

GIVE IT AWAY NOW

THE "THIRST FOR CHANGE" EDITION

GIVE IT AWAY NOW

Thirst For Change LIFE NIGHT OUTLINE

CATECHISM REFERENCE

#1928-1942
#537
#1238

SCRIPTURE

John 4:4-26
Isaiah 55:1-5
Exodus 17:1-7

GOAL

This is our third annual Global Life Night and service project. This year we are focusing on the corporal work of mercy of “giving drink to the thirsty.” This Life Night will give teens an awareness of the lack of clean water to millions of people in the world. Through a “change drive,” the global Life Teen community will raise money to build and maintain four water wells in Africa. Finally, this Life Night will reveal Christ as “living water” for all our needs.

ABOUT THIS NIGHT

In September 2008, Life Teen hosted the first global Life Night. As one family we donated more than 450,000 pounds of clothing to charity. In September 2009, we moved from clothing to food and were able to donate more than 200,000 food items to local food pantries and soup kitchens. This year we are at it again. This time we are joining together to “give drink to the thirsty” (another corporal work of mercy). We are asking all our Life Teen parishes to do the same Life Night on the same night – September 26, 2010. This time we are collecting change (and bills) to help bring clean drinking water to villages in Africa.

This Life Night starts by giving the teens an experience of thirst. Through salty snacks and crazy Saltine games (and no water), the teens will have fun and be thirsty. The Proclaim will highlight the current water crisis in many parts of the world as well as ways that the teens can be a part of the solution. The talk will also tie in our call as Christians to work for justice and live in solidarity with all people. During the Break, the teens will help count all the money collected while discussing in small groups the importance of water, both physically and spiritually. Finally, the Send is a meditation on the conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman in John 4 and how Christ is our “living water.”

SCHEDULING & PREPARATION

Our goal is to have all our Life Teen parishes participate in this year’s *Give It Away Now* global Life Night. The official date is September 26, but if you can’t do it on that date, you can schedule the Life Night before or after September 26th. Our goal is to unite the Life Teen family with a common experience and mission. This is also great to do as an area-wide Life Night. Contact other local youth ministers about joining together for this night. Be sure to work out (well in advance) the details about location, transportation, etc.

CHANGE DRIVE

This year, we are asking parishes to host a “change drive.” The money collected will be donated to W.A.T.E.R., an organization that works closely with Catholic Relief Services to build and maintain water wells in Africa. As in years past, this type of service project will take a lot of advance planning and advertisement.

At least one month before the Life Night, let the teens and the entire parish know about the change drive. Use Facebook, bulletin announcements, emails and phone calls to get the word out. Encourage the teens and their families to collect and save all their extra change. Challenge the teens to make a bigger donation by setting aside some of their allowance and/or paycheck to donate to this cause. At each Life Night leading up to this night, remind the teens about the change drive. If possible, make an announcement (and pass out flyers) at each of the Sunday Masses the week before the change drive. Encourage the entire parish to get involved. Set a parish goal of a certain amount and see if the parish can surpass the goal!

The weekend of the Life Night, have large water jugs (or another large container) available outside of all the Masses for parishioners to drop off their change (and bills!). If possible, have teens present to hold the jugs and invite the parishioners to participate. Have large water jugs for donations at the youth office and Life Night location as well.

ENVIRONMENT

Water, water everywhere! The environment for this night should douse the room in all things associated with water. As the teens enter, have the sounds of running water playing over the sound system. Have videos of waterfalls and rivers playing on the screen. Have water bottles hanging from the ceiling. Have large water jugs (the kind designed for water coolers) around the room to collect the teens’ donations. At the front of the room, create a well. It can be as simple as cardboard blocks stacked to create a circular “well.” This will be used in the teaching and the Send.

MEDIA SUGGESTIONS

YouTube: “World Water Day Video” from Charity: Water

YouTube: videos of waterfalls, rivers and rain for the environment

Website: Statistics and more information can be found at www.water.org

A Promotional Poster is provided in the May 2010 Life Support Box

GATHER *20 Minutes*

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS (5 min)

As teens enter the Life Night, have a variety of salty snacks available for them (i.e. pretzels, chips, etc.). Have water bottles as well – but empty ones. Do not allow the teens to get water or any other type of drink during this time.

The youth minister should gather all the teens together and welcome them to the Life Night. Remind the teens that this is part of the global Life Night and there are hundreds of parishes all over the world that are doing this same Life Night

tonight. The youth minister should also introduce any teens at Life Night for the first time.

SALTINE GAMES (15 min)

Divide the group into small groups for a series of relay races involving saltines (but still no water). This will get the teens up and moving while ensuring that everyone is nice and thirsty. Have Core Members prepared to be the judges and referees for the games. Below are just a few game ideas, do as many as time permits and try to get all the teens involved in at least one of the games:

Saltine Whistle – each contestant gets six saltines. The first person to eat all six saltines and whistle (audibly) wins.

Warning – there will be saltine pieces flying when they try and whistle, so be prepared!

Saltine Spit – have four teams (equal amounts of people) line up on one side of the room. On the other side of the room, have four clear cups each marked with a line about one inch from the bottom. Each team gets a large stack of saltines. The members of the team will take turns chewing up a saltine, running to the cup and spitting the saltine into it. The first team to hit the mark on the cup wins.

Saltine House – each class is given 20 saltines. Each team has to build a house with the saltines (all 20 have to be a part of the structure). Once the house is built (and remains standing without assistance), the team has to destroy and eat the house. The first team to build then eat their house wins.

PROCLAIM *15 Minutes*

“THIRST FOR CHANGE” TEACHING (15 min)

The teaching should blend together giving facts about the clean water crisis and what the Christian response should be. The person giving this talk should research the statistics and help paint a real picture of the issue while incorporating the Gospel teaching of Christ as the “living water” for all people.

1. Thirsty yet?

- 1.1 Are you thirsty? How many of you would love to have some water right now? While most of us have experienced thirst before, not many of us know what it is like to have NO access to clean water.
- 1.2 We take for granted that there will be water when we turn on the faucet. In fact, most of us think nothing of buying purified water because the tap water doesn't taste as good.

2. A Clear Problem (statistics from www.water.org)

- 2.1 Nearly one billion people do not have access to clean drinking water. That is about one out of every eight people on the planet.
- 2.2 These people drink from dirty, polluted streams, rivers and puddles – often walking many miles to get this water.
- 2.3 3.575 million people die each year from water-related diseases.

- 2.4 There are many different causes and factors that lead to these staggering statistics, but the reality is that no one should have to live without the most basic of necessities – water.
- 2.5 Through water purification and drilling of water wells, we have the ability to ensure that every person has access to clean drinking water.

3. Give Drink to the Thirsty

- 3.1 There are eight corporal works of mercy. Over the past two years, Life Teen parishes have gotten together for this “Give It Away Now” Life Night. The first year we “clothed the naked” by donating clothes. The second year we “fed the hungry” by donating food. This year, we are donating money to “give drink to the thirsty.”
- 3.2 Many different organizations are working to bring clean water to third world countries. It is more than just digging a well, the local people must be taught how to maintain the wells and keep them working.
- 3.3 Our donations today are going to W.A.T.E.R. (Water in Africa Through Everyday Responsiveness). This organization works with Catholic Relief Services and the Carter Center to build and maintain wells in Nigeria and Ghana, Africa.
- 3.4 As Christians we are called to be aware of the sufferings of our brothers and sisters, to not take for granted the blessings we have, and to share those blessings. It is more than just donating some spare change; we are called to work for the dignity of all people.

4. Water Works

- 4.1 Water is a big deal. We don't survive more than a couple of days without it. It is central to our survival; God created us this way.
- 4.2 Maybe this is why water is a big deal in Scripture as well. Water symbolizes birth, cleansing and life. God created the water; He parted it in the Red Sea; He made it come out of a rock for Moses; He changed it into wine; He walked on it; it poured out from His side on the cross.
- 4.3 We use Holy Water in Baptism as we are born into new life with Christ. God uses water to point us back to Him. There are people who are thirsty physically; there are also people (in this room) who are thirsty spiritually. God wants to satisfy both our physical and spiritual thirsts. We are called to help Him do both.

CHARITY: WATER VIDEO (3 min)

This short video is a great illustration of the issues regarding clean water and how we can help those in desperate need. It can be found on YouTube at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DEnrE4iMBU>

It can also be downloaded from the Charity: Water website at: <http://www.charitywater.org/media/videos/index.php?video=video4>

BREAK *30 Minutes*

COUNT & ROLL (10 min)

Break the teens back into the small groups from the Gather. Give each a large container of the donated money. Ask each group to count the money and roll the change (you can get rolls for the coins at the bank). At the end of this time, have each group submit their total to a designated Core Member. That Core Member will tally all the totals to get the grand total.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (20 min)

After the small group counts the money (possibly while they are rolling the coins), the Core Member should lead a discussion using the following questions:

- Have you ever experienced having no access to water?
- Why do you think this is still such a widespread issue?
- What can we do (beyond this night) to help those in need?
- How many times is water mentioned in Scripture? Can you name some?
- What does Jesus mean when He refers to Himself as “living water”?

SEND *15 Minutes*

WOMAN AT THE WELL SKIT (5 min)

Have two teens act out the scene from John 4:4-26 as someone else reads it. This can either be straight from Scripture or a modern-day retelling of the story. After the skit, the youth minister will recap the night and talk about how Christ is living water for us all. He promises to satisfy all our needs. The woman came looking for water and found so much more. We are called to bring all our “thirsts” to God and trust that He will provide.

LIVING WATER PRAYER (10 min)

Invite teens into a time of prayer for their own “thirsts.” If possible, have them write down what they are thirsting for right now and bring forward those pieces of paper and place them in the “well” at the front of the room. Next to the well, place a small bowl of Holy Water for the teens to bless themselves with as a reminder of the living waters of Baptism.

Close the night by spending time praying for those who will be helped by our donations. We will probably never meet them, but they are our brothers and sisters. Finish the night by praying the Hail Mary and Ave Maria.

AFTER THE LIFE NIGHT

After the Life Night, email your parish’s monetary donation total along with *one* group picture that includes a sign with the parish’s name, city, state, country (if outside the US) and the monetary donation total to giveitawaynow@lifeteen.com. We will post the totals, along with pictures from all the parishes, on www.lifeteen.com in the weeks following the Global Life Night. Please send us your results no later than October 18th, 2010.

Once you’ve collected your donations, you will need to send them directly to W.A.T.E.R. On their website (www.waterinafrica.com), look for the button marked Life Teen. Once you’ve clicked on Life Teen, you will be taken to a page that explains the Give It Away Now project and at the bottom will be a button that says “Donate.” Click on that to download a form to mail in with your payment.