NOT BY BREAD ALONE
The Sacrament of the Eucharist
EDGE NIGHT OUTLINE

GOAL
The goal of this Edge Night is to grow not only in our understanding of what the Eucharist is but to fall more in love with the person of Christ in the Eucharist. The group will make a transition in discussion from the bread that we need to physically sustain ourselves to an appreciation of the Eucharist being our spiritual nourishment.

EDGE NIGHT AT A GLANCE
The topic of this night is the Sacrament of the Eucharist: the source and summit of everything we do as Catholic Christians. The Eucharist is one of the three Sacraments of Initiation where we become initiated into the life of the Church and into the very life of God Himself. It is in the Eucharist where we become united with Christ and are nourished to live like Christ in all that we do. As Catholics, we believe in the True Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. At the Last Supper, Christ instituted the Eucharist and gave the apostles the command, “Do this in memory of me.” Through our receiving of the Eucharist, we become a living tabernacle because Jesus’ very life is within us.

This night begins with a service project where the whole group will put together bag lunches for the homeless in the area. Each person will have a task so that everyone is involved in this project. It is important to note that our call to serve comes from the Eucharist – Jesus gave His very life so that we may live. The night will transition into a teaching on the Eucharist focusing on the Eucharist as being central in our life. During small group time the youth will be able to discuss the main points of the Proclaim. Also in small groups, they will discuss and create an Outreach Ministry. This is a way for the youth to find a way to serve others in their community. For the Closing Prayer, the youth will move into a time of Adoration. Because this night is on the Blessed Sacrament, it will be important to have enough time to adore Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. This time will end with the Litany of the Blessed Sacrament.

BEFORE THE NIGHT
You will be preparing several bag lunches. Before the night you should decide whether or not you will donate these lunches to a nearby homeless shelter or pass them out to homeless people in the area. If you are donating them to a homeless shelter then you will want to contact them prior to the date to ensure that your donation will be accepted. Also, ask the shelter the best types of foods to be included in the bag. Often people in shelters have poor dental hygiene and cannot chew or bite into some foods like apples. Ask the parish to donate items needed for the service project – this would be a great way for the parish to help your Edge ministry. At the conclusion of the night, recruit adult volunteers to drop off the bag lunches with you.

Also, since you will be closing with Adoration, invite a priest or deacon to be present to expose the Blessed Sacrament for your group.

ENVIRONMENT
The environment for this night is simply the tables and supplies needed for the service project. It will be most effective if the tables are set up in lines similar to an assembly line. The Eucharist will be the center

SCRIPTURE & CCC:
- Genesis 14:18
- Exodus 16:13-16
- Exodus 24:8
- Deuteronomy 8:2-3
- Matthew 4:4
- Matthew 26:26-28
- Mark 14:22-24
- Luke 24:30-32
- John 6:22-71
- Acts 20:7
- 1 Corinthians 10:16-17
- CCC 1322-1327
- CCC 1337-1344
- CCC 1345-1347
- CCC 1356-1372
- CCC 1373-1381
- CCC 1391-1405
- CCC 1436
of this night so if you are having Adoration in the gathering space instead of the church then you will need an altar set-up as well. At the front of the room, using the large butcher paper found in schools, have two banners: “This is my body” and “This is my blood.”

**GATHER**

**OPENING MUSIC**
See song suggestions in Media Suggestions sidebar.

**WELCOME & INTRODUCTION**
1. Welcome and introduce new teens.

2. Recognize and celebrate any youth or Core celebrating a birthday by singing “Happy Birthday.”

3. Present a brief overview of the session.

**OPENING PRAYER**
This prayer should be based on the overview of the session. Say a prayer for the service project and the men, women and children to whom the bag lunches will feed.

**ALL HANDS ON DECK**
This night begins with a service project that will involve everyone present. The youth and Core Members will be assembling bag lunches to either give out to the homeless in the community or to take to a soup kitchen. These bag lunches can include what you receive as a donation as well as what your budget will allow (possibly peanut butter and jelly sandwich, a piece of fruit, and a drink). Be sure to involve everyone to have all hands on deck. Different jobs might be the following: putting peanut butter on bread, putting jelly on bread, bagging the sandwiches (sandwich bags), putting the fruit and drink in the bag, packing the complete lunches in a box for delivery. Before you begin, tell the youth where the lunches will be going and explain the process.

Once you have completed the service project, call the youth to return to their small groups to continue with the Edge Night.

**PROCLAIM**

**SCRIPTURE PROCLAMATION**
John 6:49-51

**PROCLAIM TALK Introduction and Transition**
Thank you so much for helping us to assemble these bag lunches for people that have little. We just spent approximately ___ minutes making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches to give to someone less fortunate than us. There are many people out there who live not knowing where their next meal is going to come from; we are so blessed to have proper nourishment each day. But, tonight is not just about homelessness; tonight we are going to look at what it means to be hungry physically and spiritually and where we can go to receive what we need to be satisfied. Most of us know how it feels when we have not eaten for a couple of hours. As you get closer to lunch at school, it gets harder to focus in class because you are hungry. When we are hungry, most of us are fortunate to be able

**SUPPLIES NEEDED:**
- Supplies for bagged lunch: bread, peanut butter, jelly, fruit, drink (or other items you collect)
- Large butcher paper
- Paint/brushes
- Tables
- Posterboard
- Markers
- Altar
- Candles
- Monstrance
- Handout A: “Litany of the Holy Eucharist” (Page 31)
to eat. What about being spiritually hungry? When God made each of us, He gave us a body and a soul. Just as we can experience physical hunger, we can experience spiritual hunger – our souls are longing for God. St. Augustine put it this way: there is a God-shaped hole in your heart that can only be filled by God.

What does it mean to be spiritually hungry? We have a longing for God, a longing to be loved. When you feel sad, lonely, isolated, worthless – that is spiritual hunger. When we try to fill that God-shaped hole in our heart with other things like popularity, a boy/girl friend, sports, etc., we realize that they cannot make us complete. At first they may make us feel great, but eventually we realize they do not satisfy.

Where should we go when we are spiritually hungry? The Eucharist. The Eucharist is the Bread of Life to feed our souls. The Eucharist is our spiritual food. The Eucharist gives us life. The Eucharist is more than just bread; the Eucharist is our communion with God.

The Sacrament
The Eucharist is one of the three Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. We are only baptized and confirmed one time, but the Eucharist we are called to receive weekly and can receive daily. Do you remember your First Communion? (Allow for a few responses.) Maybe you remember being nervous because you did not want to mess up or you remember getting dressed up in nice clothes. Perhaps you came to religious education classes at Church or studied at home. Maybe you were able to practice processing to the front of the Church, bowing reverently, how to place your hands to receive Jesus and to say, “Amen” with conviction.

The Church has said that around the age of seven one is ready to participate in the Eucharist and once again you are initiated into the Church community in a deeper way. You are initiated into a deeper relationship with Jesus – you are closer to Him than you have ever been before. You are initiated into full communion, but it is not a one-time deal; we have the privilege to receive the Eucharist each day if we choose. This is the greatest of all the sacraments and all the other sacraments point toward the Eucharist. You may have not completely understood what the Eucharist was when you were seven, but as you grow older it is necessary to know what we receive each week.

Eucharist is Central
In 2005, Pope Benedict XVI stated, “The Eucharist must remain central.” Simple but profound, the Eucharist must remain central! Why is it necessary to our lives as Christians that it should be central? The Eucharist is the center of the Catholic Church because Jesus Christ is the center of Catholic life and worship. The Church still professes, as it has for two thousand years, that the Eucharist is nothing less than Jesus Christ himself. The Second Vatican Council called the Eucharist the source and the summit of the Christian life. This means it is central to everything we do as the Church and as Christians.
More than a Symbol
We can say all this stuff: the Eucharist is central, it is the source and summit of the Catholic life, but we must actually believe that the Eucharist is the Body and Blood of Jesus. When you struggle with believing, turn to what Jesus taught us (read John 6:49-51 again for the group).

Jesus says, “Eat my flesh and drink my blood.” At the Last Supper, Jesus took bread and said, “Take, eat; this is my body” (Matthew 26:26). Jesus did not mean that it would be a symbol of his body, but it would be His actual body. At Mass, when the priest prayers over the bread and wine, they become the Body and Blood of Christ – our spiritual food. While our eyes may tell us it looks like bread, our faith tells us that it has become the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. This is what we call Transubstantiation. Trans meaning “beyond” or “to change” and substantiation meaning substance – beyond, substance or to change substance.

As Catholics, when we keep the Eucharist central in our lives, by receiving Jesus every week at Mass (and when possible to receive him daily as well), we become closer in our relationship with God. The Catechism of the Catholic Church, says that we receiving Jesus in the Eucharist allows us to experience certain fruits in our lives. Think of an apple tree. When the tree receives the proper nutrients, it is able to produce fruit. When we have the proper spiritual food, the Eucharist, we experience spiritual fruits. Listen to this quote from the Catechism:

“The principal fruit of receiving the Eucharist in Holy Communion is an intimate union with Christ Jesus. Indeed, the Lord said: ‘He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him.’ Life in Christ has its foundation in the Eucharistic banquet: ‘As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats me will live because of me” (1391).

When we receive the Eucharist, we begin to develop a deeper relationship with Jesus and experience His great love. Receiving Jesus regularly in the Eucharist gives us strength to live our Christian life as well. At your age, it is important to develop the virtue of attending Mass regularly and receiving Jesus in the Eucharist. You can receive grace to make it through the tough times, as you grow closer to Jesus.

BREAK

SMALL GROUP PRAYER
As your small group begins, say a prayer for the group and the activities for that session.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION
In your small group discuss the following questions:

1. Is Mass important to you? Why or why not?

2. How would you define physical hunger? Spiritual hunger?

3. Why is receiving the Eucharist important to us? Does receiving
the Eucharist fulfill our spiritual or physical hunger? How?

4. Why is eating so important to us? Would you ever go a week or longer without eating?

5. When you are hungry, you eat food. What does God give to us for our spiritual hunger?

6. Do you have trouble seeing the Eucharist as the Body and Blood of Christ and not just a symbol?

7. Why should we receive the Eucharist at least every Sunday, if not also during the week at daily Mass?

ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THOSE IN NEED
As a small group leader, share the following before beginning this activity:

Tonight we have talked about the True Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. We have discussed the importance of the Eucharist and that we should receive the Eucharist every Sunday as a way to continue developing in our relationship with God. As we draw deeper into relationship with God, we begin to love as God loves. Jesus came to reach out to the broken-hearted, those in need of healing, and especially the poor. Listen to the lyrics from the song “Hosanna” by Christy Nockels:

“Heal my heart and make it clean.
Open up my eyes to the things unseen.
Show me how to love like you, have loved me.
Break my heart for what breaks Yours.
Everything I am for your Kingdom’s cause, as I walk from earth into eternity.”

What do you think breaks God’s heart? People who are homeless? The sick? (Allow for a few responses.) We are asking God to make our heart ready to reach out to those in need. It is our response from becoming closer to Christ, especially in the Eucharist.

Tonight, we have the opportunity to decide on a way to reach those in need of God’s love. We will create an opportunity to serve in our community. We began by making sandwiches for those in need. As a group, we will create our own Outreach Ministry.

First, we need to decide for whom we want to provide outreach. (Together as a group brainstorm ideas for outreach and then vote together as a group which outreach on which you will focus. Once you have decided, create a poster with your Outreach Ministry name, focus, and two to three ways you will provide outreach. Bring your posters to the closing prayer.)

SEND
CLOSING PRAYER: ADORATION
Move into the location where Adoration will be held (main sanctuary, chapel, or a gathering space equipped with an altar and candles). Set a tone of prayer by lowering the lights and playing soft music. Before the priest or deacon exposes the Blessed Sacrament, it will be important to explain what Adoration is. Note: If a priest or
Consider having this as a more quiet and solemn time of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament with minimal or no music. This might be difficult at first so be willing to give simple direction to help the youth focus during their prayer.

You can say something like the following:

Mass is not the only time we can encounter Jesus in the Eucharist. The Church has a type of prayer called Adoration where we come to adore Jesus. The same Eucharist we receive in Mass is displayed for us to pray before and adore. The Eucharist is placed in a monstrance so that we can adore and pray before Him on the altar. At Mass we receive Jesus as our spiritual food. In Adoration, we can deepen our love and devotion to the Eucharist by spending time with Jesus. As Jesus comes into our presence, let us kneel in silence and ask Jesus to open the eyes of our hearts so that we can grow in our faith.

As the Blessed Sacrament is being processed into the room, it is customary to sing a hymn like “O Come Let Us Adore Him.” Ask everyone to kneel as the Blessed Sacrament is exposed. You may want music playing during this time, but encourage the youth to encounter Jesus in the Eucharist. Allow time for individual prayer and reflection by giving silence.

After some time of prayer, invite each small group to come before the Blessed Sacrament and pray together for their Outreach Ministry. They can bring their posters as a sign of their offering. Have them come forward, kneel together and silently offer up prayers for their outreach and especially those they will serve.

Before the time of Adoration is finished, pray a small portion from the “Litany of the Blessed Sacrament” (Handout A on page 31).

At the conclusion of the prayer and before the priest or deacon reposes the Blessed Sacrament, have either the priest/deacon or musician lead the youth in singing and praying the Tantum Ergo, followed by benediction, and the Divine Praises. The priest or deacon will then process out with the Blessed Sacrament. If the priest or deacon is not present, a lay minister may lead the Divine Praises and then reverently repose the Blessed Sacrament to the tabernacle. Be sure to check with your pastor before the Edge Night to ensure that the Blessed Sacrament is treated with proper respect. As the Blessed Sacrament is being reposed (or placed back into the tabernacle), it is customary to sing a hymn like “Holy God We Praise Thy Name.”
ADAPTAION IDEAS:

- If you are not able to peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, think of other ways to serve those in need. Prior to the night, ask the youth to bring toiletries that can be put together and given away to those in need.

- If you are unable to have Adoration, you could still have each group prayer for their Outreach Ministry in another prayerful setting.

Summary Challenge

Before the middle school youth are sent home they will be challenged to remember:

1. The Eucharist is the most important of all the Sacraments. It is the source and summit of the whole Christian life because it is Christ giving Himself completely to us and drawing us deeper into a relationship with Him.

2. The Eucharist should be the center of our lives, of our families and of our world.

3. To draw closer to Jesus, we should receive the Eucharist every Sunday. Make a commitment to be present every week at Mass so that you can receive the Eucharist and grow in your relationship with Him.

4. We began our Edge Night by making sandwiches and lunch bags to feed those in need. As we receive the Eucharist as our spiritual food, we make a commitment to serve our brothers and sisters in need. Let us commit to reaching out to those in need.

To the Parents of

Tonight’s Edge session was on the Sacrament of the Eucharist. Normally we start with a game or activity, but tonight we started by making sandwiches for those in need. This was to help the youth understand that when we receive the Eucharist, we grow deeper with Christ and desire to serve those in need. The Eucharist is the Source and Summit of our faith. Jesus gives Himself completely to us in the Eucharist and we are invited to receive Him into our hearts and bodies as well.

When we receive the Eucharist, our spiritual hunger is filled and we can go forth and serve others in need. In small group, your child discussed the importance of the Eucharist and together with his/her group came up with an Outreach Ministry – a ministry to help those in need. Here are some discussion questions:

1. What did you learn about the Eucharist?

2. Does your understanding of the Eucharist change the way you participate in Mass?

3. Tell me about your Outreach Ministry. How could we as a family help others in need?
Litany of the Blessed Sacrament

O Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy, Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy.
Christ, hear us, Christ, hear us.

God the Father of Heaven, have mercy on us.
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy on us.
God, the Holy Spirit, have mercy on us.
Holy Trinity, One God, have mercy on us.

O Living Bread, Who from Heaven descended, have mercy on us.
Hidden God and Savior, have mercy on us.

Grain of the elect, have mercy on us.
Vine sprouting forth virgins, have mercy on us.

Wholesome Bread and delicacy of kings, have mercy on us.
Perpetual sacrifice, have mercy on us.
Clean oblation, have mercy on us.
Lamb without spot, have mercy on us.
Most pure feast, have mercy on us.
Food of Angels, have mercy on us.
Hidden manna, have mercy on us.

Memorial of God’s wonders, have mercy on us.
Super substantial Bread, have mercy on us.
Word made flesh, dwelling in us, have mercy on us.
Holy Victim, have mercy on us.
O Cup of blessing, have mercy on us.
O Mystery of faith, have mercy on us.
O Most high and venerable Sacrament, have mercy on us.

O Most holy of all sacrifices, have mercy on us.
O True Sacrifice for the living and the dead, have mercy on us.
O Heavenly Healer, who preserved us from sin, have mercy on us.
O stupendous miracle above all others, have mercy on us.
O Gift transcending all abundance, have mercy on us.
O extraordinary memorial of Divine love, have mercy on us.

Let us pray: O God, Who under a marvelous Sacrament has left us a
memorial of Thy Passion; grant us; we beseech Thee; so to venerate the
sacred mysteries of Thy Body and Blood, that we may ever perceive within
us the fruit of Thy Redemption. Thou Who lives and reigns forever and
ever, Amen.