

HOMEFRONT

COPING WITH MILITARY DEPLOYMENT LIFE NIGHT OUTLINE

CATECHISM

2265

SCRIPTURE

Psalms 23

Psalms 27:1-3

Psalms 100

Matthew 14:27

Matthew 28:20

Hebrews 13:20-21

MEDIA

- YouTube Video: Patriot: "Papa Don't Go" by MovieClips

- YouTube Video: "Deployment from a teen's perspective" by Beyond The Yellow Ribbon

GATHER

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

(5 min)

The youth minister or group facilitator gathers all of the teenagers together and welcomes them to the Life Night. He or she introduces any teenagers that are attending for the first time or, if it's a new group of teenagers gathered, provides a few minutes for teenagers to introduce themselves to each other.

MILITARY TRIVIA GAME

(10 min)

Divide the teenagers into small groups of five or six teens with one adult Core Member in each group. Give each group a large piece of poster board or erasable whiteboard and a marker.

Groups will write their answer and hold it up after each question. Keep track of points for each team and declare a winner at the end of trivia. Use the following questions as a starting place for the game (correct answers are in parenthesis):

1. Which US President depicted on Mt. Rushmore does not have a US aircraft carrier named after him: Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt, George Washington? (Thomas Jefferson)
2. Which of the following is not a kind of US Navy ship: Amphibious assault ship, dock landing ship, missile barge, cruiser? (Missile Barge)
3. Which of the following is largest: A battalion, a battery, a company, a brigade? (Brigade)
4. What is the U.S. Army Rangers motto? (Rangers lead, to save others, serve and protect, sua sponte)

5. What does Sua sponte mean? (It is Latin for “of their own accord”)
 6. Where is the U.S. Coast Guard academy located: New London, Connecticut, Corpus Christi, Texas, King’s Point, New York, Annapolis, Maryland? (New London, Connecticut).
 7. The name “Coast Guard” came into being in what year: 1933, 1898, 1915, 1918? (1915)
 8. The Marine Corps Motto, Semper Fidelis, A.K.A. “Semper Fi”, means what in Latin: Always fighting, always prepared, always faithful, always friendly? (Always faithful).
 9. Which of the below is not a Marine Corps “Core Value”: Honor, loyalty, courage, commitment? (Loyalty)
 10. What year did the Air Force become one of the branches of the military? 1947, 1945, 1946, 1948 (1947).
 11. What is the official name of the F-16 aircraft: Fighting falcon, fulcrum, fighting eagle, bat (fighting falcon)
- Does the Church have an opinion about the military? Yes. The Church teaches, “Legitimate defense can be not only a right, but a grave duty for one who is responsible for the lives of others. The defense of the common good requires that an unjust aggressor be rendered unable to cause harm. For this reason, those who legitimately hold authority also have the right to use arms to repel aggressors against the civil community entrusted to their responsibility” (Catechism of the Catholic Church 2265).
 - In order to protect and serve others in this way, sometimes our military service men and women need to be deployed.
 - Deployments are broken down into a three phase cycle for members of the military in active duty: pre-deployment, deployment, post-deployment/reintegration. Some of us have experienced these phases or will experience them, for others, we can play an important role in supporting our friends when their family members become deployed.
 - There are positive ways that we can approach the deployment of a family member during each of these phases:

**Adapted from http://www.funtrivia.com/quizzes/world/military_matters.html*

PROCLAIM

TALK: HOMEFRONT

(10 min)

- Having a family member leave for a deployment can be tough. A deployment “refers to activities required to move military personnel and materials from a home installation to a specified destination.”
- Deployments are a regular part of fulfilling someone’s contract of service in the military, and can look different depending on the branch and job that each person has. So it’s important to note that deployment doesn’t necessarily mean that the person will be in harm’s way. Still, it can be scary and sad to have a family member deployed.
- Ask your family member about what kind of work they will be doing (like helping a certain community, protecting children, etc.). It will help remind you of the good that comes from the sacrifices your family is making during that time. Let them know that you are proud of them!
- Ask about what responsibilities and things you can help with during their time away. Obviously you have a lot of responsibilities as a student and with other activities, so making a realistic plan will be important. Make a game plan with them for when they come home too.
- Spend some quality time together. They might be busy preparing to leave, but it could go a long way to having a positive experience to look back on when they are away.
- Some of this quality time can revolve around prayer. Read Psalm 23 together, pray for safety and trust in God during the deployment.

Pre-deployment

- Don't leave things in a bad place in your relationship when they leave. You might not have the best relationship with this parent, but they are still your parent. Don't wait until the end of the deployment to reconcile areas of anger or frustration in your relationship.
- If your friend has a parent or other family member being deployed, pray for your friend and the family, for peace, unity and trust in the Lord. If possible, make it a point to check in with him or her occasionally and pray together pre-deployment.

During Deployment

- Find ways to keep the deployed family member up to speed on what is going on in your life. It can be easy to get wrapped up in our day-to-day activities, even as a way of "forgetting" that a family member is deployed. Be intentional about utilizing whatever forms of communication you can to help them stay updated on news.
- Find out if they are able to receive packages and send them a care package if you can. This could include letters with school and social updates. A letter doesn't have to be perfect or have the deepest meaning behind it. Normal information can be a great way to stay close from far away.
- Plan Skype video calls to talk to them and keep in touch. Again, in the everyday busy-ness of our lives we can easily let this slip. Don't get discouraged if your family member misses a call; it can be disheartening, but pray for understanding that their orders dictate their schedule while away and that it wasn't him or her forgetting about you.
- Reflect on Hebrews 13:20-21, pray for peace and strength to do God's will.
- If your friend has a parent or other family member that is deployed, make a plan to study together if you have any classes with that friend. It may be tough and distracting at times during a deployment. Having a study buddy can make schoolwork easier to keep up with. If possible, coordinate rides together to youth group or other events.

Post-Deployment and Reintegration

- Be patient. You might have a vision for everything going back to normal right away (or have no idea how it will look), but know it will take some time to adjust.
- Honor their authority and role as your parent. You might have had to fend for yourself in many ways while they were gone, so it will need to be a conscious effort to let the house adjust to how things were before the deployment.
- Tell them about certain events and things that happened while they were gone.
- Read Psalm 100 as a family, pray in thanksgiving for the many ways God has blessed your family.
- If your friend has a parent or other family member that recently returned from deployment, be patient. Recognize the change that has happened in the home and be understanding when they are figuring things out as a family.

Rooted In Christ

- Finally, in all phases of deployment, stay rooted in Christ and in the Church. As a community, the Church takes care of all its members and holds them up. It is a great source of support and love and the connection that we share with all men and women that are currently serving in phases of deployment.
- Be sure to also cultivate your relationship with Christ. Deployment can be a scary time, but Christ reminds us that we should not be afraid and that he is always with us. Pray for your family and work on your personal relationship with Christ as well. This will not only keep you grounded in hope, but will help you grow in your faith, as well.

BREAK

CARE PACKAGE PLAN

(25 min)

Care packages can help families through deployment. Divide the teenagers back into their small groups and invite them to brainstorm care

package ideas. If there are teens with family members currently deployed, the group can help that teenager organize their care package. If not, each group member will create his or her own "Care Package plan," for use in the event of deployment.

Provide a few suggestions and invite teenagers to brainstorm additional ideas:

- Give them a book with short spiritual reflections for each day.
- Or an iPod loaded with both fun playlists and prayerful ones.
- Send some comedy movies for them to watch with their community.
- Find out if they like beef jerky or some other snack and send it to them.
- Record some videos on your phone from certain events, put them on a USB drive and add that to the care package.

Care packages can be created for family members from your parish whether they have a teen son or daughter or not. Find out before the Life Night who from your parish is currently serving in the military. Even if they are not deployed to a war zone, a care package sent to their assigned military installation would be a great reminder of the parish community they have behind them supporting them in prayer.

ALTERNATIVE BREAK: LETTER WRITING

(25 min)

As a church we are one family this activity can help bring to mind those who right now are dealing with deployment. Soldiers get care packages, but we can send cards/ letters/ spiritual bouquets to the temporarily single parents who are in the community and have spouses abroad. Pass out pens, paper, and envelopes to the teens and invite them to write letters to families that have a member deployed. The letters can be general and distributed after the Life Night.

SEND

PRAYER FOR MILITARY

(15 min)

Gather the teens into the Church sanctuary or daily Mass chapel. Recap the Life Night and invite the teens into a time of prayer:

Regardless of where deployed family members are going, God is always present. Most especially in the Mass, we are all truly united in the Eucharist. Though they may be far away, we are eating at the same banquet table when we receive the True Presence of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let them also know that as a parish and Life Teen community those who are deployed will be in our prayers and that their Life Teen family is here to support them.

At this time, read a list of individuals currently on deployment and offer up prayers of petition for each one. Add any additional prayers for your group and families. If you have teenagers that have parents on deployment, invite them to be prayed over by the group. Encourage those who are friends to continue to be holy friends and a selfless support for their friends who have a parent away.

Pass out the prayer card found on page 29 and invite teenagers to pray it together to close the Life Night. Challenge them to offer this prayer daily for friends and family that are experiencing deployment.

ADAPTING THE LIFE NIGHT

- Invite a teen give a testimony talking about their experience with a parent's deployment. Be sure to practice this testimony with him or her prior to the Life Night.
- Invite a Core member, adult volunteer, or member of the parish who is active duty to give the Proclaim. He or she can provide personal testimony about his or her experience with deployment.

Life Teen and the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA are official partners to lead military teens closer to Christ. To learn more about Life Teen Military contact, Life Teen Director of Parish Support, Marlo Dowdy mdowdy@lifeteen.com or AMS Director of Evangelization, Mark Moitoza mmoitoza@milarch.org for more information.

Join the movement to reach military teens and their families through prayer, financial support, and raising awareness of military teens in your parish.

Learn more about the Archdiocese for the Military Services (AMS), USA: www.milarch.org

The Archdiocese for the Military Services was created by Pope John Paul II to provide the Catholic Church's full range of pastoral ministries and spiritual services to those in the United States Armed Forces. This includes more than 220 installations in 29 countries, patients in 153 V.A. Medical Centers, and federal employees serving outside the boundaries of the USA in 134 countries. Numerically, the AMS is responsible for more than 1.8 million men, women, and children.

The Archdiocese serves as the sole endorser (certifier) of Roman Catholic chaplains to the United States government. A Roman Catholic priest cannot serve within the United States Military as a priest without the express permission of the Archdiocese. As of 2008, 285 Roman Catholic priests were endorsed by the Archdiocese for active-duty military service. These chaplains serve on loan from their diocese of incardination or religious order/society and are released for a term of military service. Chaplains never become members of the Archdiocese; instead, they always remain subject to their home bishop/religious superiors. The only clergy incardinated into the AMS are its archbishop and auxiliary bishops.

Unlike a conventional diocese, the Archdiocese has no parishes or parish registries. Chapels are property of the United States government. Although the Archdiocese exercises jurisdiction over the religious education programs and the celebration of Catholic Liturgy, it maintains no legal jurisdiction over the physical property of the chapel. Because base/command chapels are United States government property, all records of sacraments performed on U.S. Military installations are maintained by the Archdiocese in its Office of Sacramental Records. This starkly contrasts with the model used in conventional parishes, where all sacraments are recorded in the parish registry. The Archdiocese currently maintains more than 2.5 million records of sacraments performed on military installations.

DEALING DEPLOYMENT HANDOUT

PRAYER
FOR THE

Military

"Lord, hold your troops
in your loving hands.

Protect them as they protect us.
Bless them and their families
for the selfless acts they perform
for us in our time of need.

Give us peace.

I ask all of these things in the name
of Jesus our Lord and Savior.

Amen."

~ The Most Reverend Timothy P. Broglio
Archbishop for the Military Services

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