

WELCOME TO SUMMIT

Welcome to Life Teen’s resource for high school teenagers, *Summit*. This Lectionary-based discipleship group is designed to help teenagers gain a deeper understanding and appreciation for Sacred Scripture and the Holy Mass.

SETTING UP SUMMIT SMALL GROUPS

Summit is designed to be used with small groups of six to eight teenagers. The discussions and activities are written for small group discipleship. Each small group should have two adult facilitators (called Core Members) there to lead, mentor, and guide the teenagers. These adults should be assigned to groups and not change throughout the course of the year (or, ideally, the life of the *Summit* group). Place six to eight teenagers in each small group. There are several ways that your parish youth group can organize small groups:

Teens Sign Up - At the beginning of the year, invite teenagers to sign up for small group communities with their friends. Assign two Core Members to lead each small group (if groups are mixed genders, be sure to assign one male and one female Core Member to each group). Groups are responsible for establishing their own meeting times and days. As more teenagers sign up for groups, new groups form.

Large Group to Small Group - One night each week, gather all *Summit* groups at the parish for a social time. Then, divide into small groups for the discussion. This allows teens to all gather at the same time, but grow in a set community.

Post-Retreat - *Summit* is a great resource to implement with small groups after a weekend retreat. Set small groups prior to the weekend, then continue to meet after the retreat in the same small groups for *Summit* sessions.

Invitation - Core Members build relationships with teenagers at Life Nights and invite six to eight to join their *Summit* group. These pre-existing relationships can allow the group to go deeper quickly.

Summit works best in conjunction with a weekly large group gathering like Life Teen’s Life Nights. The large group gathering allows teenagers a safe place to meet other teens and adults prior to getting involved with a *Summit* group.

MEETING IN SUMMIT GROUPS

Summit groups allow flexibility to meet in a variety of places that may be more comfortable for teenagers, in addition to your parish youth room. *Summit* groups can meet at coffee shops, at restaurants during lunch hours, or even at a high school (if your school will permit the group to meet and adults from the parish to be present). Gather teenagers at parks or other public spaces, or even meet at your parish office. *We do not recommend meeting at the homes of Core Members or host families, as it presents challenges for maintaining a safe environment and may violate child safety guidelines in many dioceses.*

HOW SUMMIT WORKS

Every *Summit* session is modeled after key themes from the readings of the lectionary. There is a *Summit* session for every Sunday of the liturgical year, so groups can choose to meet once each week to prepare for the upcoming Sunday readings or to process the readings from the previous Sunday. Additionally, if groups choose not to meet each week they can still reflect on the readings or dive deeper using *Ascend - A Companion to the Sunday Mass Readings*. You can purchase copies of *Ascend* online at the Life Teen store (shop.lifeteen.com).

Each *Summit* session is designed around the four movements of *lectio divina*. This intentional design helps teach the invaluable prayer of *lectio divina* each week so teenagers can continue to meditate and reflect on Sacred Scripture long after they move on from their *Summit* group.

There are five parts to each *Summit* session:

The Ascent

The Ascent helps the *Summit* group gather and introduces the theme for the session. It includes a welcome and game or activity to help the teenagers begin to focus on the main theme of the week while building community.

Lectio

During the *Lectio*, teenagers are presented with an opportunity to discuss questions relevant to the theme before watching a short *Summit* reflection video. These videos can be found online at lifeteen.com by logging into high school resources with an active subscription. Each video is short but challenging and offers content for continued discussion. Teenagers are given an opportunity to listen to one of the readings of the week proclaimed three times as they listen for God's voice resonating through Sacred Scripture.

Meditatio

After discussing a key theme and listening to the *Summit* reflection and one of the readings, teenagers have an opportunity to silently journal and reflect. There is at least one journaling question found in every *Summit* session to help teenagers guide their reflection. This time of introspection allows for deeper small group discussion later in the session.

Oratio

The bulk of the session is spent in discussion during the *Oratio*. Teenagers break open key themes of the Sunday readings, share their *Meditatio* reflection, and are challenged to connect the Word of God to their daily lives during a discussion facilitated by the Core Members.

Contemplatio

The session closes in prayer. Sometimes this prayer is short, and other times it is longer and more involved. Sometimes the group will pray together out loud, and other times they

may pray silently. A variety of prayer forms are provided so teenagers can grow in their relationship with Christ while still growing as a community. Each session ends with a challenge for the next week. These challenges are important as they provide opportunities for teenagers to live out their faith during the week. It is advised that you follow up on each challenge during the opening of the next *Summit* session.

FORMING TEEN DISCIPLES

The goal of *Summit*, as is the goal of every Life Teen resource, is to help form teenagers as disciples of Christ. This is done primarily through intentional, Christ-centered relationships. *Summit* provides a context for evangelization and catechesis while growing in relationship with a teenager's peers and adult mentors. It is important that Core Members invest in the lives of young people outside of *Summit* groups by attending sporting events, musicals, extra-curricular activities, and by meeting parents and praying for teenagers whenever possible. Forming Christ-centered relationships provides teenagers with adult faith role models, as well as a safe community where their faith can develop. It is important to always attend teen events with another Safe Environment trained adult or Core Member. Not only does this promote healthy relationships and a safe environment, but allows Core Members to form friendships with each other.

SUPPORT FROM LIFE TEEN

Know that our staff at Life Teen is continually supporting your parish in prayer and is available to help you anytime. You can contact us via e-mail, phone, or by using the "Live Chat" feature on lifeteen.com. If you need ideas for forming *Summit* groups, building your youth ministry, or just need prayer, we are waiting to hear from you. We pray that *Summit* blesses your parish and helps you lead teenagers closer to Christ!