

THE BIG LIE

An Edge Night on the Fall of Man

TEACHING GUIDE

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.

- Ask the youth to recall as much as they can about the creation of humanity from the previous Edge session. Write their responses on a whiteboard or large piece of butcher paper.
- At our last Edge Night, we learned that God created the world and created it good. God created men and women and created us very good; we are all made in God's image and likeness. Humanity had a perfect relationship with God, each other, and with creation. (CCC 374-379)
- God gave Adam and Eve free will so they could choose Him without being forced to love God. Without free will, love cannot exist. God makes a single rule for Adam and Eve to obey:
- *Read Genesis 2:15-17.*
- Adam and Eve can obey the rule and live in a relationship with God, but they can also freely choose to disobey the rule and break their relationship with God.



GOING DEEPER

Ask the group to quickly brainstorm a list of rules and why they are important, e.g., "Traffic rules are important because they keep people safe." Then, ask them what the consequences of not following these rules are. Point out that all of the consequences involve a breakdown of order and peace into chaos and suffering.



GOING DEEPER

If your parish subscribes to Life Support, show the video "Guardrails" from the Media Suggestions.

- Unfortunately, Adam and Eve are not alone in the garden. A serpent that challenges their obedience to God and their relationship with God tempts them. The serpent implies that God is withholding something from them – he tells them a lie. (Genesis 3:5)
- Adam and Eve believe the lie rather than trusting that God was telling the truth and that God would take care of them. They choose to break God's rule and choose themselves over God. (CCC 396-398)
- When this happens, the harmony that humanity lived in with God was broken. Adam and Eve became afraid of God, rather than trusting in God. They felt ashamed around each other, and the relationship they had with creation was also distorted. (Genesis 3:7-8)
- We call the moment that Adam and Eve chose against God original sin and every person is impacted by it. The consequences of original sin are suffering, evil, and ultimately death. (CCC 399-401)
- Every person is born with the stain of original sin. Our world is impacted by original sin and we see the effects every time we witness a natural disaster, hear about an act of terrorism or violence, or when we personally sin. (CCC 402-409)



GOING DEEPER

For a greater understanding of how every person is impacted by the decision of someone else, walk through St. Paul's explanation of original sin in Romans 5.

- God loves us, though, and didn't abandon us to sin and death. God makes a big promise – a promise much bigger than the lie that the serpent made. God promises to send us a savior that will redeem us. That savior is Jesus. (Genesis 3:15, CCC 410)
- Jesus is the “new Adam” who is perfectly obedient to God the Father. Adam's sin brought death into the world, but Jesus' sacrifice and death on the cross brings life. That is pretty amazing. God makes a huge promise at the beginning of creation and keeps it. (CCC 411)
- Jesus gave us the Sacrament of Baptism so that we could be free from the effects of original sin. Many of us were baptized as young children or babies, so we may not remember a lot about the sacrament. The moment we were baptized, though, the stain of sin that we are left with from Adam and Eve was erased. (CCC 1263)
- Baptism erases the stain of original sin from our soul, but not the effects. We will still wrestle with a tendency to sin, which we call concupiscence. It means that without God's grace, we will choose sin. But when we cooperate with God's grace, we can choose to avoid sin – we can do what Adam and Eve failed to do. (CCC 1264)
- *Ask for a few examples of times when the youth were presented with a choice to do the right thing or to do the wrong thing and chose the right thing. What happened when they decided to do what was right? How did they feel? Take a few answers and affirm the choices the youth made.*
- Even though we make the right decisions, it is impossible to make the right decisions all of the time without grace. We may never be perfect in our lifetime, but Jesus is continually working in our hearts to make us perfected and holy. We have to want to be holy, though.

- When Jesus teaches the disciples how to pray the Our Father, He tells them to ask God the Father to help them to avoid temptation. We make this same prayer and ask God to give us the grace to avoid temptation. We are always going to be confronted by sin. Our lives are a battle of good and evil, but we can be victorious through prayer and grace (CCC 2846-2849, Matthew 5:13).
- All sin is a lie - it promises something it can never deliver. God promises something that He always delivers - His grace, love, and mercy. Every one of us has probably sinned in the past day. And all of us have sinned in our lifetime. We've chosen against God. But God doesn't give up on us. God still rescues us.
- One of the ways that God rescues us is through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. After we are baptized, we still struggle with those effects of sin and may commit more sins. Jesus gave us the Sacrament of Reconciliation to bring continued healing to us and to give us the grace we need to go and try to "sin no more" (John 8:11, Romans 3:23).
- We have an opportunity to receive grace in the Sacrament of Reconciliation in a few minutes and to spend time with Jesus in prayer. Your challenge during this prayer is to really hand over your sins to Jesus through the Sacrament of Reconciliation and invite Him into the areas where you are hurting or broken. Jesus is ready to heal you - will you let Him?

Notes:

Examination of Conscience and Journaling (10 min)

Divide the youth into their small groups and pass out copies of the "Examination of Conscience" found on the *August 2016 Edge USB*. A preview is found on page 93. This examination is broken up by grade level, so be sure to give each middle school youth the appropriate handout. Invite the youth to take several minutes to examine their conscience and prepare for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.



SUGGESTIONS

If you are unable to offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation, lead a small group discussion with the youth and then invite them to complete the Examination of Conscience to close the small group. The following questions can be used to facilitate a discussion:

- Why do you think Adam and Eve were so tempted by the serpent? How would you have responded to that temptation?
- Why is sin a lie? What makes a lie believable? How do you feel when you have been lied to?
- In what ways have you felt the effects of original sin (suffering, broken relationships, natural disasters)? How does Jesus offer us hope?

Sacrament of Reconciliation and Adoration (35 min)

Prior to the Edge Night, invite several priests to be present to hear confessions. Ask your parish priest to be present to expose the Blessed Sacrament before opening up a time for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. If possible, invite your music ministry to lead worship during Eucharistic Adoration. Challenge the youth to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation and then spend time with Jesus in Adoration through the rest of the evening.

Close with Benediction. Pass out cards that list your parish's schedule for the Sacrament of Reconciliation to all of the youth in case any middle school student did not receive the sacrament but wanted to go.



SUGGESTIONS

If you have never done Adoration with middle school youth refer to the "*How To*" *Do Adoration With Middle School Youth* handout found on the *August 2016 Edge USB*.