

LIFE NIGHT: THE ONE WHO FREED YOU

DEAR PARENTS AND FAMILY

Throughout this series, we are going to dive into the Ten Commandments and how they challenge us to live our lives. As Christians, we don't simply look at the Ten Commandments alone, though. The list of commandments are important, but you may notice that all but two of the commandments focus on things we should not do. The Ten Commandments give us boundaries and clearly define what is sinful. The Ten Commandments are not just some set of rules that the Church made up or simply suggestions on how to be a good person, but rather a gift from God to reveal to us how to live in the freedom of being His children. They form the foundation of "best practices" for living a holy life. When we look at the Ten Commandments we notice that the commandments are given in a specific order. The first three commandments are the most vital for a solid foundation of faith as they apply directly to our relationship with God.

The goal of *The One Who Freed You* is for teens to understand how they can set their priorities to be constantly focused on God's love through breaking open the first three commandments. The conversation starters below will help you begin conversations with your teens about the content they learned during the Life Night.

KEY CONCEPTS

- God is sovereign and recognizing the place He should have as first in our lives can help us properly arrange our priorities to focus on Him and His love for us.
- In honoring God's name, we show Him the respect and love that is due to Him.
- God's love is poured out upon us through the Holy Eucharist and by firmly committing to participate in this sacrifice we tangibly make God a priority in our week.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

"He said to him, 'You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.'" (Matthew 22:37)

CATECHISM REFERENCE

"God makes himself known by recalling his all-powerful loving, and liberating action in the history of the one he addresses: 'I brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.' The first word contains the first commandment of the Law: 'You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve him. ... You shall not go after other gods.' God's first call and just demand is that man accept him and worship him." (CCC 2084)

CONVERSATION STARTERS

- How can we prioritize God more as family?
- How can we hold each other accountable in our speech?
- What can each of us do to further make the Sabbath holy in our lives?

LIFE NIGHT: AS YOURSELF

DEAR PARENTS AND FAMILY

This week, we move into the second section of commandments, which includes the fourth through tenth commandment. This section can be grouped together as “love of neighbor.” This week we talk specifically about the fifth, fourth, and eighth commandments. These remind us of the importance of being life-giving. Life is a gift given to all created things by God. All living things are created by the Creator for a specific plan and purpose, the greatest of all creation being the human being who is created in God’s image and likeness. For this reason, human life is sacred, and each human person remains in a special relationship with God, for God is the Creator and the true end of each human life.

The goal of *As Yourself* is for teens to understand the importance of loving our neighbor through breaking open the fifth, fourth, and eighth commandments. The conversation starters below will help you begin conversations with your teens about the content they learned during the Life Night.

KEY CONCEPTS

- The gift of life is sacred, and all humans deserve to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Treating others with respect and dignity begins in our homes in the way we obey our parents or caregivers and how we treat our family members.
- By continuously proclaiming the truth of Jesus and building relationships based on honesty, we uphold others’ inherent worth and dignity.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

“Jesus said: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” (Mark 12:31)

CATECHISM REFERENCE

“In response to the question about the first of the commandments, Jesus says: ‘The first is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ The second is this, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” (CCC 2196)

CONVERSATION STARTERS

- Do you think it is hard for us to show love and respect for one another at home? Why or why not?
- When are we most likely to not treat one another with dignity and respect, and how can we avoid or navigate those times?
- With whom in our lives can we share the truth of Jesus?

LIFE NIGHT: A WAY FORWARD

DEAR PARENTS AND FAMILY

We are going to focus on the sixth and the ninth commandments this week. Both of these commandments prohibit the use of another person, especially for sexual gratification. At their core, these commandments concern respect for other people in a deep and profound way. All of us have worth and innate dignity simply because we were created and loved by God. Nothing that anyone does, owns, or looks like can ever change that fact. Knowing and believing we have this innate dignity calls us to respond to better ourselves so as to avoid occasions of sin. It doesn't simply enable us to avoid sin, though, but chastity allows us to live virtuously and uphold other people in their worth and dignity.

The goal of *A Way Forward* is for teens to realize God's great care for human relationships and to call them to embrace chastity in both word and deed through breaking open the sixth and ninth commandments.

KEY CONCEPTS

- God reveals His great care for His children by providing them with clear directions regarding their relationships, particularly marriage and the life-giving union of a married man and woman.
- Through the virtue of chastity and these two commandments, God asks us not to be jealous of others and enter into the purity of mind, heart, and action.
- While we will always struggle with our desires, we can continue to practice chastity by growing in the virtue of temperance.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

"God created mankind in his image; in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them." (Genesis 1:27)

CATECHISM REFERENCE

"Chastity means the successful integration of sexuality within the person and thus the inner unity of man in his bodily and spiritual being. Sexuality, in which man's belonging to the bodily and biological world is expressed, becomes personal and truly human when it is integrated into the relationship of one person to another, in the complete and lifelong mutual gift of a man and a woman. The virtue of chastity therefore involves the integrity of the person and the integrality of the gift." (CCC 2337)

CONVERSATION STARTERS

- Is there a married or dating couple that you admire? What about their relationship stands out to you?
- What is one practical thing we can do as a family to uphold and support another family or married couple?
- What does it mean to you to be a gift of self to another?

LIFE NIGHT: PRONE TO WANDER

DEAR PARENTS AND FAMILY

The last two commandments we are going to work through in this series are the seventh and the tenth commandments. These two commandments concern our relationship with each other as we respect the possessions of our neighbor. These two commandments give direction on how to properly order our use and desire of possessions. Both can be put simply — do not steal from others and do not desire what other people have for yourself — but these are tough to live by. We are easily distracted by material goods and it is difficult to be detached from worldly things and the comforts that they bring and to put all our trust in God.

The goal of *Prone to Wander* is for teens to understand what it means to practice charity through breaking open the seventh and tenth commandments. The conversation starters below will help you begin conversations with your teens about the content they learned during the Life Night.

KEY CONCEPTS

- We all have the right to private property, but we should also use what we have to uplift the poor and marginalized.
- We are meant to place our hope solely in God rather than relying on material possessions to make us comfortable.
- We can be more charitable to God and neighbor through practices of fasting and sacrifice.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

“Jesus said: ‘Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and decay destroy, and thieves break in and steal. But store up treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor decay destroys, nor thieves break in and steal.’” (Matthew 6:19-20)

CATECHISM REFERENCE

“‘The Church’s love for the poor . . . is a part of her constant tradition.’ This love is inspired by the Gospel of the Beatitudes, of the poverty of Jesus, and of his concern for the poor. Love for the poor is even one of the motives for the duty of working so as to ‘be able to give to those in need.’ It extends not only to material poverty but also to the many forms of cultural and religious poverty.” (CCC 2444)

CONVERSATION STARTERS

- Are there things at home that we need to return to their respective owners?
- How can we become more attentive to the needs of the community as a family?
- What three items can we donate right now to those in need?