

# BLACK PANTHER

How Do I Know What is Right?

## EDGE NIGHT AT A GLANCE

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### Scripture

Proverbs 14:8,15, 19:21; Sirach 19:20-23; John 16:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:21



### Catechism

1806



### Resources

Spotify: "ES - A Great Marvel" (spotify:user:lifeteen)

## GOAL

The goal of the Edge Night is to use the example of Black Panther to help the youth understand the virtue of prudence and know what is best for themselves and for others in everyday situations.

## GATHER

The youth play a mimicking game with actions that are based on the movie, "Black Panther." The purpose of this game is for the youth to have fun and enter into the theme of the Edge Night.

## PROCLAIM

The following are the main teaching points of the Proclaim:

- The virtue of prudence helps us choose what is right in every situation and do what is good in the best way.
- Black Panther exemplified the virtue of prudence when he revealed Wakanda's technology to the world in the proper way.
- By cultivating prudence, we can be confident in the good God wants us to do for ourselves and others, as well as the bad things He wants us to avoid.



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## EDGE NIGHT SET UP

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### SET UP

Print copies of the *My Origin Story - Prudence* handout for the Break activity. Handouts can be found on the *August 2021 Edge USB* or online at [lifeteen.com](http://lifeteen.com) under Edge Support: *August 2021*. For each of the Edge Nights in this semester that teaches a specific virtue, the youth will be given a handout that has to do with their own “origin story.” These handouts provide ways to reflect and process how to apply the specific virtue to their lives as middle schoolers. The goal is that they learn to apply the virtues while they are still young and form good habits that influence them for the rest of their lives, hence the title “Origin Story.”

Test the lighting in the room for the Send to ensure the ability to dim lights as needed for the prayer activity. If the room does not allow for light dimming, consider using lamps or candles throughout the room to slowly add more light as you go through the activity.

Add to the set environment for the semester by adding cutouts or posters of Black Panther. Also create a poster with the word *prudence* on it along with its definition found below, if you have Hispanic/Latino youth also include the Spanish translation.

**Prudence:** Choosing what is right in every situation and doing what is good in the best way.

*Prudencia: Elegir lo que es correcto en cada situación y hacer lo que es bueno de la mejor manera.*

### SUPPLIES

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

- B: *My Origin Story - Prudence* handout, one per youth
- B: Pens or pencils, one per youth
- S: Lights or lamps (as necessary)

### ASSIGNMENTS

Use the following list to assign core members to specific tasks:

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



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## EDGE NIGHT OUTLINE

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### 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:

*Have you ever made a decision without taking very much time to think about it? Sometimes, when life is moving really fast, or when we just aren't in the mood to think things through, we can make decisions without really knowing what we are doing. We can get lucky and have it work out, but sometimes, it can lead to big mistakes. There may be moments we wish we had taken a little bit more time because we might not have made a decision that ended so badly. Superheroes have to make many decisions. Between flying alien monsters and civilians crying for help, a superhero sometimes has numerous options of who to save and how to save them. In order to make the best decision possible, they need the virtue of prudence. Prudence helps us choose what is right in every situation and do what is good in the best way. It sometimes is as simple as taking one more second to think about our decisions before making them, but there is more to growing in this virtue than simple patience. This week at Edge, we are going to look at the virtue of prudence by looking at the example of King T'Challa, otherwise known as Black Panther. He is a superhero who exemplifies good decision making and the wisdom to properly put his plans in place.*

#### 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: Memorize the Scripture passage Philippians 4:8.

Consider having a prize for any of the youth who have it memorized.

#### Wakanda Forever (10 min)

This game is played as a large group.

1. Gather all the youth together in one space and direct them to face the front of the room.
2. A core member stands at the front of the room and gives the youth instructions to follow that are themed on the Black Panther movie.
3. When the core member calls out the action, the youth must act out what they hear and yell out "Ha!" or any other action word they want to (e.g., "pow," "boom," "kapow") as they perform the action.

4. When the core member yells “Wakanda Forever,” the youth must race to get in a single file line in the middle of the room and cross their arms across their chest to make an X.
5. The last two youth to get in line and cross their arms are out.
6. The game continues until one or two youth are left.

Use the following actions as an example and adapt them if necessary for your youth or based on your own favorite action moves from Black Panther.

- Spear: Pretend you’re throwing a spear
- Jab: Pretend you are jabbing forward with a spear
- Shield: Cover your face with your forearm
- Dodge Right: Slide to the right
- Dodge Left: Slide to the left
- Black Panther: Squat to the ground



### **Hispanic Inculturation**

Simon Says is a very well-known game that is won essentially by the person who is the best listener and the most obedient to the leader. This can translate for Hispanic/Latino youth who are very familiar with getting “the look” from their parents. For example, imagine you are touching something at a store that you know you shouldn’t, and your parents give you “the look.” You know exactly what to do, stop touching! This mentality of “the look” is something that many Hispanic/Latino youth are accustomed to and this can also be expressed with a few other familiar phrases such as “Que estas haciendo?” “What are you doing?” or “Te estoy mirando” “I’m watching you.” In this game of Simon Says, consider incorporating some of these phrases that would be familiar to your Hispanic/Latino youth.

## **PROCLAIM**

### **“Black Panther” Proclaim Teaching (10 min)**

The teaching can be found on pages 34 to 37. The following main points are covered in the teaching:

- The virtue of prudence helps us choose what is right in every situation and do what is good in the best way.
- Black Panther exemplified this virtue when he revealed Wakanda’s technology to the world in the proper way.
- By cultivating prudence, we can be confident in the good God wants us to do for ourselves and others, as well as the bad things He wants us to avoid.

## BREAK

### Origin Story: Prudence (10 min)

Break the youth into their small groups, begin in prayer, and give each youth a copy of the *My Origin Story - Prudence* handout found on the *August 2021 Edge USB* and online at [lifeteen.com](http://lifeteen.com) under Edge Support: *August 2021*.

Help the youth to think outside of the box (when it comes to their gifts and talents) as you explain to them each question on the handout. Use the following examples as a guide.

What are some gifts and talents that you have? *For example: Are you a good listener? Are you the “go-to” problem solver in your group of friends? Can you find the good in any situation? Are you talented in academics, arts, sports, or music? Etc.*

How can these gifts and talents glorify God? *For example: Can you show the love and compassion of God to others in the way you listen to them? Can you help solve problems leading others towards God and away from sin? Can you reveal God’s blessings even in hard times? Can you give glory to God by doing your best?*

What could be some good outcomes of using your gifts and talents in a prudent way? *For example: You listened to your friend and they felt loved and cared for. You helped your friend make a decision that was good and not bad. You filled someone with hope when you showed them something positive that was happening in their life. You grew in your own talents and helped those around you grow in their talents. You inspired people through your art, music, sports, or academic achievements.*

Allow the youth to spread out around the meeting space and instruct them to think through each question as it applies to them and write down their answers.

### Small Group Discussion (10 min)

After the youth have completed the handouts, gather them back together and use the following to foster a time of discussion:

- *Whip Around Question:* If you could have any talent, what would it be?
- What was one gift or talent that you recognized in yourself?
- How did you think that gift or talent can bring glory to God?
- How do you think using that gift or talent can bring about something good?
- Why is it so important to use our gifts and talents under the guidance of prudence? What would happen if we did not?

### Eighth-Grade Adaptation

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

- If someone asked you what prudence means, what would you say to them?
- Who is an example of a prudent person in your life? What do they do that makes them so prudent?

- Is there something that person does that you would also want to do when it comes to making decisions? Explain.
- What other tools do you use to help decide what is the right thing to do?
- Do you think it is possible to do something right, but in the wrong way? Explain?
- Why is it important to be prudent in both what we do and how we do it?
- How does prudence help us in our relationship with Jesus?

## SEND

### The Light of Christ Meditation (20 min)

Gather the youth back, as a large group, into the meeting space that has been set up for this time of prayer. As a core member or the youth minister leads the youth through the following reflection, start with the room mostly dark and then gradually make the room brighter and brighter. This reflection will help the youth to understand how light helps us to see in the same way that the virtue of prudence helps us to see the good things that we should do — choosing right over wrong. Have quiet reflective music playing in the background, give each youth a sheet of paper and a pen, and use the following to lead the youth in this time of prayer:

The room should be mostly dark. Begin with the Sign of the Cross.

*“If any one walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if any one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.” (John 11:9-10)*

*We have been given clear guidelines from God through the Church as to what is and is not a sin. We are given these instructions through the Ten Commandments, Scripture, and Church teaching — but that doesn’t always mean it is easy to know what to do all the time. Sometimes, there are a lot of different feelings, people, and outcomes involved in a decision, as well as other factors that play into what we decide to do. We may not know what is right in the situation. Doing the right thing might make us uncomfortable. Or we might be afraid to hurt someone’s feelings. It can feel like a dark place to be stuck, unsure of what to do next, but we are not alone.*

Make the room a little brighter.

*“In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” (John 1:4-5)*

*Jesus is the light of the world. Jesus is always with us to guide us and to provide help through our neighbors who know how to do the right things. As we begin to grow in the virtue of prudence, the first step is to stop and think before we act. We can pray and ask the Holy Spirit for guidance, we can consider how different decisions might turn out, and we can ask others for help. But we first have to recognize and learn the importance of being patient and thinking before we decide to do something.*



Project the following short prayer for the youth to say along with the leader:

*Jesus, Light of the World, we ask you to enlighten our hearts with the virtue of prudence, that we may have the patience to ask for your grace in difficult moments and make the right decisions.*

Pause for a moment of silence. Ask the youth to write down one decision they have to make this week.

*Prudence is not something that we only need in the moments when we make big decisions. It is meant to be the light of virtue that guides us throughout our entire day. When we allow Jesus Christ to be a part of our daily lives, He is always there to guide us.*

Make the room a little brighter.

*Jesus says in the Gospel of John, "I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12).*

Project the following short prayer for the youth to say along with the leader:

*Jesus, Light of the World, we ask you to guide us as we practice the virtue of prudence, that we may be aware of your presence and help in every moment of our lives.*

Pause for a moment of silence. Ask the youth to write down one way they can invite Jesus to be a part of that decision.

*As we grow in our ability to make decisions and learn more about how to be prudent, we can no longer act only on our impulses — guided by what we want regardless of whether or not it is right. We also have to think about how our actions will affect others. We begin to realize the importance of recognizing how Jesus is calling us to love those around us, even to the point of sacrificing what we want for the sake of others.*

Make the room a little brighter.

*Saint Paul writes in the Letter to the Ephesians, "For once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light, for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true" (Ephesians 5:8-9).*

Project the following short prayer for the youth to say along with the leader:

*Jesus, Light of the World, we ask you to help us grow in the virtue of prudence, that we may not simply choose what is good or beneficial to us, but choose what is best, even if it means giving up something we want.*

Bring the lights in the room back to their normal level. Allow some time for silence. Ask the youth to write down the name of one person who will be affected by their decision.

End with the following Scripture verse: *"The night is far gone, the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light" (Romans 13:12).*



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## EDGE NIGHT PROCLAIM

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### 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

#### Right Sight

*Begin by telling a story about a decision you had to make that was difficult. What made the decision hard? How did you decide the best choice? Write your thoughts here:*

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- We have all been in a situation where we had to make a decision. Sometimes the right things to do can be obvious, like studying for a test instead of playing video games for hours into the night. In all of our decision making, we need the virtue of prudence.
- Prudence helps us to choose what is good and to go about doing what is good in the best way. It helps us make decisions that lead us toward what is right and away from what is evil or sinful. (CCC 1806)



#### Hispanic Inculturation

Prudence may not always be the easiest virtue for Hispanic/Latino youth to recognize in their homes where comments may be both very welcoming and loving, but also sarcastic and humorous. Often, within families, this includes giving each other nicknames that are not the nicest or simply making jokes that can be intended to be sarcastic but can easily come off as offensive. For example, these nicknames and jokes can point out insecurities one might have such as calling someone gordo, flaca, enojona, metiche, or cabrona. While some families may truly believe this is a way of showing love and are OK with it, allow some space for the youth to talk about how this makes them feel and to discern if there are better ways to show love to their family members.

- One aspect of prudence is being able to identify what is right and what is wrong. It helps us to choose to avoid sinful behavior.



### Going Deeper

Sin is an offense against truth and reason, and it damages our relationship with God. Minor sins, also called venial sins, weaken our relationship with God while grave sins, also called mortal sins, break our relationship with God entirely. Because sin directly and negatively affects our relationship with God, and our relationship with others, it is important to avoid sin and to confess our sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. (CCC 1849-1851)

- Prudence helps us not only decide what is right or what is the best, but how to do what is right in the best way. For example, if we are invited to a friend's birthday party and want to get them an amazing present, prudence can help us decide the best way to get that present — buying it rather than stealing it.

### Black Panther

*Project an image from the movie Black Panther. Ask the youth to raise their hands if they have seen the movie, then call on a few youth to share with the rest of the group their favorite part of the movie.*

- In the movie Black Panther, we see the current Black Panther, T'Challa struggle with choosing what is best. Having recently become king of technologically advanced Wakanda, much responsibility has been placed on his shoulders. Historically, Wakanda had remained hidden from the world which kept them safe, but now things are changing.
- T'Challa is faced with the decision of how best to protect Wakanda while also aiding those in need out in the world. The villain in the movie, Killmonger, wants to be king of Wakanda so he can use their technology to arm the oppressed people of the world and help them fight against their oppressors. Killmonger's end goal is that Wakanda would rule the world through domination and that people would know who they really are.
- After a lot of internal struggle and external fighting, T'Challa eventually decides to share Wakanda's technology with the world so that they can help others.
- At first glance, Killmonger has good intentions for what he wants to do. He desires to help the people in the world who are poor, oppressed, and in need. However, Killmonger reveals through his actions a right way and a wrong way to go about doing something that is good. Arming all of the oppressed people so they can fight against the people in power would potentially free them, but it would also cause a lot of harm and would have dangerous consequences.
- Instead of closing off Wakanda like his predecessors had done or starting wars all over the world like Killmonger wanted to, T'Challa chooses to share information with other nations in order to begin outreach work that might truly help other people throughout the world.

- T'Challa not only realized that Wakanda needed to help others, but he also saw that there was a right and wrong way of going about it. In the midst of many different options, he saw what was good and could envision the best way to go about achieving it. Namely, he practiced prudence.

### **The Voice of Conscience**

- We can learn through the character of T'Challa the importance of practicing the virtue of prudence. He had to make a big decision that affected a large number of people, and he needed to know both the right thing to do and the right way to do it.
- It is important that we know where to turn in order to learn what is right and what is wrong, so we can make good decisions. Luckily, we have the guidance of the Catholic Church who, over the past 2,000 years, has been studying what God has revealed to us about good actions and passing it down from generation to generation. The Church has much to teach us about what makes something good and what makes something a sin.
- We can learn to distinguish between a good action and a sinful action through things like the Ten Commandments, the Examination of Conscience, and the teachings of Jesus Christ directly from Scripture. We can also turn to the wisdom and guidance of those who are older than us and have a strong faith or even those who have gone before us in our faith and are now saints in heaven. (CCC 1854)

*Share with the youth a few different specific tools or opportunities they have available to them at your parish that can help them as they continue to form their conscience. Write your thoughts here:*

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- All of these different tools can help us to form our conscience, which is the little voice inside our head or the gut feeling we get that directs us in our actions. The more time we spend growing in our knowledge of what is right and wrong, the more we will be able to make prudent decisions quickly and the more we will be able to trust our conscience. (CCC 1778)



#### **Going Deeper**

Because of original sin, our conscience is not automatically well formed, and we often struggle with temptation to sin. Sometimes our past choices and our life experiences can also cloud our conscience which makes it even more difficult to make the right choices. In order to remedy this, we have to form our conscience and continually turn to the Sacrament of Reconciliation when we fall into sin.

*Read Psalm 119:105*

- God’s word is meant to be a light for us. Like a lamp in a dark room or a light post on a road, it points out the way we need to be going and helps us see things clearly. The more we listen to God’s word and the more we allow it to mold our hearts and minds, the more clearly our conscience will guide us to what is good.
- When we know what God wants for us, it is easier for us to see and choose it in our own lives. The more we listen to and stay rooted in the Word of God, the more clearly we can see that path that God wants us to take.
- When we spend time with God in prayer and Scripture, we will strengthen our relationship with Him. The more that we love God, the less we will want to hurt that relationship through sin, and we will grow in our strength and resolve to avoid sin. This will ultimately help us grow in making prudent decisions that keep this relationship with God at the forefront of our minds.
- In addition to taking the time to form our conscience, there is one very concrete thing we can do to be more prudent when making decisions. We have probably all heard the old sayings “think before you speak” or “think before you act.” Although these sayings can be written off as simple and commonplace, they contain great wisdom. They show us one easy way to exercise prudence — to simply think before we act or make a decision.

*Share a story about a time you failed to think before speaking or acting, and what you would have done differently if you had. Write your thoughts here:*

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- What we do when we are hanging out with our friends, what we are looking at when we are alone on our phone, how we respond to our parents — we can often find and choose what is best in every situation just by taking a few seconds to think about it.

*Inform the youth that you will pause in silence for 10 seconds*

- Ten seconds is all it takes to make a better decision and help us choose what is right and avoid sin. Next time you are faced with a decision, just take ten seconds to think through these two questions: “what does God want for me?” and “what does God want for others?” These two questions can help lead us to the good God desires for everyone and will help point our feet in the right direction.

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