

NCYC Preparation/Follow-up Materials



Archdiocese of Dubuque

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By Anna Steele

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Welcome to the NCYC Pre/Post Packet

NCYC Group Leaders,

Peace be with you! Thank you for your commitment to the teens of our diocese.

Whether this is your first NCYC or your tenth, this packet is designed to help you prepare your teens for the conference. You are spending so much time and energy publicizing, recruiting and collecting forms. You now have your list of teens and adults who said, “Yes!” You’ve done a great job already earning their trust.

Now what?

You might ask yourself the same question a year from now when the bustle and commotion of NCYC is over. Now what? We rounded the troops, experienced this pilgrimage and now we are home again. Some of the excitement is beginning to fade. Was it just a waste of time? Now what?

This packet contains a collection of lesson plans to launch your group before, and after, NCYC. Worry about scheduling later. First of all, consider – Where do you want your group to be a year from now? What dreams do you have for your program?

Is it possible that NCYC could help you get there?

We believe it is.

Flexibility is Key.

The most important part of the attached resources is a track called “Basic.” Basic is a series of 5 lesson plans you might use for your meetings to help your group get to know each other and prepare for the conference. It will help increase your communication, sense of teamwork and spiritual readiness.

If Basic does not quite meet the needs of your group, there are three additional tracks that can be utilized. You can also pick and choose from any of the tracks, creating a custom track with lesson plans you like.

You do not need to use any of the lesson plans. One meeting before you leave for NCYC may help you distribute trading items, t-shirts, etc. That may be all your group needs. If, however, you want to use NCYC as a Next Leveling pad into something even greater for your teens and chaperones, we encourage you to consider these resources with an open heart, always asking yourself, “What if?”

How do we make the most of this experience?

WHO

First of all, look at your roster. Who is signed up? Are they older teens who have gone before? Upperclassmen trying it out for the first time? Mainly un-involved participants hoping to have a fun experience? A combination of all of the above? Who has God called – and who has said yes?

NCYC presents a unique opportunity to begin forming the faith community that teens will have when they return. NCYC itself will take care of the mountain top experience and/or formation many of the kids signed up for. How do we make the most of this program so that the trip itself isn't the main point? Instead, let's focus on the energy and support surrounding the experience – before and after, from you, from the parents and from the parish.

WHAT

Secondly, what are the needs of your students and of your overall group returning from NCYC? Focus on the big picture of where you'd like to see you participants 2 years from now before they attend the next NCYC or 5 years from now when they are immersed in college or a professional career.

The materials here will help you focus your energies on one of the four following tracks. Each track emphasizes a different anticipated outcome from NCYC. Of course, you are welcome and encouraged to select from all four tracks if you so choose.

- Plan A.** Our program is in need of stronger leadership from older teens. Our upperclassmen attending have great potential and the younger students are excited about what they've heard.
→ If this is you, select materials from LEAD (Youth Empowerment).
- Plan B.** Our program is in a building phase. We hope NCYC will be a jumpstart into heavier involvement by the participants attending.
→ If this is you, select materials from the NEXT LEVEL (Growing Your Program).
- Plan C.** We want the chaperones attending NCYC to take more ownership in our programs.
→ If this is you, select materials from the FOUNDATION (Forming Adults).
- Plan D.** I'm not sure what our program needs right now. I just wanted to have a group attend NCYC. Anything I can do to help them would be great.
→ If this is you, select materials from BASIC.

WHERE/WHEN

1. Pick a custom fit "blue print" of the resources provided for your post-NCYC game plan.
2. Begin with chaperone meetings. Yes, meet with the adults before you meet with the teens. Send a letter to the chaperones 2-4 weeks before the first Chaperone Gathering (See the proposed meeting Calendar on page 6 & 7 and the "NCYC Chaperone Training" document on pages 16 & 17). Empower them with your vision for how NCYC will help your entire youth ministry program become something great. Ask them to bring calendars to the first chaperone meeting to schedule your remaining preparation sessions.
3. Utilize these resources to plan NCYC as an initiative to grow your programs by focusing on the participants attending.

4. You should have at least 3 meetings before you depart for NCYC. Two meetings will barely cover team building and logistics; four meetings are recommended to make this the start of something new.

How will you make time for it all?

Consider having these meetings during your regular meeting time instead of Faith Formation classes. If you schedule these before creating your annual calendar, this should be possible. Many of the resources cover discipleship topics that likely overlap with your annual curriculum.

Again, make sure your chaperones are committed to this. Discern additional or new chaperones if they are not able to support your vision for NCYC.

WHY

You will end up spending so much energy on NCYC this year. We want to utilize your efforts to build something even greater with NCYC as a trampoline to make these dreams possible. Your teens have trusted you enough to sign up for this trip, invest in the fundraising, participate for four whole days and even wear clothes that you picked out! **You've done a great job already** in earning the trust of your group. Now the fun begins.

Now is the time to *really* lead them into the woods, on the yellow brick road, to Mordor, on the Enterprise – whatever epic adventure you can identify with, God is in charge of the ship and you get to bend to His will, helping Him to see it through.

The four day experience of NCYC should be the mountain top experience that your group has climbed and prepared for together. As you may have heard before, nothing grows in the valley. Responsible leadership prepares for *metanoia*, a change of heart and expects God to work on His own time. Whenever teens begin to develop into new stages of faith, we know you will be there – before, during and after NCYC.

Our job is to do what we can with open hearts and provide opportunities for them to grow as intentional disciples: adults, teens and selves included.

Material Overview



Sessions at a Glance

Select one “track” from the right or mix and match.	FOUNDATION (Forming Adults)	LEAD (Youth Empowerment)	NEXT LEVEL (Growing your Program)	BASIC
Stage 1: Show them you care	SEA & SKY	SPEAK UP	ASLEEP	ALL PLAY
Stage 2: Show them they belong	DARKNESS BRIGHT	OVERFLOW	SERVE	EXPECT GOD
Stage 3: Show them how to be authentic	SNOW & RAIN	SPLIT	2x2	BETTER
Stage 4: Show them how to live with doubt	HEARTS OF STONE	WHITE FLAG	ISLANDS	HYPE
Stage 5: Show them how to listen to God	WIND & FLAME	SERPENTS & DOVES	EMPTY	IMAGINE
<i>Leading a post-NCYC Program</i>		PARADOX		

What are these resources supposed to do?

We have about 25 sessions at your disposal, organized into 4 “tracks” and 3 training meetings. You can implement them as suggested in the calendar, or dissemble them to custom fit for your group.

It is recommended that you have at least four meetings before NCYC for your participants. If you decide to focus on one track, one of the series will help you: Youth empowerment, growing your program, or forming adults. If your focus is on forming your chaperones, for example, you might not utilize any of the resources for teens (Lead, Next Level or Basic) at all.

Why make it so complicated?

The model is based on intentional discipleship with 5 “stages” led by you and your leadership (chaperones). Each of your chaperones will be offering apprenticeship for their assigned 4-6 teen participants. Young adults 18-20 years of age can assist a chaperone in their small group.

Forms and t-shirt sizes are due to the diocese September 1st. You need at least one large group meeting to discuss emergency locations, curfew, meals, trading items, etc., which should take place approximately 1-2 weeks before you leave. Make sure all participants have this on their schedule.

What should happen to make the most out of NCYC?

Ask your chaperones for the commitment to be a small group leader for your NCYC participants after you return. Invite them to meet twice a month with the teens in December, January, February, March, April and

May. If you are able to configure your faith formation and Confirmation programs so their NCYC chaperone can serve as their weekly catechist for the year, that would be great.

This is a lot of work!

Actually, it should be a lot less work for you in the course of a year... and beyond. Forming chaperones into spiritual companions can take all of your efforts from NCYC and transform them into something that is an anticipated pivot in your program, rather than a strange, extraneous limb.

Relationships take a very long time to form and are essential to faith formation. NCYC builds relationships naturally. This pilgrimage should be the fuel for your ministry. NCYC is a dependable source of energy. Training your chaperones and utilizing them in your regular programs is the best way to allow NCYC to be a starting point, not a final destination, to teenagers' faith.

What do I need to do with the chaperones?

In addition to Virtus training, Background Checks and attending a diocesan training meeting with the Archdiocesan Office of Adolescent Faith Formation in October, the chaperones should understand they have five stages or challenges to meet with their small group before and/or during NCYC.

What are the Five Stages?

Stage One: Show them you care. Understand where they're coming from. What does their daily and weekly life look like? What are their goals? What do they pray for, or need intercession for? Learn their names, and what makes them different.

Stage Two: Show them they belong. A community that supports them exactly how they are is in the Catholic faith. They should not have to compromise who they are or their values. We all desire to be known by our peers, and we provide a safe environment for them to do that. Figure out where they fit in their family, schools and your own small group.

Stage Three: Show them how to be authentic. Be honest and expect honesty out of them. Discuss how superficial high school and media encourage us to be. What is the countercultural act to that? Provide a space where they can express whatever is on their heart, what they fear and what they long for. Help them to become confident in this. Let them know you are listening and are here to support them.

Stage Four: Show them how to live with doubt. Faithful people ask plenty of questions of God. It's possible to be a great Catholic who doesn't understand God's plan, who struggles with injustice in the world and regularly faces opposition – in fact, these are key to some of the most remarkable witnesses of faithfulness and grace. This is when leaders are born. Our Baptism calls all of us to be a leader in some kind; Confirmation is how the called are equipped.

Stage Five: Show them how to listen to God. Model a confident faith yourself that listens to Jesus and obeys His call, even when it is difficult, because you know that He loves you, believes in you and that you can make a difference. Challenge the teens beyond what is "normal" lukewarm Christianity. Allow them opportunities to grow and show them they have what it takes. Study developmental stages of faith. Encourage teens to surrender to God, embracing the adventure discipleship in Jesus Christ.

Pre-NCYC Calendar (Sample)

	Chaperones	FOUNDATION (Forming Adults)	LEAD (Youth Empowerment)	NEXT LEVEL (Growing Your Program)	BASIC (Good for everyone)
May	Send Parent Letter (page 20): Welcoming teens and announcing Meeting Schedule Send Chaperone Letter (page 18): Welcoming adults and announcing Meeting Schedule, Introduce 5 Stages				
June/July	Training A	SEA AND SKY Our God of the Passover			
July	Send Parents information as appropriate				
August	Training B	DARKNESS BRIGHT Our God of Gethsemane	SPEAK Opening up to each other & to God's will	ASLEEP Waking up to God's voice	ALL PLAY Welcoming teens to their small group
September	Send Parents information as appropriate				
September/ October	Diocesan Training	SNOW & RAIN Our God of the Magnificat	OVERFLOW Sharing our witness of faith with others	SERVE Growing in community	EXPECT GOD How God works
	Optional Movie Night: <i>The Human Experience, Grassroots Films Parishioners, Parents welcome</i>				
October/ November		HEARTS OF STONE Our God of the Presentation	SPLIT Causes of division	2X2 How we pray for one another	BETTER Interdependence
November	Send Parents information as appropriate				
November		WIND & FLAME Our God of Prophets & Kings	WHITE FLAG Surrender and discipleship	ISLANDS How we stay connected	HYPE God is not asking you to sell out
December	Send Parents information as appropriate				

Post-NCYC Calendar (Sample)

	Chaperones	FOUNDATION	LEAD	NEXT LEVEL	BASIC
December	Begin a study of Catholicism (Word on Fire) or encourage them to begin leading/assisting a small group		SERPENTS & DOVES What it means to live differently	EMPTY How we allow God to continue filling our cup	IMAGINE What it would look like if God continued to be a part of our daily life
January	Evaluation/ Diocesan Gathering		PARADOX How we help others to live the challenges of our faith		
February			Small groups continue once/twice a month based on teens' schedule OR during Faith Formation. "Youth ministry" small groups can use weekly readings for mass or study of YM's choice. Faith Formation classes would follow framework curriculum for the remainder of the year.		
March					
April					
May					

If you want to continue meeting with your group after NCYC, you can use "Foundation" lesson plans when "Lead" has finished theirs. The different programs are not levels of achievement that are better or worse; they are planned for older groups and stages of faith on the same concept. All of the lesson plans are available to you and there are overlaps between the sessions at different levels. Use the version that works best for your group.

Depending on the maturity, needs and schedules of your participants, you can also use any of the sessions after returning from NCYC as a way to start ongoing small group formation.



PARISH RESOURCES

NFCYM provides great flyers, bulletin announcements and graphics for Social Media at the official NCYC website: <http://www.ncyc.info/promotions/tools.htm>.

FORMATION

NCYC is a timely opportunity for multi-generational programming to form your entire parish.

Your first step is not *what* information to share but *how* the information will be presented, and to whom. Where is there a need for more formation in your parish? Is there a specific group (Children, young parents, young adults, those with disabilities) not reached by your current offerings??

Look for holes first before you begin to fill them. Always consult/invite your Faith Formation Director and Faith Formation Commission to be a part of these brainstorming sessions.

If you are the Faith Formation Director looking for ideas, the following would be a great connection before or after the conference:

- Hold a 3-part Bible Study on Samuel, Mary and Jesus (found in your journals and chaperone training packets) for parents, open to your entire parish. Host the same bible study with a focus on new parents with childcare available as a fundraiser.

Duplication Tip #1

Discern the needs of your community with your leadership. Don't automatically assume responsibility that you can share with your NCYC leadership. At your first chaperone gathering, brainstorm ideas of how to include the rest of your parish in your preparation for the teens.

Duplication Tips

No one person can do all things! It's important that the NCYC Group Leader is not the only one doing the work necessary to grow the parish/cluster's youth ministry program. "Duplication Tips" found throughout this resource are ways that you can empower others to share in the joy of ministry, and duplicate yourself. The more people involved in ministry, the better the ministry and easier it is for you. These are also hints at how your work can be more efficient.

- Offer a night of praise music led by a teen band or your choir focusing on the theme Ecce Adsum (Here I am.) Invite a dynamic leader in your parish to be the worship/prayer leader, facilitating scriptural reflections and testimonies between songs. Focus on young adults and/or invite the entire parish. A free will donation basket passed at the end might help raise funds for teens or for a donation to a local service agency.

- You might also have a catechetical session on "Here I am Lord" before and/or after NCYC for parishioners to reflect on the theme. Begin with an age appropriate activity followed by testimony, small group discussion/sharing and prayer.

- Utilize the “Foundation” adult-focused sessions as a Parent Retreat before/after NCYC. Utilize the “Lead” track resources for a young adult retreat before/after NCYC. Tie in these retreats with your NCYC experience by linking participants as prayer partners. Host a gathering for the prayer partners to share testimonies on their retreat/NCYC experiences with one another.

AWARENESS

Gathered and non-gathered ideas to create awareness of NCYC in your parish:

- Write an article for your local newspaper after your return.
- Display a slideshow 2 weekends after you return with teens to be shown after mass. You may include a small, inexpensive Thank You to parishioners for their prayers and financial support (i.e. pieces of candy, bags of popcorn, leftover trading items, etc.)
- Create a newsletter before and after you leave for NCYC with snippets on each of the teens, chaperones, goals of the conference and ways for parishioners to be involved from home. Include the blessings on page 13 if possible.
- Ask for prayerful support for your participants with the prayers below.

Duplication Tip #2

Consider forming a small committee of 2-3 adults who have attended NCYC in the past to serve as liaisons with your parish. They can form a bridge between your current NCYC group and your parish, duplicating your efforts. Former NCYC chaperones should be capable of handling publicity, event coordination and facilitating the evening for you.

Duplication Tip #3

If you use Service Hours for Confirmation Preparation, consider offering candidates 2 or 4 hours for participating in each of the following activities. Youth leadership will help you duplicate your efforts.

FUND-RAISING IDEAS

- **Special Dinner for Prom, Homecoming, etc.** Ask a chaperone or parishioner to host a special dinner in their home or in your parish before a high school dance. Parents would love to not have to cook for their child and 14 of their closest friends before the dance! You can also offer a special theme dinner for a random Friday night this summer, special Fourth of July party, etc.. How can you make money off this? Charge \$20 per person, ask parents to make a goodwill donation OR raffle/auction the special dinner off. This would make a great addition at your annual parish fundraiser or festival. Donated decorations and catering goods (including food) is necessary. Wal-Mart and Sam’s Club typically offer a \$50 gift card if asked for far enough in advance.
- **Parents Night Out!** Offer a movie night for children ages 4-10 years old. The movie *Frozen* is always a great hit, but any movie is fun if you can project it BIG on the wall and provide a special experience with popcorn, candy and an inviting atmosphere. This is a great chance for NCYC participants to work together as a team. American Red Cross training is recommended for all care givers. It is recommended that you have a ratio of 1 chaperone (21 and older) for every 8-12 kids with experience with the age group. Use signupgenius.com for RSVP’s. Be sure to request allergy, medication, potty-training and behavioral notices on the RSVP. Don’t be afraid to be firm on age requirements based on your teenagers’ comfort levels. This might work well around Mother’s Day or Father’s Day.

- **Made-to-Order Waffles and/or Omelets.** For a change in the typical pancakes and egg casserole, offer a made-to-order waffle or omelet bar after mass one weekend. Ask the teens to serve as the waffle and omelet chefs so guests can see them working for their funds. All waffle supplies should be donated to make the most profit. Homemade waffle mix might be your most affordable option. Don't forget gluten free varieties!
- **Involve the elementary students!** Do you have Catholic school ministry as part of your parish outreach? Involve the school in your fundraising. If your school has a uniform, ask the principal if you can have a "Jeans Day" where students can donate \$1 or more to wear jeans that day. All funds would go to NCYC. You might also have a presentation on NCYC for the school with each class sponsoring a teen. The teen can visit before the trip, and after, to share about the universal nature of the Catholic Church with the students as part of their religion class. Teachers will appreciate their help and presence in the classroom, and the students will love them!
- **Time for a Telethon!** Ask your parish secretary for a list of parishioners who might need help around the house for Spring, Summer or Fall Cleaning projects. These might be families with new babies, people living alone without family near them, families new to the area or those with physical handicaps, etc. Don't list it in the bulletin and ask them to contact you – set aside one afternoon for the participants to call and practice saying, "Here I am!" If parishioners are not in need of anything, they might still be interested in taking a "rain check" with a goodwill donation. Encourage them to make a donation directly to the Faith Formation Office.
- **Parent Retreat.** If you have many upperclassmen attending NCYC, ask them to work together with chaperones to provide a parent retreat before you leave. This event could be open to parents of all ages with a \$50 suggested donation. The retreat can take place at your parish on a Saturday to involve your already scheduled confession and mass times with little cost other than food and printing. If the retreat is 8 hours long, encourage the teens to plan 4 two-hour sessions with icebreakers, witness talks, small group and prayer. This is great ministry experience and a way for them to raise funds while growing in their faith.
- **Rope Rosaries.** Ask each participant to bring a few yards of thick string/thin rope and create rosaries together for 2-3 hours. Teens are great multi-taskers so consider showing "The Human Experience" (Grassroots Films) or another film that they can discuss as they work. Sell the rosaries for a goodwill donation or \$5 a piece after mass.
- **Treat Trays.** This involves a lot more work but is a great fundraiser. Ask 10 families to create a grocery list for 1 of their family favorite recipes and scout out prices for the best deals. Again, donated groceries will help increase sales. Invite teens to come together on a Friday night to bake up a storm! Display a full color photo of a model tray with samples of all 10 treats in your parish bulletin, a poster in your gathering space or e-mail to parishioners. Offer the treats 2 weekends in a row after masses. This is great for Mother's Day, Father's Day, Fourth of July, Memorial and Labor Day – any holiday when people will be hosting guests or need a gift for a loved one. Pre-sales are highly encouraged so you can control quantity and avoid waste.
- **Helping Others.** Offer a fundraiser meal after your Saturday evening mass with a twist. Set a goal to give the first half of your proceeds, or the first \$250 or \$500, to a local service agency. Any profits ABOVE that goal will be split between the teens' families. You'll be surprised how much more

people are willing to donate when they know the goal is for TWO good causes. This also helps the teens to be generous stewards.

- **Host a Daddy-Daughter Dance.** Host a daddy-daughter dance for girls in a 3-year bracket (i.e. 3-6 years or 9-12 years old, etc.) and their Dads. This is a great opportunity for the kids to plan games for dad's and their young daughters to participate in together. They can also create a clean playlist for dancing. Light refreshments, a theme and balloons are all it takes to make this very special. Don't forget to collect RSVPs on signupgenius.com or another website to track attendance. An event is a great way to get a large group of people to work together. Four teens can be assigned to committees with their chaperone to coordinate publicity, RSVPs/reminders, decorations, hospitality, music, games, food, photo booth/photography, etc. They will love planning it and it's a great witness for the young men and women. Ask the Dads of the teenage girls to lend a hand with set-up! Make sure you check within your community when scheduling a date (or another Daddy-Daughter dance) that doesn't conflict.

Blessings for Mass & Prayer Cards

Utilize the following blessings (from the Diocese of Rochester). The prayer cards can be distributed at mass the weekend before or during NCYC, mailed to parishioners or set on a table in your gathering space. The blessing can be utilized during your liturgy before or after NCYC, or included in a bulletin insert.

Blessing of Youth

God of youth,
We ask your blessing upon our young people.
You have gifted each one of them in a special way.
May they come to know their giftedness
as they discover your living and active presence in their lives.
Be with them as they grow in their faith
and discern your call in their lives.
Bless their openness and enthusiasm
and allow their questions to both enliven and
challenge us as a community of believers gathered to do your will.
Strengthen and support the good works that they do.
Guide and sustain them along the exciting journey
that awaits each one of them
as we join with them in praising you
as the source of our Jubilee.
We ask this blessing through Jesus Christ,
Our risen Lord and Savior.
AMEN!

Blessing of the Parents of Teens

Creator God,
You know what it is like to be both Mother and Father to us all.
We ask You, the source and sustainer of all life,
to bless these parents in the role you have set before them.
Gift them with the wisdom to speak the truth so it can be heard.
Gift them with the sensitivity to listen to the spoken as well as unspoken needs of their children.
Gift them with a steadfast faith that shows your intimate presence in their life.
Gift them with patience and understanding to handle the changing needs and demands
that are placed before them each day.
And gift them with the eagerness to seek out, to reconcile and to console during times of conflict and
pain.
Be with them each day as they continue to witness
your steadfast love and compassion to their children.
We ask this blessing upon each of them,
In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
AMEN!

Duplication Tip #4

Ask current or past NCYC chaperones/participants to “man a booth” before or after mass, distributing prayer cards, requesting prayers and answering questions about the conference.

Blessing of Youth Leaders and Ministers

To be used to commission pilgrims when they return.

The Presider invites all young people involved as the following blessing of their senses is prayed. If the group is small, the Presider may wish to actually make the sign of the cross over the senses of each person or use a general motion of the sign of the cross if the group is large. If the group is larger, have them make the sign of the cross over each other. You can also have the teens stand in their pew with a parent who will bless them.

*May the Lord bless your Eyes so that you see the goodness
and uniqueness of God in every person you meet.*

*May the Lord bless your Ears so that you may listen
and remain open to the diversity of needs that exist within this community.*

*May the Lord bless your Lips so that you may speak the truth honestly,
openly and powerfully in all you do.*

*And may the Lord bless your Hands that they may serve as an extension
of Christ's as you reach out in compassionate service for the good of the Kingdom.*

Conclude the blessing of leadership with the following blessing prayer.

Invite the community to extend their hands in solidarity as the blessing is said by the Presider:

God of all Life,

we ask you to bless these young people whom you have called forth as pilgrims and now as leaders.

*Guide and sustain them so that their ministry will bring forth all of the richness and diversity that you have
bestowed upon this community.*

*Empower them to be prophetic voices of today as they prepare to lead us into the possibilities of
tomorrow.*

Inspire all they do so that it reflects your purpose and divine will.

We ask this blessing upon each of them

through Christ, Our Risen Lord.

AMEN!

Templates for Prayer Cards

On next page

pray for |

Lily

Freshman NCYC
Participant



pray for |

Ted

Freshman NCYC
Participant



pray for |

Robin

Freshman NCYC
Participant



pray for |

Barney

Freshman NCYC
Participant



pray for |

Tracy

Freshman NCYC
Participant



pray for |

Marshall

Freshman NCYC
Participant



Everlasting God,
We ask your blessing
of safety and strength
upon this pilgrim.
May their witness bring the
Gospel into a world
in need of hope.
When they continue their
pilgrimage here, may we
provide a loving Church for
them to forever call home.
In Jesus' Name,
Amen.



Everlasting God,
We ask your blessing
of safety and strength
upon this pilgrim.
May their witness bring the
Gospel into a world
in need of hope.
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upon this pilgrim.
May their witness bring the
Gospel into a world
in need of hope.
When they continue their
pilgrimage here, may we
provide a loving Church for
them to forever call home.
In Jesus' Name,
Amen.



Everlasting God,
We ask your blessing
of safety and strength
upon this pilgrim.
May their witness bring the
Gospel into a world
in need of hope.
When they continue their
pilgrimage here, may we
provide a loving Church for
them to forever call home.
In Jesus' Name,
Amen.



Chaperone Letter



NCYC Chaperone,

Leading NCYC can be much more than showing up in November with your bag packed, forms submitted and balance paid (though these things are important!) As a chaperone, you are the spiritual guide for 4-6 teens. We hope to use NCYC as more than just a one time “Jesus High.” In order to help NCYC fit into the big picture, we need your help and commitment.

Consider now that after you build these relationships with the teens, we’d love for you to continue journeying with them until the end of the year. You probably signed up thinking you would help supervise teens for a few days – nothing more. If so, thank you! This is a great service. What is desperately needed for teens is a Church that is willing to meet them where they are and show them to be unafraid. The Church is here to support them, relate to them and listen to them. This is called relational ministry. NCYC is a great opportunity for you to provide this for the teens in your group.

Before we leave for NCYC, we will be using the following process in building relationship with the teens:

Preparation Process

1. Getting to know the individual teens
2. Community building with your small group
3. Opening the doors of Trust
4. Struggle together
5. (Optional) Challenging one Another

Stage One: Show them you care. Understand where they’re coming from. What does their daily and weekly life look like? What are their goals? What do they pray for, or need intercession for? Learn their names, and what makes them different.

Stage Two: Show them they belong. A community that supports them exactly how they are is in the Catholic faith. They should not have to compromise who they are or their values. We all desire to be known by our peers, and we provide a safe environment for them to do that. Figure out where they fit in their family, schools and your own small group.

Stage Three: Show them how to be authentic. Be honest and expect honesty out of them. Discuss how superficial high school and media encourage us to be. What is the countercultural act to that? Provide a space where they can express whatever is on their heart, what they fear and what they long for. Help them to become confident in this. Let them know you are listening and are here to support them.

Stage Four: Show them how to live with doubt. Faithful people ask plenty of questions of God. It’s possible to be a great Catholic who doesn’t understand God’s plan, who struggles with injustice in the world and regularly faces opposition – in fact, these are key to some of the most remarkable witnesses of faithfulness and grace. This is when leaders are born. Our Baptism calls all of us to be a leader in some kind; Confirmation is how the called are equipped.

Stage Five: Show them how to listen to God. Model a confident faith yourself that listens to Jesus and obeys His call, even when it is difficult, because you know that He loves you, believes in you and that you can make a difference. Challenge the teens beyond what is “normal” lukewarm

Christianity. Allow them opportunities to grow and show them they have what it takes. Study developmental stages of faith. Encourage teens to surrender to God, embracing the adventure discipleship in Jesus Christ.

NCYC Meeting Tracks

BASIC: Good for anyone and everyone

FOUNDATION: Forming Adults (Chaperones Only)

LEAD: Teen Empowerment (Upperclassmen who can be empowered with leadership)

NEXT LEVEL: Growing your ministry (For teens who are up to a challenge, but not yet ready for leadership)

Sessions at a Glance

BASIC

	BASIC
Stage 1: Show them you care	ALL PLAY
Stage 2: Show them they belong	EXPECT GOD
Stage 3: Show them how to be authentic	BETTER
Stage 4: Show them how to live with doubt.	HYPE
Stage 5: Show them how to listen to God.	IMAGINE

	FOUNDATION	LEAD	NEXT LEVEL
Stage 1: Show them you care	SEA & SKY	SPEAK UP	ASLEEP
Stage 2: Show them they belong	DARKNESS BRIGHT	OVERFLOW	SERVE
Stage 3: Show them how to be authentic	SNOW & RAIN	SPLIT	2x2
Stage 4: Show them how to live with doubt.	HEARTS OF STONE	WHITE FLAG	ISLANDS
Stage 5: Show them how to listen to God.	WIND & FLAME	SERPENTS & DOVES	EMPTY
<i>Leading a post-NCYC Program</i>		PARADOX	

After NCYC, your group may want to keep meeting weekly, even for 45 minutes. Prayerfully keep this a possibility in your schedule. Teens need a constant presence and mentor in their life. Preparing for NCYC and experiencing it alongside them puts you in the perfect place to serve as a companion on their spiritual journey. Many NCYC chaperones become Confirmation sponsors in the lives of their “assigned” teen. Keep an open mind about how a little bit of your time once or twice a month might make a life-changing impact.

Parent Letter



May 2015

Dear NCYC Parents,

Your child is about to embark on an uplifting journey of faith to the National Catholic Youth Conference!

We hope this pilgrimage is more than just a powerful “experience” in their life. Our goal is that they encounter the living God in each other, in the Church and in themselves. So many teens go through youth ministry and faith formation programs without making a personal commitment to follow Jesus. We hope NCYC is a moment for them to take ownership of their faith, and come to a deeper maturity in their relationship with God.

The theme at NCYC is “Here I am Lord.” NCYC is a step in the journey of presenting ourselves to the Lord to do His will. Archbishop Jackel’s personal motto is *Ecce Adsum* – Here I am, based on the call of Samuel (1 Samuel 3), Mary (Luke 1) and Jesus (Luke 22).

We have scheduled several gatherings to spiritually prepare for the conference. Our goals in preparing for NCYC are to provide a sense of belonging, acceptance and spiritual openness where we can challenge one another to grow. We will provide a parent information sheet for you to understand the purpose of each meeting.

Our pre-trip meeting(s) will take place on the following dates: **[Fill in your dates here]**

We hope NCYC will be a time to make new friends with people who will challenge teens to the next level in their faith. At each meeting, your child will meet with their small group. Small groups are utilized for discussion and to provide deeper relationships and purposeful companions on their journey to and from NCYC. The assignments were prayerfully considered and will influence sleeping, meal and travel arrangements. Please respect the small group assignment’s purpose. The teens will, of course, still be able to spend plenty of free time with their friends on the bus and at the conference!

When your child returns from NCYC, they will be on fire for the faith! After NCYC, we will continue meeting based on your teen’s schedule.

NCYC is meant to be much more than a great experience. It is formational and transformational. We are excited about our plan to make NCYC a trampoline for your child to jump into a new life in Christ.

Yours in Christ,



The goal of the following meetings is to provide relationship and community building amongst formation for the conference. This will hopefully lead teens to a deeper faith experience before and after NCYC.

Stage One: Show them you care.

ALL PLAY: WELCOMING TEENS

Teens are introduced to their small group, leaders and the NCYC pilgrimage.

Date: [insert date/time of meeting here]

Stage Two: Show them they belong.

EXPECT GOD: HOW GOD WORKS

We have a God of surprises. How can we take God out of the box we've put Him in?

Date: [insert date/time of meeting here]

Stage Three: Show them how to be authentic.

BETTER: INTERDEPENDENCE

Why is it better to lose together than win alone? What does St. Paul teach us about relying on one another?

Date: [insert date/time of meeting here]

Stage Four: Show them how to live with doubt.

HYPE: SELLING OUT

Does God want us to sell out? What does real faith look like?

Date: [insert date/time of meeting here]

Stage Five: Show them how to listen to God.

IMAGINE: A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

What does our future look like in God's eyes? How do we keep God part of our daily life?

Date: [insert date/time of meeting here]



The goal of the following meetings is to provide leadership experience and formation which will lead committed teens to a higher level of intentional discipleship. This will lead to effective, relevant evangelization of your younger teens and a stronger, communal vision of your program.

Stage One: Show them you care.

SPEAK: RESISTING SILENCE

Speak is about opening up to each other and to God's will. How do you lead if you are shy? How can we go beyond nice and into the realm of bold? What holds you back from the plunge?

Date: [insert date/time of meeting here]

Stage Two: Show them they belong.

OVERFLOW: WITNESS POWER

Overflow instructs participants in reflecting and preparing their witness. Teens are challenged to write and present a witness talk within their parish. Four teens will present at the session with younger participants. Is it time to jump?

Date: [insert date/time of meeting here]

Stage Three: Show them how to be authentic.

SPLIT: RECOGNIZING DIVISION

Split is about broken families, broken relationships and the reparation of the Holy Spirit.

Date: [insert date/time of meeting here]

Stage Four: Show them how to live with doubt.

WHITE FLAG: DAILY SURRENDER

What is surrender? Have you surrendered?

Date: [insert date/time of meeting here]

Stage Five: Show them how to listen to God.

SERPENTS & DOVES: LIVE DIFFERENTLY

The Way is different – living differently than before we met Jesus and living differently from others.

Shrewd as serpents and simple as doves – what does this mean?

Date: [insert date/time of meeting here]



The meetings below are for a group of any age needing NCYC preparation to challenge them to dive deeper in their faith.

Stage One: Show them you care.

ASLEEP: WAKING UP TO GOD'S PRESENCE

Awake is a lesson plan for teens to encounter God's wake-up call in the middle of the night like the prophet Samuel.

Date: [insert date/time of meeting here]

Stage Two: Show them they belong.

SERVE: GROWING IN COMMUNITY

Serve is a team-building exercise focused on service to the community. We listen and obey God as a community.

Date: [insert date/time of meeting here]

Stage Three: Show them how to be authentic.

2X2: INTERCESSORY PRAYER

2x2 introduces participants to models of faith through the lens of evangelization. A prayer partner program begins in this session.

Date: [insert date/time of meeting here]

Stage Four: Show them how to live with doubt.

ISLANDS: STAY TOGETHER

Islands is a lesson plan on camaraderie in difference, strength in weakness and the importance of resisting isolation at NCYC.

Date: [insert date/time of meeting here]

Stage Five: Show them how to listen to God.

EMPTY: INTERCESSORY PRAYER

Empty is inspired by, "poured out like a libation," (2 Timothy 4:7-8) in listening, following and serving God; emptied of ourselves and filled with a love for God, a love for humanity.

Date: [insert date/time of meeting here]

Tracks and Lesson Plans

	BASIC
Stage 1: Show them you care	ALL PLAY
Stage 2: Show them they belong	EXPECT GOD
Stage 3: Show them how to be authentic	BETTER
Stage 4: Show them how to live with doubt.	HYPE
Stage 5: Show them how to listen to God.	IMAGINE

	FOUNDATION	LEAD	NEXT LEVEL
Stage 1: Show them you care	SEA & SKY	SPEAK UP	ASLEEP
Stage 2: Show them they belong	DARKNESS BRIGHT	OVERFLOW	SERVE
Stage 3: Show them how to be authentic	SNOW & RAIN	SPLIT	2x2
Stage 4: Show them how to live with doubt.	HEARTS OF STONE	WHITE FLAG	ISLANDS
Stage 5: Show them how to listen to God.	WIND & FLAME	SERPENTS & DOVES	EMPTY
<i>Leading a post-NCYC Program</i>		PARADOX	



BASIC

This resource is for groups of any size preparing to attend the National Catholic Youth Conference 2015, *Here I am Lord (Aqui Estoy, Señor.)*

The goal of Basic is to provide relationship and community building amongst formation for the conference. This will hopefully lead teens to a deeper faith experience before and after NCYC.

Stage One: Show them you care.

ALL PLAY: WELCOMING TEENS

Teens are introduced to their small group, leaders and the NCYC pilgrimage.

Stage Two: Show them they belong.

EXPECT GOD: HOW GOD WORKS

We have a God of surprises. How can we take God out of the box we've put Him in?

Stage Three: Show them how to be authentic.

BETTER: INTERDEPENDENCE

Why is it better to lose together than win alone? What does St. Paul teach us about relying on one another?

Stage Four: Show them how to live with doubt.

HYPE: SELLING OUT

Does God want us to sell out? What does real faith look like?

Stage Five: Show them how to listen to God.

IMAGINE: A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

What does our future look like in God's eyes? How do we keep God part of our daily life?

Each lesson in this series follows this format:

- 1) Announcements: Trip Details and Housekeeping by the Group Leader
- 2) Check-In: Brief High-Low Discussion in Small Groups
- 3) Opening Game: Small OR Large Group
- 4) Teaching: Large Group message by a LEAD or FOUNDATION participant (peer leader/chaperone)
- 5) Deeper Discussion: Questions on the Teaching in Small Group
- 6) Closing Prayer: Intercessory/Teen-Led Prayer in Small Group

The deeper discussion portion is the most important, at least 20 minutes in length. The rest average about 10 minutes a piece for a ~75 minute gathering.

If small groups meet separately (instead of in a large group setting), they can focus on the Announcements and Deeper Discussion portions.

If you meet in a large group, consider having an in-house competition between the small groups for the games. Recording the winning team from each game at each meeting and post the scoreboard at each meeting. The prize can be extra trading items, a special hat or bragging rights.



Resource Title	BASIC ALL PLAY
Objective	<i>Stage One: Show them you care.</i>
Supplies Needed	Timer for each small group (cell phone is sufficient) Blue, yellow and green sheets of paper for small groups 10 Peanuts and 2 bowls for the Peanut Game (Chaperones attend first training meeting before meeting)
Modify	Small groups may also complete this resource independently of each other (without an initial large group gathering)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The group leader should welcome everyone. Begin with spontaneous prayer and an Our Father.

As they arrive, allow teens to sit by grade. Have drinks available.

The Group Leader should briefly go over basics of NCYC: the location, date, overall format of 3 days with workshops, to set the teens minds at ease. The teens will have a small group leader to help them as a “travel guide” and to get them what they need for the weekend so they won’t feel lost.

Ask each small group leaders to bring their favorite snack for their small group. Introduce the small group leaders who will share their favorite snack so all of the teens are excited to be with their leader. As they each stand up they should read the names of their small group participants to avoid confusion.

The upperclassmen witness or group leader will describe the next game. Ask the teens to stand up and hold hands as a small group. They can stand in a circle or line. At the beginning of the circle/line, place a bowl of 10 peanuts. Place another empty bowl at the other end of the circle/line. The first person in the line must take a peanut with one hand and pass it to the other hand/the hand of the person next to them. The small groups should time themselves. The small group leader should participate but also observe. This is not a race but a process of seeing how the groups participate with one another.

Dismiss to small group/snack with games.

OPENING

Laugh about how people participated in the passing-peanut game. Who was impatient? Who kept dropping the peanut? Who was an encourager? Who was a task master? Praise each of the teens for their participation and gifts.

Ask the teens to introduce themselves and what variation of Pie, Muffin or Kitchen Utensil they would be and why.

HOT SEAT: Each person in your small group will spend 60 seconds in the “Hot Seat.” The other members of the small group can ask any question they like, as fast as they can. This rapid-fire style of friendly “interrogation” forces both the interviewers and interviewee to think, ask and respond off the top of their head. Play at least 2 rounds with everyone in the group. The second round, group leaders should hold back and allow the teens to ask the deeper questions.

WHAT’S YOURS LIKE? Create a list of 10 items for small group members to describe, one at a time, for the person in the Hot Seat. They will be trying to guess the item the rest of the group is describing based on their varying descriptions which are hopefully as clever and obscure as possible. For example, if the Guess Word is “shoes,” then each small group member will say, “Mine are red,” “Mine cost 2 weeks allowance” or “Mine have never been washed.” Allow each small group member two turns. Examples of guess words would be: Least favorite chore, best friend, favorite snack, mother, phobia.

Other games? The point of this session is small group bonding so use your own ideas if you’d like. If you finish before the other groups, you can pass peanuts again to try to break your time.

TEACHING

Witness: Upperclassmen

Ask a witness from an upperclassmen or previous NCYC student about feeling unsure about NCYC or God and how God met them where they were. This talk should be welcoming and help the teens feel comfortable with wherever they are in their faith. The speaker should affirm their choice to be there.

DISCUSSION

Review any known information about logistics for NCYC with the group and ask if they have any questions.

Print the following questions on a piece of yellow paper:

If you could win 4 free tickets to a concert, who would you go see, who would you take with you and why?

When is the last time you had a pickle? Bread and butter or dill? Why?

Are you willing to kill a spider with your bare hand?

What is the best vacation you’ve ever been on?

Print the following questions on blue:

What is your birth order in your family? How would your siblings describe you?

What are the top two BEST aspects about the grade you are in?

Who is one person in the Bible you do not particularly care for? Why?

What do you think is the best age to be? Why?

Print these questions on green:

Overall, what was faith formation like for you last year?

Take out your phone and tell us the person who you have the most missed calls from.

Where do you see yourself when you are 40 years old?

If someone knew your whole faith story, how would they describe God in one word? How would they describe you in one word?

Let the teens know that on the yellow sheets of paper are fun questions. Blue sheets of paper are medium-depth. The green sheets are more challenging and not for the faint of heart.

Allow the teens to choose their own color of question. They can also choose “All Play” where everyone in the circle has to answer – but they must answer first.

Discard each question after it has been asked.

Ask the small group what is the best thing that could happen at NCYC. How do we help make sure that happens?

Together, write a petition for the closing prayer and a question about the trip for the group leader to answer at the next meeting. Each small group leader should have one pre-written in case you run out of time.

PRAYER

Before concluding in prayer, ask for any pressing questions from the group and save the rest of questions for the next large group meeting.

As a small group, submit an intercession to the Group Leader for the closing prayer. Ask one small group member to participate in the closing prayer by reading your group’s contribution.

Optional Song to include with Prayer: Crowder, Come As You Are
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yjgioXrnEME>

Optional: Small groups may want to plan the rest of their gatherings on their own schedule. The group leader will notify the chaperones individually of trip updates so they can relay them to the group. They do not need to meet in large group until the final meeting with last minute details.



Resource Title	BASIC EXPECT GOD
Objective	<i>Stage 2: Show them they belong.</i>
Supplies Needed	Laundry baskets, multi-colored balls, bungee cords, scooters and helmets for the Hungry, Hungry Hippo game

ANNOUNCEMENTS	Decide trading items (order forms may be needed). Distribute forms if you have not already done so. Have a notary onsite the day forms are due.
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CHECK-IN Teens will share their spiritual highs and lows since the last small group gathering.

OPENING Hungry, Hungry (Human) Hippos
<http://news.yahoo.com/blogs/trending-now/-human-hungry-hippos--takes-classic-game-to-the-next-level-183457939.html>

TEACHING Our theme for NCYC this year is ECCE ADSUM. It means, Behold, I come; Here I am; or Lord, I am here. When you think of this phrase, “Here I am,” what comes to mind? It’s the motto of our Archbishop.

Ask an adult leader to provide the witness on Samuel, Mary and Jesus. 3 adult leaders could be utilized but they need to be brief (10 minutes for all).

- How does God work?
- In Surprises
 - Humbling the Exalted

“My ways are not your ways and my thoughts are not your thoughts.” Isaiah 55:8

God does not often arrive in the “package” you expect. He speaks while you’re sleeping. He gives you news you would never dream of. He comes to earth as a baby. We can expect God to come through in the way He wants, but we must challenge ourselves to let God out of the box we put Him in. God isn’t a bubble gum machine. He’s not Santa Claus. The more limitation we put on Him, the more we limit our faith.

God surprised Samuel and Mary, and His Love for Jesus was also a source of Jesus’ joy.

You know you are following God's will when you find yourself somewhere that you never planned to go.

God works in detours. He is often unexpected, like a baby in a manger, like an empty tomb.

"Coincidence is God's way of remaining anonymous." (Albert Einstein)

How did Samuel, Mary and Jesus respond to this surprise?

How can you let God surprise you at NCYC?

DISCUSSION

"Lord God, Here I am!

You created me and know me completely.

You know all about my life – my joys and my sufferings, my questions and my dreams.

I know you love me, even when I feel my sins and mistakes make me unlovable."
(St. Mary's Press, CYB)

- Which part of this prayer means the most to you?
- Who do you identify most with – Mary, who seemed to be waiting for God and readily accepted? Jesus, who was asked to do something difficult and carried it through to the end? Or Samuel, who was woken up in the middle of the night and didn't expect God, but ultimately obeyed? Why do you choose that person?
- Have you ever felt like you do not belong in the Church? Why?
- Do you think God only calls people who are "special"?
- Do you know anyone who feels unlovable? What is their life like?
- Are you expecting God at NCYC? How will God be "different" there than he is here, at home?

PRAYER

Speak, Lord...

Provide a worksheet with the simple words, Speak, Lord... on the page. Allow the teens 10 minutes of silence and solitude to listen to the Lord and write down anything that comes to mind in prayer if they wish.



Resource Title	BASIC BETTER
Objective	Stage 3: Show them how to be authentic.
Supplies Needed	Garbage Can for Push Me/Pull You

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Discuss any rules about positivity, safety & group dynamics
 - Assign/Share Hotel Rooming Arrangements
-

CHECK-IN

Teens will share their spiritual highs and lows since the last small group gathering.

Last week we talked about listening to God. How did you carry that into your daily life?

This week we are on the line “your servant.” What do you think of when we talk about being God’s servant?

OPENING

Push Me, Pull You and Snap, Crackle, Pop
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1XSgDTL-Byul9wfwCLeSc68ISThBAuZvSFWKbb4igml/edit>

TEACHING

Leader note: Cover these points yourself or assign them to a chaperone/teen. (See LEAD/FOUNDATION).

Have you ever been lost? Have you ever been lost by yourself? Have you ever been lost with a friend? What was the difference?

The salvation of souls is the mission of the Church.

- Think about the stretch of your arm. You can reach maybe 1-2 people by holding your arms out. But if everyone in the Catholic Church stood together with their hands held, our single file line could encircle the globe.
- For example: Say a friend of yours had an Amazon Prime account with access to 100s of movies and TV shows, and you have a Netflix subscription that can also access many programs for instant streaming. You share each other’s information with one another and now you both have access to double the time-wasting resources.
- Truly, together is better.

NCYC is about the universal nature of our Church.

- On Thursday night, you will walk into that stadium and be blown away by the energy of all the young Catholics gathered. You will realize just how NOT alone you are. How you belong.
- On Saturday night, we will go to mass together and you'll realize the potential we have when you see how many great leaders we have.

This is what NCYC is about: that it's better to be together. There are 3 temptations of NCYC we want to touch on tonight which can pose a threat to this incredible experience.

1 Control: 2 Timothy 1:7

"For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control"
You're spending a lot of money or spent a lot of time fundraising for this event. It's your time, your experience. It makes sense that when you want to eat at a certain restaurant, listen to a certain speaker or go to the bathroom without waiting. NCYC, however, is a great privilege. Moreover – God gives us the gift of self-control.

2 Competition: John 17:21

"...that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me."
NCYC isn't about having the best seats, the best trading items and the best t-shirts. It is easy to compare yourself to other youth groups that are bigger, more excited, seem to have better "ideas." Don't get distracted. Comparison is the thief of joy. Jesus' final prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane was for us and our unity. NCYC isn't about being better or worse, it's about being together and what we have in common. As Frederick Buechern – a non-Catholic brother of Christ – once said, "There can be no joy for anybody until there is joy finally for us all."

3 Cost: Matthew 17:1

"After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light."
The cost of NCYC is that we gather for this weekend but then we are sent home. We experience a mountain top like Peter, James and John at the transfiguration of Jesus, only to remember that nothing grows at the top of the mountain – life grows in the valley of our lives. We return to our daily lives excited but sometimes confused.

What do you think is the opposite of control? Of competition? Family. NCYC is about interdependence. What does that word mean? It means we are mutually dependent. We can't fulfill the mission alone - we need each other. It may be easier to go it alone, but it is better together. You will dive deeper in this topic at small group.

DISCUSSION

When you are assigned a group project at school, what role do you usually play?

What are some good images of interdependence? (A body, orchestra, dominoes.) What happens when one area excels? One area fails?

Do you find it easy to depend on other people? To trust other people? Why or why not?

What if somebody told you that you had Trust Issues, how would you react?
What proof would they have to say that?
Who are you closest to in your life?
Do you feel that you depend on God more, or yourself?
Which temptation is the greatest threat to you – control, competition or returning home?

PRAYER

Your Servant...

As a small group, bow your heads in prayer in a circle.

Starting and ending with the group leader, each person will pray for themselves to be a servant of God. If they are comfortable, each participant will ask God in spontaneous prayer to help them be His servant. When they are finished, they will each pray the following prayer of consecration to service.

“Help me to love you, God with all my heart, mind and soul, and to love all people, even as I love myself.” (St. Mary’s Press CYB)



Resource Title	BASIC HYPE
Objective	Stage 4: Show teens how to be authentic.
Supplies Needed	Jeopardy Board (can be written on a Dry-Erase board or Powerpoint) Copies of workshops for each small group Copies of workshop choice worksheet for each small group leader

ANNOUNCEMENTS **Last Minute Announcements and Logistics**

NCYC Jeopardy (Page 33)
Ask for 1 representative from each small group to play NCYC Jeopardy. The information from the game will be provided in a letter to parents sent before this meeting.

CHECK-IN Teens will share their spiritual highs and lows since the last small group gathering.

OPENING Ask two of your LEAD leaders to act out a street vendor scene selling bottled water. The street vendor should be over-the-top energetic, like an infomercial. The water they sell should be from a Tibetan mermaid spring, evaporated and diluted into energy-efficient bottles made in a green house in a remote island off the coast of Japan, etc., etc. The point is the hype and propaganda about the water is a marketing scheme that can't be trusted. Ask for two of your LEAD leaders to serve as "customers" of the bottled water; one of them is skeptical and the other is completely gullible. Take 2-3 volunteers from your large group as well who can react however they see fit.

Connection: God isn't about hype. God isn't trying to get you buy in or sell out. To quote the Princess Bride, "Life is pain, anyone who tells you otherwise is trying to sell you something." While life is more than just pain, it is true that we live in a world promising a fast fix. That's not what NCYC or the Church are all about. Jesus meets you where you are in your life, pain or no pain, struggle or no struggle. What God provides is peace with wherever your life is; not a solution to your problems.

God wants you and wants to give you freedom in return. Do you believe this?

TEACHING Top 10: Make the Most of NCYC

10) Get comfortable with being uncomfortable.

NCYC is a pilgrimage. Pilgrimages are hard! You might have to wait to eat or go to the bathroom sometimes. Try to put what's best for the group ahead of yourself. If you're feeling really sick or anxious, let your chaperone know. When you're feeling slight irritations, hungry or angry, take a minute to calm down and make the best of the situation.

9) You're the director.

This weekend, you're here to see & experience things to return home and tell your parish about. Consider yourself a reporter on site for a TV station, but even more than that – you're in charge of what you see. Don't waste time at sessions that you're not interested in or aren't "deep" enough for you. You decide if NCYC will be a positive experience or negative one so don't sweat the small stuff and make sure to get the big stuff on video! Keep a journal and take lots of pictures to share your story. Record videos of experiences to show people and post it on social media as often as you can.

8) Trade Stuff, and Stories.

NCYC is about the young Church. What are the universal trading items of our faith? Try to meet people from every part of the country and talk to them about what is great, or difficult, about being Catholic in their state. Odds are you face some of the same issues.

7) Be smart.

Remember our code of behavior and encourage others to follow it. Being Catholic means being different. Disciples of Jesus are leaders, whether you're shy, artistic or socially awkward. **Don't** give your personal contact information out to very many people, especially adults that you don't know.

6) Be kind.

Don't budge in line or cut anyone off (including cars!) Avoid calling strangers names. Be respectful during mass & sessions. If you can do these 3 things, you will make the experience of NCYC much better for over 25,000 people.

5) Obey.

Your Group Leader is here to make sure you have the best experience possible. Their suggestions may not always be the most "fun," but they are for your benefit – so you can get the most out of NCYC. Try not to give them a hard time. In this situation, following the directions really will pay off. Resist the temptation to be "smarter than the rules." It might get you sent home. Obey your body if you're starting to feel fatigued or lightheaded. There will be First Aid stations and it's better to be safe than sorry (or passed out!)

4) Remember who you are.

You represent your parish and your part of the country. We're known for being incredibly friendly and nice. As Christians, we're also witnesses of love. Give Jesus, Iowa, and the teens from your parish, a good name! 😊

3) Listen.

Take notes and listen to your heart. Maybe you want to go to a certain session or *don't* want to hang out with a certain group of people, but you are afraid to get away from the pack. Don't be afraid to tell your chaperone what your needs are. Don't ignore the warning signs, especially if you are feeling sick.

2) Make it about God.

You may never get to attend NCYC again! Look for opportunities and sessions that meet your needs. Are you stressed out at home? Try to attend sessions about prayer. Do your friends ask you lots of questions about being Catholic? Seek out information sessions. All the sessions at NCYC are going to meet you where you are and won't be too "lecture-heavy." You'll be glad you pushed yourself.

1) Know that you are loved.

This conference is for you. Your needs, your heart, your relationship with Jesus. The Church loves you! We're here to help you encounter Christ – in each other, in the Church, and in yourself. Take it all in. Make good choices and *have fun!*

"Young people must say to the world: to follow Christ is good; to go with Christ is good; the message of Christ is good; emerging from ourselves, to the ends of the earth and of existence, to take Jesus there, is good!" Pope Francis, May 24, 2013

DISCUSSION

"Jesus, thank you for showing me how to live. I know you want only the best for my life, and I believe following you is the way to a full and abundant life."

What do you feel called to learn more about at NCYC? Write it down without looking at each other's answers.

In small group, review the workshops offered at NCYC. Decide which break-outs you will attend as a small group. It's okay for two teens to go together to one session without a chaperone as long as you establish a meeting place. It's okay for the kids to change their mind after they are at the conference but it will help to plan ahead.

Small group leaders can use the worksheet on page 34 if they'd like to record the teens' choices.

Set up your daily schedule at NCYC. Consider meeting during lunch each day as a small group to go over the highs and lows. At the end of the day, on the bus or in the hotel, you can meet in your small group to go over the questions from the journal.

PRAYER

Is listening....

Provide a sheet with the words, "is listening..." on it. Give the teens 2 minutes to write the questions they have for God. Then, ask them to flip it over. Play instrumental music and to write down any responses they feel they are receiving from God for 3 minutes.

NCYC Jeopardy (based on the Glossary provided in their journal and information provided at your meetings. Please modify for what is most important for your group to know.)

The Conference	Ecce Adsum	True/False	Our Diocese	Our Parish
100				
Should we bring our phone to general sessions? (Opinion question)	Who was called in the middle of the night three times, and mistook the voice of God for the priest, Eli? (Samuel)	Catholic means unitarian. (False. Catholic means universal)	Archbishop Jackels is the ___ Bishop of the Diocese of Dubuque (10 th)	What time should we arrive to load the bus on Wednesday night/Thursday morning?
200				
Who are our emcees? (Jackie Francois and Paul Kim)	Where did the agony in the Garden take place? (Mt of Olives/Gethsemane)	All Catholics in the united states have the same bishop. (False.)	Which day do we wear diocesan shirts?	When is curfew on Friday night?
300				
What are we supposed to do with our trading items? (Meet new people)	Which kings did Samuel anoint? (Saul and David)	The word "catholic" appears in the creed read at some Protestant services. (True)	Fill in the blank: I the lord of ___ and ___, I have heard my people ___. (Sea, sky, cry.)	When are we eating together as a group?
500				
What is the name of the stadium? (Lucas Oil)	What is the song of Mary called? (Magnificat)	If you have a headache or get sick at NCYC, you just have to tough it up till Sunday (False. Tell your small group leader first and they'll help you find a First Aid station. Tell your chaperone first and ask a responsible friend to accompany you so we know where you are.)	What's the difference between a diocese and an archdiocese?	Where is our emergency meeting location and when would we meet there?

Small Group Leader

Tentative Workshop Choices for Teens

NCYC 2015

<i>Participant Name</i>				
Wants to learn more about... (Specific Speakers/ Topics of Interest)				
Workshop A	Location: _____	Location: _____	Location: _____	Location: _____
Workshop B	Location: _____	Location: _____	Location: _____	Location: _____
Workshop C	Location: _____	Location: _____	Location: _____	Location: _____
Workshop D	Location: _____	Location: _____	Location: _____	Location: _____
Workshop E	Location: _____	Location: _____	Location: _____	Location: _____



Resource Title	BASIC IMAGINE
Objective	<i>Stage 5: Show them how to listen to God.</i>
Supplies Needed	Slideshow Lost & Found items from the conference

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Play a slideshow of photos from NCYC.

Discuss any post-NCYC formation provided for parents or the parish.

If you have not been able to yet, share an Open Mic with the teens about NCYC. If a few weeks (or months) have gone by, they may express frustration that NCYC was so phenomenal, but they have been struggling to feel in touch with God since the conference. The goal of this session is to respond to that frustration.

CHECK-IN

Teens will share their spiritual highs and lows since the last small group gathering.

OPENING

Answer the following questions.

If you were a stranger walking into our parish, what would you like them to see, feel and hear?

If you were returning to our Faith Formation (Confirmation/Youth Group) program after college, what would you want to make sure was still here? What would you want to see, hear or feel differently?

If you brought your friend to an event at our parish, how would you like them to encounter God here? How would they see God, feel God, hear God?

Ask each teen to share all of their responses in turn.

Next, have each teen repeat their response to the first question (about a Stranger in their Parish.)

Narrow it down: Write down the words or phrases that are common among your group for this question.

Narrow it down: Pick a similar Sight, Feeling, Sound.

Repeat for each question.

TEACHING

The Teaching will involve the small groups sharing their common responses to the questions.

The next step does not have to be tricky. Ask the small groups to come up with one word they would use to describe how they feel (based on what they see and hear) as a parishioner. You may have to ask your small group members to write down a word and then stick to it when sharing with one another. This may be easy or the source of argument for some small groups.

Finally, discuss how you might like to see the groups move from where they are (how the teens feel) to how they want strangers and friends to feel in the future.

DISCUSSION

How do we want to continue our small group discussion? (Organize how you will meet every 2 weeks. If you are continuing as a Faith Formation class, this doesn't apply.)

Would one of our small group members want to serve as a leader to continue the visioning process for our program? (Give volunteers' names to the group leader.)

PRAYER

"Holy Spirit, give me the courage and wisdom to be Jesus' follower, even when it isn't easy. Fill me with the joy and peace that comes from doing your will. Amen."
(St. Mary's Press, CYB)

Listening to God has a lot to do with our emotions. Our emotions get in the way and distract us from prayer. We can also use them to launch us into prayer to pour our heart to God like Hannah in the temple. Or we can also use our emotions, in prayer, which leads us to action.

St. Frances de Sales once said, "Humility does what it is told." Discipleship, as modeled by Samuel, is listening to God and responding to Him – choosing not to ignore Him.

What do you hear your parents, supportive friends and trusted leaders encouraging you "to do"? How can you answer that call?

Conclude with intercessory prayer.

Each teen will offer what they need from God to listen to Him, and conclude with the prayer above. The group leader (or a volunteer) will then pray over that teen. If you are not sure what to say simply recite, "Come Holy Spirit. Come Now. Come as you wish." Have the teen echo back each phrase in call/response.



FOUNDATION

This resource is for adult leaders attending NCYC as chaperones. The result of this process is a well-formed and focused team. Your chaperones should be comfortable taking instruction from you, supporting one another and being prayerfully present for the teens. Each session is part team meeting, part “class.”

NCYC chaperones will be invited to the IMPACT program (starting fall 2015), the ACT program, which is a local parish wing of the IMPACT program, and the Adult conference (Nov. 7, 2015) in Waterloo.

Duplication Tips #5 - #11

5. Ask another parish faith formation leader to lead these sessions for you so you can participate.
6. Additional chaperone trainings are not needed if you utilize this resource. Excluding the final diocesan training in the Fall, all training for NCYC is incorporated in the meetings or as homework.
7. Strive for a mini-retreat feeling. Avoid having these sessions on a weeknight or before/after Sunday morning mass. This should be a separate event for the group leaders to spend time lingering over the message of God.
8. If you are able to have these sessions outside of parish property, even better.
9. Consider hosting these every Saturday morning for 5 weeks before NCYC preparation begins. Attend Saturday morning communion service or daily mass together or go out to breakfast together.
10. Sunday nights once a month from 7-9pm with a potluck might be another good option.
11. Offer childcare if that will help with attendance.

Stage One: Show them you care.

SEA & SKY: INTRODUCING TEENS TO OUR GOD OF THE PASSOVER

God tells us “Here I am,” in the heritage of our faith – the Passover. He shows us He cares for us by saving us from slavery.

Stage Two: Show them they belong.

DARKNESS BRIGHT: INTRODUCING TEENS TO OUR GOD OF GETHSEMANE

God tells us “Here I am” in his Agony in the Garden. He shows us we belong by dying amongst criminals, saving us from death and freeing us from sin in his death and resurrection.

Stage Three: Show them how to be authentic.

SNOW & RAIN: INTRODUCING TEENS TO OUR GOD OF THE VISITATION

God says, “Here I am” when he presents Himself through Mary. He shows us how to be authentic when we are able to see His promise clearly fulfilled through Mary’s Song.

Stage Four: Show them how to live with doubt.

HEARTS OF STONE: INTRODUCING TEENS TO OUR GOD OF THE PRESENTATION

God says, "Here I am" in our broken-heartedness. The Presentation shows our God in both hope-fulfilled and prophesied pain.

Stage Five: Show them how to listen to God.

WIND & FLAME: INTRODUCING TEENS TO OUR GOD OF KINGS

God says, "Here I am" when He calls Samuel. This judge serves the kings of Israel because he is able to listen, take command and bravely deliver God's word. The story of Samuel and the Lord is call and response: this is discipleship.

Each lesson in this series follows this format:

- 1) Announcements: Housekeeping and important leader information by the Group Leader
- 2) Next Meeting with Tens: Provide a brief overview of the upcoming large/small group sessions with the rest of the group
- 3) Focus: Brief discussion of "Here I am Lord" lyrics
- 4) Teaching: Discussion of the next stage and Large Group Bible Study
- 5) Solitude: Questions on the teaching
- 6) Closing Prayer: Intercessory/Teen-Led Prayer

Providing an overview of the next meeting with teens and discussion on that stage are the most important if your time is limited.



Resource Title	FOUNDATION SEA AND SKY: Our God of the Passover
Objective	<i>Stage 1: Show them you care.</i> God tells us “Here I am,” in the heritage of our faith – the Passover. He shows us He cares for us by saving us from slavery.
Supplies Needed	Forms for each leader (Adult Liability Waiver and Adult Code of Conduct) Small group assignments (4-8 teens per chaperone recommended) Pics & Bios of teens for their assigned leader Ideas for t-shirt/trading item themes (pricing info would be helpful) Copies of Scripture/Solitude Reflection Questions
Modify	Provide a list of training expectations and Exodus 12-14 as Homework for chaperones to complete beforehand.

*I the Lord of sea and sky. I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin, My hand will save.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

At this point, chaperones should have completed a Background Check and Virtus training.

Distribute Adult Liability Waiver due for the Archdiocese and NCYC as well as the Adult Code of Conduct. These can be found on the group leader page of the Archdiocesan website (dbqarch.org/ncyc). Ask for them to be returned at the next meeting.

Distribute pictures and a quick biography of each of the teens for the group leaders, if possible. Write it yourself or request help from parents/teens. If you'd rather, you can provide the parent contact information to each of the chaperones and ask them to collect this information as Homework for the first gathering. Regardless, the chaperones should have a sheet of paper with their teens' names, personalities, etc. readily accessible from the beginning of this process.

Discuss chaperone suggestions for theme (t-shirts, etc.).

REVIEW NEXT SESSION

Review either “All Play” (from BASIC) or “Asleep” (from NEXT LEVEL). Make any modifications with your chaperones to accommodate your facility and the needs of your group.

CHECK-IN

Begin the session with group discussion on the stanza from “Here I am, Lord.”

*I the Lord of sea and sky. I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin, My hand will save.*

What is the cry of teenagers?
How do they dwell in the dark of sin?
What do you know about your small group of teens right now?

TEACHING

Show them you care.

The first Step in leading teens on this journey to NCYC and to discipleship is to show them that you care. You may have heard the phrase – They won't care how much you know until they know how much you care. Maybe you don't feel like you know very much. But to know the Lord is enough, and to know that the young people need your witness and your compassion is enough. They only need your commitment to help find the answers and to not abandon them.

We cannot lead them somewhere we have never been. We can't introduce them to someone they don't know. If our goal isn't to lead teens to Christ, where are we leading them? To more confusion, heartbreak and imperfection? We know that God has a loving, constant presence and faithful plan for them.

The "God of NCYC" is also the God of Monday mornings and boring youth groups and ridiculous icebreakers. The God who summons each of the 20,000+ participants to this conference is also the God who speaks to each teen in the quiet of their own heart and trouble of their own mind.

God shows us He cares: The Passover

Read Exodus 12-14 together. Be open to interruptions; discuss as questions arise.

How is the Passover like Baptism/Confession?
How is the Passover the beginning and end of a journey?
What frustrates or inspires you in this story?

Optional: Show Mark Hart's presentation to student leaders, "Where Leaders Fail" available on YouTube: (Google it! This link is way too long to list here.)

SOLITUDE

Tonight we reflect on our God of sea and sky. What do we know about the sea and the sky? They are mysteries. You can plunge to the depths of the sea or plummet to the farthest discovered galaxy and still God is farther. Still there are things we do not know, will never know. A billion years ago and a billion light years away, God is there. God goes before us, will still be there when we are long gone.

This constant, trustworthy God is who we are called to know personally and receive His love. This is the God we are honored to introduce to teenagers. We are privileged to teach them the sound of His encouraging, strengthening voice.

15 minutes of solitude with the Lord for group leaders. Leave your phone. Please don't speak to one another or ask about time, NCYC, bathrooms.

"The Lord Himself will fight for you, you need only to be still." Exodus 1-14

*Do I have what it takes to show teens I care?
Why do I care?
Do I have a hidden agenda?
How can I be an instrument in God's hands so He can lead them?
How can I reveal the God of the Passover to show teens this is a God who cares?*

Oceans: Where Feet May Fail:

Lyric Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N2PNTq_-mZs

Instrumental Only: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HvmFr2YIS8M>

PRAYER

Sing quietly, three times:

*I the Lord of sea and sky. I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin, My hand will save.*

Leader: "I the Lord am your God who led you out of Egypt." (Exodus 20:2)

Our Response is: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Litany for Teens

For teens who struggle with mental illness...

For teens with broken families...

For teens who are tempted to join a gang or leave a supportive friend group...

(Sing *Here I am Lord* chorus)

For teens who suffer from perfectionism...

For teens with a physical disability...

For teens who have never "felt" God...

(Sing *Here I am Lord* chorus)

For teens who do not know how to be still...

For those of us struggling to allow God to fight for us...

For the Passover in our life, that we may find newness in our faith in the face of trial...

(Sing *Here I am Lord* chorus)

For teens who don't think anyone cares for them...

For teens seeking a Jesus High rather than Jesus Himself, that we may find and lead them to the source of joy that does not fade...

For the parents of teens, that their authenticity and gentleness in the faith will lead their family's walk with the Lord...

(Any other intentions)



Resource Title	FOUNDATION DARKNESS BRIGHT: Our God of Gethsemane
Objective	Stage 2: Show teens they belong. God tells us “Here I am” in his Agony in the Garden. He shows us we belong by dying amongst criminals, saving us from death and freeing us from sin in his death and resurrection.
Supplies Needed	Copies of Scripture/Solitude Reflection Questions
Modify	

*I who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear My light to them? Whom shall I send?*

ANNOUNCEMENTS Collect forms.
 Discuss hotel lodging arrangements.
 Discuss travel details (if possible) – will snacks or journals be provided on the bus?
 Introduce Bus Boss if it is not your group leader.

NEXT MEETING WITH TEENS Review “Expect God” (BASIC) or “Serve” (NEXT LEVEL)

FOCUS Begin the session with group discussion on the stanza from “Here I am, Lord.”
*I who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright.
 Who will bear My light to them? Whom shall I send?*

How do we help teens feel as if they belong?
 What is the cry of our teenagers?
 Do you feel as if you belong in the Church? Why or why not?
 Do you feel like you belong with this group of chaperones?
 Do you “belong” with God?
 How do we help teens get over a hurdle of feeling like they don’t belong?

TEACHING Show Them They Belong
 Community is built through sharing laughter, pain, holding hands, cheering each other on, and much more. “Silly games” are important for this age group because they enhance a sense of belonging amongst the “survival of the fittest” mentality of high school. Everyone is equal and often people are “handicapped” by the rules of the game so they are made vulnerable.

In a world of ours with a hierarchy of the most beautiful and powerful at the top, and the least powerful and socially unaccepted at the bottom, it’s hard for teens to believe that all belong in God’s kingdom. The Church is a hospital for

sinners, not just a museum for saints, as Pope Benedict says. The phase of belonging is crucial but we can't stay there; in small groups, this phase is foundational. You want your small group to have a sense of identity and belonging as a team before you leave for NCYC. They will watch out for each other, keep each other safe, support one another in prayer and identify with one another.

Your teens need you as a leader, because you care. They may need each other – arguably – even more. These are the people in the trenches of high school and the teenage years with them.

God Shows us We Belong: Gethsemane

What does Gethsemane have to do with belonging?

Read Luke 4:39-46 together in Lectio Divina.

(Instructions here: http://qvdays.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/lectio_divina.pdf)

or

<http://qvdays.org/discernment/prayer/>

or

<http://www.ignatianspirituality.com/ignatian-prayer/the-what-how-why-of-prayer/praying-with-scripture>

Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. On reaching the place, he said to them, "Pray that you will not fall into temptation." He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.[a] When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow. "Why are you sleeping?" he asked them. "Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation."

Our fully-human Jesus suffers in the Garden so that we can belong with Him. From one garden to the next, God shows His true presence and compassion. Jesus struggles with the Cup offered to Him, just as we suffer. In Gethsemane, we realize that Jesus may have been God but He still felt as we would have felt in that situation. With perfect obedience, however, He does not run away, betray or waver. He embraces His own belonging to His Father's kingdom despite His emotion and human desire. He invites us to the same – no matter the cost.

Optional: Leadership Secrets of Christ:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OveKcYzYJoo>

SOLITUDE

Prayerfully consider...

What is the significance of Christ withdrawing a stone's throw? How have you

behaved as a Catholic leader when you felt God wasn't looking?
The apostles fall asleep – how does this remind us of Samuel and Eli?
How does Christ's physical suffering tell us about his ability to feel human emotion?
Why is the incarnation so important in the Garden of Gethsemane? What does this offer teens?
What does the suffering of Christ in Gethsemane tell us about our belonging to heaven?
How is Christ's suffering like ours?

In the background play, Hillsong "Nothing Like Your Love."
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aMT5XqEq_c4

PRAYER

Sing quietly, three times:
*I who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear My light to them? Whom shall I send?*

Light a candle in a dimly lit room for the closing prayer to emphasize the theme, "Darkness Bright." In a circle, pass around the candle sharing reflections from their solitude.

Our Response is: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Litany for Teens

For teens convinced they do not belong in the Church...
For parents who feel too far from God to lead their teens to Him ...
For those who are marginalized in our faith community...

(Sing *Here I am Lord* chorus)

For God's children who are invisible to the world, that we may see them...
For teens who have been abused...
For teens in our parish who need only a welcoming smile, that we will respond to their need...

(Sing *Here I am Lord* chorus)

For teens who do not know how to talk to God or relate to Him...
For us – when we don't know how to include others ...
For the Gethsemane in our life, that we may find newness in our faith in the face of trial...

(Sing *Here I am Lord* chorus)

For teens who don't think anyone cares for them...
For teens seeking a Jesus High rather than Jesus Himself, that we may find and lead them to the source of joy that does not fade...
For the parents of teens, that their authenticity and gentleness in the faith will lead their family's walk with the Lord...
(Any other intentions)



Resource Title	FOUNDATION SNOW & RAIN: Our God of the Magnificat
Objective	<i>Stage 3: Show teens how to be authentic. God says, "Here I am" when he presents Himself through Mary. He shows us how to be authentic when we are able to see His promise clearly fulfilled through Mary's Song.</i>
Supplies Needed	Copies of the Magnificat and Questions for Solitude

*I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my people's pain.
I have wept for love of them, They turn away.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NEXT SESSION WITH TEENS

Review Better (BASIC) or "2x2" (NEXT LEVEL).

FOCUS

Begin the session with group discussion on the stanza from "Here I am, Lord."
*I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my people's pain.
I have wept for love of them, They turn away.*

How are your small groups doing? Are they leaning in, or turning away?
What pain are they carrying? How have you responded to this?
We can think of "snow and rain" as trial, desolation in prayer, feeling isolated.
Is there anyone in your group called to an authentic faith, by the way God is working in their life right now?
What are the strengths and weaknesses within your group?

TEACHING

Stage 3: Show them how to be authentic.
We have a lot of leaders in the world who are dualistic. Conflicting ideas in the Church can even make Catholicism look hypocritical. Teens are looking for someone who IS who they say they are. Someone who is the real deal. Authentic faith is difficult for them. Above all, teens want to fit in. They are looking for someone to show them the way but aren't always sure who to trust.

Authentic Catholic faith is like Peter running back from the tomb. Full of joy for what God has done, Peter is aware that everything Jesus said was true. He wasn't a liar or a lunatic – He is the Lord.

Who is a model of authentic faith who might be invited to attend our next session with the teens?

God Shows Us How to Be Authentic: The Magnificat
Pray Lectio Divina through the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55)

Mary is like God's magnifying glass. This is authentic faith. Conceived without sin, we are able to see God perfectly even in her humanity. What words would you use to describe Mary's faith?

Mary's authentic faith points to that which is authentic: a faith lived in service to God. This will be the challenge in our upcoming session. Are your teens ready for this challenge?

Finally, Mary is a model of authentic faith because she isn't the Mother of God by her own merit. She is holy simply because of the Father's love for her, because He chose her. Authentic faith does not depart from the mission of God.

God shows us His authenticity in what He does through Mary. Teens are called to be authentic because if it could happen with Mary, why can't tremendous faith become a reality in *their* lives?

SOLITUDE

Where am I struggling with authenticity? Is there an area in my life that I hide my faith or am ashamed of who I believe God is?
When have I watered down my faith so it is more palatable for others?
What are my three weaknesses?
What do I believe are my strengths?
Your weaknesses are how God can be glorified in your life. Where have you experienced healing from God?

PRAYER

Sing quietly, three times:
*I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my people's pain.
I have wept for love of them, They turn away.*

Leader: Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, "It is the Lord," he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the water." John 21:7

When you look at the weakness and healing in your life, remember this is how you are called to live authentically. Honest about your struggles, honest about God's glory in them.

Our Response is: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Litany for Teens

For teens who do not feel loved by their parents ...
For teens who do not feel loved by God ...
For teens who do not love themselves ...

(Sing *Here I am Lord* chorus)

For teens and parents experiencing desolation in their prayer ...

For teens and parents who feel they are drowning in stress and worry ...
For teens in our parish who cannot find anyone to lead them to Christ ...

(Sing Here I am Lord chorus)

For parents to have the courage to share with their children how God has
moved in their life ...
For us – when we feel too ashamed to share what God calls us to witness ...
In Thanksgiving for the humility of Mary, that we may model her selfless
authenticity ...

(Sing Here I am Lord chorus)

For teens who don't think anyone cares for them ...
For teens seeking a Jesus High rather than Jesus Himself, that we may find and
lead them to the source of joy that does not fade ...
For the parents of teens, that their transparency and gentleness in the faith will
lead their family's walk with the Lord ...
(Any other intentions)



Resource Title	FOUNDATION HEARTS OF STONE: Our God of the Presentation
Objective	<i>Stage 4: Show teens how to live with doubt. God says, "Here I am" in our broken-heartedness. The Presentation shows our God in both hope-fulfilled and prophesied pain.</i>
Supplies Needed	Final information and Leader Packets (if possible) for NCYC Copies of journals for the leaders to study and prepare ahead of time

*I will break their hearts of stone. Give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my words to them. Whom shall I send?*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

This is the 2nd to last meeting of chaperones before NCYC. Discuss any "personnel" issues between participants, leaders, and any other important schedules.

Provide a copy of the workshops. They will decide at the next meeting with their teens which workshops the teens feel they should be attending.

Distribute a journal to each leader so they can potentially add/revise small group discussion questions for each day.

Discuss & decide on prayer card distribution and/or blessing with your parish.

Delegate any formation opportunities you will provide for your parish on the NCYC theme.

NEXT SESSION WITH TEENS

Review "Hype" (BASIC) or "Islands" (NEXT LEVEL.)

FOCUS & SOLITUDE

Play "Here I am Lord" while they read the Presentation (Luke 2:22-38) and reflect on their own (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWme0w2kLGk>)

- What were Anna's doubts?
- What were Simeon's doubts?
- Did Joseph, Mary or Jesus have any doubt?
- What role does "waiting" play in the Presentation of Jesus?
- Have you discussed the teens' doubts at all in your small group yet?
- How have you responded to your own doubt in life?

TEACHING DISCUSSION

Stage 4: Show teens how to live with doubt.
The lyrics of this week's portion of Here I am Lord is about brokenness. When

has God broken your heart?

NCYC will present a fire for the faith for these teens, but as leaders we must encourage them to not let their passion to make them self-righteous and judgmental. How is this possible?

When have your judgments on someone else been wrong?

The Presentation: Discussion

What reflections did you have on the presentation of Jesus?

The role of Simeon and Anna in Jesus' life is tremendous. Imagine how they affected the attitude of Joseph and Mary. Once again, they are both filled with wonder at the response Jesus receives. First, shepherds and angels in the field finding him at his birth. Now, prophets at his presentation. The wonder will never end. How did this prepare Mary for the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus? She knew that his death, the final milestone in his life, would also be just as his birth, his presentation – unexpected.

We have a God of surprises. A God who saves at the last minute. A God who transforms us. The Presentation teaches us about the grace of God that was with Anna and Simeon that enabled them to wait, to hold on and to finally meet the Christ – despite their brokenness.

Our God is a heartbreaker, and a heart-healer. The presentation also foreshadows the pain in Jesus, Mary and Joseph's lives to come. That God breaks us in order to give us new hearts. In the novel "Ben Hur," the author describes the Sanhedrin as those who looked God in the eyes and found there a God they did not understand.

God's mystery doesn't mean we can't understand Him, only that it is beyond our understanding. We may be given the grace to comprehend, briefly, or the grace to follow through even without understanding.

How can you pass this message on to your small group as they head to NCYC? Why might this information and this side of God's identity be useful to them?

Over, and over again, in the hymn we have been studying, God asks, "Whom shall I send?" God is sending you to the teens in your small group. They are broken-hearted. They are often stone-hearted. And so are you – so were you when you were their age. What words can you speak from your experience but, more importantly, what presence can you be to these specific teens, now that you've gotten to know them better?

Now that we are approaching our final session before NCYC, how do you feel sent to your small group? Why were you given these specific teens and why were they given you?

Optional: Leadership Secrets of Christ by Mark Hart

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OveKcYzYJoo>

PRAYER

Sing quietly, three times:

*I will break their hearts of stone. Give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my words to them. Whom shall I send?*

Leader: "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh." Ezekiel 36:26

Our Response is: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Litany for Teens

For teens who are experiencing a break-up for the first time ...

For teens struggling with infatuation ...

For teens who feel God does not hear their prayers ...

(Sing *Here I am Lord* chorus)

For teens and parents experiencing doubt as they wait upon God's response ...

For teens and parents who cannot see how God is working in their life ...

For teens in our parish who cannot find anyone to lead them to Christ ...

(Sing *Here I am Lord* chorus)

For parents who have lost a child ...

For us – when we struggle to see what we can offer ...

(Sing *Here I am Lord* chorus)

For teens who don't think anyone cares for them ...

For teens seeking a Jesus High rather than Jesus Himself, that we may find and lead them to the source of joy that does not fade ...

For the parents of teens, that their transparency and gentleness in the faith will lead their family's walk with the Lord ...

(Any other intentions)



Resource Title	FOUNDATION WIND & FLAME: Our God of the Prophets & Kings
Objective	<i>Stage 5: Show them how to listen to God.</i> God says, “Here I am” when He calls Samuel. This judge serves the kings of Israel because he is able to listen, take command and bravely deliver God’s word. The story of Samuel and the Lord is call and response: this is discipleship.
Supplies Needed	Assign a portion of Samuel 1-15 to each of your chaperones as homework before this session. Projector for praise and worship songs (optional)

I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.

I will set a feast for them, My hand will save.

Finest bread I will provide, Till their hearts be satisfied.

I will give My life to them, Whom shall I send?

ANNOUNCEMENTS	<p>Ensure all paperwork, payments, and final details have been communicated to your leaders.</p> <p>Review the packing list and delegate any duties of materials that need to be brought.</p> <p>If you haven’t already, discuss prayer card distribution and/or blessing with your parish.</p>
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REVIEW NEXT SESSION WITH TEENS	<p>NCYC is the next “session” with teens.</p> <p>Review “Imagine” (BASIC) or “Empty” (NEXT LEVEL)</p> <p>Discuss how the leaders feel called to continue meeting with their small groups after NCYC, which is much more important than pre-meetings.</p>
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FOCUS	<p>Begin the session with group discussion on the stanza from “Here I am, Lord.”</p> <p><i>I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.</i> <i>I will set a feast for them, My hand will save</i> <i>Finest bread I will provide, Till their hearts be satisfied.</i> <i>I will give My life to them, Whom shall I send?</i></p> <p>How are these lyrics like the Sacraments of Initiation (Confirmation and Eucharist)? How do we call teens out of their comfort zone? What does that conversation</p>
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look like? What different responses can you expect?

TEACHING

Optional: Listen to Fr. Barron's Reflection on the Call of Samuel

<http://www.wordonfire.org/resources/homily/speak-lord-im-listening/569/>

Stage 5: Show Them how to Listen to God's Voice

Returning from NCYC will be a call to discipleship. You've worked hard to build these relationships with them. As you journey to NCYC, you will witness their growth, a rollercoaster of emotion (or disappointment). You will be able to see a trajectory. Look for a way to challenge them to grow in service of their faith and in contemplation. Perhaps this means daily mass (the feast God has set for us) or simply reading the Book of Esther because you think it could speak to them. Pray, pray, pray about how to lead them at NCYC. Work hard not to hover but still direct.

God Shows us how to Listen to His Voice: The Kings

Samuel is given to Israel as a prophet, who demanded a king. First and foremost, Samuel was given to His mother.

So we give these teens to God to see them become prophets to kings. They will become leaders in ministry that will go beyond their own reach. In many ways, you are like Samuel to Israel as a chaperone.

We've begged God for their conversion, for this to be a meaningful experience for them, to be "born." This is the beginning but we don't know where God will lead them and that is very exciting.

SOLITUDE

15 Minutes of Solitude with 1 Samuel 1-3.

Provide 1/3 of your chaperones with 1 Samuel 1-5, 1/3 with 1 Samuel 6-10 and 1/3 of your chaperones with 1 Samuel 11-15.

Discuss the role of Samuel in each of these chapters as a group before closing in prayer.

How does God say "Here I am" in these chapters?

How does Samuel respond to God? To Israel?

What does Samuel teach us about discipleship? How can we share this message with our teens at NCYC?

Why is it going to be so important for the teens to go "beyond NCYC"?

Consider the call of Samuel in the temple in 1 Samuel 3. What if NCYC is like the Lord calling your teens? Why will it be so important for you, like Eli, to connect them to their *lived* calling? Their emotions will abandon them after NCYC – why does that make it even more important that you, as their leader, do not?

PRAYER

For prayer, sing together hymns that are popular among your group or the 3 listed below before concluding worship in the refrain from Here I am, Lord (Schutte.) Finally, close your prayer and session with intercessions for the teens attending NCYC – spontaneous intentions provided by your leaders:

Oceans: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1m_sWJQm2fs
Because He Lives: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PBvU7arNhQs>

Set a Fire: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fs6bdFzgQfY>

Sing quietly, three times:

*I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them, My hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide, Till their hearts be satisfied.
I will give My life to them, Whom shall I send?*

Intercessory prayer for teens.



LEAD

LEAD is a track of NCYC preparation sessions which activates your upperclassmen as leaders in your program.

The goal of LEAD is to provide leadership experience and formation which will lead committed teens to a higher level of intentional discipleship. This will lead to effective, relevant evangelization of your younger teens and a stronger, communal vision of your program.

Consider the 10-12 participants signed up for NCYC who are natural leaders who simply need a little “push” to become more involved. Prepare them separately so NCYC can be the fuel to the flame.

LEAD is a separate track from BASIC. Meetings are held separately from the large group. Opportunities are listed in the lesson plans so LEAD participants can help provide leadership for the rest of your group (underclassmen) in the large group preparation meetings.

After NCYC, set these teens on track to attend the Christian Leadership Institute, Notre Dame Vision or the Life Teen Leadership Conference as a group.

Stage One: Show them you care.

SPEAK: RESISTING SILENCE

Speak is about opening up to each other and to God’s will. How do you lead if you are shy? How can we go beyond nice and into the realm of bold? What holds you back from the plunge? This meeting should take place before “All Play” (BASIC.) LEAD teens will provide a witness at “All Play.”

Stage Two: Show them they belong.

OVERFLOW: WITNESS POWER

Overflow instructs participants in reflecting and preparing their witness. Teens are challenged to write and present a witness talk within their parish. Four teens will present at the session with younger participants. Is it time to jump? This meeting should take place before “Better Together” (BASIC.)

Stage Three: Show them how to be authentic.

SPLIT: RECOGNIZING DIVISION

Split is about broken families, broken relationships and the reparation of the Holy Spirit.

Stage Four: Show them how to live with doubt.

WHITE FLAG: DAILY SURRENDER

What is surrender? Have you surrendered?

Stage Five: Show them how to listen to God.

SERPENTS & DOVES: LIVE DIFFERENTLY

The Way is different – living differently than before we met Jesus and living differently from others. Shrewd as serpents and simple as doves – what does this mean?

PARADOX: THE REVOLUTION

How do we help others to live the challenges of our faith? This meeting should take place after “Imagine” (BASIC).

Each lesson in this series follows this format:

- 1) Announcements: Introductions & Housekeeping by the Group Leader
- 2) Next Meeting with Teens: Provide a brief overview of the upcoming large/small group sessions with the rest of the group (underclassmen)
- 3) Check-In: Brief Spiritual High-Low Discussion in Small Groups
- 4) Teamwork/Teaching: Large Group message via activity or FOUNDATION participant (chaperone)
- 5) Discussion: Questions on the Teaching in Small Group
- 6) Closing Prayer. Intercessory/Teen-Led Prayer in Small Group

Providing an overview of the next meeting with teens and spiritual check-in with one another are the most important if your time is limited.



Resource Title	LEAD SPEAK
Objective	<i>Stage 1: Show them you care.</i> Speak is about opening up to each other and to God's will. How do you lead if you are shy? How can we go beyond nice and into the realm of bold? What holds you back from the plunge? This meeting should take place before "All Play" (BASIC) Lead teens will provide a witness at "All Play."
Supplies Needed	For Saving Sam: 2 paperclips, 1 plastic punch cup, 1 gummy worm, 1 gummy lifesaver and 1 cocktail stirrer per team.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/TEACHING

Welcome everyone and THANK them for their essential leadership in your parish. Take a moment to define "servant leadership." The ten characteristics of a servant leader, as defined by mindtools.com, are: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people and building community.

As a team, brainstorm how we can display these characteristics as NCYC Leaders.

Discuss what role you want the peer leaders to play. They will help lead the BASIC or NEXT LEVEL large group preparation sessions for underclassmen (and chaperones). Would they also like to be Spirit Leaders to assist the Bus Boss? Lead formation programs for the parish? Brainstorm ways they can bring "conceptualization" and community building to the parish, with NCYC as the foundation.

At NCYC this year, we envision a specific role for you because of how you've grown since attending NCYC.

REVIEW NEXT SESSION WITH TEENS

Review "All Play" (BASIC) or "Asleep" (NEXT LEVEL) session with the large group.

Delegate responsibilities accordingly.

TEAMWORK

Saving Sam

Skills: Team work, creativity, patience, leadership roles
http://www.biologycorner.com/worksheets/saving_sam.html

DISCUSSION

What did we learn from this activity? What worked in saving Sam?
What did not work?
Did anyone feel like they knew what to do, but no one would listen to them? What made you feel that way?
Would you describe yourself as a vocal or silent leader? Why?
Do you feel like the Church cares about you as a leader?
How has your relationship with Jesus led you to ministry to others?
Speaking up sometimes means advocating for other people's needs, as well as your own, that we might honor Christ. Describe how you hope we can form this NCYC experience for the needs of our underclassmen.

CLOSING PRAYER

JUMP Narrative

Ask six leaders to read the following narrative with the group (different leaders from before.) They will each read one line in order.

Everyone has a secret talent
Once upon a time
Mine was hesitation
Procrastination
Fear

God chooses the weak
To lead the strong

Embrace how much you need Him
And jump

Jump
Jump

And then
Only then
Will He be able to use you

You are called to lead
Not called to hesitate
To let him open up your sails
And see what happens when we soar

But sometimes we wait
Until someone else's pain
Is more important than our pleasure
Until we are so sick of choking on a dark world
All we want to do is feed it the light of Christ

You will never
Ever
No matter how much money you make
No matter how many friends you have
No matter how good you look in pictures
Or how happy your life looks from the outside

You will never find a greater joy
Than leading people to the Christ.

Giving people Jesus
Is the greatest joy of all

Don't wait until you're ready
It only takes 20 seconds of insane courage

To step out
Sit up
Buckle your seat belt

And get comfortable
With being uncomfortable

This is not about you
This is not about the accolade
This is about heaven
Because your Master
Your Lord
Your King

Will not rest
Until all of us are saved

The longing of his heart is the salvation of all
And when you truly know him
You cannot rest
You won't sleep
No fear
No trepidation
No hesitation
"Peter, don't you know you're going to lose your reputation??"
Nothing will be able to stop you
From giving someone Christ

Because you are a rebel
Going against the grain
Thinking for yourself
Instead of eating from a dumpster

Stop
Just stop
Worry is for cowards.
And you are an apostle

You will find your arms reaching
Your hands holding
Your heart racing
As His hunger overwhelms you and you can hear his ache

So Jump

Jump
Just... jump
And know He will catch you
Wherever you fall

"My son."
"Take courage."
"In this world you will have trouble.
Let's face it
Whether you follow me or not
You will have trouble. But take courage.

"For I have conquered the world."
"Be brave."
"Do not fear."
"Whatever you do."
"Don't you dare be afraid."
"For you - my daughter
My brave one

The darkness will overwhelm you
But you will not be overcome

Your enemy will surround you
But you will not be taken down

The God of angel armies
Is always by your side

Give light
Give light
And the darkness will disappear

Maybe once upon a time
The troubles in our world were small
We could ignore them
But now, they are growing

And pounding like boulders
Knocking our brothers down
Tearing our sisters up
Our families are breaking
And the world follows in our wake

Do you still desire to be safe?

Taking casualties everywhere
Even the strongest soldier can fold
If he does not stand on Christ

Here comes the avalanche
But take courage
Be not afraid
It is I

The time for pretending is over
The time for hiding in doubt has ended

For I am God and there is no other
And I can move mountains
I can raise people from the dead
Nothing is impossible for me

Draw near to God and He will always
Always
Draw near to you

And do not be conformed to this world,
But be transformed by the renewing of your mind

I will find you
I'm coming for you
Wherever you go

You are the Church
Our Rescuer has sent you
No one else is coming
You are it

You do not have to save the world
But you must not leave it the same

You are the Church
You once covered
But now
You are the witness of miracles
Full of grace

So I say to you
Lazarus, come out!
I say to you little girl, arise!
Do you still not understand?

The time to lead is upon us.
There is no longer time
To be safe
(Curriculum Resources for Catholic Educators, permission granted)



Resource Title	LEAD OVERFLOW
Objective	<i>Stage 2: Show them they belong.</i> Overflow instructs participants in reflecting and preparing their witness. Teens are challenged to write and present a witness talk within their parish. Four teens will present at the session with younger participants. Is it time to jump? This meeting should take place before “Better Together” (BASIC)
Supplies Needed	

ANNOUNCEMENTS

REVIEW NEXT SESSION Review either “Expect God” (BASIC) or “Serve” (next level)

CHECK-IN Teens will share their spiritual highs and lows. Your “LEAD” group is likely small, so a “large” group discussion that is with everyone will work. If you have more than 10-12 people, split up by gender.

TEAMWORK/TEACHING The youth minister should share a message on evangelization. What is the single most important trait or characteristic of a good leader?

Prayer. Our witness, our leadership, must always start with a relationship with Christ. Otherwise we are only leading people to ourselves, to an emotional high.

Pope Francis shared in *Evangelii Gaudium* (49), “If something should rightly disturb us and trouble our consciences, it is the fact that so many of our brothers and sisters are living without the strength, light and consolation born of friendship with Jesus Christ, without a community of faith to support them, without meaning and a goal in life. More than by fear of going astray, my hope is that we will be moved by the fear of remaining shut up within structures which give us a false sense of security, within rules which make us harsh judges, within habits which make us feel safe, while at our door people are starving and Jesus does not tire of saying to us: “Give them something to eat” (Mk 6:37).”

Our faith must overflow in our lives with such joy – beyond the fear of remaining shut up - so that we can respond to the disturbing fact that people are living without Jesus. We should be so moved by joy from our belief in Jesus, that we aren’t discouraged that so many don’t know Him – we are encouraged, convicted and set into action.

Faith is our response to God

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z6DzBwkRPDI>

Optional Video: Sharing the Gospel from *Outside da Box*

<https://youtu.be/4fEVjGEqxbw?list=PL01AFEB24CB3F6162>

DISCUSSION

List your three strengths.

How do you currently use them in your life?

List your three weaknesses or struggles.

What if we told you that your weaknesses are how God wants to be glorified, not just your strengths? Your witness is about how your weakness was transformed, not by your own power.

Take 10 minutes. Pretend you have died and are about to go to heaven. They ask one question: What did you allow God to do in your life?

How would you respond?

Offer sharing.

PRAYER

Now is the time for us to give to God what is His.

Everyone stand up and keep your eyes closed. If you're ready to share your witness, to allow God to work not through your comfort zone, not through your gifts, but through your doubt and through your agony, open your hands, or stand on your chair.

Lord I'm Ready Now by Plumb

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zBUQqLp6N24>

You are in good company in your weakness, in your frailty. Our witness is in God's love and power, not in our human strength or even "dramatic" things that happened to us. You glorify God in how He transforms your life.



Resource Title	LEAD SPLIT
Objective	Stage 3: <i>How to Be Authentic</i>
Supplies Needed	Paper & pen for offering it up reflection Audio/Visual - Lyric Projection (optional)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tonight we reflect on divisions.

What is the threat of division?
 Why should we be peacemakers? What does this mean about our own dignity?
 Why is it important that we do not “go rogue”?
 What is the temptation behind those who do not want to follow directions?
 How do we encourage teens to be safe at NCYC as peer leaders?

NEXT MEETING WITH TEENS

Discuss the next session for Basic (“2x2”) and Next Level (“Better.”) Interdependence is the theme at the next few sessions.

CHECK-IN

Discuss your spiritual highs and lows of the week as a large group.

TEAMWORK/TEACHING

Play “Never Once” by Matt Redman.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r2CpU39tM0c>
 Invite the teens to write down the source of all things that give them anxiety that they cannot control, problems they wish they could find a solution for.

Open the teaching with Eucharistic Prayer for Reconciliation I (discussion will include EPRII):

“It is truly right and just that we should always give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For you do not cease to spur us on to possess a more abundant life and, being rich in mercy, you constantly offer pardon and call on sinners to trust in your forgiveness alone.

Never did you turn away from us, and, though time and again we have broken your covenant, you have bound the human family to yourself through Jesus your Son, our Redeemer, with a new bond of love so tight that it can never be undone.

Even now you set before your people a time of grace and reconciliation, and, as they turn back to you in spirit, you grant them hope in Christ Jesus and a desire to

be of service to all, while they entrust themselves more fully to the Holy Spirit.

And so, filled with wonder, we extol the power of your love, and, proclaiming our joy at the salvation that comes from you, we join in the heavenly hymn of countless hosts, as without end we acclaim..."

This prayer is what we pray together, right before we sing the Sanctus together at mass.

What lines stood out to you?

Most of us have broken relationships and dysfunctional families. Think about the Middle East and the dialogue on the Comments of YouTube videos. Disagreement seems to be the only thing we have in common.

Are you beyond criticism? Beyond tolerance? Beyond communion? Do you try to understand where the people who offend you are coming from?

Forgiveness is the call of a Christian. Because God has forgiven us, we keep bridges open and possibilities open that repentance is always an option.

God is like a magnet. He draws us towards himself at all times. He is constantly leading us forward and back to the path of closeness with Him. We never know what happens in the last moment of a person's death. We can only control our own behavior and our own love of Jesus, being as transparent and authentic about our faith as possible.

DEEPER DISCUSSION & PRAYER

Open Mic...

Tonight we are going to pray for the broken relationships in our life and in our world that are leading us to struggle in our honesty with God. We bring to God our anger, our confusion, our hurt, our sadness, our worry.

Sing "Lay it Down" by Matt Maher.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NPoxMOD_On8

Invite teens to bring forward the anxieties they wrote down while the song is playing.

Encourage teens to come forward and share a story where they are in need of reconciliation with a friend, family or war in the world that is causing them anxiety.

After a few intercessions, read a stanza of the following prayer (or save it for the end.)

It is truly right and just that we should give you thanks and praise, O God, almighty Father, for all you do in this world, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

For though the human race is divided by dissension and discord, yet we know that by testing us you change our hearts to prepare them for reconciliation.

Even more, by your Spirit you move human hearts that enemies may speak to each other again, adversaries may join hands, and peoples seek to meet together.

By the working of your power it comes about, O Lord, that hatred is overcome by love, revenge gives way to forgiveness, and discord is changed to mutual respect.

Therefore, as we give you ceaseless thanks with the choirs of heaven, we cry out to your majesty on earth, and without end we acclaim:

Video: "*One Thing Remains*" by Kristan Stanfill
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6_KXsMCJgBQ



Resource Title	LEAD SERPENTS & DOVES
Objective	<i>Stage 4: Show them how to live with doubt.</i>
Supplies Needed	

ANNOUNCEMENTS

This is the last session before NCYC.

Decide who will be the “Spirit Leaders” on the bus if desired. These people would serve as the leader of prayer, games and open mic on the bus to and from NCYC. They can utilize the journal as well and would work with the group leader to come up with a schedule of games and discussion topics.

REVIEW NEXT SESSION WITH TEENS

Review the upcoming session “Imagine” (BASIC) or “Empty” (NEXT LEVEL.)

CHECK-IN

Teens review the spiritual highs and lows of their week as a small group.

OPENING

Ask the group to vote on the 4 leaders they feel they know the least (shyest, haven’t been able to make the meetings, etc.) Provide them with a cupcake or some special, edible treat to soften the blow that they will have to play this game!

- Would you rather?
- Would you rather eat an oatmeal cookie (no raisins) or chocolate chip cookie (no chocolate chips?)
- Would you rather fight a lion or a shark in their natural habitat?
- Would you rather be in Gryffindor or Ravenclaw?
- Would you rather talk like Porky Pig or Daffy Duck?
- Would you rather be Frodo or Sam?
- Would you rather have 3 feet long hands or 3 hands on each foot?
- Would you rather have to eat mayonnaise or lemon curd on everything you consume?
- Would you rather see Taylor Swift or One Direction live?
- Would you rather be Dauntless or Erudite?
- Would you rather have the Wizard give you a new heart or a new brain?
(Add your own questions as you wish.)

TEACHING

The most essential trait of a leader is Prayer.

For those of you who played “Would you rather”, how many of them chose Gryffindor over Ravenclaw, or Dauntless over Erudite? Why do you think that is? Gryffindor and Dauntless are the brave houses. The ones that are fearless

and willing to fight.

How many good leaders do you know that are actually like that? Leadership isn't always about being externally valiant – sometimes it's much more about internal courage that keeps trying.

Today's session is based on Matthew 10:16 where Jesus says, "Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as **serpents** and innocent as **doves**."

As we prepare for NCYC, only God can teach us what it means to be both clever and gentle; wise and innocent.

Can you think of an example where you have felt like a sheep among wolves?
Can you think of an example when Jesus was as wise as a serpent? Why is that necessary to be cunning, when cunning is the weapon of the "enemy"?
Can you think of a time you saw someone lead by being as innocent as a dove?
How is innocence an important part of authenticity?

Optional: *Leadership Secrets of Christ*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OveKcYzYJoo>

DISCUSSION

What makes the difference in good leadership is love of the Lord. When we love Jesus, we love who He loves.

Spend 10 minutes in silent reflection on 1 Corinthians 13.

- When we love Jesus, who do we also love?
- What does love actually mean?
- How does love use reason - calls us to be as wise as a serpent?
- How does love use purity of heart – calling us to be as innocent as a dove?

Meet as a large group to share your responses.

After tonight's discussion, pick a word that is resonating with you that is the sort of leader you want to be on NCYC.

Share that word with the group and the group leader will record it so when we see each other at NCYC, we can evaluate how we are matching up with that description throughout the conference.

PRAYER

Ask all small group leaders to attend this session to "commission" the leaders for NCYC. This is the second to last meeting before the conference. Each will read one line of the Commissioning Service.

Commissioning Service

The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go.

Jesus came to them and said, "Go and make disciples of all nations,
Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
And teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

"I am sending you out like sheep among wolves.

Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.

Be on your guard

On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles

But do not fear them.

Do not fear them.

You have no reason to fear them.

And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

When they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it

For it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

The Disciples of Jesus devoted themselves to the apostles teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread,

And the prayers.

Awe came upon everyone because many wonders and signs were being done by them.

All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods

And distribute the proceeds to all as any had need.

For behold I am with you always.

To the very end of the age.

How can this be?

Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread and ate their food with glad

and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people.

And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved."

How can this be? I'm only a simple teenager, who wanted a simple life-

The only thing remarkable about me is my trust in God.

And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

I will give you bravery you don't recognize.

You will do things you don't understand.

You will stand before the power of hell when death is at your side.

But know that I am with you.

I am with you.

I am with you through it all

A sacrament is a visible sign of God's invisible Grace
Confirmation is the transformation of your heart by the Holy Spirit
So the Sacrament of Confirmation doesn't begin on the day you are Confirmed.
It begins today.
It begins when you hear his voice.
It begins when your heart burns within you.
It begins when you recognize Jesus.
It begins when you suddenly know your prayers are heard.
It begins today.
It is time.
As we take the roads less travelled by,
We are the Body of Christ.
We will always have each other.
Divided by our friends, our families, our opinions,
We will always be united in Him.
It is time.
To set aside our lukewarm dreams.
It's time to give up the maze of mediocrity
Our dwarfed goals.
It is time to follow Christ
This is the beginning
This is where it starts
The battle for all time
The battle for your heart
They will ask you lots of questions
What happened? Why are you different?
They won't ask you what is wrong
They will ask you what's so right.
They will ask you where hope is from.
They will ask you why you believe.
They will ask you where you draw your strength.
And you must have your answer ready.
What about cancer, leukemia, lymphoma,
If your God is so powerful,
Why do people die?
Where is Jesus when I cry?

If religion is so great, why does it start so many wars?
Well would it really be truth if it wasn't worth fighting for?
The thing they knew about the early Christians
The thing they couldn't take away
They left them bruised, burned and beaten
But they couldn't take away their hope
And they will know that we are Christians by more than just our Facebook.
They will know that we are Christian
We will give other people a chance
By our unfailing
Solitary conviction
We will do what is right
And not what is easy
When the status quo is leery
We will stand up for each other
We will bring the case of Christ
We will listen
Resolute
We will be compassion
We will be his light.
We were made to be courageous
We were made to lead the way
We could be the generation
That finally breaks the chains
In the Book of Acts, Paul and the apostles would pray over the new disciples of
Jesus by laying hands on them.
They would say a prayer to the Holy Spirit to bless them and guide them in all
of their ways.
Today, we will pray over you in a similar way. We ask that you bow your
heads and open your hearts
As we ask God to unite us and guide us from this day forward.
"So let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and to
find grace for timely help." (Hebrews 4:14-16)
"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us rid
ourselves of every burden and sin that clings to us.
Let us persevere in running the race that lies before us while keeping our eyes
fixed on
Jesus, the leader and perfecter of faith." (Hebrews 12:1-2)



Resource Title	LEAD WHITE FLAG
Objective	<i>Stage 5: Show them how to listen to God.</i>
Supplies Needed	

ANNOUNCEMENTS

REVIEW NEXT SESSION WITH TEENS Delegate duties for “Hype” (BASIC) and “Islands” (NEXT LEVEL)

CHECK-IN Share spiritual highs and lows for the week as a group.

TEAMWORK “Capture the Flag”

- Split up into two groups.
- After the first time the flag is caught, split into four groups and play again.
- When everyone is too confused to “keep fighting,” call the game to a close.

TEACHING

- Google defines surrender as ceasing “resistance to an enemy or opponent and submit to their authority.”
- When Jesus said, “It is finished.” He meant He had done everything He could for us in his life. The rest was up to His heavenly Father.
- Surrender is more than just telling God to have His way. It is more than telling Him we will go wherever He calls. It is more than saying, “Here I am, Lord. Speak, your servant is listening.”
- Surrender is telling God that you will not fight Him any longer. And sticking to it.
- Surrender is shelving your defiance. Surrender is turning your back on disobedience of the past in order to walk in a new future, in a new light.
- Isaiah 43:19, the prophet gives us these words of the Lord: “See I am doing a new thing. Now it springs up everywhere. Do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.”

-
- We can sometimes be the obstacle in God's path. Waving our white flag tells God to have His way.

SOLITUDE

Plan 20 minutes of complete silence. No Bibles. No Phones. No Journal Guides. Ask the teens to reflect on surrender and the pivotal times they have surrendered to God throughout their life, including their daily activity today.

PRAYER

In one sentence, ask the teens to stand up and share in one sentence, "God is victorious over my life because _____."

They will share where God's grace has moved in their life. For example, "God is victorious over my life because I stopped looking at pornography after a confession a few years ago." Or "God is victorious over my life because I've been able to make new friends since my best friend hurt me in 8th grade."

Have a candle available for them to pick up after they have made their "confession."

Pray the following prayer St. Ignatius of Loyola's Suscipe prayer together,

*Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty,
my memory, my understanding,
and my entire will,
All I have and call my own.*

*You have given all to me.
To you, Lord, I return it.*

*Everything is yours; do with it what you will.
Give me only your love and your grace,
that is enough for me.*

When all are finished, play "White Flag" by Chris Tomlin, "The Stand" and/or "Take All of Me" by Hillsong in front of the Blessed Sacrament.

Offer to pray for continued healing and strength over each teen who might need it.



Resource Title	LEAD PARADOX
Objective	<i>Beyond Stage 5 and others chosen in "Imagine" (BASIC)</i>
Supplies Needed	Poster Paper and Markers or pens/paper for 3 groups

ANNOUNCEMENTS	Welcome any new teens who are joining your "LEADers" from the pre-NCYC training. These are individuals who want to be a part of taking your vision into a reality for your future program.
REVIEW PREVIOUS SESSION WITH TEENS	Summarize what happened at NCYC that was so instrumental for your group: community building, forming stronger disciples, etc.

How can we keep that energy going? What direction is our group heading?

Share the descriptions from the "Imagine" (BASIC) session with the group.

TEACHING

What is a paradox? It's when something isn't the way you think it is. Though we are leaders wanting to make a difference, we know that we are really servants offering ideas to inspire and unite a community.

The Paradox is that though we are in the world, we are not of the world. After NCYC we are part of a revolution trying to change the society that pressures teens to forget who they are and lose their confidence in Christ. This is much bigger than a program – it's about people. People like you who are in the hallways of your high schools and seeing what's going on – not like spies – but as advocates.

Advocate is the word that Jesus uses for the Holy Spirit. The one who is with us, and for us, never against us. The Holy Spirit will lead us in building a community that encourages teens to live differently after NCYC. We cannot make you "comfortable" with being different from the rest of your class or friends, but we can help you feel hope and a sense of belonging in your faith family.

The Paradox about conformity is that "non-conformity" has become normal. The paradox teens have to face these days is trying to find the kernel of truth in bad advice and still existing in the world, while knowing you don't agree with many cultural influences.

Tonight is a visioning and planning session to help create that environment and keep us – wise as serpents, and simple as doves. This is the paradox of Christianity that our Lord calls us to.

S.M.A.R.T. is an acronym for Specific-Measurable-Attainable-Realistic-Timely.

Divide your visions from the “Imagine” session into 3 main areas. They might be: more social activities for high school students, a more welcoming environment for teens at mass, more service opportunities for Confirmation candidates.

DISCUSSION

Split into 3 groups to set one S.M.A.R.T. goal for each vision. Each group will work on one S.M.A.R.T. goal and how it will be implemented (who, what, where, when and why).

Share these plans with each other.

Commit to how you will proceed in the future with monitoring the success of these plans.

PRAYER

“For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*
(Romans 5:38-39)

Dedicate your planning, action and devotion to prayer as leaders by praying an Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be together.

This group gathered for Paradox may continue to meet once a month to review how the goals are being accomplished. They could also meet separately once a month, reporting to you directly.

It would be ideal for the “Leaders” to continue meeting once a week as visionary and planning body – like a youth ministry team – with the help from other adults in the parish who may have been a part of their NCYC process.



NEXT LEVEL

NEXT LEVEL is for a group of teens needing a challenge but not quite ready for leadership (i.e. sophomores and juniors). If your group is ready for basic catechesis and preparation for NCYC, we recommend "BASIC." If some of your teens are ready for intense leadership, we recommend "LEAD".

This resource is for a group of any age needing NCYC preparation to challenge them to dive deeper in their faith. The sessions follow the same pattern as BASIC and LEAD but can be substituted if they are a better fit for your group (i.e. "Asleep" from the NEXT LEVEL track instead of "All Play" in the BASIC track.)

Stage One: Show them you care.

ASLEEP: WAKING UP TO GOD'S PRESENCE

Awake is a lesson plan for teens to encounter God's wake-up call in the middle of the night like the prophet Samuel.

Stage Two: Show them they belong.

SERVE: GROWING IN COMMUNITY

Serve is a team-building exercise focused on service to the community. We listen and obey God as a community.

Stage Three: Show them how to be authentic.

2X2: INTERCESSORY PRAYER

2x2 introduces participants to models of faith through the lens of evangelization. A prayer partner program begins in this session.

Stage Four: Show them how to live with doubt.

ISLANDS: STAY TOGETHER

Islands is a lesson plan on camaraderie in difference, strength in weakness and the importance of resisting isolation at NCYC.

Stage Five: Show them how to listen to God.

EMPTY: INTERCESSORY PRAYER

Empty is inspired by, "poured out like a libation," (2 Timothy 4:7-8) in listening, following and serving God; emptied of ourselves and filled with a love for God, a love for humanity.

Each lesson in this series follows this format:

- 1) Welcome: Announcements & Housekeeping by the Group Leader
- 2) Check-In: Brief Spiritual High-Low Discussion in Small Groups
- 3) Teaching: Large Group message via activity or FOUNDATION participant (chaperone)
- 4) Deeper Discussion: Questions on the Teaching in Small Group. The content of your discussion should always be, "How is God moving in the lives of these teenagers?"
- 5) Closing Prayer: Intercessory/Teen-Led Prayer in Small Group

Providing a team-building activity and deeper discussion with one another are the most important if your time is limited.



Resource Title	NEXT LEVEL ASLEEP
Objective	<i>Stage 1: Show them you care.</i>
Supplies Needed	<p>Each table should have a red card, green card and yellow card (enough for each member in the group to have one of each card). They can be pieces of construction paper cut into an index card size.</p> <p>Chaperones (from FOUNDATION) will be needed to practice the Narrative and provide two witness talks. They will also be asked to participate in the closing prayer. Chaperones may need to arrive 30 minutes earlier to help set up, be prepared to receive the students as guests, practice their roles, etc.</p> <p>The participation and <u>welcoming attitude</u> of the chaperones is important to showing the teens they care because they are willing to be vulnerable. “NEXT LEVEL” assumes that teens are ready for something deeper; providing a session that gets straight to the point will be welcoming to them.</p> <p>Several YouTube videos/songs are utilized in this lesson. Download them onto your computer to avoid internet failure. Always practice technology ahead of time to ensure quality sound and image before your students arrive.</p>
Modify	If a teen or parishioner is better for the “Wake-Up Call” witness talk, feel free to ask a chaperone to work with them on their presentation (rather than the chaperone providing the witness themselves). Team teachings by married couples are usually effective to show both sides of the story.

ANNOUNCEMENTS	Discuss (or decide) Trading Items Distribute Forms – due at next meeting Review any Fundraising/Financial deadlines
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CHECK-IN	Split teens into small group when they show up by giving them a picture of their small group leader. It could resemble a baseball card with the average hours of sleep they get each night, their favorite place to nap and a book that always puts them to sleep.
	In future gatherings, teens will provide a spiritual high and low for their week in small group at the beginning of each meeting. This first gathering will transition into discussion more gradually.

OPENING

Ask for 2 volunteers from each small group. The only requirement is they must wear a nametag. They will participate in a variety of games for the large group to witness.

Games can include: Oreo Challenge, Egg Roulette, Beanboozled or Chubby Bunny. Use a variety of games to keep this interesting. Record the videos in 15-30 second clips and post on Vine/Instagram or a YouTube mash-up.

TEACHING

Four upperclassmen or teens from “LEAD” will meet fifteen minutes before your meeting to practice the narrative below. They are reading the call of Samuel from 2 Samuel 3.

Reader One: In those days the word of the LORD was rare; there were not many visions.

Reader Two: One night Eli, whose eyes were becoming so weak that he could barely see, was lying down in his usual place. The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the house of the LORD, where the ark of God was.

Reader One: Then the LORD called Samuel.

Reader Three: Samuel answered, “Here I am.” And he ran to Eli and said, “Here I am; you called me.”

Reader Two: But Eli said, “I did not call; go back and lie down.” So he went and lay down.

Reader One: Again the LORD called, “Samuel!”

Reader Three: And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, “Here I am; you called me.”

Reader Two: “My son,” Eli said, “I did not call; go back and lie down.”

Reader One: Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD: The word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him. ⁸ A third time the LORD called, “Samuel!”

Reader Three: And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, “Here I am; you called me.”

Reader Two: Then Eli realized that the LORD was calling the boy. So Eli told Samuel, “Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, ‘Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.’” So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

Reader One: The LORD came and stood there, calling as at the other times,
“Samuel! Samuel!”

Reader Three: Then Samuel said, “Speak, for your servant is listening.”

Message

“Asleep” means they were inattentive to God. Do you feel as if you are awake to God? Following His will? Ignoring God?

On each of your tables there are Red, Yellow and Green cards. Think about which card you would choose. Here in this story, Samuel is giving God a green light. He says it’s okay for you to move in my life God. I’m listening to you. I’m awake.

Prayer is sometimes nothing more than our attentiveness to God’s will but we, like Samuel, are asleep, and we, like Eli, don’t recognize His voice. Sometimes we don’t even know if He is real.

Show video: *How do I know God is real?*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9bcuyAix2Hk>

Provide two witness talks from FOUNDATION/LEAD participants.
Two people who can speak relevantly and/or powerfully about how they were not paying attention to God and received a blessing of a wake-up call.

DISCUSSION

What people can you think of that fall asleep in the Bible? What did that mean? When they woke up, were their lives different?

When do we start paying attention to God? When someone gets sick or we need Him?

How are these wake up calls a gift? How do they appear at first?

Do you have a friend who only calls you when they need or want something?

What is the problem with only talking to God when you need Him? Is that really a relationship?

Choose a card from the pile if you were to describe your relationship with God right now. Are you giving God the green, yellow or red light? Why did you pick this card?

The content of our small group is how God is moving in your life. You may feel like God isn’t telling you or showing you anything; in small group we’ll try to discover what it might be. At the beginning of our next meeting, we’ll each share a spiritual high and low of our week. Would anyone like to share now?

PRAYER

“*Alive Again*,” Matt Maher:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0cDO7pH-Hys>

(His witness of writing the song might also be helpful for the night if you do not

have a witness speaker: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OyBkwpsAb4Q>.)

“Bones,” Hillsong United:

<https://youtu.be/8xkwt8C33Go?list=PLZiE7X6hsxiiuib6htQEgZtZrQ2t4RShp>

While the songs play in the background, leaders will come forward with a piece of paper (chalkboard or wipe board would work, too). One at a time, they will show the group when they received their wake-up call to follow God. For example, one leader’s paper might read: Shelly. A car accident when I was 18; or Matt, when my first child was born.

The group leader will thank the chaperones for their vulnerability and close with an Our Father.



Resource Title	NEXT LEVEL SERVE
Objective	<i>Stage 2: Show them they belong.</i>
Supplies Needed	Chaperones who have filled out the Volunteer Driver Form (found in FirstClass, Self-Insurance Folder) with sufficient seatbelts for their small group in their vehicle. Glass Cleaner Rubber gloves 2 fake or real flowers for each team One Volunteer Driver Off-Site Event (Field Trip) Permission Forms for each minor. Checklists of the Scavenger Hunt for each group
Modify	Offer the Grassroots Film “The Human Experience” after or as part of this event.

ANNOUNCEMENTS	Pick up forms Review trading items purchased Reveal t-shirt design and confirm t-shirt sizes Collect hotel assignment requests (optional) Fundraising/Financial Announcements
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CHECK-IN The content of our small group is how God is moving in your life. You may feel like God isn’t telling you or showing you anything; in small group we’ll try to discover what it might be.

What was the high point of your last week? What was the low point?

OPENING

Service Scavenger Hunt

- Return 5 shopping carts to the parking lot cart rack.
- Give a flower to 2 random people and ask them if they need prayers. Don’t forget to smile even if they don’t want prayers.
- Write a note to someone who is stressed out with jokes. Seal it and label its purpose; give it to a member of your family.
- Leave 4 post-it notes with a positive, uplifting message in a public restroom.
- Clean up the water on a bathroom counter in a busy place (use rubber gloves and sanitizer).
- Use Windex to clean the windshield of 2 fellow NCYC participant’s vehicles in the parking lot.
- Delete every angry comment or unloving tweet from your social media

accounts.

- Write Danny Nickerson (A 5 year old with an inoperable brain tumor) a note: P.O. Box 212, Foxboro, MA 02035
- Pull 10 empty garbage cans back to the top of someone's driveway.
- Find someone doing yard work outside. Help them for 10 minutes.
- Find someone carrying groceries to their car or into their house. Help them.
- Find a parent with kids in a store. Tell them they're doing a great job. And mean it.
- Make a commitment to do something more this week. Each member in your group should come up with something creative: Take a box of dog treats to the animal shelter. Donate coloring books and crayons to the pediatric floor in your hospital. Write a letter to a veteran.

TEACHING

"By becoming the answer to someone's prayer, we often find the answer to our own." Dieter Uchdorf

We're not here to be settled. We are here to be sent.

What do the following stories have in common?

Exodus 3:1-12

Jeremiah 1.4-10

Isaiah 6.1-13

1 Samuel 3:1-14

You are not called for you. You are called to be the answer to someone else's prayer.

Optional Video: *Love God, Love Each Other* (Outside da Box)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=gykmvCAh24g

DEEPER DISCUSSION

It's important for us to realize we are called to be in service to one another, to see other people's problems as something we can potentially help.

- What do you do when you cannot help someone?
- What do you do when what you have done to help somebody did NOT seem to make a difference?
- At NCYC, we will hear a lot of powerful messages and experience a lot of "grace." What is grace?
- Do you think we receive grace instantaneously (like we downloaded it from the App Store)?
- How is grace delayed?
- How did our time together help you feel like you belong?

PRAYER

Assign each teen a quote for them to read, followed by spontaneous prayer, such as:

"The best antidote I know for worry is work. The best medicine for despair is service. The best cure for weariness is the challenge of helping someone who is even more tired." Gordon B. Hinckley

"By becoming the answer to someone's prayer, we often find the answer to our own." Dieter Uchdorf

A comfort zone is a beautiful place but nothing ever grows there.

Close with an Our Father.



Resource Title	NEXT LEVEL 2x2
Objective	Stage 3: Show them how to be authentic.
Supplies Needed	Alarm clocks for the <i>Ticking Time Bomb Game</i>

ANNOUNCEMENTS Next meeting will receive trading items and t-shirts.
 Distribute preliminary information about NCYC: departure time, hotel room assignments, etc.
 Discuss meals.

CHECK-IN Share spiritual highs and lows of the week in small group.

OPENING Ticking Time Bomb Game
<http://jrhighthuguy.blogspot.com.au/2012/11/game-20-time-bombs-big-game.html>
 Play this game in the dark, if possible. Set the alarms for 30 minutes after you are set to begin so you will have time to give instructions and welcome the group beforehand. Hide the “bombs” as far and wide around your facility as possible.

On “Go” teams have a set amount of time to find and collect as many “Time Bombs” as they can. The team with the most “Time Bombs” wins. An alarm will be going off on each “Time Bomb” (alarms set for the time you are going to begin). Each team will use their listening skills and each other to find the bombs. 15 minutes should be sufficient to find the bombs depending on the size of your facility.

TEACHING Ask 2 boys to give a witness on the importance of Christian brotherhood; ask 2 girls to give a witness on the importance of Christian sisterhood. Separate the boys and girls for this talk.

If you’re utilizing “LEAD” there are 4 teens who will be trained in their 2nd meeting to give this witness talk.

If not, simply meet with all 4 of them together to plan their witness at least 1 week before presenting.

They will give the witness in pairs.

- Young men: relate/tell the story of Sts. Hippolytus and Pontian (<http://www.americancatholic.org/Features/Saints/saint.aspx?id=1106>)
- Young women: tell the story of Sts. Perpetua & Felicity (<http://www.americancatholic.org/Features/Saints/Saint.aspx?id=1315>)
- Red flags for someone who might be a negative influence on you.
- What can girls/guys do to encourage one another in friendship?
- Why is it important to have good friends who support your Catholic faith?

- What does a true friend look like?
- Shout out definitions of a good friend. A good friend is someone who has compassion for you and is willing to suffer with you, pray for you, and go with you – to chapel, to events, to meet with your psychologist, etc. A friend isn't a savior but points you to Jesus, who is.
- A friend stands by you, protects you, is authentic, is honest with you, and admits they're not perfect.
- You might be surprised how many good friends you really do have, but you might not see them as your first choice companions due to reputation and appearances.
- Maybe this is what God meant when He said we cannot serve both God and mammon, when he encouraged us to give Him the good wine first.
- "And he called his twelve disciples together and began sending them out two by two, giving them authority to cast out evil spirits." Mark 6:7
- Why would Jesus send people out in pairs, rather than alone?

**DEEPER
DISCUSSION**

Assign Prayer Partners.

Small groups will split into pairs. You can let the kids split up, or assign them. Start with a 2 minute interview. One partner will interview the other to collect as much information they can to present to the rest of the group.

After the interview, the teens should discuss the following:

- Be honest, who has been one of the best friends you've ever had? Why?
- What stood out to you from the guys (or girls) talk?
- Should a friend tell you what you don't want to hear? How can you be supportive of a friend even if you don't agree with them?
- What does it mean to agree to disagree?
- Can you think of 2 people who were made Holy with each other?

PRAYER

In closing, each teen will "introduce" their prayer partner to the rest of the small group. They will close the small group by leading an intercessory prayer for their partner.

For example:

Dear God, I'd like to pray for my prayer partner, Regan. She is struggling to find a group of friends that support her faith. Most of them don't understand why she is attending NCYC and she is doubtful that she will have a good time. God, I pray that you will be with Regan and help her to not care what other people think, but to see herself as you see her. I pray she will grow closer to you at NCYC. Amen.

Close with an Our Father.



Resource Title	NEXT LEVEL ISLANDS
Objective	<i>Stage 4: Show teens how to live with doubt.</i>
Supplies Needed	Jeopardy Board (can be written on a Dry-Erase board or Powerpoint) Copies of workshops for each small group Copies of workshop choice worksheet for each small group leader (p. 4)

ANNOUNCEMENTS	Invite parents Distribute trading items, apparel, schedules, etc. Discuss safety precautions Final logistics of NCYC discussion Teens submit Workshop Schedules with chaperone
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CHECK-IN Share spiritual highs and lows of the week in small group with the parents.

OPENING NCYC Jeopardy (page 95)

TEACHING At the end of our last meeting, we discussed Mark 6:7. Does anyone remember what it said? (The sending of the 12, two by two.)

Talk about: Why would Jesus send people out in pairs, rather than alone?

- What are some things everyone in this room has in common? We're all Baptized. We're all Catholic. We all have a name.
- In Baptism, you were given a name. The YouCat tells us that, even if we were Baptized as babies, "Before we decide on God, God has decided on us." (197)
- Baptism is the way out of the kingdom of death into LIFE, the gateway to the Church and the beginning of a lasting communion with God [CCC1213-16, 1276-1278]
- We've been learning about sacraments our entire life. We know they represent change. We know they help us see what we can't see.
- The YouCat tells us, "We need sacraments in order to outgrow our petty human life and to become like Jesus through Jesus." [173, CCC 1129]
- Sacraments challenge us to use the things you can see to show you what you believe.
- At one point in our life, or multiple times in our life, we come to a decision to follow Christ (use the Witness Speaker as an example.) Some of us are still trying to learn a little bit more about Jesus. Some of us have had powerful encounters with God before. Others of us – like me – still might have their doubts sometimes.

- NCYC isn't about everyone being perfect or on the same page. It's a pilgrimage. It's a journey. God has been with us since before we were born, before we were baptized, before we were given our name.
- We all might be different but we need each other's support. In order to ask for help, you need to know what it is you need. So tonight, we're going to spend some time with Jesus. Just you and the Lord. This should be time for you to be yourself with God. Be honest with God. And talk with Him about how you are hoping to grow from attending NCYC. Don't worry about where you "should" be – but just where you are.
- Have any of you had a friend who was dishonest? Who lied about where they were or what they were doing? It's hard to have a relationship with someone if you're not being real, if you're not being yourself.
- Have you ever had someone in your life who failed to love you as you deserved, and you blamed God for it?
- St. Paul tells us, "To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues" (1 Cor 12:8-10)
- You have a strength that you're bringing to this group. We all have strengths. We also have weaknesses. This time in prayer is meant to think how can I help the people I'm journeying with, my fellow pilgrims, grow closer to God at NCYC, and what do I need to ask them to help me with?
- The answer to the brokenness in our life is wholeness in the Body of Christ. Here to talk to us more about that is one of our NCYC leaders...

Witness talk from NCYC Upperclassmen or Chaperone

- Goal of Witness is how community helps us to live with doubt.
- Introduce personal prayer time.

Provide the Following for their Personal Prayer (and Parent Small Groups):

From whom have I isolated myself?

Who do I not want to be One with? Why?

What am I losing by not being unified with them?

What are three things I want to pray for during NCYC? (Not 3 things I want to happen, but 3 things I have hope God can transform, 3 things I want to let go of.)

What are my doubts I want to give God to transform? What session topics should I look for to help me grow in these areas?

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." John 14:27

DEEPER DISCUSSION

With Small Groups...

How was your personal prayer time?

How can we stay united as a team at NCYC?

How is the Our Father a model prayer? (Hope, Unity, God's will.)

Study the workshops and decide who will attend what sessions. Teens can attend in pairs; they shouldn't go alone. A worksheet is included for the small group leader's use.

Tentatively decide which workshops to attend (see spreadsheet for leaders)

PRAYER

With prayer partners, share the 3 things with each other they need prayers for. Pray for each other and close in an Our Father.

NCYC Jeopardy (based on the Glossary provided in their journal and information provided at your meetings. Please modify for what is most important for your group to know.)

The Conference	Ecce Adsum	True/False	Our Diocese	Our Parish
100				
Should we bring our phone to general sessions? (Opinion question)	Who was called in the middle of the night three times, and mistook the voice of God for the priest, Eli? (Samuel)	Catholic means unitarian. (False. Catholic means universal)	Archbishop Jackels is the ___ Bishop of the Diocese of Dubuque (10 th)	What time should we arrive to load the bus on Wednesday night/Thursday morning?
200				
Who are our emcees? (Jackie Francois and Paul Kim)	Where did the agony in the Garden take place? (Mt of Olives/Gethsemane)	All Catholics in the united states have the same bishop. (False.)	Which day do we wear diocesan shirts?	When is curfew on Friday night?
300				
What are we supposed to do with our trading items? (Meet new people)	Which kings did Samuel anoint? (Saul and David)	The word "catholic" appears in the creed read at some Protestant services. (True)	Fill in the blank: I the lord of ___ and ___, I have heard my people ___. (Sea, sky, cry.)	When are we eating together as a group?
500				
What is the name of the stadium? (Lucas Oil)	What is the song of Mary called? (Magnificat)	If you have a headache or get sick at NCYC, you just have to tough it up till Sunday (False. Tell your small group leader first and they'll help you find a First Aid station. Tell your chaperone first and ask a responsible friend to accompany you so we know where you are.)	What's the difference between a diocese and an archdiocese?	Where is our emergency meeting location and when would we meet there?

Small Group Leader

Tentative Workshop Choices for Teens

NCYC 2015

<i>Participant Name</i>				
Wants to learn more about... (Specific Speakers/ Topics of Interest)				
Workshop A	Location: _____	Location: _____	Location: _____	Location: _____
Workshop B	Location: _____	Location: _____	Location: _____	Location: _____
Workshop C	Location: _____	Location: _____	Location: _____	Location: _____
Workshop D	Location: _____	Location: _____	Location: _____	Location: _____
Workshop E	Location: _____	Location: _____	Location: _____	Location: _____



Resource Title	NEXT LEVEL EMPTY
Objective	<i>Stage 5: Show them how to listen to God.</i>
Supplies Needed	Pitcher of water, a cup and a large bowl 4 Prepared Witness speakers Commitment Cards (page 101) Projection for Matt Maher video (optional)

ANNOUNCEMENTS This meeting can take place with parents. Invite four teens – one from each grade to provide a witness from NCYC on Emptiness.

OPENING

Water Analogy:
Take a pitcher of water, a cup and a large bowl.

We grow up thinking we are called to bring God to others. To be nice. To carry an old lady's groceries across the street. How many of us have actually found an old lady carrying groceries in our neighborhood?

So we take God (pour water into one glass). And we give it away (pour water into bowl).

What happens to us when this is the case? (We feel empty. We get burned out. The task can never be completed. It's exhausting. It's more about us than Jesus.)

What we learned at NCYC is that sometimes the joy God gives us... overflows. When we put ourselves into the world, and we empty our glass completely (place cup in the bowl), when there is nothing left of us because we have submerged ourselves in the world that Jesus loves, He pours Himself into us and that just overflows on everyone we meet and into the world. (Slowly pour contents of pitcher into cup and watch it fill the bowl.) It is no longer exhausting. It is refreshing. We are flooded with grace and our weariness is only that we are weary with relief. We stay connected with God. We stay connected with each other.

TEACHING

Blessed. Broken.

As Catholics, we hear the words all of the time.

In some ways, Confirmation is a little bit like a sacrament of service or vocation: fully initiated, we begin to figure out why we're here and what God has given us the passion to do.

So where does your mind go when you wander?

Friedrich Buechner once said, “The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.” Polyvore once told us that “If you want to know where your heart lies, look to where your mind wanders.” (Check out Matthew 6:21).

So what is your deep gladness? Where do you dream about – what kind of world do you imagine? Sometimes we avoid it because we imagine a place with better families, and that would mean admitting that our family isn’t perfect. Sometimes it’s about how we wish our generation would live – but then we have to claim that generation as our own. Sometimes to be a part of the solution, we have to admit we’re part of the mess.

Jesus wasn’t part of the mess. But He was the solution. The Only Solution. He already saved the world, so you can take that weight off your shoulders. Truth is – Jesus is *still* saving the world. You are one important piece of a huge puzzle. Looking around the stadium, you felt what it was like to be one in 25,000. You’re one of *billions*! Think of the good we could do if we were all truly working together.

The mission of Christ’s life was the salvation of all souls. That is the mission of the Church. That is your mission. And what does the world need? The world needs your deep gladness to feed her deep hunger. For what is the world hungry?

Love. Peace. Unity. Forgiveness. Miracles.

The world is hungry for Jesus. The world needs your story of NCYC, of His love in your life, even if it isn’t anything remarkable. Your life is a story of his faithfulness. That is what the world needs. He gave us His Body so we could Be his body to everyone.

“For as often as you eat this bread and drink the chalice, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.” 1 Cor 11:26 You are consecrated now. You are the bread for the multitude now.

Maybe you don’t know what your gifts are. Maybe you think, “I don’t have any deep gladness!” That’s okay. Ask your youth minister what they think your gifts are. Tell them you’d be willing to give God an hour a week just to see where it leads.

All it takes is a “Yes”.

Will you be the message sent to the world by writing His love with your life?

DEEPER DISCUSSION

This discussion is about building accountability within the small group to help teens stay faithful to their commitment to discipleship.

What was different about NCYC?

Why were you able to listen to God?

How can we maintain that in our daily life?

What if NCYC was just the start of a life of listening and living with Him?

PRAYER

Empty & Beautiful (Matt Maher)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j_oTFmxkBQA

Lord God, Here I am!

You created me and know me completely.

You know all about my life – my joys and my sufferings, my questions and my dreams.

I know you love me, even when I feel my sins and mistakes make me unlovable.

Help me to love you, God with all my heart, mind and soul, and to love all people, even as I love myself.

Jesus, thank you for showing me how to live. I know you want only the best for my life, and I believe following you is the way to a full and abundant life.

Holy Spirit, give me the courage and wisdom to be Jesus' follower, even when it isn't easy. Fill me with the joy and peace that comes from doing your will.

Amen.

(Catholic Youth Bible, St. Mary's Press)

Commitment Cards

Commitment Cards

(Submit 1 Copy to your Prayer Partner, 1 Copy to Yourself and 1 Copy to your Small Group Leaders)

Drive. What will be the driving force in your life? Be intentional.

God's hour. We don't have to wait for Lent to make a commitment to follow God. When is one hour a week – besides mass – that you can give to God? E.g. 6-7am on Tuesday morning) _____

____ I want my prayer partner to remind me of this every ____ for ____ months.

____ I want my small group leader to start reminding me of this commitment once a week starting in ____ weeks.

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