



VIRTUAL YOUTH MINISTRY NIGHT (Sample)
St. Augustine Youth Ministry - New City, New York by Jessica Giglio

6:00 PM Enable "waiting room" on Zoom and let youth in at 6 PM. Say hello to each youth introducing them as they join. Ask each youth how they're doing, catch up with them in a structured way going over the highs and lows of their week. After most of the teens have joined, mute the whole chat.

6:10 PM Automatically mute everyone and explain the "rules"

1. Stay muted unless you are called on to share.
 - a. If you want to share, raise your pinky and the Core Team will call on you!
2. Be respectful, appropriate, and kind - or you will be removed.

If you agree with the rules, give me a thumbs up.

6:15 PM **GAME:** Ask youth to count how many statements are true for them, At the end everyone will reveal their tally!
https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/17sziISIRG6N_QKYNjvJF-Hdl_7kg7vAmtXYBUGjQHBg/edit?usp=sharing

6:30 PM **WITNESS TALK:** Anxiety and fear and how to combat it (see below)

6:45 PM **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS- 3 short questions to all all youth to share.**

- How are you feeling about the current situation?
- What are some new/different blessings in this new reality?
- How will you remain rooted (in God) throughout the quarantine?
 - SUGGEST:
 - Pray daily
 - Praying with the Sunday Mass readings
 - Making a daily act of spiritual communion
 - Praying a daily rosary for an end to coronavirus
 - Watching a live stream of the Mass (maybe daily, but definitely Sunday's)
 - Lifeteen videos on Youtube
 - Christian worship music
 - Daily bible verses
 - Fr. Mike Schmitz Youhtube videos

- Given the number of youth who might join, 3 questions was the perfect amount to get everyone engaged and talking and not going over on time.



7:00 PM PRAYER (Brendon)

- Youth raise their hand to add prayer intention (once they share they are re-muted)
- **PRAYER:** Lord give us strength through this difficult time. Fill us with the warm feeling of your love, that same love which can let us know that everything will be alright. That same love which has risen from the dead, and has conquered all. Let your people know that you are here with us, shielding us, embracing us. Even in the moments where we cannot see you, or hear you, let us feel you in our hearts. Let this time in our lives not be defined as a moment of being a prisoner in our own homes, but as an opportunity to better ourselves. To find you, in a world that is confused, and afraid. To find the love in our families, to find the purpose in ourselves, and the faith in you.

7:10 PM ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Join Slack (LINK)
- Daily chats/ core team members sharing their day
- What else would they like to see?

END MEETING

WITNESS TALK

When thinking about the situation we are in right now, I can feel highly overwhelmed. Raise your hand if you feel really anxious or really angry or really bored or just like there is nothing you can control at this time. *PAUSE*. Please know what these reactions are totally normal, and I know that I am experiencing every single one of those on a daily basis. Simultaneously, I am seeing the amount of love in this world, and I am praying that God teaches me more about how to love during this time.

I am seeing love in our healthcare workers. I am seeing love in the people that are offering to get groceries for people in their town. I am seeing love in the people offering to help out with homework and online schooling. I am seeing love in the people who are telling us the recovery numbers and the positive efforts being made during this trying time. I am seeing love in the people who maybe haven't been going to Mass in person, but now they are hopping online to engage in spiritual connection and may come back to the faith in person when this pandemic is over. I am seeing love in the people who are interceding in others' lives through prayer.



God is reaching out to us during these difficult times, and it can be so, so hard to see that during times of war and illness. It could be easy to fall into temptations of unhealthy behaviors that make us feel good but may not be spiritually good. It could be so hard to see Jesus' never-ending love during times of anxiety and stress.

With that, I have some tips for you to include more of God in your life and fewer attacks of anxiety, boredom, and temptation.

- My first tip is to pray the Jesus prayer daily. The Jesus Prayer is, "Lord, Jesus Christ, have mercy on me." Make it a routine to pray for a few minutes every day. Start by saying it out loud, you can even get your family involved. After saying it out loud for a few days, you may find yourself praying it mentally within yourself often. This prayer is a prayer of humility and worship that helps refocus the mind away from temptation.
- My next tip is a big one. Create a routine for yourself to keep yourself energized and less sluggish. My recommendations are to include time for prayer, school work, exercise, family game time, and self-care time, whether that includes playing video games, doing your makeup, doing a facemask, making a smoothie, whatever!
- Another great tip is making sure you are eating well and drinking plenty of water. Did you know that the foods you eat could affect your mental health? The foods we put in our bodies affect our hormone levels, which affect our mood.
- Another tip is to journal. Let out all your thoughts on paper. List everything that is overwhelming you, and then list everything that you are grateful for.
- Another big tip is to keep physical distance but don't keep social distance. Stay connected via phone, text message, and video chatting platforms, and keep your physical distance from others to protect yourself and them.
- My last tip is to engage in deep breathing. We often breathe through our chests, but our focus should be on belly breathing. Belly breathing calms the body down; try taking deep breaths for about 8-10 seconds while focusing on a word, phrase, or prayer.

If you ever feel like you need more support, please reach out to the core team and your peers. We want you to know that you are not alone, and God is with you every step of the way. In the book of James Chapter 4 verse 8, James tells us, "Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you of two minds." What Jesus' Word is saying here is that there is always an opportunity to draw closer to our Lord, and Jesus is going to draw closer



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to us when we put in that same effort. He is also fittingly telling us to wash our hands! Hahaha, what he really means is to confess our sins to God, which will help us draw closer to Him and calm our mind that can be filled with both confusion and a strong faith.

Please know that Jesus is within all of you, for you all were made in the image of God, and He can't leave you. While we may not come together for Mass or youth ministry in person, we are all here for you!