

Youth Night

The Incarnation

Purpose of the Night

This youth night is designed to provide a teaching on the Incarnation of Jesus. The Incarnation is one of the most important and fundamental beliefs of our Catholic faith as it encapsulates the humility and love of God in becoming flesh and being a human being in the person of Jesus Christ. The goal of the night is to give the students a better understanding of the Incarnation and of the virtue of humility that is at the center of this teaching.

Supplies Needed

Cheese balls
Shaving cream

Environment

The environment for this night will be fairly simple as it should try and depict the verse from John 1:14 that says "And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us us." To capture this place at the front of the room an open bible on a stand with candles around it. Next to the bible, place a wooden cross or crucifix.

Preparation

Snacks/fellowship time (20 minutes)

Before diving into the topic, have snacks or even a meal available for the youth as they arrive. Allow them time to socialize with their friends as well as to meet any new people. Be sure to have yourself as well as any core team mingle among the kids and reach out especially to anyone who may be new. This time would also be a good time for any announcements as well as announcing any birthdays.

Game – Cheese ball toss (10 minutes)

Divide into small groups. Try to have at least 4 or 5 people in a group but probably no more than 8 or 9. Designate one person (preferably an adult core member) to cover their face in shaving cream. The same person should take a trash bag (with a hole cut into the top) and place it over them to act as a covering. Each team will form a single file line with the first person standing about 10 feet or so from the person with the shaving cream. When the game starts, each person in line will get a chance to throw a cheese ball at the person with the shaving cream. Each person may only throw one at a time then move to the back of the line. The team that sticks the most cheese balls to the person's face in 2 minutes wins.

Introduction of the Topic (5 minutes)

Transition the youth into the main space to begin the night. The youth minister will begin by introducing the topic of the night.

Proclamation

Proclamation verse: John 1:14 – “And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.”

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Reading (John 1:1-14)

A Reading from the Gospel of John

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be. What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. A man named John was sent from God. He came for testimony, to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came to be through him, but the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, but his own people did not accept him. But to those who did accept him he gave power to become children of God, to those who believe in his name, who were born not by natural generation nor by human choice nor by a man's decision but of God. And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.

Prayer

Heavenly Father,

We come before you this day in thanksgiving for the gift of Your Son and our Savior Jesus Christ and His Incarnation to become a human being like us. Open our hearts this day and allow us to take on the same humility as your Son. We ask this in your name.

Amen.

(Optional) If you have a musician who can begin the night with a praise and worship song, that could be used as the opening prayer

Explanation

Teaching (15-20 minutes)

Choose a speaker to talk to your group about this topic and its importance in our lives. The speaker can be the youth minister, a core member, a parish priest or deacon, a guest speaker, or anyone who you feel may be qualified to speak on the topic. You can use the outline below to provide some thoughts for this talk.

Transition from game

- The game required the Core Team member to check their pride at the door and humble their self by covering their face in shaving cream and allowing others to throw cheese balls at their face.
- What is Humility?
 - o The virtue by which a Christian acknowledges that God is the author of all good. Humility avoids inordinate ambition or pride, and provides the foundation for turning to God in prayer (CCC 2559). Voluntary humility can be described as "poverty of spirit" (CCC 2546).
 - o Humility is necessary for a team to win because if the core member is not willing to be humble than there is no chance to win the game.
 - o The same is true about our faith and our salvation.
 - Mankind was separated from God through and act of pride.
 - We are reconciled to Him by God's ultimate act of humility of becoming a human being.
 - *John 1:14 – "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us."*
- The Word became a person just like all of us in order to draw us to the Father

What is the "Word"?

- We hear this term a number of times throughout Sacred Scripture
 - o Creation – God the Father speaks the world into creation.
 - o The Patriarch's (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses) – We hear a number of times that the word of God came to these men and this is how they communicated with God
 - o The Prophets – The Word of God came to the prophets and spoke through them to the people
- Whenever we hear of the Word of God we are actually coming into contact with a person rather than just a simple word.
 - o The Word of God is the Son, the second person of the Trinity.

Why did the Word become flesh?

- The Fall of man
 - o The Fall of mankind created a gap between man and God. We were separated from the Father and unable to bridge the gap ourselves.
 - o The only way in which we could be reconciled with God the Father was through the Incarnation – *John 1:14*
 - It is only by God becoming a man that He can draw us back to Him.
- The Word becoming flesh is the single most humbling act ever.
 - o God, who is an infinite and eternal being, humbles Himself to a finite human who can be tempted, suffer, and even die.

What does this mean for us today?

- We have hope
 - o *Titus 3:3-7 – "For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, deluded, slaves to various desires and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful ourselves and hating one another. But when the kindness and generous love of God our savior appeared, not because of any righteous deeds we*

had done but because of his mercy, he saved us through the bath of rebirth and renewal by the holy Spirit, whom he richly poured out on us through Jesus Christ our savior, so that we might be justified by his grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life.”

- Before the Incarnation mankind was destined for a path of suffering, death, and eternal separation from God.
- Through the single act of mercy and humility, we have hope in Christ and hope in eternal salvation.

Video – “A Man Fell in a hole” (5 minutes)

This video is a powerful illustration of the importance of God becoming man and can provide a good transition between the talk and small groups. The video can be found on YouTube at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5WCTltHR-Hg>

Application

Small Groups (20 minutes)

Divide the group into small groups. The easiest way would be to keep the same groups as from the opening game. Below are some discussion questions that you can use.

1. What has stuck out to you so far from tonight? What stuck out to you from the game, talk, or video?
2. Who is the “Word”?
3. Why did the Word have become flesh?
4. Do you think the world would look different today if Jesus had never come to this earth? If so, how?
5. Do you think that your own life would be different if Jesus had never come to the earth? If so, how?

Celebration

Recap of the night and closing prayer (10 minutes)

Gather everyone into the church or a prayerful area and spend a few minutes recapping the night and wrapping up by explaining the importance of the Incarnation. Take a few minutes to offer up any intentions and close with the Litany of Humility which can be found on the next page:

Litany of Humility

O Jesus, meek and humble of heart, **Hear me.**

From the desire of being esteemed, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the desire of being loved, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the desire of being extolled, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the desire of being honored, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the desire of being praised, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the desire of being preferred to others, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the desire of being consulted, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the desire of being approved, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the fear of being humiliated, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the fear of being despised, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the fear of suffering rebukes, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the fear of being calumniated, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the fear of being forgotten, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the fear of being ridiculed, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the fear of being wronged, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the fear of being suspected, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

That others may be loved more than I, **Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.**

That others may be esteemed more than I, **Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.**

That, in the opinion of the world, others may increase and I may decrease, **Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.**

That others may be chosen and I set aside, **Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.**

That others may be praised and I unnoticed, **Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.**

That others may be preferred to me in everything, **Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.**

That others may become holier than I, provided that I may become as holy as I should, **Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.**