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Welcome to the new and improved One Eight curriculum! One Eight is a comprehensive model of preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. This stand-alone resource provides a practical, doctrinally sound, and experiential catechesis for the Sacrament of Confirmation. It is designed to help lead teenagers closer to Jesus Christ through His Church, while building their relationship with the Holy Spirit. Each session in this resource draws teenagers into the teachings of the Church, prepares their hearts for the Sacrament of Confirmation, and challenges them to grow in prayer.

The first version of One Eight was released in 2003, and a companion DVD was released in 2009. This revised version of One Eight incorporates and updates material from previous editions, cross-references current Life Teen resources, and introduces entirely new sessions to the curriculum.

**WHAT IS ONE EIGHT?**

One Eight is a curriculum that prepares high school teenagers to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. This curriculum can be used over a one or two year time period. It contains 20 sessions, a weekend retreat, and additional materials to support each session. There are four sample layouts provided for scheduling, along with a step-by-step guide for promoting, organizing, and implementing the One Eight program found on pages 9 to 15.

One Eight utilizes experiential, relational, and systematic methods that engage teenagers in their faith while presenting doctrinally sound teachings, rooted in the Catechism and Sacred Scripture. Through engaging presentations of the faith, teenagers are invited into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and challenged to become life-long disciples over the course of the One Eight curriculum.

**OVERVIEW**

This revised One Eight resource is structured to follow the format of the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA). This format provides opportunities for teenagers preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation to participate in several rituals modeled after those that occur during RCIA. These rituals and prayer experiences are meant to foster a deeper sense of belonging to the Catholic Church.

One Eight is divided into three phases of preparation, each with distinct features, themes, and rituals that are modeled after the RCIA process.

**PERIOD OF INQUIRY**

The One Eight curriculum begins with sessions that allow teenagers to learn more about the requirements for the Sacrament of Confirmation. This period of time involves student meetings with their parent(s) and sponsor and also includes an interview. These sessions are designed to help both teens and parents discern if they can commit to the preparation necessary for the Sacrament of Confirmation. The focus of this period is encouraging students to be open in journeying toward the sacrament, and to identify students who are not open or ready to engage in the preparation process.

**PERIOD OF EVANGELIZATION**

For teenagers preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation, this period of time will reintroduce and deepen their understanding of the basic tenets of the Catholic faith. It is a “new-evangelization” for the teenagers and an opportunity for continued conversion to Christ. For some it will be a review, and for others it may be the first time many Catholic beliefs are
explained and introduced. This period begins with a modified Rite of Acceptance, where the parish priest will formally “accept” the teenagers as candidates for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

RETREAT
A three-day retreat is offered as a part of the One Eight curriculum. This retreat focuses on the seven virtues, and offers teenagers an opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. For this reason, it is highly recommended that this retreat be implemented as part of your parish’s program. You may also utilize the retreat in a one-day format.

PERIOD OF MISSION
This period focuses on a growing relationship with Jesus Christ, a lively interaction with the Holy Spirit, and a deeper understanding of the missionary call each teen received during his or her Baptism. The period begins with a modified Rite of Election, and a second interview with each candidate. Candidates will reaffirm their desire to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation and commit to dive more deeply into prayer during this period of time.

SESSION FORMAT
Sessions follow the format of: Gather, Proclaim, Break, and Send. These four sections are modeled after the four movements of the Mass. Teenagers will “gather” into the session through an activity or game. The topic of the session will be “proclaimed” as a teaching; teenagers will “break” open the topic through discussion, and will be “sent” out with a closing prayer. This is the same format that Life Teen uses for its high school and middle school resources and will provide a familiar feel to sessions for parishes that utilize the Edge and Life Teen model.

REFERENCES
Every session includes references to paragraphs in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, passages in Scripture, and sections within the YouCat. Certain sessions also include references to relevant Church documents. These references are included for consultation while planning a session. They should be given to members of the Core Team to read through prior to the session, so they will be adequately prepared for their small group discussions.

KEY CONCEPTS
The main concepts for each session are listed at the beginning of each outline. As you plan, keep those bullet points in mind, and make sure that they are emphasized within the dynamics and teaching of the session; they are the important things teens should remember.

KEY TERMS
It is important to continually define the religious vocabulary that is used during the sessions. Common words like “grace,” “faith,” and “evangelization” may not be understood, or a teenager may have wrongfully defined those terms. Definitions of key terms are given at the beginning of each session. Be sure to define these words during the session in a way that the teenagers can understand and memorize. Key terms are cited in bold within the body of each teaching.

ABOUT THIS SESSION
A brief summary of each session is given at the beginning of its outline. This overview is helpful in understanding how each section of the session relates to its other parts, and provides a vision for the material that follows.

ENVIRONMENT
Each session has a unique environment suggested to complement the topic. Some environments are used as visual aids during the teachings. The environment helps draw the teens into the session, and it also creates a space that differs from an empty parish hall. Different parishes may have restrictions and challenges to implementing an environment, but it is highly suggested that some effort be made to transform the space you are using for each One Eight session.

CONNECTING TO LIFE NIGHTS
For parishes that also subscribe to Life Teen, Life Nights that complement each One Eight session are listed at the beginning of every session. These Life Nights can be used as references for additional teaching information, along with alternative Gather, Breaks, and Sends. This section can help a youth minister plan an organic ministry by scheduling Life Nights during the year that complement One Eight sessions.
SERVICE PROJECTS
In the curriculum formats listed on pages 9 to 15 there are suggested spaces for small group service projects. If your diocese requires candidates to perform a certain number of service hours before they receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, consider utilizing the suggested times of year. Having teenagers participate in service activities as a group can build community and offer a shared experience for discussion. Session 19 in the One Eight curriculum directly addresses these service projects.
Confirmation preparation can be viewed in three distinct stages: Till, Sow, and Reap. Tilling involves preparing an environment and ministry that is ready to receive teenagers. Sowing is the catechesis that takes place during sessions; it is during this time that teenagers are called to a deeper relationship with Christ through His Church and are challenged to be disciples. Reaping involves following up with teenagers and integrating them into parish life and existing youth groups, and ultimately helping them connect with the universal Church. This stage generally takes place after they have received the Sacrament of Confirmation.

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TILL THE SOIL
Preparation is the key to a successful Confirmation program for teenagers. A successful One Eight program begins before teens hand in registration paperwork. It involves planning your schedule, recruiting and training a Core Team, sending out important information, and taking time to pray. This creates an environment that will be less stressful, more focused, and open to receive God’s grace.

• Plan Your Schedule (6 months in advance). This is one of the most critical aspects of preparation. As you organize your schedule, make sure you also have other calendars available that include important events in the parish, local schools, and within the community. Try to avoid scheduling sessions or retreats that conflict with any of those major events. It may be impossible to always avoid conflicting with other activities, but it should be avoided when possible.

After you have selected dates and times for your One Eight sessions, retreat, and set a date for the Confirmation Mass, make sure these decisions are communicated to the appropriate people. Put the dates and times on the parish calendar and reserve necessary meeting areas, sign a contract with a retreat center, notify the diocese and return any necessary paperwork to them, and communicate all information to your parish priest. If you want to book speakers or musicians for sessions, make sure to contact them early.

• Recruit and Train a Core Team (3-6 months in advance). In order to successfully implement One Eight you will need a team of dedicated adults to serve as volunteer “Core Members.” These men and women will lead small groups for the teens throughout the course of the year, and they will function as role models for the teens as they prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Serving on the Core Team is important and requires dedication. Some suggested requirements for Core Members are:

• Faithful, Confirmed Catholic in good standing with the Church.
• Committed to attending all One Eight sessions.
• At least two years out of high school.
• Has a passion and desire to teach the Catholic faith.

Core members come from all walks of life – don’t be afraid to ask college students, married couples, retirees, and religious brothers and sisters. A diverse Core Team will provide your teenagers with many living examples of what it means to be a faithful Catholic. Be sure that all
of your Core Members fulfill all necessary safe environment requirements for your diocese.

Once you have recruited your Core Team, host a training day for them. Life Teen provides numerous training resources for Core Teams; these resources can be viewed online for subscribing Life Teen parishes or purchased from the Life Teen store. Make sure to train your Core Members on how to lead small groups and the importance of relational ministry. They should be familiar with the structure of a One Eight session. It is also important to take time for team building and prayer. A well trained, spiritually fed Core Team will be more effective and able to lead teens closer to Christ.

• Create and Send Registration Materials (3 months in advance). The Sacrament of Confirmation requires varying degrees of paperwork depending on your diocese. Being organized with the registration paperwork early and having a communication plan for parents is critical for building a positive environment. The more streamlined and simple your registration process, the less frustrated parents will be, and the less stressed you will be. Work with your parish priest, Director of Religious Education, and/or your diocesan director to establish what paperwork needs to be completed by parents.

Once you have determined the paperwork you will need from parents and created a filing system within your office, send out registration materials to the parents of teens that are eligible to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Within those materials, be sure to give the date of the parent and student information meeting.

Sample registration forms can be found on pages 224 to 228.

• Host a Parent and Student Information Meeting (1-2 months in advance). Within your registration paperwork you should list the date and time of the parent and student information meeting. Make sure this date is on the parish calendar in advance, and double check for any conflicts with school or community events. This meeting should explain the expectations you have for teenagers in the program, offer parents a time to register and ask questions, and give you an opportunity to meet some of the possible candidates. If possible have your priest at this meeting.

**SOW SEEDS**

Once an environment has been created that will be conducive to catechesis and sacramental preparation, implementing a systematic plan becomes critical in opening doors for teenagers to encounter Christ. The One Eight curriculum provides 20 sessions and a weekend retreat; all of which have been intentionally designed to properly evangelize and catechize teenagers. How these sessions are implemented will vary depending on your diocesan requirements and your parish.

• Interviews. It is recommended that all teenagers seeking the Sacrament of Confirmation have an interview with the youth minister or a Core Member. These short interviews can all be done in one evening, or additional times can be scheduled for teenagers to meet. Interviews should precede the catechetical sessions. A full outline for a successful Confirmation candidate interview can be found on page 16.

• Small Groups. It is highly recommended that teenagers be assigned a small group for the entire year. This can be done before the first One Eight session. Having teenagers in small groups for every session will help build trust and allow the members of each small group to have deeper discussions as the curriculum progresses. It will also allow each Core Member to get to know a set group of teenagers throughout the entire process.

• Catechetical Sessions. There are 20 catechetical sessions that are provided as part of the One Eight curriculum. These sessions cover the basic tenets of the Catholic faith, provide teenagers with time to pray and encounter Christ, and challenge them to become evangelists. These sessions can be implemented over a one or two-year period, and can be scheduled in a variety of ways.

A list of suggested formats for covering the curriculum over a one or two year period can be found on pages 9 to 15.
• **Weekend Retreat.** A retreat experience is very important for the spiritual development of teenagers. The weekend retreat within *One Eight* is titled, “Live With Virtue,” and it introduces candidates to the seven virtues. It has been designed to work over a weekend, but it may be adapted to be a one-day retreat. It is recommended that this retreat be utilized in the middle of the curriculum, but it can be hosted at any point prior to teens receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation.

**REAP**

It can be easy for teenagers preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation to view their reception of the sacrament as a “graduation” from religious education. This “graduation mentality” is dangerous and often results in teenagers being away from the Church during some of the most critical years of their life. In order to help eliminate this mindset and help teenagers “reap” the grace that has been sown in their lives from the Sacrament of Confirmation, it is important to follow up after the teens have been confirmed. Successful follow-up after Confirmation begins during the process itself:

• **Connect Teens to the Parish.** As you plan your sessions, make sure that teenagers are being integrated back into the parish community. Invite various ministries to present during the final sessions. Encourage teenagers to get involved with liturgical ministries. Provide them with opportunities to build relationships with various church organizations. Additionally, make sure teenagers are being encouraged to sign up as parish members; this will instill a sense of responsibility and ownership within the parish community.

• **Provide Leadership Opportunities.** A great way to help teenagers reap the fruits of the grace they receive at their Confirmation is to provide them with opportunities to lead. Connecting teens with middle school youth ministry or grade school catechesis will help them continue to grow in their faith and provide them with opportunities to serve. The areas of leadership where teens can serve should not be limited to event clean up and set up, though these may be appropriate and are great ways to help teens serve at the parish. Confirmed teenagers make great parish council members, can serve as catechists with grade school students, and also serve as peer ministers for Confirmation preparation the following year.

• **Continue Faith Formation.** Teenagers who have been confirmed still need opportunities to learn and grow in their faith. Consider starting a Bible study or book discussion group for teens that have been confirmed. Have special service projects just for upperclassmen that have received the Sacrament of Confirmation.

• **Life Nights.** If your parish currently implements a Life Teen program, it is important to have “contact points” between your Life Nights and *One Eight* sessions. Each *One Eight* session begins with suggested Life Nights to supplement that topic. Connecting confirmation students with the Life Teen community can help them continue growing in their faith after they have received the Sacrament of Confirmation.
ONE-YEAR SUPER SATURDAY CURRICULUM

Scheduling Note: All Super Saturday sessions are eight-hour retreat days. Small Group Service Projects should be coordinated in advance; the last service project is a large group service project.

PERIOD OF INQUIRY

- Session 01 (October)
  - Generation to Generation – Preparing for Confirmation (For Parents and Candidates)

Candidate Interviews (mid-October)

- Session 02 (November)
  - Support System – The role of a sponsor (For Candidates and Sponsors)

PERIOD OF EVANGELIZATION

Small Group Service Project (During December)

Kickoff Retreat Day (First Saturday in December)

- Session 03 - Why?
  - Faith and Baptism

- Session 04 - Credo
  - Belief in God, Existence of God

- Session 05 – Epic Story
  - God’s plan of salvation

Small Group Service Project (During January)

Super Saturday One (Early January)

- Session 06 – God With Us

- The Incarnation, Person of Christ

- Session 07 – Fire, Wind, and Water
  - The Holy Spirit

- Session 08 – Pillars
  - The four marks of the Church

Small Group Service Project (During February)

Super Saturday Two (Mid-February)

- Session 09 – Outward Signs
  - The sacraments of the Church

- Session 10 – Any Given Sunday
  - The Mass

- Session 11 – Three Trees
  - The Sacrament of the Eucharist

Weekend Retreat - Live By Virtue

PERIOD OF MISSION

Small Group Service Project (During March)

Super Saturday Three (Mid-March)

- Session 12 – Grace Perfected
  - The Sacrament of Confirmation

- Session 13 – A Bold Profession
• The Nicene Creed

• Session 14 – Unwrapped
  - The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

• Session 15 – Courageous Witness
  - Saints and the gifts of the Holy Spirit

**Large Group Service Project** (During April)

• Session 19 – Your Turn
  - Christian Service

Final Candidate Interviews (Early April)

**Super Saturday Four** (Mid- April)

• Session 16 – Truth Be Told
  - Making Moral Decisions

• Session 17 – On a Mission
  - Missionary Mandate of the Church

• Session 18 – Spread the Word
  - Evangelization

• Session 20 – The Journey Continues...
  - Vocation & Discipleship

**Confirmation Rehearsal and Rite of Confirmation** (Easter Season)
**One-Year Weekly Curriculum**

**Period of Inquiry**

**Session 01** (Early October)
Generation to Generation - Parent & Teenager Intro Session

Confirmation Candidate Interview (Early October)

**Session 02** (Mid-October)
Support System - Candidate & Sponsor Session

**Period of Mission**

**Session 12** (February)
Grace Perfected – Sacrament of Confirmation

**Session 13** (February)
A Bold Profession – Nicene Creed

**Session 14** (February)
Unwrapped – Gifts of the Holy Spirit

**Session 15** (March)
Courageous Witness - Saints, Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Final Candidate Interview (Mid-March)

**Session 16** (March)
Truth Be Told – Making Moral Decisions

**Session 17** (March)
On a Mission – Missionary Mandate of the Church

**Session 18** (March)
Spread the Word – Evangelization

**Session 19** (April)
Your Turn – Christian Service

**Session 20** (April)
The Journey Continues... - Vocation and Discipleship

**Confirmation Rehearsal and Rite of Confirmation** (Easter Season)

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**Weekend Retreat** (Late January / Early February)
Live By Virtue

**Period of Evangelization**

**Session 03** (November)
Why? - Faith and Baptism

**Session 04** (November)
Credo – Existence of God

**Session 05** (November)
Epic Story – God’s Plan of Salvation

**Session 06** (November)
God With Us – Person of Christ, the Incarnation

**Session 07** (December)
Fire, Wind, and Water – The Holy Spirit

**Session 08** (December)
Pillars – Four Marks of the Catholic Church

Small Group Service Project (December)

**Session 09** (January)
Outward Signs – Sacraments

**Session 10** (January)
Any Given Sunday – Mass

**Session 11** (January)
Three Trees – Sacrament of Eucharist

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**Small Group Service Project** (Early April)

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Scheduling Note: Kickoff retreats are eight-hour retreat days. Small Group Service Projects should be coordinated in advance.

YEAR ONE DATES & SESSIONS

PERIOD OF INQUIRY

Session 01 (September)
Generation to Generation – Parent and Teenager Intro Session

Confirmation Candidate Interview
(Mid-September)

Session 02 (September)
Support System – Candidate and Sponsor Session

PERIOD OF EVANGELIZATION

Year One Kickoff Retreat (Three hour retreat during October)

• Session 03
  - Why? – Faith and Baptism

• Session 04
  - Credo – Existence of God

Small Group Service Project (During November)

• Session 05 (November)
  - Epic Story – God’s Plan of Salvation

• Session 06 (December)
  - God With Us – Person of Christ, the Incarnation

• Session 07 (January)
  - Fire, Wind, and Water – The Holy Spirit

• Session 08 (February)
  - Pillars – Four Marks of the Catholic Church

• Session 09 (March)
  - Outward Signs – Sacraments

Year One Closing Retreat
(Three hour retreat during April)

• Session 10
  - Any Given Sunday – Mass

• Session 11
  - Three Trees – Sacrament of Eucharist

YEAR TWO DATES & SESSIONS

PERIOD OF MISSION

Year Two Kickoff Retreat
(Three hour retreat during September)

• Session 12
  - Grace Perfected - Sacrament of Confirmation

• Session 13
  - A Bold Profession – Nicene Creed

Small Group Service Project (During October)
• **Session 14** (November)
  - Unwrapped – Gifts of the Holy Spirit

• **Session 15** (December)
  - Courageous Witness – Saints, Gifts of the Holy Spirit

• **Session 16** (January)
  - Truth Be Told – Making Moral Decisions

**Weekend Retreat** (Late January / Early February)
Live By Virtue

**Final Candidate Interview** (During February)

• **Session 17** (February)
  - On a Mission – Missionary Mandate of the Church

• **Session 18** (March)
  - Spread the Word – Evangelism

**Year Two Closing Retreat** (April)

• **Session 19**
  - Your Turn - Christian Service

• **Session 20**
  - The Journey Continues... - Vocation and Discipleship

**Confirmation Rehearsal and Rite of Confirmation** (Easter Season)
TWO-YEAR LIFE NIGHT CURRICULUM

Scheduling Note: Parishes that subscribe to Life Teen’s high school curriculum can use this two-year weekly curriculum. One Eight sessions are supplemented and incorporated with Life Nights that have been published by Life Teen.

YEAR ONE DATES & SESSIONS

PERIOD OF INQUIRY

Generation to Generation (September)
One Eight

Confirmation Candidate Interview (During September)

Support System (September)
One Eight

PERIOD OF EVANGELIZATION

Why? (October)
One Eight

A River Runs Through It (October)
Life Night Curriculum Guide 2: Person of Christ

Immersed (October)
Life Teen Curriculum Guide 5: Sacraments

Credo (November)
One Eight

Mystery Revealed (November)
Life Teen Curriculum Guide 1: Scripture

Epic Story (November)
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Small Group Service Project (During December)

God With Us (December)
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Mirror Image (December)
Life Teen Curriculum Guide 2: Person of Christ

You Call This Good? (January)
Life Teen Curriculum Guide 11: Paschal Mystery

Fire, Wind, and Water (January)
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1+1+1=1 (January)
Life Teen Curriculum Guide 10: Person of Christ

Common Thread (February)
Life Teen Curriculum Guide 4: Church

Pillars (February)
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Hypocrites Welcome (February)
Life Teen Curriculum Guide 4: Church

Outward Signs (March)
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Life Teen Curriculum Guide 13: Sacraments

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Confirmation interviews are a great way to begin a teenager’s preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. When done correctly, a Confirmation interview will accomplish three things:

• It will begin relational ministry between the teenagers and the small group leaders.

• It will help the leaders assess where the teenagers are at before their preparation, and allow them to adjust the sessions accordingly.

• It will emphasize the importance of the sacramental preparation by formalizing the process.

It is recommended that interviews be done at the beginning of the year before a teen attends any sessions. Two of the easiest ways to schedule interviews is to have teenagers sign up for an interview time slot at a registration meeting or to have an “interview day” with several Core Members to interview the students that attend.

• If teens sign up for interview times: The youth minister should block out times for interviews that comply with Safe Environment policies. This may be during regular office hours, or during hours that other adults will be on site. Interviews are not “closed door,” and are informal meetings. If necessary, have another adult present during the interview. Always follow Safe Environment guidelines for your diocese.

Provide parents and teens with a list of dates and times that they can sign-up for. Give them a definitive time frame (e.g. the week of August 1st to August 7th) for when interviews can be completed. If there are a lot of students who need interviews, recruit the help of some Core Members to assist with interviews as well.

• If you are hosting an interview day: Provide the time and date of the interview day to parents and teenagers at least one month in advance. Have Core Members present and provide a time range for teenagers to come for an interview. Pair teenagers with Core Members as they arrive; after their interview the teens can leave. This is a great way to get a lot of interviews done in a short amount of time.

Each interview should last between 10-20 minutes and be fairly informal. Use this time to get to know the candidate, help them feel more at ease with the Confirmation process, and assess where they are at in their faith life. Remember, you are their first interaction with the program and possibly even the parish.

**IN THIS INTERVIEW YOU SHOULD**

• Determine if the candidate is freely choosing Confirmation, and if not, help them to either be open to the process, or encourage them to talk to their parents about their hesitation. A follow up meeting may be needed with the teen and his or her parents if he or she is vehemently opposed to the sacrament.

• Determine a candidate’s faith background so you can better understand where they are coming from, and what bias, expectations, or knowledge they may have before beginning preparation.
• Begin and end the interview with a brief prayer. It is important to get the candidates ready for frequent prayer from day one. This can be a prayer that the candidate knows and can participate in with you.

• Review expectations for One Eight. Your session attendance policy, make-up policy, important dates, and expectations for handing in required paperwork should all be reviewed.

• Take notes on the “Confirmation Candidate Interview” form, and review these as a team after all of the interviews are finished. Use this information to determine if there are any topics that need to be covered in more depth with the teenagers.

### HOW TO CONDUCT A CONFIRMATION INTERVIEW

• When a teen comes in for an interview, the person doing the interview should welcome them and introduce him or herself. If the student has paperwork (registration, sponsor form, etc.), the interviewer should take it and put it in a safe place.

• Interviews should be conducted in an open area, following Safe Environment guidelines. If there are a lot of interviews happening, conduct the interview in a room close to others with the door open.

• Begin the interview with a prayer. This can be something simple; ask the Holy Spirit for openness and strength during the Confirmation preparation process.

• Spend some time getting to know the candidate and letting them get to know you. Ask questions about school, hobbies, likes, and dislikes. Tell them a little bit about yourself as well. Keep in mind that any information you share should be appropriate to the conversation (e.g. sharing that you are married and have children is acceptable, but elaborating on family problems would not be).

• Ask the candidate why he or she would like to be confirmed. Talk a bit about this decision and how they made it. Remind them that you aren’t looking for a “correct” answer.

• Talk a bit about the candidate’s prayer life and his or her relationship to Christ. Teens may have difficulty answering or may be unable to answer this question; ask questions in order to guide them to an answer. This will give you a better assessment of their faith life.

• Ask the candidate where they feel their faith is strongest. What do they think they know the most about? Conversely, what do they feel they know the least about?

• Find out about the candidate’s faith formation background. Do they go to Catholic school? Have they been an active participant in Life Teen, religious education, or another youth group? If not, when did they stop attending religious education?

• Ask the candidate if he or she has any questions for you. Answer them as much as you can; chances are the candidate may not have anything to ask, or may ask a question about the program. They may ask about a Church teaching; if the person doing the interview feels comfortable responding to this question they may, otherwise it should be noted and possibly covered in a session. A follow-up should be made with that teen to answer his or her question within the first two sessions.

A form for Confirmation interviews can be found on page 227.

### FINAL INTERVIEWS

One Eight has an option for a final interview. This interview takes place before the last five sessions of the curriculum. It allows time for a final assessment of teens, and it gives the youth minister an opportunity to determine whether there are any subjects or topics that need to be covered again before the period of preparation is over.

It is not recommended that this option be used as a time to test students and “pass” or “fail” them.
It may, however, help some students discern that they are not ready to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. It also may provide an opportunity for parents, their son or daughter, and the youth minister to meet to discuss whether or not a student is willing and ready to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

An interview form for a final interview can be found on page 228.
Period of Inquiry

This period of time could also be considered your “pre-Confirmation preparation” period. It is during this time that teenagers and parents will be asking questions about the One Eight program and requirements for the Sacrament of Confirmation and attending a parent and teenager meeting. There are two sessions that accompany this period – one session is for parents and teenagers, and the second session is for teenagers and their sponsors.

After the teen and sponsor sessions, teenagers will be formally considered “candidates.” The sponsor session closes with a prayer service modeled off the RCIA Rite of Acceptance, and is an important ritual to utilize for teenagers as they begin the next step in their journey toward the sacrament.

The main focus of this time period is to get parents and teenagers information about One Eight, the Sacrament of Confirmation, and your parish’s expectations for sacramental preparation.
BELIEF IN GOD

CATECHISM
#29-43
#156-160
#286
#338
#356

SCRIPTURE
Genesis 1:1-31
Job 11:7-9
Isaiah 55:6-9
Jeremiah 9:22-23
Romans 5:1-5
Ephesians 5:1-20
Hebrews 11:1-3

CHURCH DOCUMENTS
• Dei Verbum, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, Vatican II
• Libertas Praestantissimum, Encyclical, Leo XIII

YOUCat
#3-8

CONNECTING TO LIFE NIGHTS
• Anti-Graduation, Life Teen Curriculum Guide 10: Person of Christ
• Prove It, Life Teen Curriculum Guide 2: Person of Christ

KEY CONCEPTS
• We are religious beings that were designed to worship God. However, we can choose to ignore God or reject Him.
• Faith is not opposed to reason. God uses science and reason as ways that we can come to know Him.
• There is a difference in believing there is a God, and believing in God. Believing in God causes a conversion in our lives, and we surrender our lives to God.

KEY TERMS
• Conversion – A radical reorientation of a person's whole life away from sin and evil and toward God.

GOAL
The goal of this session is twofold: First, to present a classical proof for the existence of God and eliminate the myth that there is a discrepancy between reason and faith. Second, to make the distinction between “believing in God,” and “believing there is a God.” This will challenge the candidates to lead their lives to honor, love, and serve God.

ABOUT THIS SESSION
This session begins with a humorous skit and video featuring three “scientists” trying to prove the existence of God. This skit leads into the teaching for the session, which provides candidates a classical proof for the existence of God, and challenges them to ask if they are living their lives.
as people who believe in God, or as people who simply believe there is a God. The Break will allow candidates to discuss and process this critical distinction. The session closes with a prayer using two passages from the Book of Psalms. It will give candidates who are wrestling with doubt an opportunity to be prayed for, and it will give a time for those striving to live their lives for God an opportunity for spiritual strengthening.

PARENT CONNECT
This week at One Eight we talked about the existence of God and the implication this has on our lives. Teenagers will likely have a discussion with someone who does not believe in God or who challenges their belief in God at some time during high school. This week we began to give teenagers some practical reasons why there is a Creator, and that Creator is God. We also challenged them to make an important distinction; we challenged them to ask if they just believed there was a God or if they believed in God. Belief in God requires trust and self-surrender, whereas belief that there is a God doesn’t necessarily require our response. Teens discussed how they lived their lives currently, and struggles they faced with living a life trusting completely in God. The question of how fully we believe in God is an important one, and is worthy of further discussion after this session. Some questions you can use to continue this discussion with your son or daughter are:

- Have you ever been in a discussion with someone about the existence of God? What happened?
- If someone were to ask you why you believed in God, what would you tell him or her? (This is a great time to share reasons why you believe in God, and some of your faith experiences with your son or daughter).

ENVIRONMENT
The environment for this session should be set up to resemble a science laboratory. Near the front of the room set up a table with beakers, glass jars, and other scientific instruments. Be creative with what items you use. Consider contacting a local high school and asking to borrow some non-dangerous items for the environment. Find a large periodic table and put it up on a wall. The idea is to make the main meeting space seem as “scientific” as possible.

GATHER (15 Min)
WELCOME & OPENING PRAYER
(5 Min)
The youth minister will welcome all of the candidates to the One Eight session. He or she will lead an opening prayer, and then begin to review information from the past session. During this review, the three “scientists” will interrupt him or her and the opening skit begins.

SCIENTIST SKIT & VIDEO
(10 Min)
For this opening skit you will need three Core Members to dress up as scientists for the session. You will also need to do some advance preparation to record a video to be used during the skit. There are two parts to this opening dynamic:

SKIT
The three “scientists” will interrupt the youth minister during the recap of the previous session. They will excitedly claim that they have finally proven the existence of God, scientifically. Against the youth minister’s protests, the scientists take over the Gather, and introduce the video footage they obtained.

A full outline for the skit can be found on page 58.

VIDEO
The same three Core Members who will be playing the scientists will need to record a short video segment prior to the session. The video should feature them at a school or parish event asking adults and teens to “prove” different things.
Some of these proofs can be silly, for example, “Prove that the sky is blue,” “Prove why your school is great,” or “Prove that air exists.” During these proofs, the scientists should have the teens conduct experiments to support their opinion. The scientists should finally ask the adults and teens to provide a proof for the existence of God. This video is shown during the skit.

**Proclaim** (15 Min)

**TEACHING: CREDO** (15 Min)

Following the skit, the youth minister will regain control of the session and have the scientists exit. He or she will then transition into the teaching for the session. This teaching is meant to provide a couple of practical “proofs” for the existence of God, but it is also meant to challenge the candidates in how they live their lives according to the reality that there is a God. It is important to balance these two points, as many teens may believe there is a God, but fail to trust, serve, and love Him.

An outline for the teaching for this session can be found on page 54.

**Break** (30 Min)

**SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION** (30 Min)

Each Core Member should lead an opening prayer. He or she should spend a few minutes asking the candidates how their previous week was since the last meeting, and if there are any big events coming up at their schools or in their personal lives. This relational time is very important to building community within the group. After a few minutes have been taken for this, small group leaders should use the following questions for discussion:

• What “proofs” have you heard to prove the existence of God? What is most convincing about these arguments?

• What arguments have you heard from people who want to disprove God? How do you respond to these arguments?

• Are there experiences in your life that make it easier to believe in God?

• When do you feel it most challenging to believe in or trust God?

• Is there a difference between “believing in God,” and “believing there is a God?” What is the difference? Where do you think most people stand? Where do you stand?

• How does a belief in God change the way a person lives their life?

• What can you do over the next month to “believe in God” rather than simply believing there is a God?

**Send** (15 Min)

**SESSION RECAP** (5 Min)

The youth minister should gather all of the small groups back together to begin the closing prayer for the session. The candidates should enter back into a prayerful environment. If possible, ask your music minister to be present to provide quiet worship music, or have music playing softly in the background. The youth minister should recap the main points of the session:

• We are religious beings that were designed to worship God. However, we can choose to ignore God or reject Him.

• Faith is not opposed to reason. God uses science and reason as ways that we can come to know Him.
• There is a difference in believing there is a God, and believing in God. Believing in God causes a conversion in our lives, and we surrender our lives to God.

**SCRIPTURE PRAYER**

(10 Min)

After the youth minister has finished recapping the main points of the session, he or she should invite the candidates into this time of prayer and encourage them to be honest. The youth minister should ask the candidates to close their eyes and listen to two different Scripture passages.

Have two different Core Members read the passages. The first person will read Psalm 77:5-11. After he or she has read the passage, the youth minister will invite any candidates that relate to this first passage (doubt of God’s existence or love) to stand. The youth minister will lead a prayer over them that God increases their faith, especially during the Confirmation process, and that they can be open to how the Holy Spirit is working in their lives.

The second Core Member will read Psalm 63:5-9. After he or she has finished reading it, the youth minister will invite candidates who related more to the second passage (confident in God’s love and blessings) to stand. He or she will lead a prayer that these candidates can protect and defend their faith, and that it will be strengthened during the Confirmation process. The youth minister should close the prayer by thanking the candidates for their honesty and challenge them to continue seeking answers and asking questions in order to grow in their faith. The youth minister should ask for the intercession of Mary, that she would intercede on behalf of the candidates that their faith may continually be strengthened.

**ADAPTING THE SESSION**

• This is a great session to have a teen give a testimony about a conversion from atheism. If you have any confirmed teenagers who at one point believed there was no God, but underwent a conversion of heart, invite them to give a five minute testimony during the Proclaim.

• During the Send have candidates journal about each one of the passages from the Book of Psalms, either praising God or asking God for the grace to help them undergo a conversion of heart.
INTRODUCTION

• If someone asked you to prove the existence of God, what would you say? Would you respond with a scientific proof or experiment? Would you talk about the Bible or your personal experience?

• Chances are that someday, someone will challenge your belief in God. You may even sometimes be searching for a “proof” in times of doubt. When you try to find that proof, it can seem harder than we realize.

• That’s not uncommon. The vast majority of people in the world believe in God, but if you ask them to articulate why, they may struggle to find the right words, or any words at all. So how do we know that God exists?

• An atheist may respond that all we have is “blind faith,” and that our faith is completely opposed to reason. Both of these assumptions are wrong.

FAITH & REASON WORK TOGETHER

• When people begin to ask questions about whether or not God exists, they often look first to science. Science is the use of logic and reason to determine truth.

• The scientific method is a process of making a hypothesis and then testing that hypothesis with evidence to determine truth.

• We may not be able to do scientific experiments to prove the existence of God, but it is very easy to prove the existence of God utilizing reason, hypotheses, and evidence.

• The Church teaches us that, “God can be known with certainty from the created world by the natural light of human reason.”

• Throughout history many very intelligent people have made very sound and logical arguments for the existence of God. These arguments are so good that they have been a part of philosophy for centuries.
• One of the most famous arguments for the existence of God comes from a “Doctor of the Church,” St. Thomas Aquinas.

**ST. THOMAS AQUINAS & THE ARGUMENT OF CONTINGENCY**

- Summa Theologica, Question 2, 44.

- St. Thomas Aquinas lived over 800 years ago and he gave five proofs for the existence of God. Those proofs still have not been proven wrong after 800 years.

- His most important proof is called “The Argument of Contingency:”

- In your mind, draw a line between two points in this room. Every line we mentally drew has something in common – it has a beginning and an end point.

- Our lines also have something in common with all of us; we all have a beginning and an end. It is commonly understood that all things have a beginning and an end. We could also call this “time” (think of a timeline).

- In our experience, we realize that there isn’t anything that is timeless.

- Since all things have a beginning and an end, creation also must have a beginning and an end. Creation isn’t timeless.

- We also know that things just don’t begin. But logically, before there was “something” there must have been “nothing.” And something can’t come out of nothing. So there must be something else that is timeless.

- This thing that is timeless must also have the ability to create, because “something” cannot come out of “nothing” unless there is a Creator.

- To believe that an infinite being that creates doesn't exist would be illogical. We call this infinite thing that creates God.

- This is only one of five proofs for the existence of God by St. Thomas Aquinas, and one of many reasonable arguments made by many different people over the centuries. Arguments like this one show that we can know God exists purely by the use of our reason.

- God is not simply revealed to us through our reason, there are still other ways we can come to know there is a God and who God is.

**GOD REVEALS HIMSELF THROUGH CREATION**

- When we look at the world, we see order. Everything works together perfectly, but we often take that for granted.
• If conditions were to be only slightly different, our universe could not sustain life. While we may accept that some things happen randomly, it is difficult to accept that our universe, in all its complexity, happened randomly.

• By looking at creation, we realize there must have been a Creator. Just the same way a person would look at a brand new home and realize that someone drew up the blue print for the home and then built the home, we can look at creation and realize that there was a being that created it.

• St. Augustine said that the beauty of creation is a “profession” of the Creator. We can also infer from this beauty that our Creator is good and loves us.

GOD REVEALS HIMSELF THROUGH OUR REASON

• Finally, God reveals Himself through the human person – through us. We were created with the capacity to know God and to be open to truth and beauty.

• These facts speak to the truth that God created us – it is proven by the history of humanity’s search for God.

• Using the gifts that God has given us we become open to faith, to trusting the Creator with our whole selves even though we cannot see Him.

• This total trust in God is not our reaching out towards Him; as we talked about in our last session, it is our response to God’s reaching out towards us.

OUR THIRST FOR GOD

• There is a story in Scripture of a woman from Samaria who goes to draw water from the well and meets Jesus. We find out later, from her conversation with Jesus, that she is a promiscuous woman.

• Jesus asks the woman for a drink from the well. He reaches out to her first. He tells her that if she drinks from the well she will be thirsty again, but He can provide her with water that will completely fulfill her.

• These words are significant. Jesus knows this woman’s “thirst” for God. By reaching out to her, we realize that God also “thirsts” for us.

• When the woman finally came to the realization of who Jesus was, she ran into town and told everyone about whom she had met. She no longer was interested in the water at the well. She was only interested in her relationship with Jesus Christ.
• When Jesus met the woman she knew that He existed, that wasn’t a question for her. She also knew that a messiah existed, and that He was someone the people had been waiting for. But when she believed “in” Jesus, her life changed.

• This change is called a conversion. A conversion is when a person’s life radically changes and they turn away from sin and evil and toward God.

• There is a difference between believing there is a God, and believing in God. We can continuously give “proofs” that show that God exists. We can argue from every angle, but those arguments can’t give us faith.

• Faith in God requires more than simply acknowledging that He exists. You can acknowledge something exists without trusting in it or having it change your life. God isn’t looking for our affirmation; He is looking for our hearts. Faith in God requires conversion.

• God has created all of us with a thirst for Him. We will never be satisfied until we learn to surrender our lives to Him. We are made for God and we will never be truly happy until we have communion with Him.

• That means you have an important choice to make: Do you believe in God, with your whole heart, mind, and soul? Or do you acknowledge that there is a God, but live like there isn’t?

• Just like the woman at the well, the choice dramatically impacts who we are and how “thirsty” we will be in our lives. We were created to worship, which means we will have something as our “god.”

• People may worship money, popularity, sex, or power. They may sit at any of these wells hoping to find water. But as much as they tell themselves they will be filled, they won’t be.

• We were created to give our lives back to God freely, and in doing this we find happiness and fulfillment. It is the water that never leaves us thirsty. God exists, we have to choose if we are going to believe in Him, or simply acknowledge He is there.