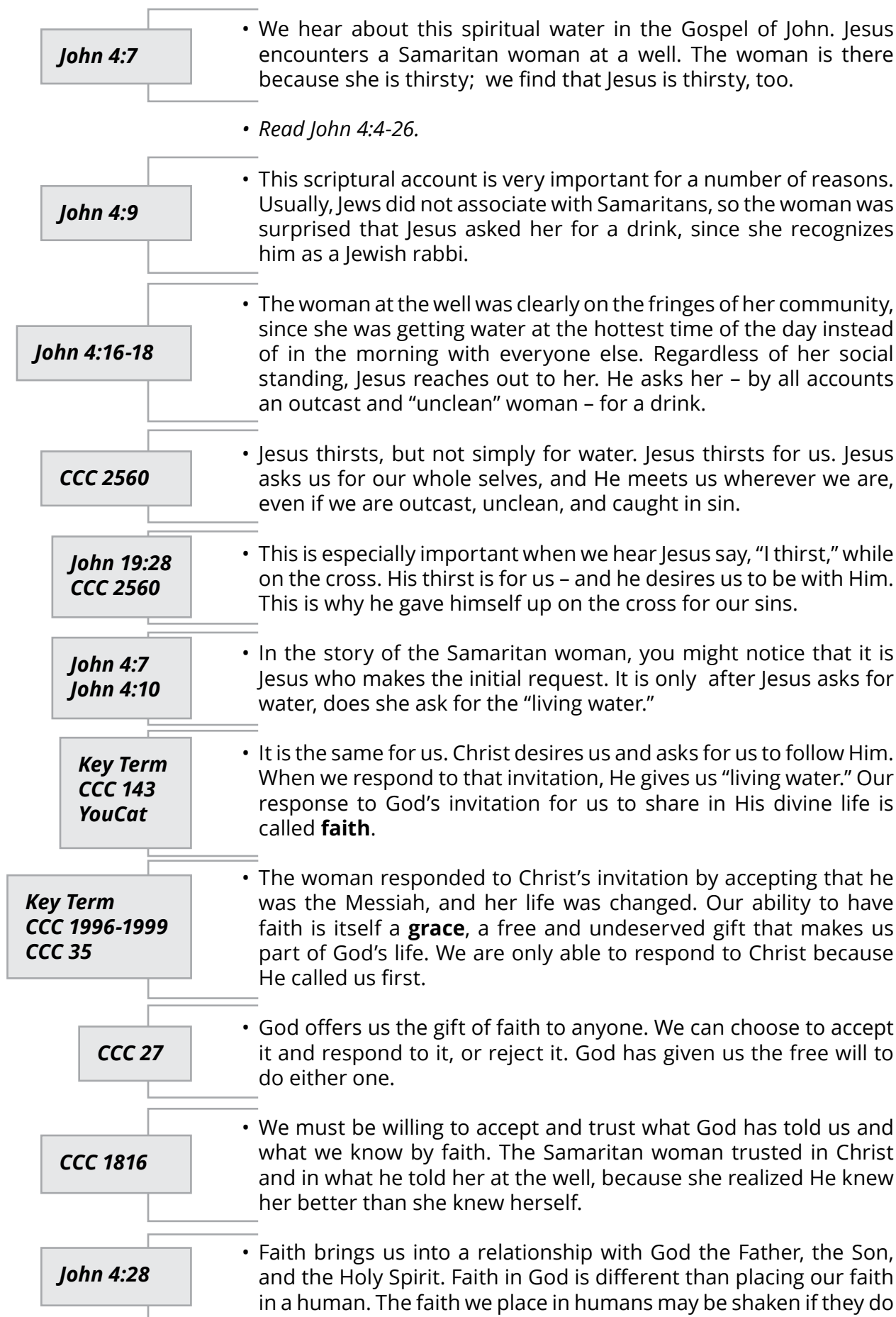
- Have you ever been really thirsty? We can go without food for days, but without water our bodies quickly shut down. Living things need water to survive – without water, there is no life.
- The effects of not drinking water are quickly evident, and the effects of replacing pure water with other things (alcohol, high caffeine, sugary drinks) can almost be as devastating. Our bodies need pure water to survive and thrive at their fullest.
- When we are thirsty, everything else becomes less important. Our survival instinct kicks in, and we become restless until we satisfy our thirst.

BODY AND SPIRIT

- We are created with a body and a soul, and both need to be provided for so that we can live life healthy and full lives.
- Just like our bodies thirst, our souls thirst as well. Our bodies need water to have life, and our souls need spiritual water in order to have life as well.

CCC 362
CCC 365

Jeremiah 17:7-8
John 3:5
CCC 2744



something that hurts us. Our faith in God is trustworthy; we can commit our whole selves to Him because he never lets us down.

- This relationship with God sustains us. As Christians, our belief in God the Father is tied with our belief in Jesus Christ, the Son. Our faith in Christ isn't just a nice thing – it changes us in radical ways.

CCC 150-152

FAITH LEADS TO DISCIPLESHIP

- When we recognize Jesus' role in our **salvation**, we are responding to the invitation which God has been extending since He created us. We enter into personal relationship with God as we recognize Christ as our Lord and Savior.

CCC 457
Key Term

- The Samaritan woman's life was radically changed once she recognized Jesus. She spread His message to everyone she met.

John 4:39

- Jesus has come to give us a better life than anything we've ever known, one free of sin and death. John 10:10-11 says: *"...I have come that they might have life, and have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."*

John 10:10-11
John 10:14-18

- Our faith in Christ leads us to be his disciples. Just like the Samaritan woman, when we recognize that Jesus is our savior our lives are changed and we follow Him.

CCC 1823
CCC 2347

- This means new and abundant life for us. A life with Christ is a better life than we could ever have without Him. When we trust in Jesus, we truly know ourselves and how to live joyfully.

- This means big things for us eternally (because through Christ we get to heaven) and for our daily lives. Our relationship with Christ grows stronger through our faith and constant trust in Him.

- The story of the Samaritan woman at the well gives us a glimpse into the heart of Jesus, who chooses to love us because He knows us better than we know ourselves. He asks us for an offering of whatever we have, no matter how worthy we think it might be. In return for our offering, He offers us eternal life.

- The Samaritan woman believed that Jesus was the Messiah, and she went to tell her entire town about it. Being a follower of Christ involves working to spread the faith by word and example and active participation in the Church community.

- This call is not always easy. Sometimes sharing our faith in Christ can be scary, and other times we may feel too busy to get involved at our parish or even to find time to pray. Staying connected to a community and sharing our faith is important to staying connected with Christ. We need to find time for these things.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAITH AND RELIGION

YouCat 24

- Our relationship with Christ begins with faith and is lived out through our religion. It is important to remember that Christ himself was religious – an observant Jew – and established religious practices for us, before he returned to God the Father.

Key Term
CCC 2084
CCC 2135

- Faith and religion are not the same, but are not opposed to each other. Faith is our response to God's invitation to share in His life through Christ. **Religion** is the set of beliefs and practices that are followed by people committed to serving and worshipping God.

CCC 763-766

- Our faith needs to be lived out in religious practice. Once we respond to our invitation to a relationship with Christ, we express that relationship through liturgical worship and prayer.
- Christ gave the Church the seven sacraments, which are outward signs of God's invisible grace; they sustain and strengthen our faith. We experience them in the context of our religious practice.
- Without religion, we lose the ability to express and nourish our faith.
- The opposite is also true; a person can be very religious but not have faith. This can lead people to empty religious practice or devotion without faith. This is not a good thing.
- We need to keep our faith in Christ at the center of our religious practice; otherwise, our worship can seem like a meaningless routine rather than an intimate relationship.
- It is this relationship with Christ that must be at the center of our lives. If we truly want to thrive in our lives, rather than simply "get by" we need Christ. Without his living water, which we receive in faith, we slowly start to die. Jesus asks for all of us, and in return, He gives us more than we could ever imagine.

LIFE NIGHT 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 _____

Game: The Long Straw _____

Small Group Discussion _____

Living Water _____

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 _____

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.
- ☐ E-mail entire Core Team an overview of the night and small group questions.

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

LIFE NIGHT EVALUATION

INSTRUCTIONS:

Use the following questions to discuss and evaluate your Life Night.

1. On a scale of 1-10, how well did this Life Night accomplish the goal we set? Explain.

2. What was the strongest aspect of this Life Night?

3. What kind of follow-up do we need to do after this Life Night?

4. What can we improve for future Life Nights? How can we accomplish this?

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