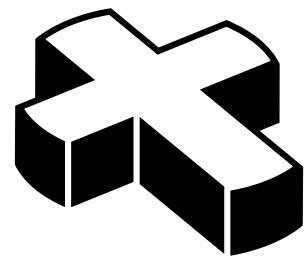


**SPG**

# WIRES AND ROBOTICS

Questions About the Human Person



**EDGE**

Middle School Ministry

 LIFE TEEN



# WIRES AND ROBOTICS

Questions About the Human Person

## SEMESTER PLANNING GUIDE CONTENT

<b>INTRODUCTION</b> Important Information About the <i>Semester Planning Guide</i>	Pg. 5
<b>THE GREAT IDEA</b> Why Am I Here?	Pg. 12
<b>INTERNAL COMPONENT</b> What Does It Mean to Be Human?	Pg. 24
<b>BINARY CODE</b> Does My Body Matter?	Pg. 36
<b>LIMITED EDITION</b> What Makes Me Unique?	Pg. 48
<b>INSTRUCTION MANUAL</b> Why Should I Live a Good Life?	Pg. 60
<b>BEYOND WIRES AND ROBOTICS</b> Where Am I Going?	Pg. 72

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# WIRES AND ROBOTICS

Questions About the Human Person

## THE BIG QUESTIONS

Generation Z (those who were born between 1995 and 2015) is unlike any other generation before them, and the *Semester Planning Guide* is created specifically for these youth. Facing the reality that young people are becoming less religious, are less likely than ever before to claim a religious identity, and are no longer being raised with a Christian worldview, we are taking an entirely new approach to how we talk about religion and our Catholic faith with middle school youth.

Before they can care about what the Church teaches, they need to know that God exists. Before we can teach them details about morality, they need to know that there is absolute truth. Before we can expect them to be excited or invested in the Mass and the sacraments, they need to know Jesus. The *Semester Planning Guide* will be full of Catholic teachings, doctrines, devotions, and practices, but it will have a greater focus on the foundations of our faith and present them in a kerygmatic way that answers the big questions this generation is asking.

## WIRES AND ROBOTICS

Who am I? Why am I here? What is the purpose of my life? What does it mean to be human?

These very questions are pivotal to our identity and how we understand both who we are and our dignity and worth. Middle school youth are beginning to explore who they are and who they want to be, and they may be wondering why they even exist. Developmentally, finding their identity is one of the biggest tasks for this age group. This *Semester Planning Guide* is designed to help middle school youth tackle the big questions about what it means to be human and what God has revealed to us about our humanity. It will help the youth see the origin, destiny, and dignity of every human being, so they can form their identity on the foundation of truth and discover who God created them to be.

## HOW TO USE THE SEMESTER PLANNING GUIDE

This *Semester Planning Guide* contains six Edge Nights. Each Edge Night covers a different aspect of the big question that is being addressed. For the most cohesive and comprehensive succession of topics, it is recommended that these Edge Nights are used in the order in which they appear in the *Semester Planning Guide*. However, each Edge Night is not dependent upon the middle school youth remembering the previous Edge Night in order for the topic to be understood.

# SEMESTER PLANNING GUIDE AT A GLANCE

Each *Semester Planning Guide* begins with a quick glance at what will be covered throughout the six Edge Nights. The *Semester Planning Guide at a Glance* is useful for seeing the big picture of the semester and for planning. It should be given to the Core Team as a handout.

Each *Semester Planning Guide at a Glance* provides the goal for the semester, the set environment for the semester, a list of the six Edge Nights in the *Semester Planning Guide*, the goals of the Edge Nights in the *Semester Planning Guide*, as well as suggested resources for the Core Members’ own formation.

# EDGE NIGHT AT A GLANCE

At the beginning of each Edge Night is an *Edge Night at a Glance*. This handout is essential for planning the Edge Night and preparing the Core Team.

Each *Edge Night at a Glance* provides the Scripture and Catechism references for the Edge Night, as well as any other helpful resources. It also provides the goal for the particular Edge Night and an overview and purpose of the Gather, Proclaim, Break, and Send. At the end of every Edge Night is a weekly challenge to help the middle school youth put what they learned into action. The weekly challenge is included in the *Edge Night at a Glance* as well.

# EDGE NIGHT SET UP

The *Edge Night Set Up* can also be found at the beginning of each Edge Night. This handout can be used for planning the Edge Night with the Core Team.

Each *Edge Night Set Up* gives any specific instructions for setting up the room, which may include minor adaptations to the set environment for the semester. It also includes a list of the supplies that are needed for the Edge Night and which part of the Edge Night they will be used for (G for Gather, B for Break, S for Send). This guide also provides an outline for assignments for the Edge Night that can be filled in with the names of Core Members, giving clarity to the various roles throughout the Edge Night.

# GATHER

Every Edge Night begins with a Gather. During the Gather, the youth are welcomed, gathered together, and given a brief introduction to the Edge Night. There is always an instruction to review the previous week’s challenge and a time to invite the youth to share about their experience of putting what they learned into action.

The Gather always includes a game or activity. Due to the developmental realities of this age group, games are incredibly important. Games serve the purpose of helping the youth enter into the Edge Night and build community. They also address their developmental need for movement and aid them as they experience a loss of childhood by giving them a time to simply have fun and play. The games and activities in the Gather may be just for fun or they may have a direct link to the teaching points — the purpose for each Gather is outlined in the *Edge Night at a Glance*.

# PROCLAIM

The attention span for the majority of Gen Z youth is eight seconds. That being said, teachings for this age group should be no more than ten minutes and need to be engaging and interactive.

The *Proclaim Outline* in each Edge Night provides bullet points and callout boxes to aid in crafting a talk. These outlines supply the necessary information, as well as areas for writing to help the user make the talk more personal and relevant to the middle school youth in the audience. The outlines are not created to be read to the youth but are to be used as a launching point for an engaging and informative teaching that is specific to the youth who are being served.

For added assistance in crafting a Proclaim teaching, refer to the “Proclaim Walk-Through” videos found on the *March 2020 Edge USB* and online at [lifeteen.com](http://lifeteen.com) under Edge Support: *March 2020*.

Going Deeper: At any given point in a *Proclaim Outline*, there may be a *Going Deeper* callout box. This section provides deeper insight into the topic that was presented in the previous bullet point. The person who is giving the talk must assess the needs of the particular middle school youth they are addressing and decide whether or not to use the information provided.

# BREAK

After every Proclaim, the youth divide into small groups to dive deeper into the content that was presented. The purpose of the Break is for the youth to process the information in a variety of ways and begin to learn how to express their faith to others. Each Break includes an activity, which provides different avenues for learning, as well as questions to be used for discussion. A Whip Around Question can be found at the beginning of each small group discussion. It is a lighthearted question that should be answered quickly by the youth as you move around the circle and is a fun way to get the youth comfortable talking in small groups.

The purpose of small groups is to provide a safe place for middle school youth to share about their faith, ask questions, and wrestle with what they are learning as they build community with one another and grow as disciples of Christ. In order to achieve this goal, we recommend dividing the middle school youth into small groups based on their grade and gender. Each small group should have six to ten youth and two Core Members who will lead the group. Male Core Members should lead male small groups and female Core Members should lead female small groups. The small groups should remain the same for at least one semester.

If you are not able to implement this best practice, there are scalable options and trainings available to help you achieve this goal in your Edge program. For more information, refer to the *Edge Small Group Creation Guide*, which can be found on the *March 2020 Edge USB* and online at [lifeteen.com](http://lifeteen.com) under Edge Support: *March 2020*, or contact your parish coach.

It can be challenging to run an effective small group because of the different developmental levels of middle school youth. With this reality in mind, every Break has a section that is specifically for eighth-grade youth who are ready to go deeper with the content. In addition, Life Teen has provided extensive training on how to run effective small groups, which can be found online at [lifeteen.com](http://lifeteen.com) or by contacting your parish coach.

SEND

The Send concludes each Edge Night. This is the portion of the Edge Night where the youth are given an opportunity to encounter Jesus through a variety of prayer experiences. This is a vital part of the Edge Night, so it should not be rushed or skipped. Nothing else that happens during the Edge Night will matter in the long run if the youth do not know Jesus personally.

There is a weekly challenge at the end of each Send section. This is a practical way for the youth to put into action everything they learned and experienced.

ADAPTATIONS

Throughout the Edge Night, there are a variety of callout boxes to aid in adapting the Edge Night to the different needs of the youth and parish.

Suggestions: This callout box has helpful tips and pointers for running different activities.

Step It Up: This callout box gives ideas for different ways to amp up the activities for parishes that have greater resources, bigger budgets, and more time to invest in big ideas.

Hispanic Inculturation: Across the United States, the Hispanic/Latino population in Catholic parishes is large and growing. According to the USCCB’s survey on the Hispanic/Latino population in the United States and the Catholic Church, 54 percent of Catholic millennials (those who were born in 1982 or later) are Hispanic/Latino.

To meet this growing need, Edge has added various suggestions throughout the Edge Nights for adaptations for youth groups that are predominantly Hispanic/Latino. These notes were developed by a group of dedicated youth ministers who serve at largely Hispanic/Latino parishes throughout the United States.

We recognize that not all Hispanic/Latino communities are the same. These suggestions assist youth ministers in adapting to the needs of their specific community by providing insight into the Hispanic/Latino culture.

HANDOUTS

All of the handouts for the Edge Nights can be found on the *March 2020 Edge USB* and online at lifeteen.com under Edge Support: *March 2020*. The handouts are formatted to be easily printed and copied on standard letter-size paper. Please be diligent in accessing and looking these over while planning the Edge Nights.

PARENT LETTERS

The *Parent Letter* contains a brief overview of the Edge Night, along with discussion questions for the family to use as a follow-up from the Edge Night.

The *Parent Letter* can either be emailed to the parents the day of the Edge Night or after the Edge Night. It can also be handed out at the end of each Edge Night.

Consider having Core Members at the doors and in the parking lot immediately following the Edge Night in order to distribute the *Parent Letter* and watch the youth for safety purposes.

The *Parent Letter* can be found in both English and Spanish on the *March 2020 Edge USB* and online at lifeteen.com under Edge Support: *March 2020*.

FLOCKNOTE

For parishes that also subscribe to Flocknote, *Parent Letters* are loaded into the interface. Simply log in to schedule these communications to be sent. More information about subscribing to Flocknote can be found online at flocknote.com.

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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# WIRES AND ROBOTICS

Questions About the Human Person

## SEMESTER PLANNING GUIDE AT A GLANCE

### GOAL

The Goal of this *Semester Planning Guide* is to answer questions about the human person and help the youth see the origin, destiny, and dignity of every human being, so they can form their identity on the foundation of truth and discover who God created them to be.

### ENVIRONMENT

Use wire to decorate the front of the main meeting space; hang the wire in a zigzag fashion along the wall in the front of the room to create a web design, or use fishing line and hang wires like Christmas lights from the ceiling around the room. Collect robotic material to decorate the front of the room or use paint on poster boards or tubing to look like various metals (aluminum, steel, bronze, brass, copper, etc.). Project the *Environment Image*, which can be found on the *March 2020 Edge USB* and online at [lifeteen.com](http://lifeteen.com) under Edge Support: *March 2020*.

### EDGE NIGHTS

This *Semester Planning Guide* contains the following Edge Nights:

- 1. **THE GREAT IDEA:** The goal of this Edge Night is for the youth to understand that they were created out of the goodness and love of God and only in Him will they find purpose and meaning for their lives.
- 2. **INTERNAL COMPONENT:** The goal of this Edge Night is for the youth to understand that human beings are set apart from all other creation, for they are created in the image and likeness of God and have a physical body and an eternal soul, which changes how we approach the material world and live our lives.
- 3. **BINARY CODE:** The goal of this Edge Night is for the youth to see their identity as a man or woman as a gift that is given to them by God for a purpose.
- 4. **LIMITED EDITION:** The goal of this Edge Night is to help the youth understand that, while all human beings have a common origin and dignity, we have a unique identity, who we are matters, and we are a part of something bigger than ourselves.
- 5. **INSTRUCTION MANUAL:** The goal of this Edge Night is for the youth to understand the effects of original sin on humanity and the responsibility we have to form our conscience and make good choices.

- 6. **BEYOND WIRES AND ROBOTICS:** The goal of this Edge Night is for the youth to understand heaven as their eternal goal, a gift that is freely given but requires us to accept it in faith and then live in accord with everything God has revealed.

## GOING DEEPER FOR CORE MEMBERS

The following resources support or enhance the information the middle school youth will be learning throughout the semester and provide the Core Members and youth minister with additional information that can aid in their personal growth.

- F.J. Sheed: “A Map of Life: A Simple Study of the Catholic Faith”
- Christopher West: “Theology of the Body for Beginners: Rediscovering the Meaning of Life, Love, Sex, and Gender”

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# THE GREAT IDEA

Why Am I Here?

## EDGE NIGHT AT A GLANCE



### Scripture

Genesis 1:26-31; Isaiah 45:19; Proverbs 19:21; Psalm 33:11; John 3:16-17, 10:1-3; 1 Corinthians 2:9; 1 John 4:9



### Catechism

356-359, 456-460



### Resources

Spotify: “ES - Wires and Robotics” (spotify:user:lifeteen)  
Edge Video Support March 2020: “The Greatest Invention” (lifeteen.com)

## GOAL

The goal of this Edge Night is for the youth to understand that they were created out of the goodness and love of God and only in Him will they find purpose and meaning for their lives.

## GATHER

The youth are challenged to create a robot that can perform a specific function. The purpose of this activity is for the youth to lean into the theme of the semester as well as to demonstrate that items are created in a certain way to achieve the function for which they were made.

## PROCLAIM

The following are the main teaching points of the Proclaim:

- God created humanity out of love to know Him, love Him, serve Him, and one day be with Him in heaven.
- God reveals His love and plan for humanity through Jesus.
- Only in God, who created us, will we find meaning for our lives and purpose for our existence.

## BREAK

The youth come up with an idea for an app that will solve a specific, large-scale problem of their choosing. The purpose of this activity is for the youth to see that objects are created with a purpose and application in mind, which mirrors how they were created as human beings. The youth then have a small group discussion about what they learned.

## SEND

The youth are led in a prayerful reflection about the creation of the world alongside scientific facts for how each element of creation sustains human life. The purpose of this reflection is for the youth to see that God created everything for human beings, who are His greatest idea.

## WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Think of one concrete way to show someone you love them and then make it happen.

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## THE GREAT IDEA

## Why Am I Here?

## EDGE NIGHT SET UP

## SET UP

Gather all of the needed supplies for the Gather and Break activities. Prepare all technology needs for the Send by downloading the *Creation Story* PowerPoint and the *Creation Story* handout, which can be found on the *March 2020 Edge USB* and online at [lifeteen.com](http://lifeteen.com) under Edge Support: *March 2020*.

## SUPPLIES

The following is a list of supplies that are needed for the Edge Night:

- G: Shoeboxes filled with random items
- G: Slips of paper with specific robot functions written on them
- B: Large sheets of butcher paper
- B: Markers or crayons
- S: *Creation Story* PowerPoint
- S: *Creation Story* handout

## ASSIGNMENTS

Use the following list to assign Core Members to specific tasks:

**Set Up:** \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

### Gather:

- Opening Prayer: \_\_\_\_\_
- Game: \_\_\_\_\_

**Proclaim:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Break:** All small group leaders

**Send:**

- Closing Prayer: \_\_\_\_\_
- Weekly Challenge: \_\_\_\_\_



# THE GREAT IDEA

Why Am I Here?

## EDGE NIGHT OUTLINE

### GATHER

#### Edge Night Introduction (5 min)

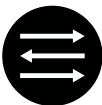
Welcome the youth, introduce any youth who are there for the first time, and begin in prayer. Give a brief overview of the topic of the Edge Night, using the following as an example:

*Great inventions begin with a great idea. There is a process of creation in the mind of every inventor and innovator. It usually begins with a great idea, followed by a plan and a lot of hard work. Eventually, their idea is created and the world is given the gift of their invention. God is the ultimate creator of great ideas, and the greatest of all of His creations is the human being. We were in the mind of God at the very beginning of creation. God had a plan for creation and put in a lot of hard work. On the sixth day of creation, man and woman were created, and God saw that humanity was very good, the greatest of all of His ideas. This week at Edge, we are going to talk about why humanity was created.*

#### Great Idea Creation Game (15 min)

This game is played in small groups.

1. Give each small group a shoe box filled with random items (tape, scissors, toilet paper or paper towel tubes, cardboard, glue, clothespins, yarn, binder clips, marbles, straws, plastic cups, paper plates, etc.) and a slip of paper with a specific parameters written on it (e.g., create something that is tall, create something that is long, create something that can hold two pounds, create something that can spin, etc).
2. Instruct the youth to create a robot that is capable of their assigned function.
3. After ten minutes, give each group a chance to demonstrate the function of their robot.
4. Award a prize to the group with the best-functioning robot.



#### Suggestions

For a larger group, consider having a few of each function. Have the small groups with the same function compete for most effective robot in their category. Rather than every small group demonstrating their robot's function, several Core Members can judge the different categories at the same time. After all of the small groups have been judged, announce a winner for each category.

### PROCLAIM

#### “The Great Idea” Proclaim Teaching (10 min)

The teaching can be found on pages 20 to 22. The following are the main points that are covered in the teaching:

- God created humanity out of love to know Him, love Him, serve Him, and one day be with Him in heaven.
- God reveals His love and plan for humanity through Jesus.
- Only in God, who created us, will we find meaning for our lives and purpose for our existence.

### BREAK

#### Creative Solution Activity (15 min)

Divide the youth into their small groups. Begin in prayer and then provide the small group with a large sheet of butcher paper and markers or crayons. Give the youth one minute to decide on a cause or issue they want to create a solution for (world hunger, homelessness, loneliness, etc.).

*Pastoral Note: Middle school youth are inspired to make great changes in the world. It is important not to trivialize issues they are currently passionate about because we perceive a greater need elsewhere. For example, if the small group decides to find homes for all stray animals, move forward with the cause rather than insisting they solve homelessness. If they want to create a solution for a cause or issue that is against Catholic moral teaching, gently nudge them in a different direction, briefly explaining how our faith should inform our actions.*

Once the youth choose a cause, have them brainstorm and design an app that will help create a solution to the problem. Instruct them to write what the app will do and how people will use it on the piece of butcher paper. They also need to come up with a name and design an image for the app.

#### Small Group Discussion (10 min)

Use the following questions to foster a discussion within the small group:

- *Whip Around Question:* In your opinion, what is the best invention in the past year?
- Have you ever thought about God as an inventor? What parts of the created world do you love or find most interesting (e.g., volcanoes, the solar system, lizards)? Why?
- You are created in God's image and likeness. How are you an inventor like God?
- What does it mean to know who God is? To love God? To spend our lives serving God?



## Hispanic Inculturation

Hispanic/Latino culture places considerable emphasis on family. Consider adapting the Small Group Discussion with Hispanic/Latino youth to include the following questions, so they can reflect on how their family shares about God: How has your family helped you understand how God is an inventor? How has your family helped you recognize the way you are an inventor like God? What has your family taught you about what it means to know who God is?

### Eighth-Grade Adaptation

Use the following questions for a more challenging discussion for eighth-grade youth:

- What questions do you have about your purpose in life? *(This is not necessarily a time to answer the youths' questions about their purpose but to help them discover and express the questions they have.)*
- Do you believe that you are God's greatest idea? Why?
- What makes it difficult to know God? What are different ways we can know God?
- What are a few ways you see people love and serve God? How do you love and serve God? What else can you do to love and serve God?

**SEND**

### Creation Story Reflection (15 min)

Gather the youth back to the large group. Set a tone of prayer as the youth enter the room (e.g., dim the lights and have instrumental music playing in the background). Have the *Creation Story* PowerPoint and the *Creation Story* handout prepared (both can be found on the *March 2020 Edge USB* and online at [lifeteen.com](http://lifeteen.com) under Edge Support: *March 2020*). Instruct the youth to find a seat and then introduce the reflection, using the following as an example:

*Think about the last time someone did something really meaningful for you (e.g., your mom or dad worked hard to surprise you with your favorite meal, your best friend saved his or her money to buy you a gift, your teacher took extra time to help you understand a difficult topic). Meaningful gestures can be little or big. It is moving to stop and consider that someone had an idea to do something for you and cared enough to follow through. Thinking about these moments can deepen our gratitude and love for these people in our lives. Think about the world around you. God created this world for each of us specifically; God had each one of you in mind as He created every part of the world.*

Project the powerpoint and move through each image as it corresponds to the day of creation that is being read from the reflection handout.

Close the Edge Night by praying a Hail Mary as a large group. Following the prayer, give the youth their weekly challenge.



### Step It Up

If the group is small enough, take time to name each person in the room when you talk about God having each person in mind as He created the world. This will help emphasize the individual nature of God's love and combat the idea that God loves everybody "collectively" but not "me individually."

### Weekly Challenge (5 min)

Think of one concrete way to show someone you love them and then make it happen.

# THE GREAT IDEA

Why Am I Here?

## EDGE NIGHT PROCLAIM

### GETTING STARTED

This teaching is provided to give you an example of how to present this topic in an age-appropriate way, making it relevant to middle school youth. If the youth are ready to take it deeper, incorporate a few of the *Going Deeper* call-out boxes, picking the ones the youth would relate to the most. If there are Hispanic/Latino youth in the youth group, incorporate the applicable suggestions from the *Hispanic Inculturation* call-out boxes.

### TEACHING GUIDE

#### The Great Idea

*Begin with a story about a recent invention or advancement in technology. Research who created it and what it is supposed to do. Write your thoughts here:*

- All great inventions begin with an idea. All great inventors then take that idea and come up with a plan to make their idea a reality. It takes time and tremendous planning with great precision and an incredible amount of detail to create something. Some inventors even put their love into their creation.
- There have been many incredible inventions throughout the history of humankind.
- *Play the video, “The Greatest Invention” from the Resources section.*
- While there have been many remarkable inventions, one great idea stands above all else. At the very origin of the existence of the world, God had a great idea: to create you.
- With human beings in mind, God put the sun in the sky to give us daylight, and He filled the world with land, water, plants, and animals to be our nourishment and sustain us. (CCC 358)



#### Going Deeper

Saint John Chrysostom speaks of humanity as the greatest of all creation, saying the human person is “that great and wonderful living creature, more precious in the eyes of God than all other creatures! For him the heavens and the Earth, the sea and all the rest of creation exist” (CCC 358).

- When everything was in place, God created human beings uniquely in His image and likeness, putting His breath into them to give them life. (Genesis 1:26-27, 31)
- *Read Genesis 2:7.*
- You exist because God loves you and willed for you to exist. (CCC 356)
- Since human beings were created out of the sheer love of God and made in His image, we all have dignity — we are worthy of honor and respect.
- Nothing we do, or do not do, will ever change this worth or our dignity. (CCC 357)

#### To Know, Love, and Serve

- Knowing that we exist because God loves us and willed for us to exist only answers part of the question of why we exist. We may also wonder what the point or purpose of our existence is.
- If you want to know why something was created, what its purpose is, the best way to find out is by asking the inventor.

*Refer back to the invention you shared about at the beginning of the Proclaim, and share why that person created what they did. Write your thoughts here:*

- If you want to know the purpose of your existence, one of the best ways to find out is by asking God. But you might think that sounds problematic; how do we ask God a question, and how do we hear His answer?
- God knew that we would have questions, and He knew that we would need answers given to us in a way we would understand. So God became like us.
- God sent us His only Son, Jesus. (John 6:38)



#### Going Deeper

Jesus is God and reveals to us that God is three persons. Jesus speaks of God the Father and of the Holy Spirit, pointing out that they are all one. This idea of God as three persons in one God is known as the Trinity. (CCC 238-248)



- Jesus reveals to us in His words and actions the purpose for our existence: to be in a relationship with God, to know God, to love God, and to live our lives serving God. (CCC 358-359)

## Something Here

- Our purpose in life is to know God, to love God, and to serve God, but what does that look like?
- We come to know God, first and foremost, through Jesus, who reveals who God is. We can learn more about God by reading the Bible or looking at what other holy people have said about God.
- When we know who God is and discover His great love for us, we can learn to love Him in return.
- Jesus proves His love for us in incredible ways, including dying on the cross to save us from sin. When we see how much He loves us, we are inspired to love Him in return. (Romans 5:8)
- When we are rooted in a knowledge of God and love Him, everything we do flows from this knowledge and love, and we learn to serve Him.
- Learning to serve God does not mean we are in any way a slave or servant; it means we act and make decisions based on our gratitude for God's love and seek to give Him glory in every aspect of life. (1 Peter 4:11)


*Give the youth a few examples of how they can serve God in their daily lives. For example, when they take out the trash, they can recognize the great love God has for them in creating them with a body that can lift a trash bag. They can also see God's love in the home they live in and all of their possessions (even the trash in the trash can), and they can be thankful for their parents, even when they have to do chores. This one task can be an act of service, done in great love for God and all He has given them, and bring God glory. Write your thoughts here:*


- Knowing, loving, and serving God is not something we can just know with our minds; it is something we do and experience by growing in a relationship with God.
- This semester at Edge, we are going to spend time learning about God and what it means to be a human person, but we are also going to spend time getting to know God through conversations, activities, and, most importantly, opportunities for prayer.
- You will also be given a challenge each week, which will help you put everything you learned into action and give glory to God throughout the week.
- As you continue to understand who you are and who God created you to be, the first step is to know that you exist because God loves you. You were created for a reason: to know God, to love God, and to serve God. You are God's greatest idea.


# INTERNAL COMPONENT

What Does It Mean to Be Human?

## EDGE NIGHT AT A GLANCE

**Scripture**  
Genesis 1:26, 31; Matthew 16:25-26; 1 Corinthians 16:19-20

**Catechism**  
358, 362-368, 373, 1700-1705, 1730-1733

**Resources**  
Spotify: “ES - Wires and Robotics” (spotify:user:lifeteen)

## GOAL

The goal of this Edge Night is for the youth to understand that human beings are set apart from all other creation, for they are created in the image and likeness of God and have a physical body and an eternal soul, which changes how we approach the material world and live our lives.

## GATHER

The youth play a game of robot tag. The purpose of this game is to provide a fun way to enter into the theme of the semester and tie into what it means to be human later in the Edge Night.

## PROCLAIM

- The following are the main teaching points of the Proclaim:
- Being human is unique; our ability to reflect and think about ourselves and our existence sets us apart from all other creatures.
  - Created in the image and likeness of God, we have both a physical body and an eternal soul that, united together, make us human.
  - While the physical world was created good, it is passing. Our souls are eternal, and this reality guides how we live our lives.

## BREAK

The youth are given a series of questions to ask Siri. The point of this game for the youth to have fun with the technology they love while demonstrating what sets humans apart from all of creation, including technological advancements. The youth then have a small group discussion about what they learned.

## SEND

The youth are given a handout with specific Scripture verses about the goodness of their bodies to use for a reflection. The purpose of this activity is to emphasize that their bodies are created good and it is important to care for our bodies.

## WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Do one thing this week to take care of yourself and one thing to take care of an aspect of creation.

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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## INTERNAL COMPONENT

## What Does It Mean to Be Human?

## EDGE NIGHT SET UP

## SET UP

Print copies of the *Hey Siri* and *Our Bodies Are Good* handouts for the Break and Send activities. Handouts can be found on the *March 2020 Edge USB* and online at [lifeteen.com](http://lifeteen.com) under Edge Support: *March 2020*.

## SUPPLIES

The following is a list of supplies that are needed for the Edge Night:

- B: *Hey Siri* handout
- B: Core Member's iPhone
- S: *Our Bodies Are Good* handout
- S: Pens or pencils

## ASSIGNMENTS

Use the following list to assign Core Members to specific tasks:

**Set Up:** \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

### Gather:

- Opening Prayer: \_\_\_\_\_
- Game: \_\_\_\_\_

**Proclaim:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Break:** All small group leaders

**Send:**

- Closing Prayer: \_\_\_\_\_
- Weekly Challenge: \_\_\_\_\_



# INTERNAL COMPONENT

What Does It Mean to Be Human?

## EDGE NIGHT OUTLINE

### GATHER

#### Edge Night Introduction (5 min)

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

*When we look at modern technology, such as our smartphones, tablets, televisions, and even cars, we can see that they are made of physical elements. They have parts that fit and work together to serve a specific function; however, they also need some sort of programming and power. There are internal components that make all of the other parts work, giving them the energy they need to function — whether it is battery power, gasoline, or electricity. The human person is also made up of material components — bones, muscles, skin, hair, etc. — but there is an internal component to the human person. Human beings are created as a perfect union of a body and a soul. Our soul is what gives us life; it animates our body and makes us living beings. But the human soul is more than just a power source; it is the life of God within us. Our soul makes us unique because we alone are created in the image and likeness of God.*

#### Weekly Challenge Check In (5 min)

Ask any youth who are willing to share about their experience with the weekly challenge from the previous Edge Night: Think of one concrete way to show someone you love them and then make it happen.

#### Robot Tag (15 min)

This game is played in a large group.

1. Instruct the youth to spread out around the room.
2. Have one or two youth volunteer to be “it.”
3. On “go,” the youth play a game of tag. Instead of running normally, everyone must keep their legs locked straight and their arms at 90 degree angles, so they move like robots.
4. When a youth is tagged by the person who is “it,” he or she must freeze in place until someone who is not “it” tags the frozen person.
5. Play as many rounds as time allows.



#### Step It Up

Utilize an adaptation to make the game more interesting. If a youth gets tagged on their arm or leg, it becomes broken and they can no longer use it. Assign a mechanic who can repair broken arms and legs. Shout “rainstorm” to make everyone rust, causing them to only be allowed to move in slow motion. Set up a “recharging station” to act as home base.

### PROCLAIM

#### “Internal Component” Proclaim Teaching (10 min)

The teaching can be found on pages 32 to 35. The following are the main points that are covered in the teaching:

- Being human is unique; our ability to reflect and think about ourselves and our existence sets us apart from all other creatures.
- Created in the image and likeness of God, we have both a physical body and an eternal soul that, united together, make us human.
- While the physical world was created good, it is passing. Our souls are eternal, and this reality guides how we live our lives.

### BREAK

#### Hey Siri Activity (10 min)

Divide the youth into their small groups. Begin in prayer and then give each youth a copy of the *Hey Siri* handout, which can be found on the *March 2020 Edge USB* and online at [lifeteen.com](https://lifeteen.com) under Edge Support: *March 2020*. Prior to the small group activity, make sure one Core Member in each group has an iPhone.

*Pastoral Note: All of the questions for this activity have been tested. If additional questions are added or substituted, it is recommended that the Core Team test them prior to the Edge Night.*

Transition into the small group discussion after the activity, using the following as an example:

*Siri is a fun component of an iPhone. While we can talk to Siri and ask Siri questions, it is a programmed computer that is limited in its ability to help us. Everything Siri does and says is pre-programmed. We are different than Siri because we have the ability to ask questions, think about our responses to one another, and choose what we will say and do. We are going to spend time doing just that during our small group discussion.*

### Small Group Discussion (10 min)

Use the following questions to foster a discussion within the small group:

- *Whip Around Question:* How many phone chargers do you own?
- What does it feel like to lose power on your phone or any other important battery-operated or electrically-powered object you own (e.g., gaming device, remote control)?
- If our soul is our internal component, why is it important for us to take care of it?
- How do you take care of your soul? What are some new ways for you to take care of your soul?

### Eighth-Grade Adaptation

Use the following questions for a more challenging discussion for eighth-grade youth:

- We now know that our soul is what makes us different from the rest of creation. What are some examples in your life that make you aware of the differences between human beings and the rest of creation?
- How does an awareness of your eternal soul change the way you live your life?
- How can you help others become aware of the importance of both their body and their soul?

**SEND**

### Our Bodies Are Good Prayer Reflection (15 min)

Gather the youth back to the large group, and provide them with a copy of the *Our Bodies Are Good* handout, which can be found on the *March 2020 Edge USB* and online at [lifeteen.com](https://www.lifeteen.com) under Edge Support: *March 2020*. Set a prayerful tone and then use the following to introduce the reflection:

*As we have learned, being human means we are given the important task of taking care of everything God created. It is not only an important task but a rewarding one. We get the joy of eating good food we grow and cook, being responsible for our pets, and keeping the air clean so we can breathe in fresh smells, not unhealthy, smelly ones. In order to do this to the best of our ability, we are also tasked with taking care of our body. It is really easy to be hard on ourselves because of the way our bodies look or because of the different, sometimes embarrassing or limited, abilities we have. Our bodies are good, but it takes work to appreciate our bodies exactly as they are and keep them healthy. We are going to take some time to pray about the goodness of our bodies and the unique gift it is to be a human with a body and a soul.*

Instruct the youth to spread out around the room and use the handout for a time of prayerful reflection.

Close the Edge Night by praying a Hail Mary as a large group. Following the prayer, give the youth their weekly challenge.

### Weekly Challenge (5 min)

Do one thing this week to take care of yourself and one thing to take care of an aspect of creation.

Notes:

# INTERNAL COMPONENT

What Does It Mean to Be Human?

## EDGE NIGHT PROCLAIM

### GETTING STARTED

This teaching is provided to give you an example of how to present this topic in an age-appropriate way, making it relevant to middle school youth. If the youth are ready to take it deeper, incorporate a few of the Going Deeper call-out boxes, picking the ones the youth would relate to the most. If there are Hispanic/Latino youth in the youth group, incorporate the applicable suggestions from the *Hispanic Inculturation* call-out boxes.

### TEACHING GUIDE

#### Internal Component

*Turn your phone off, hold it in your hand, and show it to the youth. Briefly talk about how it is made up of many different parts, programs, drives, etc. But if it is not turned on, it is useless — just a really complex unity of technological parts. Turn on the phone and help the youth see that once the phone is on and “comes to life,” the possibilities are endless. Write your thoughts or adaptations here:*

- We have many amazing inventions and technological advancements at our fingertips, but most of them require some sort of power. They need batteries or have to be charged; they need a source of “life” to be more than just material pieces that are assembled together.
- While the battery brings our devices to “life,” the objects are still technically inanimate objects. It is clear to us that a smartphone is different than a dog.

*Explain that animate objects have life or are living, like a plant or a cat, and inanimate objects are non-living things such as a hairbrush or cookie. Ask the youth to share a few examples of animate objects and a few examples of inanimate objects. Write some examples here:*

- While both animate and inanimate objects have material parts we can see and touch, they are different from each other.
- A cat is different from a hairbrush because the cat is alive. Living things can grow, reproduce, adapt to their surroundings, and eventually die.
- Humans are also animate — we are living creatures that are capable of growth, reproduction, and adaptation, and we will one day die — but the internal component of a human being is vastly different from every other living creature. This difference is called a “soul.”

#### Set Apart

- *Read Genesis 1:26.*
- In the story of creation, we see that the human person is the only thing created in the image and likeness of God. God sets us apart over all of creation. (CCC 362)
- Human beings are unique from God’s other creatures. We are different from plants and animals, and we “occupy a unique place in creation” because we are made with both a body and a soul (CCC 355).
- Our body and soul are not separate from one another; together, as one, they make us who we are. (CCC 364-365)



#### Going Deeper

The word “soul” often refers to human life or the entire human person. It is our deepest internal component where we are most specifically in the image and likeness of God. (CCC 363)

*Share one aspect of yourself that is reflected in your body. For example, you may be six feet tall, or have blue eyes, or have one toe that is longer than the rest. Write your thoughts here:*

- The physical aspects of our bodies come from our genetics. Oftentimes we have physical attributes that are similar to our parents or grandparents.
- Our souls, on the other hand, are created by God and are given to us at the moment of our existence; our souls do not come from our parents. (CCC 366, 1703)
- Another unique aspect of our souls is that they are eternal, meaning our bodies die when we die but our souls do not.
- It is this internal component — an eternal soul that is given directly to us by God, united with a body — that sets us apart from all other creatures. We are not just something but someone. (CCC 357)
- *Ask the youth to take a few moments to think about who they are.*



- Being able to think about yourself, as someone, is entirely unique to human beings. (CCC 357)
- We are able to think complexly about life and the world around us in a way that animals cannot. We are also able to think complexly about ourselves and question who we are. (CCC 357, 1704-1706)



## Hispanic Inculturation

Help Hispanic/Latino youth understand this point further by sharing how thinking complexly about ourselves and questioning who we are is a privilege earned for them by the efforts of their families. Point out how the sacrifices, struggles, and hard work of their immigrant parents or grandparents make it possible for them to focus on who they are and pursue the life that they were created for.

## Care for Creation

- Since we stand apart from all other creatures and are made in the image and likeness of God, we are given the responsibility of working with God to take care of His creation. (CCC 357; Genesis 1:26-30)

*Share how the youth can work with God to take care of creation. For example, they can take care of their pets, not litter, recycle, and not be wasteful. Write your thoughts here:*

- It is good to take care of the created world. It is good to love our pets, to be kind and gentle toward animals, and to realize that they are a part of God's creation. It is also good to take care of the Earth and all God has made. This responsibility has been given to us by God. (CCC 373, 2416)
- While this is all good, it is important for us to realize our place in creation and the responsibility we have to take care of ourselves and other people, which means caring for our bodies as well as our souls.
- *Read 1 Corinthians 6:19-20.*
- Our bodies are good and reveal the image of God to the world, and it is important for us to take care of ourselves.
- We can do this by making healthy choices — eating a well-balanced diet and staying active — and glorifying God in the way we talk and think about our bodies.
- *Read Matthew 16:25-26.*
- Taking care of our bodies is important, but, as human beings, we also have to take care of our internal component: our souls.

- Taking care of our souls looks like a lot of different things: making time for prayer, growing in our knowledge of God and all He teaches, developing good relationships with others, and growing in our love of God and other people.
- *Read Genesis 1:31.*
- God looked at everything He created and saw that it was very good.
- We have been created very good. God set us apart. We are the most complex of all of God's creation, and we stand in a unique way, as both body and soul, made in the image and likeness of God, to give Him glory and share in His care of all creation.

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

# BINARY CODE

# Does My Body Matter?

## EDGE NIGHT AT A GLANCE



## Scripture

Genesis 1:27, 2:7, 18-23; Wisdom 11:24; Matthew 28:20; Ecclesiastes 3:11;  
Colossians 3:14



## Catechism

369-373, 2337



## Resources

Spotify: “ES - Wires and Robotics” (spotify:user:lifeteen)

## GOAL

The goal of this Edge Night is for the youth to see their identity as a man or woman as a gift that is given to them by God for a purpose.

# GATHER

The youth play an upfront game where representatives from each grade compete in a challenge to match different complementary items. The purpose of this game is to highlight the theme of the Edge Night and reflect the complementarity of men and women.

# PROCLAIM

The following are the main teaching points of the Proclaim:

- The human body is remarkably complex and follows specific formulas; for example, chromosomes determine whether we are male or female.
- God created human beings as male or female, which is revealed to us in our biological sex. As men and women, we uniquely reflect the image of God.
- As men and women, we have equal dignity and are complementary to one another.

# BREAK

The youth are challenged to decode a Scripture verse about the creation of men and women. The purpose of this activity is to highlight the theme of the Edge Night and emphasize that God created human beings as male and female. The youth then have a small group discussion about what they learned.

**SEND**

The youth remain in small groups and are given a handout that helps them reflect on their goodness as male or female, followed by a prayer for the opposite gender. The purpose of this time of prayer is for the youth to grow in their understanding of how men and women reflect the goodness and image of God.

## WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Introduce yourself to one new person, get to know that person by asking them a question or two, and then say a silent prayer for them.

# BINARY CODE

## Does My Body Matter?

## EDGE NIGHT SET UP

## SET UP

Gather all of the supplies and set up for the upfront Gather game. Print copies of the *Complementarity Code* and *Image and Goodness* handouts for the Break and Send. Handouts can be found on the *March 2020 Edge USB* and online at [lifeteen.com](http://lifeteen.com) under Edge Support: *March 2020*.

## SUPPLIES

The following is a list of supplies that are needed for the Edge Night:

- G: Table
- G: Buzzer
- G: List of complimentary items
- G: Prize
- B: *Complementarity Code* handout
- S: *Image and Goodness* handout

## ASSIGNMENTS

Use the following list to assign Core Members to specific tasks:

**Set Up:** \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

### Gather:

- Opening Prayer: \_\_\_\_\_
- Game: \_\_\_\_\_

**Proclaim:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Break:** All small group leaders

**Send:**

- Closing Prayer: \_\_\_\_\_
- Weekly Challenge: \_\_\_\_\_



# BINARY CODE

Does My Body Matter?

## EDGE NIGHT OUTLINE

### GATHER

#### Edge Night Introduction (5 min)

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

*Binary code is a system of two symbols. When these two symbols (one and zero) are laid out in a sequence, they become, in essence, an alphabet for computers to communicate with each other. In a similar way, our biological sex is determined by a two-symbol system that consists of an X chromosome and a Y chromosome. When combined, these chromosomes determine our sex — females have two X chromosomes and males have one X and one Y chromosome. There is a biological code that makes us male or female. There is also truth revealed to us by God that being a man or a woman is a gift that is given to us by Him for a reason.*

#### Weekly Challenge Check In (5 min)

Ask any youth who are willing to share about their experience with the weekly challenge from the previous Edge Night: Do one thing this week to take care of yourself and one thing to take care of an aspect of creation.

#### We Go Together (15 min)

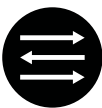
This game is played as an upfront game.

1. Invite one volunteer from each grade to come to the front of the main meeting space.
2. Have the three volunteers stand an equal distance from a table with a buzzer on it.
3. After the youth minister or Core Member reads one thing that has a common or usual complementary element, the youth must think of the answer and race to the buzzer to give the correct answer.
4. If he or she gives a correct answer, they receive one point for their grade.
5. If they do not give the correct answer, the question passes to the youth on their right. If that youth answers the question correctly, they receive one point for their grade. If it is not correct, the last youth is given a chance to guess.
6. If none of the youth answer correctly, read the next complimentary item.

7. Encourage the youth from each grade level to cheer on their representative.
8. Award a prize to the youth from the grade level with the most points at the end of the game.

The following is a list of complementary items that can be used for this game, but add to it as you see fit:

- Chips and salsa
- Peanut butter and jelly
- Salt and pepper
- Macaroni and cheese
- Ketchup and mustard
- Batman and Robin
- Elsa and Anna
- Phineas and Ferb
- Sugar and spice
- Fork and spoon
- Socks and shoes
- Scooby Doo and Shaggy
- Beauty and the Beast



#### Suggestions

Instead of an upfront game, give every youth a card (or name tag) with one of the items from a pair. Instruct the youth to put the card on their forehead without looking at it. Set a timer for five minutes. During that time, the youth must run around and find their partner.

### PROCLAIM

#### “Binary Code” Proclaim Teaching (10 min)

The teaching can be found on pages 44 to 46. The following are the main points that are covered in the teaching:

- The human body is remarkably complex and follows specific formulas; for example, chromosomes determine whether we are male or female.
- God created human beings as male or female, which is revealed to us in our biological sex. As men and women, we uniquely reflect the image of God.
- As men and women, we have equal dignity and are complementary to one another.

**BREAK**

### Complementarity Code Activity (10 min)

Divide the youth into their small groups. Begin in prayer and then give each person a copy of the *Complementarity Code* handout, which can be found on the *March 2020 Edge USB* and online at [lifeteen.com](http://lifeteen.com) under Edge Support: *March 2020*. Instruct the youth to work together to decode the message on the handout.

Once decoded, the youth should discover the following Scripture verse: “So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them” (Genesis 1:27).



## Suggestions

For eighth-grade small groups, consider giving them the Scripture verse and asking each of them to decide on a coding system in which they write the verse for the person who is sitting next to them. Rather than decoding the verse, their task will be to figure out the coding system the other person created.



## Suggestions

If small groups are not usually gender specific, as suggested in the Break explanation from the *Introduction*, consider reworking small groups so they are gender specific for this Edge Night.

### Small Group Discussion (10 min)

Use the following questions to foster a discussion within the small group:

- *Whip Around Question:* Who do you look up to as a female and/or male role model?
- Why do you look up to him or her? What qualities do you admire in this person?
- What are one or two qualities that make you unique as a male or female?
- How do these qualities reveal something about who God is?

### Eighth-Grade Adaptation

Use the following questions for a more challenging discussion for eighth-grade youth:

- What does it mean to you that you, as male or female, reveal something unique about God?
- Do you think your body matters? Why?
- How has your body been a gift to your life? (Provide an example, if needed. E.g., “My hand-eye coordination makes me really good at art.”)

**SEND**

### In the Image of God Prayer Activity (15 min)

Gather the youth back to the large group, but have them remain in their small groups. Use the *In the Image of God* handout to lead the small groups in prayer. Handouts can be found on the *March 2020 Edge USB* and online at [lifeteen.com](http://lifeteen.com) under Edge Support: *March 2020*.

Lead the small groups through the first part of the prayer, which will help them contemplate how they reflect the image and goodness of God as a male or female. After they pray for themselves, lead them through the second half of the handout, which will guide them through a prayer to see the goodness in those of the opposite gender.

Close the Edge Night by praying a Hail Mary as a large group. Following the prayer, give the youth their weekly challenge.

### Weekly Challenge (5 min)

Introduce yourself to one new person, get to know that person by asking them a question or two, and then say a silent prayer for them.

# BINARY CODE

Does My Body Matter?

## EDGE NIGHT PROCLAIM

### GETTING STARTED

This teaching is provided to give you an example of how to present this topic in an age-appropriate way, making it relevant to middle school youth. If the youth are ready to take it deeper, incorporate a few of the *Going Deeper* call-out boxes, picking the ones the youth would relate to the most. If there are Hispanic/Latino youth in the youth group, incorporate the applicable suggestions from the *Hispanic Inculturation* call-out boxes.

### TEACHING GUIDE

#### The Code

- *Begin by saying the following sequence: “01001000 01100101 01101100 01101100 01101111 00100001.”*
- While that may mean nothing to you, I just said “hello” in binary code.
- Computers use this two-symbol system to communicate with each other. When the zeros and ones are sequenced together in a specific way, they have meaning.
- There are a lot of things in the world of technology that follow specific formulas and patterns to create things like websites, apps, and even specific systems of communication between computers.
- In a similar way, our bodies are made up of genetics which are incredibly complex systems and formulas, which are like a recipe for who we are.
- These codes found within our genetics determine many things about us from our eye color, hair color, height, and even our gender.
- Human cells contain two sets of 23 chromosomes. We get one set of chromosomes from each of our parents, which gives us a total of 46 chromosomes.
- One pair of these chromosomes determines whether we are male or female. If you have two X chromosomes, you are female; if you have an X chromosome and a Y chromosome, you are male.
- The biological code, the combination of these chromosomes, determines whether we are male or female. “‘Being man’ or ‘being woman’ is a reality which is good and willed by God” (CCC 369).

#### Created Male and Female



#### Hispanic Inculturation

Note that some Hispanic/Latino youth may be troubled by the fact that boys and girls are often treated differently in their culture due to cultural understandings of gender stemming from *machismo* culture (e.g., girls are expected to do household work, boys are less likely to have an early curfew). *Machismo* is difficult to define as a singular term, but it is used in Latin America to describe an attitude or conception of masculinity that often enforces hurtful gender stereotypes and distorts gender roles, resulting in a disproportionately negative experience for women and girls. While this may not be the case for every Hispanic/Latino youth, it is helpful to acknowledge that it has a significant impact on the way we view gender. As you work through this Proclaim, encourage the youth to approach God’s design for women and men as a hopeful antidote to the ways culture has and/or can distort how gender is lived out in the world.

- *Read Genesis 1:27.*
- Our bodies matter and our gender matters, because there is something we each uniquely reveal about God in both our body and our soul. (CCC 369)
- Both men and women are created in the image and likeness of God and have the same dignity; therefore, they are equal. (CCC 369)
- While men and women have equal dignity, there are differences between them — both obvious and mysterious — and these differences are good and willed by God. (CCC 370)
- For example, there are obvious differences between male anatomy and female anatomy, but there are also differences in how men and women express who they are, approach the world, and live out their identity that are less obvious and more mysterious and complex.

*Pastoral Note: The purpose of this teaching is not to discuss or enforce gender stereotypes but to recognize the vast and unique ways both men and women can reveal an aspect of who God is. There will be youth in your program who do not see themselves as fitting into traditional gender stereotypes or roles, which is OK. This teaching aims to help them see how they are a man or a woman, regardless of where they fit into stereotypes or not, because they were created that way by God.*

- These differences are not meant to divide men and women from each other; rather, they show us that we are created to work together and help one another. (CCC 371-373)



#### Going Deeper

Read Genesis 2:18-23. As Adam encountered the different animals, he discovered that he was set apart from them and the rest of creation. He realized that he was different and needed to find another creation like him, so God created Eve.

- There are many different ways we can help one another and work together, using our specific strengths and talents in a way that is unique to us as an individual and reveals a different aspect of what it means to be a man or a woman.
- For example, both men and women are strong, but perhaps you are strong in a way that is different from the person next to you — you might be physically strong, you might be mentally strong and able to solve complex problems, or you may be emotionally strong and able to handle really tough situations.
- For example, both men and women should be kind and caring, but you might express that in different ways — some of you might use your words to tell others you care about them, some of you might give hugs or high fives, and some of you might show someone you care about them by doing a kind act.

## Complex Identities

- There are biological realities and theological truths that reveal the plan and purpose God had in creating men and women as well as the goodness in them.
- Our bodies reveal to us whether we are a man or a woman. As humans, our bodies and souls are united completely, making us entirely male or female.
- The reality of how we are created is foundational to who we are. Our identity as men and women is important, but it is also complex.
- There are as many ways of being a man as there are men in the world, and there are as many ways of being a woman as there are women in the world.
- As you continue to understand who you are, there may be times when you feel like you do not fit into a certain understanding of what it means to be a man or a woman, but that does not mean you are not a man or a woman.
- Manhood or womanhood is not achieved by something we do; rather, it is a reality of how we were created.
- God created you as a man or a woman for a specific reason.
- God knows every detail about who you are and who He created you to be; He even knows how many hairs are on your head. (Luke 12:7)
- Do not be afraid or anxious if you feel lost or confused about who you are; you do not have to have all of the answers right now.
- You have time to discover your identity, and you have time to find the infinite goodness in being created as a male or a female.
- With great love and patience, God wants to reveal to us who we are. All we have to do is continually turn to Him for the answers, for He is the one who created us and knows us perfectly.



# LIMITED EDITION

What Makes Me Unique?

## EDGE NIGHT AT A GLANCE



### Scripture

Genesis 1:27; Sirach 6:34; Matthew 25:14-15; John 1:12; 1 Corinthians 12:12; Revelation 7:9-10



### Catechism

360-361, 1702, 1730, 1934-1938



### Resources

Spotify: “ES - Wires and Robotics” (spotify:user:lifeteen)

## GOAL

The goal of this Edge Night is to help the youth understand that, while all human beings have a common origin and dignity, we have a unique identity, who we are matters, and we are a part of something bigger than ourselves.

## GATHER

The youth play a large-group game where they pair up and find out what they have in common with each other as the youth minister reads questions of preference. The purpose of this game is for the youth to have fun and recognize similarities and differences they have with one another.

## PROCLAIM

The following are the main teaching points of the Proclaim:

- Every human person is created in the image of God, as either a male or female, with a physical body and an eternal soul; yet no two humans are exactly the same.

- God created each of us with unique personalities, gifts, and talents, and only in Him will we discover the purpose for our lives that is specific only to us.
- God did not create human beings to be alone but to live in communion with each other; working together with others, using our gifts and talents, brings glory to God.

## BREAK

The youth are given a handout with color-coded characteristics. They choose which characteristics apply to them and use corresponding colored pipe cleaners to make a sculpture of themselves. The purpose of this activity is for the youth to recognize some of their unique gifts and talents. The youth then have a small group discussion about what they learned.

## SEND

The youth have time for prayer in Adoration. The purpose of this time of prayer is for the youth to be in the presence of Jesus and reflect on how they have been made perfect and unique.

## WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Set an alarm on your phone (or write it on your mirror, so you see it when you pass by) to remind you of your unique nature: “God, help me see myself as you see me.”

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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## LIMITED EDITION

## What Makes Me Unique?

## EDGE NIGHT SET UP

## SET UP

Work with the Core Team to come up with a list of preferences for the Gather game. Print copies of the *Characteristics* handout, which can be found on the *March 2020 Edge USB* and online at [lifeteen.com](http://lifeteen.com) under Edge Support: *March 2020*, and sort pipe cleaners for each small group for the Break activity. Contact your parish priest, and make any necessary arrangements for Adoration.

## SUPPLIES

The following is a list of supplies that are needed for the Edge Night:

- G: List of preferences
- B: *Characteristics* handout
- B: Pens or pencils
- B: Pipe cleaners
- S: Supplies for Adoration

## ASSIGNMENTS

Use the following list to assign Core Members to specific tasks:

**Set Up:** \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

### Gather:

- Opening Prayer: \_\_\_\_\_
- Game: \_\_\_\_\_

**Proclaim:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Break:** All small group leaders

**Send:**

- Closing Prayer: \_\_\_\_\_
- Weekly Challenge: \_\_\_\_\_

# LIMITED EDITION

What Makes Me Unique?

## EDGE NIGHT OUTLINE

### GATHER

#### Edge Night Introduction (5 min)

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

*If something is created as a “limited edition,” only a certain number of it are created and sold. This kind of limited edition strategy makes the item exclusive and desirable because few are made. Something about the design is usually unique, and people get excited to be one of the few people to own it. Every single human person is, in a sense, a limited edition, but we are even more exclusive and unique than anything humankind has created or branded. Every human person has the same origin and dignity, but we are all unique. There never has been and never will be the exact same person ever again.*

#### Weekly Challenge Check In (5 min)

Ask any youth who are willing to share about their experience with the weekly challenge from the previous Edge Night: Introduce yourself to one new person, get to know that person by asking them a question or two, and then say a silent prayer for them.

#### Game Instructions (15 min)

This game is played in a large group.

1. Have the youth find a partner with Core Members filling in as needed.
2. Read one question of preference (e.g., Chick-fil-A or Raising Cane’s? Ariana Grande or Billie Eilish? Disneyland or Universal Studios?).
3. Instruct the youth to shout their answer. If their partner’s answer is the same, the youth remain as partners for the next question. If they answer differently, they must find a new partner.
4. Play as many rounds as there are questions.
5. At the end of the game, see which pairs remained together for the most rounds.

## PROCLAIM

### “Limited Edition” Proclaim Teaching (10 min)

The teaching can be found on pages 56 to 58. The following are the main points that are covered in the teaching:

- Every human person is created in the image of God, as either a male or female, with a physical body and an eternal soul; yet no two humans are exactly the same.
- God created each of us with unique personalities, gifts, and talents, and only in Him will we discover the purpose for our lives that is specific only to us.
- God did not create human beings to be alone but to live in communion with each other; working together with others, using our gifts and talents, brings glory to God.

### BREAK

#### Small Group Activity (10 min)

Divide the youth into their small groups. Begin in prayer and then give each youth a pencil and a copy of the *Characteristics* handout, which can be found on the *March 2020 Edge USB* and online at [lifeteen.com](http://lifeteen.com) under Edge Support: *March 2020*. Introduce the activity, using the following as an example:

*God created each of us so unique that it is often easy for us to recognize the qualities and characteristics of other people. How often, though, do we stop to appreciate the unique characteristics within ourselves? We are going to stop and appreciate a little bit of who we are. Remember, even if you have similar characteristics to those around you, you display them in a way no one else can.*

Instruct the youth to take a few minutes to read the list of characteristics on the handout. After they have read all of them, ask them to circle the top five characteristics they recognize in themselves.

Once the youth have circled five characteristics, instruct them to take two pipe cleaners that match the color of each characteristic they circled. Using the pipe cleaners, invite them to create a sculpture or image of themselves.



#### Step It Up

Shorten or adapt a personality test for the youth to take instead of doing the above activity.

### Small Group Discussion (10 min)

Use the following questions to foster a discussion within the small group:

- *Whip Around Question:* What is one thing you like about yourself?
- What are the five characteristics from the handout you think best describe you? How do these characteristics look different in your life than in the life of someone else who has similar characteristics?
- Is it easy or hard for you to see yourself as unique? Why?
- How have the people in your life helped you understand who you are?

### Eighth-Grade Adaptation

Use the following questions for a more challenging discussion for eighth-grade youth:

- Do you consider yourself a “limited edition”? Why?
- Why do you think God found it important to create each person uniquely?
- What can make it feel like we are alone in figuring out who we are? How can we help the people in our lives know their uniqueness?

**SEND**

### Prayer Activity (15 min)

Gather the youth back to the large group, and quietly lead them to the designated area for Adoration. While they are in Adoration, encourage them to sit with the handout from the Break and pray about the characteristics they see in themselves. Invite them to thank God for the unique combination of qualities that make them who they are. Use the following to introduce this time of prayer:

*Whether or not you feel like it, you are a limited edition. Sometimes the last thing we want is to be unique. We might even try to change who we are to be more like others. Other times, we spend a lot of energy trying to stand out or prove that we are different, so we do not actually enjoy the unique things about ourselves. During Adoration, we are going to bring all of these thoughts and feelings to prayer. Using your Characteristics handout, we encourage you to go through each characteristic, even beyond the five you chose for your activity, and thank God for them individually. Once you thank God for them, ask Him to show you His love for you — the one-of-a-kind person He delighted in creating.*

After Adoration, close the Edge Night by praying a Hail Mary as a large group. Following the prayer, give the youth their weekly challenge.



## Suggestions

If you are not able to do Adoration, bring the youth to the church sanctuary to pray. If you have a small group, consider taking the youth to the parish chapel.



### Step It Up

Invite parents to join you for Adoration.

### Weekly Challenge (5 min)

Set an alarm on your phone (or write it on your mirror, so you see it when you pass by) to remind you of your unique nature: “God, help me see myself as you see me.”

Notes:



# LIMITED EDITION

What Makes Me Unique?

## EDGE NIGHT PROCLAIM

## GETTING STARTED

This teaching is provided to give you an example of how to present this topic in an age-appropriate way, making it relevant to middle school youth. If the youth are ready to take it deeper, incorporate a few of the *Going Deeper* call-out boxes, picking the ones the youth would relate to the most. If there are Hispanic/Latino youth in the youth group, incorporate the applicable suggestions from the *Hispanic Inculturation* call-out boxes.

## TEACHING GUIDE

### Limited Edition

*Do some research on a recent limited edition item the youth would be excited about. Explain what the item was, how many were made, and how much money it was sold for. Write your thoughts here:*

- Companies have many strategies for creating limited edition products. Usually there are a limited number of items made, and they are exclusive, unique, and desirable.
- While we might get excited about limited edition items from our favorite companies or brands, we often forget that each individual human being is created as a “limited edition.”
- We have each been created uniquely with specific detail, purpose, and love.

### Foundation of Identity

- There are concrete realities at the core of our identity that we all share as human beings, which are foundational to who we are. (CCC 360, 1934)
- Every human being is created in the image of God, and we all have equal dignity and deserve to be treated with honor and respect. (CCC 366, 1702)
- Human beings are set apart from all of creation because we are made in the image of God; we have a soul as well as a physical body. (CCC 366)
- God created human beings to be male or female. (CCC 366)

- These three elements make us human. From this foundation of who we are, there is a great deal of diversity among all people. While we are all part of the human race, no two human beings are exactly the same.



### Hispanic Inculturation

This is a good moment to point out the gift of cultural/ethnic diversity in the body of Christ. Challenge the youth to consider how the presence of Hispanic/Latino Catholics, for example, enriches the way Catholicism is understood in the United States. Help the youth acknowledge how their unique perspective is shaped by their cultural heritage, and encourage them to see those differences as another avenue through which God reveals Himself to us.

*Ask the youth to look around the room and take note of the vast diversity they see in each other. Challenge them to not only think about the physical differences but the differences in personalities or talents, as well. Write a few thoughts of reflection here:*

- The differences we see in each other are a part of God’s plan. These differences serve as a beautiful reminder of how great God is because, created in His image and likeness, we each reveal an aspect of Him.
- These differences make us unique, and we each have something to offer the world through the specific gifts and talents God has given us.

*Share some ideas of gifts or talents the youth may have, both obvious and less obvious. For example, they might play a sport or an instrument well, or they may be good at listening or making people laugh. Write your thoughts here:*

- A part of discovering who you are is recognizing the goodness of your body and what you are capable of, but it is also recognizing the different aspects of your personality and how you relate to other people and the world around you.
- It is important to learn what gifts and talents God has given you, but it is also important to grow physically and spiritually. As you do so, you have to remember that your dignity and worth is not based on your success.
- Your worth is not based on how you look or what you do. Your dignity and worth come from the fact that you are a human being, created in God’s image and likeness. This reality is unchanging; it does not increase or decrease depending on how good you are at something.

## You Are Not Alone

- While it may feel like you have to figure out who you are by yourself because it is your identity you are trying to figure out, the truth is that we were not created to be alone.
- God created us to live in communion with other people, and we need other people in order to grow and develop into who we were created to be.
- All of us, from the moment of our birth, depend on others to grow. (CCC 1936)
- For example, as a baby, you cannot do anything for yourself. Someone else had to teach you to walk, eat, get dressed, etc.
- As you continue to grow, you still need other people. You need teachers to help you learn, coaches to teach you how to play sports, family members to teach you how to love and have relationships with others, and friends to help you along the way.
- People in your life also need you. They need your specific gifts and talents. Whether your team needs you in the game, your teacher needs you to do your best, or your parents simply need you to be present when you are home because who you are makes your family complete, no one else can replace you in your communities.

*Share a brief time in your life when you needed the gifts and talents of other people to help you do something, followed by how you shared your gifts and talents with others. Write your thoughts here:*

- You are entirely unique. You are a limited edition. But you need other people in your life because you were created to live in communion with others, to give of yourself and receive from others. (CCC 357)
- Do not isolate yourself from the people God has brought into your life. Be open to the advice and guidance of your parents, family members, priests, teachers, and coaches.
- As you discover who you are and what makes you unique, remember you are not alone, your worth and dignity is unchanging, and you are known and loved by God, who created you. (1 John 4:16)

# INSTRUCTION MANUAL

# Why Should I Live a Good Life?

## EDGE NIGHT AT A GLANCE



## Scripture

Genesis 3:1-7; Sirach 15:14; Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, 45; Philippians 2:8; Hebrews 8:10



## Catechism

386-388, 1776



## Resources

Spotify: “ES - Wires and Robotics” (spotify:user:lifeteen)

Edge Video Support March 2020: "Instructions " (lifeteen.com)

## GOAL

The goal of this Edge Night is for the youth to understand the effects of original sin on humanity and the responsibility we have to form our conscience and make good choices.

# GATHER

The youth work in small groups to come up with instructions for their Core Member to follow in order to properly use a certain object. The purpose of the game is to help the youth understand the importance of following correct instructions.

# PROCLAIM

The following are the main teaching points of the Proclaim:

- In the beginning, human beings mistrusted the goodness of God and disobeyed Him, which led to original sin that affected all of humanity. As a consequence, we struggle to trust God and make good choices.
- Jesus saved us from our sins, and He gives us the grace to do what is good and offers us forgiveness when we fail.

- We are all created with a conscience that compels us to do good and avoid evil, but we also have to form our conscience properly, which affects who we are now and who we will become.

# BREAK

The youth are given a handout and have to take turns making choices in an attempt to get to a desired end. The purpose of this activity is for the youth to understand how their decisions either lead them closer to heaven or further away. The youth then have a small group discussion about what they learned.

**SEND**

The youth learn about the Sacrament of Reconciliation and are given time to pray with an examination of conscience. The purpose of this prayer activity is for the youth to understand why it is important to seek Christ's mercy when they sin, as well as to learn about a tool they have to help them learn right from wrong and when they commit sins.

## WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Notes:

# INSTRUCTION MANUAL

# Why Should I Live a Good Life?

## EDGE NIGHT SET UP

## SET UP

Collect a variety of battery-powered items for the Gather. Print copies of the *Choose Your Adventure* and *Examination of Conscience* handouts for the Break and Send activities. Handouts can be found on the *March 2020 Edge USB* and online at [lifeteen.com](http://lifeteen.com) under Edge Support: *March 2020*.

## SUPPLIES

The following is a list of supplies that are needed for the Edge Night:

- G: Tables
- G: Battery-powered items
- G: Paper
- G: Pens or pencils
- B: *Choose Your Adventure* handout
- S: *Examination of Conscience* handout

## ASSIGNMENTS

Use the following list to assign Core Members to specific tasks:

**Set Up:** \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

### Gather:

- Opening Prayer: \_\_\_\_\_
- Game: \_\_\_\_\_

**Proclaim:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Break:** All small group leaders

**Send:**

- Closing Prayer: \_\_\_\_\_
- Weekly Challenge: \_\_\_\_\_



# INSTRUCTION MANUAL

Why Should I Live a Good Life?

## EDGE NIGHT OUTLINE

### GATHER

#### Edge Night Introduction (5 min)

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

*Every time we buy something new, there is a small booklet inside the package that tells us how to use the product. Maybe you read this instruction manual right away. Maybe you do not read it at all and just figure things out as you go. Perhaps you tuck it away somewhere and only refer back to it if something goes wrong. You may not realize this, but God created human beings with an instruction manual. He has given us specific instructions on how we ought to live our lives if we want to be happy, find our purpose, and achieve the goal for which we were created. If we want to know how to “function properly,” it is important that we read the instruction manual ahead of time. Doing this will help us live life fully, in a way we could never imagine, rather than figuring it out as we go along or only looking to it when something goes wrong. This week at Edge, we are going to learn more about the instructions God gave us and why we should want to follow them.*

#### Weekly Challenge Check In (5 min)

Ask any youth who are willing to share about their experience with the weekly challenge from the previous Edge Night: Set an alarm on your phone (or write it on your mirror, so you see it when you pass by) to remind you of your unique nature: “God, help me see myself as you see me.”

#### Game Instructions (15 min)

This game is played in small groups as an upfront game.

1. Divide the youth into small groups.
2. Set up tables at the front of the room. Have one Core Member from each small group stand behind the table.
3. Give each small group a different battery-powered item such as a flashlight, remote control car, walkie talkie, etc.
4. Instruct the youth to work together to come up with a list of instructions for how to use their item, including putting the batteries in.

5. After the youth have written their instructions, have one youth from each small group bring their item and instructions to their Core Member at the front of the room.
6. One at a time, each Core Member must follow the instructions that were given to them from their small group. They should follow the instructions literally, doing exactly what they say.
7. The Core Member(s) and small group(s) whose instructions accurately guided them wins.



#### Suggestions

If you are not able to find a different object for each small group, have one item that all of the small groups write directions for. Have the youth minister follow each set of directions to determine a winner.

### PROCLAIM

#### “Instruction Manual” Proclaim Teaching (10 min)

The teaching can be found on pages 68 to 71. The following are the main points that are covered in the teaching:

- In the beginning, human beings mistrusted the goodness of God and disobeyed Him, which led to original sin that affected all of humanity. As a consequence, we struggle to trust God and make good choices.
- Jesus saved us from our sins, and He gives us the grace to do what is good and offers us forgiveness when we fail.
- We are all created with a conscience that compels us to do good and avoid evil, but we also have to form our conscience properly, which affects who we are now and who we will become.

### BREAK

#### Small Group Activity (10 min)

Divide the youth into their small groups. Begin in prayer and then introduce the activity, using the following as an example:

*We have to make choices each day. Some decisions are bigger and some are smaller. While these choices shape our lives in both positive and negative ways, they all contribute to the adventure of life. Making choices is not something we should be afraid of, especially when we are growing in our relationship with God, forming our conscience, and trusting in God’s grace and mercy. Making choices is an important part of being human, so we are going to spend some time choosing our adventure as a small group.*

Using the *Choose Your Adventure* handout, which can be found on the *March 2020 Edge USB* and online at [lifeteen.com](http://lifeteen.com) under Edge Support: *March 2020*, create stations for the youth to choose their adventure. At each station, read the youth the scenario

and the youth choose a response and are given the corresponding consequence. Have the small groups start at different stations and instruct them to rotate through the stations to create their adventure.



**Suggestions**

If you have more than five small groups, consider setting up two sets of stations for small groups.

**Small Group Questions (10 min)**

Use the following questions to foster a discussion within the small group:

- *Whip Around Question:* What is one choice you made today?
- Why is it important to make good choices?
- How do bad choices affect us and our relationships with other people?
- How would you describe your conscience? How can we form our conscience?

**Eighth-Grade Adaptation**

Use the following questions for a more challenging discussion for eighth-grade youth:

- How do the small choices we make shape the big choices we will have to make in the future?
- Why does God give us the ability to make choices?
- Does making bad or good choices make it easier to make more bad or good choices? Why?
- How can you make choices that will help form your conscience in a positive way?

**SEND**

**Prayer Activity (15 min)**

Gather the youth back to the large group. Introduce the Sacrament of Reconciliation and explain how to use an examination of conscience, using the following as an example:

*We are going to take some time to examine our conscience. Examining our conscience means we think about the instructions God has given us to live a good and holy life and ask ourselves where we have done a good job and where we need to do a better job. Once we examine our conscience, we can identify things we need to ask God's forgiveness for and areas of our conscience that need to be better formed. As you go through the examination and ask God for forgiveness, also ask Him to help you find one area of your conscience that needs to grow. While we can ask God for forgiveness now, it is important for us to bring these sins and areas of growth to Christ in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.*

Give each youth a copy of the *Examination of Conscience* handout, which can be found on the *March 2020 Edge USB* and online at [lifeteen.com](http://lifeteen.com) under Edge Support: *March 2020*. Allow the youth time to prayerfully reflect on their lives while they read the examination. Encourage them to ask Jesus to help them see where they need to turn away from sin and turn back to Him.

Close the Edge Night by giving the youth the schedule for confession at your parish and praying a Hail Mary as a large group. Following the prayer, give the youth their weekly challenge.



**Suggestions**

Email the parents a copy of the *Examination of Conscience* handout as well as a list of the times the Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered at local parishes; make them aware of their youth's weekly challenge to go to confession and encourage them to go as a family.



**Hispanic Inculturation**

Many Hispanic/Latino youth are more likely to have experienced the Sacrament of Reconciliation in Spanish, so provide them with Reconciliation times when Spanish-Speaking priests are available or help them become familiar with the English prayers that are necessary for confession. Remind them that it is not a problem to use a combination of Spanish and English during the rite itself (e.g., saying the prayers in Spanish but making their confession in English or vice versa).



**Step It Up**

Offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation during or after the Edge Night.

**Weekly Challenge (5 min)**

Go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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# INSTRUCTION MANUAL

Why Should I Live a Good Life?

## EDGE NIGHT PROCLAIM

### GETTING STARTED

This teaching is provided to give you an example of how to present this topic in an age-appropriate way, making it relevant to middle school youth. If the youth are ready to take it deeper, incorporate a few of the *Going Deeper* call-out boxes, picking the ones the youth would relate to the most. If there are Hispanic/Latino youth in the youth group, incorporate the applicable suggestions from the *Hispanic Inculturation* call-out boxes.

### TEACHING GUIDE

#### Instruction Manual

Ask one or two youth to share why people need instruction manuals. Write your thoughts here:

- Instruction manuals are important because they tell us how something should be used and what it was created to do.
- *Play the video, “Instructions ” from the Resources section.*
- If we follow the instructions from the creator of an item, everything will work as it should and we will be able to use the item properly.
- In a similar way, we were created with an “instruction manual” that tells us how we should live our lives.
- God created us to know Him, love Him, serve Him, and be in heaven with Him for eternity. He also created an instruction manual for us to follow, so we can actually accomplish these things.

#### Origin of Sin and Salvation

- *Read Hebrews 8:10.*
- God has written this instruction manual on our hearts. Deep within us there is a law that we have not created ourselves, yet we feel compelled to follow. This law calls us to love, do what is good, and avoid what is evil. (CCC 1776; Sirach 15:14)

- At the same time, God created us as rational beings with free will. We are able to think, make decisions, and act; we are not robots. (CCC 1730)
- God created us with free will because He desires for us to be in a relationship with Him — to know Him and love Him, as well as to know and love others — and love is a free choice. (CCC 386; Matthew 22:36-40)
- Our free will is a gift from God, but when we have free will, we are able to willingly choose to not follow the law God has given us.
- When we do not follow the law that is given to us by God, we abuse our gift of freedom and break our relationship with God. When we reject God’s plans for us and turn our back on Him, it is called “sin.” (CCC 386-387)



#### Going Deeper

There are different types of sin: mortal sin and venial sin. Mortal sin is a serious breaking of God’s law that destroys our connection with God. In committing this type of sin, we willingly turn away from God. For a sin to be mortal, it must be of grave matter, done in full knowledge of the evil of the sin, and with full intention to commit the sin. Venial sin — when we break the law of God in a less serious matter or commit a sin without full knowledge that it is a sin or without fully intending to commit the sin — weakens our relationship with God but does not destroy it. (CCC 1854-1864)

- *Read Genesis 3:1-7.*
- The reality of sin goes all the way back to the origin of men and women. (CCC 390)
- We all struggle to believe in God’s goodness, trust in His plan for our lives, and choose to follow Him, and we do not always follow the law He gave us.
- When we use our freedom wrongly, our relationship with God is broken. When our relationship with God is broken, we are no longer living in accord with how we were created. (CCC 389)
- When it comes to sin, we cannot fix the problem ourselves; we cannot repair our relationship with God alone. We need to be saved from our sin, and we need help from a source greater than ourselves. (CCC 389)
- *Read John 3:16-17.*
- Jesus came to save all of humanity from sin, and He repairs our relationship with God through His death and Resurrection. (CCC 389, 457-460)

#### But Why

- Sin is real; it is a part of our condition as human beings. But Jesus came to save us from our sins and show us how to live.
- But why should we follow Jesus? Why should we care whether or not we sin?
- We were created to know God, love God, and serve God. We were created to be in a relationship with God. When we sin, we go against everything we were created for.

*Share a few examples of how we are unhappy when we act in a way that goes against how we were created. For example: if we never sleep, we will be miserable; if we only eat ice cream, we will be sick and unhappy; if we do not drink enough water, our body stops functioning properly. Write your thoughts here:*

- When we follow the instruction manual from God, we take responsibility for our lives and who we are. When we live our lives with responsibility, following the path of Jesus, we find meaning in our lives, which gives us purpose and direction.
- While it may not always be easy, when we have a goal as great as heaven to strive for, we discover the strength to overcome difficulties and find constant joy in Jesus, no matter our circumstances.
- If we want to find true and lasting meaning for our lives, we should live how we were created to live by doing what we were created to do.
- In order to know what we are created to do and avoid sin, we have to form our conscience.
- Our conscience is our interior voice, the one that prompts us to do what is good and avoid what is evil. Our conscience helps us follow the law of God, which is written on our hearts. (CCC 1777-1778)
- Sin weakens our conscience, and we have to work hard to form it. Just like we have to work hard to learn new things, like algebra or a new language, we have to work hard to learn what is right and what is wrong, according to what Jesus has revealed to us. We have to work hard to follow God's law, our instruction manual.
- God offers us many ways to learn about the instruction manual He gave us: understanding the Ten Commandments, reading about Jesus' life and teachings in the Bible, and following the teachings of the Catholic Church, which was established by Jesus to be our guide.
- As we learn what is right, what is wrong, how to avoid evil, and what to do when we sin (ask Jesus for forgiveness through the Sacrament of Reconciliation), we have to act and make changes in our lives to better follow God's instructions.
- Jesus' life shows us the way to live; He reveals to us the truth of who God is, gives us new life by His grace, and helps us follow God's law. (John 14:6)
- There are also concrete ways for us to accept and receive the grace Jesus gives to us through the sacraments of the Church.



## Going Deeper

Through the Sacrament of Baptism, we are forgiven of original sin, made sons and daughters of God, and able to enter the gates of heaven. Through the Sacrament of the Eucharist, we receive Jesus and many graces to sustain us. Through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we are forgiven of our sins and restored in our relationship with God.

- When we follow the law that is written upon our hearts, we will live according to how we were created. In doing so, we find meaning, purpose, and lasting happiness. Jesus promises us that, in Him, we will find the fullness of life we all desire. (John 10:10)


Notes: \_\_\_\_\_





# BEYOND WIRES AND ROBOTICS

Where Am I Going?

## EDGE NIGHT AT A GLANCE

**Scripture**  
John 6:28-29, 53-59, 14:2-4; 1 Corinthians 2:9; Philippians 2:12-13; Revelation 21:4

**Catechism**  
358, 412, 1703, 1949, 2002

**Resources**  
Spotify: “ES - Wires and Robotics” (spotify:user:lifeteen)

## GOAL

The goal of this Edge Night is for the youth to understand heaven as their eternal goal, a gift that is freely given but requires us to accept it in faith and then live in accord with everything God has revealed.

## GATHER

The youth create catapults out of popsicle sticks and compete to see who can launch a pom pom ball the farthest. The purpose of this activity is for the youth to have fun while creating something that supports the theme of the Edge Night.

## PROCLAIM

- The following are the main teaching points of the Proclaim:
- From the moment of our creation, God desires for us to be in heaven and makes it possible for us to get to heaven through Jesus Christ.
  - God freely gives us the gift of heaven, but we must decide to accept this gift through faith and then live our lives following all God has revealed to us.

- Because of the great love of God and the hope we have for heaven, our lives will look different; who we are and all of our actions will be a result and reflection of this great love.

## BREAK

The youth learn about the Bible and how to use it. They are also challenged to find three Bible verses about heaven. The purpose of this activity is to teach the youth how to read the Bible. The youth then have a small group discussion about what they learned.

## SEND

The youth learn how to pray with Scripture and revisit the Bible verses they found during the Break. The purpose of this prayer activity is for the youth to learn how to pray with Scripture, so they can continue to do so on their own and grow in their relationship with God.

## WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Pray with one of the Bible verses about heaven. Reflect on what stands out to you and what God might be trying to say to you through the Scripture verse.

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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## BEYOND WIRES AND ROBOTICS

## Where Am I Going?

## EDGE NIGHT SET UP

## SET UP

Before the Edge Night, complete the Gather activity with the Core Team, so each Core Member makes a popsicle stick catapult and is prepared to guide the youth through the activity. If possible, gather enough Bibles for all of the youth or contact parents ahead of time so they can send their child with a Bible for the Break and Send activities.

## SUPPLIES

The following is a list of supplies that are needed for the Edge Night:

- G: Popsicle sticks
- G: Rubber bands
- G: Plastic spoons
- G: Pom pom balls
- B: Bibles
- S: Bibles

## ASSIGNMENTS

Use the following list to assign Core Members to specific tasks:

**Set Up:** \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

### Gather:

- Opening Prayer: \_\_\_\_\_
- Game: \_\_\_\_\_

**Proclaim:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Break:** All small group leaders

**Send:**

- Closing Prayer: \_\_\_\_\_
- Weekly Challenge: \_\_\_\_\_

# BEYOND WIRES AND ROBOTICS

Where Am I Going?

## EDGE NIGHT OUTLINE

### GATHER

#### Edge Night Introduction (5 min)

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

*The next best thing is always on the way. Just when you think you have the latest edition of a smartphone, the next version comes out. Right after you buy and get really good at a certain video game, the next version is in stores. In our world of technology and innovation, once a smartphone gets too old or a video game is mastered, we throw it out. Once the material items we own become used, we toss them out and forget about them. However, our story ends differently than our possessions. Our purpose and destiny is not just to fill our days until we become outdated and tossed out. When our life is fulfilled and we reach our death, we are not just replaced and forgotten; death is not our end. This week at Edge, we are going to talk about our ultimate destiny. We will answer the question, “Where are we going?” and explore the destiny we were all created for; we are talking about heaven.*

#### Weekly Challenge Check In (5 min)

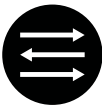
Ask any youth who are willing to share about their experience with the weekly challenge from the previous Edge Night: Go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

#### Game Instructions (15 min)

This game is played in small groups.

1. Give each youth seven popsicle sticks, five rubber bands, and one plastic spoon.
2. Instruct the youth to stack five of the popsicle sticks on top of each other and fasten them together with rubber bands on each end of the stack.
3. Have the youth take the other two popsicle sticks and put them on top of each other. Instruct them to fasten the popsicle sticks together with a rubber band on one end of the stack.
4. Instruct the youth to pull the two popsicle sticks slightly apart and place the stack of five popsicle sticks in between them, sliding the bottom of the two popsicle sticks in between the fourth and fifth popsicle stick in the stack to secure them.

5. Finally, have the youth use a rubber band to fasten the plastic spoon to the top popsicle stick.
6. Give each youth a pom pom ball, or a similar item, and have them line their catapults up next to each other to compete to see who can get their pom pom ball to go the furthest.
7. Continue to catapult pom pom balls for as long as time allows.



#### Suggestions

If you are not able to collect enough supplies for each youth to make a catapult, have them work together to create a single catapult for their small group.



#### Step It Up

Turn this activity into a large group competition. The youth first compete against each other in their small groups. The winner from each small group advances to the next level and competes against the winners from the other small groups. Award a prize to the overall winner.

### PROCLAIM

#### “Beyond Wires and Robotics” Proclaim Teaching (10 min)

The teaching can be found on pages 80 to 83. The following are the main points that are covered in the teaching:

- From the moment of our creation, God desires for us to be in heaven and makes it possible for us to get to heaven through Jesus Christ.
- God freely gives us the gift of heaven, but we must decide to accept this gift through faith and then live our lives following all God has revealed to us.
- Because of the great love of God and the hope we have for heaven, our lives will look different; who we are and all of our actions will be a result and reflection of this great love.

### BREAK

#### Small Group Activity (10 min)

Divide the youth into their small groups. Begin in prayer and then give each youth a Bible. Use the following to introduce the activity:

*Since no one who is living on Earth has experienced heaven, it can be hard for us to imagine what it will be like. However, God gives us glimpses of what heaven will be like in Scripture. We are going to spend some time learning how to use our Bible and find passages that tell us about heaven. When we look for passages in the Bible, we do not use the page numbers; we use the book, chapter, and verse to find what we are looking*

*for. The number before the colon is the chapter and the number after the colon is the verse. For example, let us look for Revelation 21:4. Revelation is the book of the Bible. Once we find the book, we can look for chapter 21. Once we have found chapter 21, we can look for verse four. Let us all try that together. Once you have found the passage, place the open Bible on your head.*

Instruct the youth to find and read the following Bible verses: Revelation 21:4, John 14:2, and 1 Corinthians 2:9. Have them mark the page in the Bible so they can easily find them again or instruct them to write down each verse on a separate piece of paper.



## Hispanic Inculturation

Consider adding Revelation 7:9 to the list of verses the youth are instructed to find. In the Send, affirm the youth who recognize the importance of heaven that includes a diverse multitude of people from every nation, tribe, and tongue. Help Hispanic/Latino youth, as well as youth of other cultures represented in your youth group, recognize how their presence will be celebrated in the Kingdom of God during the Small Group Discussion.

### Small Group Questions (10 min)

Use the following questions to foster a discussion within the small group:

- *Whip Around Question:* What is one word you would use to describe heaven?
- How have you seen heaven represented in TV, movies, or memes?
- How are these images different than the way Scripture talks about heaven?
- Why do you think you were created for heaven?

### Eighth-Grade Adaptation

Use the following questions for a more challenging discussion for eighth-grade youth:

- Do you ever think about eternal life? What have you thought about it?
- What does hope mean to you?
- How can the promise that we will live an eternal life in heaven provide us with hope?

**SEND**

### Prayer Activity (15 min)

Keep the youth in their small groups and introduce the prayer activity, using the following as an example:

*Not only can we read Scripture to know things about God, Christianity, and heaven, but we can take time to pray with Scripture and grow in our relationship with God. When we pray with Scripture, we have a conversation with God and are given the grace*

*to become the people He created us to be. Praying with Scripture can encourage us when we feel defeated. It can give us hope when we feel discouraged. It can provide us with peace when we feel anxious. There are many different ways we can pray with Scripture, so we are going to focus on learning one of them right now.*

Instruct the youth to read the three Bible verses about heaven again and choose the one they like the most or stands out to them the most. Then ask them to slowly read that verse again, paying attention to any words that stand out to them or images that come to mind. Ask them to read the verse one final time and think about what God might be trying to tell them through this Scripture verse.

Allow any youth who are willing to share which verse they chose, what stood out to them about it, and what they think God is trying to tell them through that particular verse.

Close the Edge Night by praying a Hail Mary as a large group. Following the prayer, give the youth their weekly challenge.

### Weekly Challenge (5 min)

Pray with one of the Bible verses about heaven. Reflect on what stands out to you and what God might be trying to say to you through the Scripture verse.

# BEYOND WIRES AND ROBOTICS

Where Am I Going?

## EDGE NIGHT PROCLAIM

### GETTING STARTED

This teaching is provided to give you an example of how to present this topic in an age-appropriate way, making it relevant to middle school youth. If the youth are ready to take it deeper, incorporate a few of the Going Deeper call-out boxes, picking the ones the youth would relate to the most. If there are Hispanic/Latino youth in the youth group, incorporate the applicable suggestions from the *Hispanic Inculturation* call-out boxes.

*Pastoral Note: Be sensitive when talking about death with youth. At this age, they are more aware of the finality of death, causes of death, and how the death of a loved one would impact their future. There may be heightened fear of death and anxiety about the thought of losing someone they love. For youth who have already experienced loss, they may feel isolated if none of their friends have experienced a similar situation. Be open to conversations with the youth about death and aware of regressive behavior and emotional reactions for those who have lost a loved one. Allow the youth to express their feelings through various means. If a youth is feeling isolated in their experience of loss, reach out to their family to suggest a support group where they can normalize it and talk about their feelings in a healthy way.*

### TEACHING GUIDE

#### Beyond Wires and Robotics

Begin by sharing about the most recent material item you have replaced and why. For example, getting a new smartphone because your phone was outdated, getting a new gallon of milk because the one you had expired, or getting a new car because your car broke down. Write your thoughts here:

- All items in the material world come to some sort of end. Our electronics become outdated and replaced, or they break and we get new ones. Our food eventually goes bad or expires. Our clothes get old or ripped and need to be recycled.
- All living things also reach an end, which we call “death.” Death is a reality of life.
- As human beings, we all have a common origin, being created by God in His image and likeness. We all have equal dignity, and we will all face the same end.

- Unlike the rest of the material world, human beings are both physical and spiritual beings; when we die our soul is separated from our body. Our bodies go through the natural process of breaking down and decomposing. However, our souls are immortal and do not die; they live on for eternity. (CCC 366)
- We believe that at a point called the “final resurrection,” our bodies will be raised from the dead like Jesus’ and we will be reunited with our souls. (CCC 366)



#### Going Deeper

When God created the world, He also created time, but God lives outside of time in eternity. When we die, we will enter into eternal life — either in heaven or hell. Eternal life has no time and no end.

#### Our Destiny

- Read *Wisdom 1:13*.
- God did not create death; death is a result of sin and entered the world through original sin. (CCC 413)
- When we sin, it affects our life here and now, but it also has eternal consequences.
- God desires for all of us to one day be in heaven, but we were created with free will, so we have to freely choose to love God and accept this great gift He has given us. (CCC 2002)
- When people use their free will to choose not to love God and do not seek forgiveness for their sins, their choice becomes permanent at the end of their life and their soul goes to hell, where they permanently exclude themselves from a relationship with God and those who love God. (CCC 1033)
- But God does not abandon us to sin and death; rather, God sent His only Son, Jesus, to save us from sin and bring us to eternal life with God in heaven. (CCC 359, 1949)
- Heaven is eternal life with God where we will live forever in perfect unity and love with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit as well as all of the other people who are in heaven. Heaven is “the state of supreme and definitive happiness, the goal of the deepest longing of humanity” (CCC 1023).



#### Going Deeper

The joy and happiness of heaven is beyond anything we could imagine; in heaven, “He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away” (Revelation 21:4). In heaven, we will have the perfect relationship with God; He will be enough for us and fulfill every desire of our hearts.

- God created us all freely out of love. We did not ask to be born, and we did nothing to deserve the life He has given us.



- In the same way, God freely gives us the gift of heaven through Jesus; there is nothing we did to deserve salvation, yet Jesus died and rose from the dead to save us. (Romans 5:8)

*At this time, ask the youth to close their eyes and invite those who are ready to accept this gift of eternal life to silently repeat after you in their minds and hearts. Reassure those who are not yet ready and encourage them to simply be open and listen to the following words:*

Jesus, I trust in you. I accept the gift of life you have given me through the Sacrament of Baptism, and I freely choose to love and follow you. Help me continue to love you and follow you every day. Thank you for your death on the cross. Thank you for the new life you give us. I accept it all, and I love you.

## Living Hope

- The grace of Jesus and the gift of heaven are freely given to us in the Sacrament of Baptism, where we are freed from original sin, made sons and daughters of God, and become a part of the community of the Church. (CCC 1213)
- This sacrament begins our spiritual life. We are united through baptism to the death and Resurrection of Jesus so one day, when we die, we can be resurrected to eternal life with Jesus. (CCC 1277)



## Going Deeper

The Sacrament of Baptism is necessary for salvation and is a gift given to the Church by Jesus Himself as the means for salvation. God has bound salvation to the Sacrament of Baptism, but He is not bound by the sacraments. God, in His infinite mercy, is able to work outside of the sacraments, but that does not mean we should neglect them or think that they are not necessary. (CCC 1257-1258)

- While there is nothing we did or can do to deserve God's love and the gift of heaven, we are called to respond to this great love in the way we live our lives. There is a proper way to respond when we are given a great gift.

*Give concrete examples for receiving a gift. For example, imagine that it is Christmas morning and you are opening up a present from your parents. It is the best gift imaginable, the one you have always wanted and never thought you would get. How would you respond? Would you throw it away? Would you let it get broken or ruined? Would you refuse to open the gift? No. The best way to respond to a great gift is to open it, show gratitude to those who gave it to you, and take care of it to the best of your ability. Write your thoughts here:*

- We have all been given the gift of heaven, and we should respond to God with great gratitude and love. We should take care of the gift we have been given.
- When we choose to know God, love God, and serve God, we remain on the path He has given us, which will lead us to heaven, and live lives full of hope.
- When we have hope, we “desire and expect from God both eternal life and the grace we need to attain it” (CCC 1817).
- By following the law God has given us and accepting the grace that comes to us through Jesus, we will orient our lives toward our destination of heaven. (CCC 1949)
- *Read John 14:2-4.*
- God wants us to get to heaven so badly that “He did not spare His own Son for the sake of man. Nor does He ever cease to work, trying every possible means, until He has raised man up to Himself” (CCC 358).
- What we do with our lives matters. The choices we make matter. Our lives are not random; we were created for a reason and are called to eternal life with God.
- With the truth of our origin, dignity, and destiny at the foundation of our lives, we discover what it means to be human and can properly form our identity. This allows us to find true happiness, meaning, and purpose, both today, tomorrow, and for all of eternity.

Notes:

