
LIFE IN THE FIRE

An Edge Night on the Structure of the Church

EDGE NIGHT OUTLINE

GATHER

Edge Night Introduction (5 min)

Welcome the youth and introduce any youth who are there for the first time. Give a brief overview of the topic of the Edge Night using the following as an example:

The Holy Spirit is ever-present in the Church and brings life to the Church. We, as the people of God, have the privilege of living this exciting life with the fire of the Holy Spirit that is present to us always and in very tangible ways through the sacraments. But just like any organization, the Church needs structure in order to operate properly and accomplish all of the things that have been entrusted to her. This week at Edge, we are going to learn more about what that structure looks like and how we fit in, because we are all a vital part of the Church.

Begin in prayer by using the *Come Holy Spirit* projection found on the *August 2018 Edge USB* and online at lifeteen.com under Edge Support: *August 2018* for the youth to follow along.

St. Vincent Pallotti (5 min)

Use the following information to share three fun facts about St. Vincent Pallotti and the work he did to teach others about the Holy Spirit.

Fun Facts

1. Saint Vincent did not have a powerful appearance, but his glance was powerful.
2. At the age of 16, he resolved to become a priest.
3. He spent most of his life selflessly looking after the poor in urban areas.

Teaching on the Holy Spirit

Saint Vincent had an incredible experience with the Holy Spirit. He was not a very good student growing up and showed little promise of ever advancing in his education. In the midst of his struggles, his mother suggested that he pray to the Holy Spirit, so St. Vincent asked the Holy Spirit for a ray of light to illuminate his poor understanding and the Holy Spirit helped him. His studies greatly improved and he continued on to be a great priest and preacher.

All the Same Game (15 min)

This game is played in a large group.

1. Begin by choosing one youth to leave the room.
2. Once that youth has left, choose another youth to be "it."

3. The youth who is “it” comes up with a signal that indicates an action that everyone else does. For example: every time the “it” youth crosses his or her fingers, all the youth in the room must do three jumping jacks.
4. Call back the youth who was outside of the room and have him or her try to figure out who is “it” by carefully observing the youth.
5. Play this for as many rounds as time allows, each time sending a different youth out and picking a different youth to be “it.”



SUGGESTIONS

This game can also be played in small groups if there are a large number of youth in your program.



STEP IT UP

After two or more rounds, change the rules without announcing it, such as having more than one person who is “it” or two signals to do two different things. In the final round, have either everyone or no one be “it.”

PROCLAIM

“Life in the Fire” Teaching (10 min)

This teaching can be found on pages 74 to 76.

BREAK

The Web (15 min)

Break the youth into their small groups and give each small group a ball of yarn or twine.

1. The youth all sit in a circle.
2. The Core Member, holding the ball of yarn, starts and shares one fact about him or herself and then rolls the ball of yarn or twine to a youth across the circle while holding on to the end of the string.
3. Then, that youth shares one fact about him or herself and rolls the ball of yarn or twine to someone across the circle while holding on to the end of the twine.
4. This continues until all the youth have had a turn. If time allows, continue to have the youth share until you reach the end of the ball of yarn or twine.
5. Each person in the circle should be holding at least one strand of twine and the group will have created a web.

During this activity, point out how each person in the group is unique but connected. Everyone has something different to share, but the web is incomplete without each person. At some point, consider having one youth drop their part of the web to show how the web breaks down without all of the members. To conclude, point out any similar characteristics between the youth as well.



SUGGESTIONS

Depending on your group size, the web activity could be done in a large group with a short debrief before the youth have a discussion in small groups.

Small Group Discussion (10 min)

Keep the youth in their small groups and use the following questions for a discussion based off of the activity they just completed:

- How does the web activity show the importance and connection of the roles and structure of the Church?
- How is the role of bishops and priests important to the Church? What would it be like without them?
- Do you think you have an important place in the Church? Why or why not?

8th Grade Adaptation

Use the following adaptation for your 8th grade youth who are ready to go deeper:

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-31 to lead a lectio divina reflection.

- *The first time, ask the 8th graders to close their eyes and listen attentively to the Scripture passage.*
- *The second time, ask one of the youth to read the passage and, if each 8th grader has a Bible, they can read along and try to zero in on a word or phrase from the passage.*
- *The third time, another youth can read it while they listen again and ask God to speak to them based on the word or phrase they received the previous time.*
- *Be sure to pause for silence between each reading and encourage the youth to maintain silence.*

Then use the following questions for discussion:

- What do you think God was saying to you through this Scripture passage?
- How does this Scripture relate to the Church and her structure?
- If we take our part in the Church seriously, we can see everyone is important. Does this make you want to change to more truly build up the Body of Christ in the world? How can you make changes in your everyday life to accomplish this?

SEND

Church on a Mission (15 min)

Bring the youth back to the large group and use the following to introduce this time of prayer:

LIFE IN THE FIRE

An Edge Night on the Structure of the Church

TEACHING GUIDE

GETTING STARTED

To cover the basic information, follow along and craft the talk based off of the bullet points. If your youth are ready to take it deeper, start incorporating a few of the Going Deeper call out boxes (like the one below) by picking the ones your youth would relate to the most.



GOING DEEPER

Check inside these boxes for tips and ideas on how to take your youth a little deeper with the Proclaim.

IMPORTANCE OF STRUCTURE

- *Ask the youth to respond: What was frustrating about the game? What was difficult? What was funny?*
- There are so many things in our lives that require a specific structure in order for them to function according to their purpose. For example, a house is built in a specific way with specific rooms that serve the purpose of daily living for families. Sports teams have specific structures, positions that are played, and rules for games so players can achieve their goal of being good athletes and excelling at their sport.
- In these examples we can see that structure can refer to physical things like buildings, or the structure of an organization of people like on a sports team.
- *Project an image of a Catholic church.*
- In the same way, the Church has physical structures, like the parish buildings we go to for Mass, that are made to fulfill the purpose of bringing people together in community to worship God.
- *Project an image of people during Mass.*
- But the Church also has a human element of structure in that there is specific order, roles, and responsibilities of the people that help us to achieve the purpose of worshipping God. (CCC 871-872)
- Structure is important for many areas of our lives and structure is important for the Church. Jesus gave the Church a specific purpose and mission to accomplish, but He also gave the Church a specific structure so that these things can be accomplished. (CCC 874)
- The Holy Spirit is always active in the Church; the structure of the Church is never stale or stagnant but always enlivened by the fire of the Holy Spirit. All of us are a part of the Church and are called to live in the power of the Holy Spirit that is present in the Church.

HIERARCHY

- While the physical structure of the Church is important, we are going to focus on the structure of the Church that is made up of people.
- *Project an image of the pope, cardinals, bishops, and priests.*
- The first structure of the Church is called the hierarchy. The hierarchy consists of the pope, bishops, and priests who lead our Church.
- The hierarchy was established first by Jesus, who gave Peter the role of leading the Church and, along with the other apostles, His authority to forgive sins, lead, and govern His people in the faith. (CCC 875-887, 976-983; Matthew 16:18)
- The faith, power, and authority of the apostles and Peter have been handed down through an unbroken line to our pope today and the priests and bishops who serve in our parishes. (CCC 875-879)



GOING DEEPER

For a visual explanation of apostolic succession, play the video “Hold My Keys” from the *Media Suggestions*.

- Within the hierarchy of the Church, there is the Magisterium. This is a group of bishops who, along with the pope, are in charge of passing on the truth of our Catholic faith without error. (CCC 890-891)
- It is the task of all ordained men — bishops, priests, popes, etc. — to teach and protect the faith and to sanctify the Church through prayer and the sacraments, as well as to govern the particular diocese and parishes they have been assigned to. (CCC 888-896)
- *Ask the youth to respond: What would it look like if we did not have the hierarchy in our Church? What do you think would happen to the structure?*

LAITY

- The hierarchy is not the only structure that is essential to the Church to accomplish her mission and purpose — the laity are also an essential part of the Church.
- *Ask the youth to respond: What does the word “laity” mean?*
- The laity are all of the people of the Church who are not ordained through Holy Orders, which includes all of us. (CCC 897)
- Just like the men who make up the hierarchy have specific roles and duties, so do the laity.
- It is important that we assist our priests and help at our parish in any way we can.
- It is our responsibility, as the people of the Church, to bring the Good News of Jesus and the Kingdom of God into all areas of our lives. Because we are all a part of so many activities in our communities, we have a large number of people we can reach who may not come to church. (CCC 898-900)

