

Peer Pressure

Pages L-1 through L-4
Fireside Catholic Youth Bible - NEXT

Song: Follow the Light
Words and Music by: Putorti/Dutkiewicz

CD 2, Track 2
FCYB Music CDs

Materials Needed

Fireside Catholic Youth Bible - NEXT, FCYB Music CDs, CD player, markerboard or chalkboard and a copy for each teen of the list for the “The Pressure is On” Large Group Activity, small candy bars as prizes for the “Bible Aerobics” Large Group Activity.

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Proclaim Isaiah 42:16 (Have this Scripture verse written on a markerboard or chalkboard for all to see.)
Follow with:

Lord, help me to turn from the darkness sometimes in front of me and follow the light. . . to follow only You. Shower me with grace to remain calm under pressure and cool in the heat of the battle. In my search for answers inspire me to take Your hand and look to Your word for guidance. When I am tempted, give me strength; when I feel pressured, give me peace of mind and when I have fallen and am in pain, help me to stand again.

Play the song “Follow The Light” by Putorti/Dutkiewicz. CD 2, Track 2 of the FCYB Music CDs.

Large Group Discussion – “The Meaning of Free Will” (15 minutes)

Read the Roots of our Faith article on page L-3 in the **Fireside Catholic Youth Bible – NEXT**. Discuss the teens’ answers to these questions:

How would you define free will?

Can you think of any other creature besides man that has free will?

Why do you think God chose to empower us with free will?

Large Group Activity/Discussion - “The Pressure is On” (15 minutes)

Introduce this activity by reading the Your Decision/Your Reward article on page L-1 in the **Fireside Catholic Youth Bible – NEXT**. Give each teen a copy of the following list. Ask them to rank the list in order of what they feel most pressure to do (1) to what they feel least pressure to do (10). Encourage everyone in the group to share and discuss their answers. Then, tabulate the cumulative totals on a markerboard or chalkboard. Ask the teens if there are any other things that they sometimes feel pressured to do. Add them to the list and discuss the results.

_____ using foul language

_____ lying

_____ drinking alcohol

_____ using drugs

_____ having pre-marital sex

_____ speeding

_____ participating in cult activities

_____ stealing

_____ cheating

_____ breaking curfew

Large Group Activity – “Bible Aerobics” (20 minutes)

Have teens look up the Scriptures on page L-2 in the **Fireside Catholic Youth Bible – NEXT** using the “*Bible Aerobics*” method. After each Scripture is read, discuss what “bad habit” the Scripture is referring to and how this Scripture will help when you are tempted.

Explanation of “*Bible Aerobics*” - Each teen has a Bible. The Scripture reference is announced and the teens race to see who can find the passage in their Bibles the fastest. A small candy bar or other prize can be awarded the winner of each search.

After all the Scriptures have been found and read, discuss the teens’ answers to these questions:

Are you pressured by your peers to do any of these?

What other things are you pressured to do?

Can peers ever pressure you in a positive way? How? Give examples.

Do you think Christ felt peer pressure? Why? Why not?

Large Group Discussion – “The Ultimate Peer Pressure” (5 minutes)

Prayerfully read the 1 on 1 with Christ article on page L-4 in the **Fireside Catholic Youth Bible - NEXT**. Ask the teens to offer their thoughts about this way of looking at peer pressure.

Closing Prayer

Say the following prayer (or a similar one from your heart):

Lord Jesus, Help me to put my faith in You and to obey God so that no matter what pressure I feel I will not make bad decisions. Increase my faith so I can follow You and change the world for the better. Saint Aloysius Gonzaga, pray for us, Amen.

Bed Thinks

When you go to bed tonight . . .

Think about the one thing that you marked on your list that you feel the most pressured to do. Ask God to help you not to give in to peer pressure when tempted commit this sin.

(Type this message on a small piece of paper and give to each teen as they leave.)

Peer Pressure

Pages L-5 through L-8
Fireside Catholic Youth Bible - NEXT

Song: Follow the Light
Words and Music by: Putorti/Dutkiewicz

CD 2, Track 2
FCYB Music CDs

Materials Needed

Fireside Catholic Youth Bible – NEXT, FCYB Music CDs, CD player, a lamp and a bushel basket for the What Jesus Said Large Group Discussion, pens/pencils and paper for developing a skit in the Putting My Faith Into Action Small Group Activity.

Setting the Stage

As the teens gather, have the song “*Follow the Light*” by Putorti/Dutkiewicz playing in the background. CD 2, Track 2 of the FCYB CDs.

Opening Prayer

A Disciple’s Prayer about Peer Pressure

Lord Jesus, help me to put my faith in You and to obey God so that no matter what pressure I feel, I will not make bad decisions. Increase my faith so I can follow You and change the world for the better in my example for others. In Your name I pray, Amen.

What Jesus Said

Large Group Discussion – “Your Light Must Shine” (20 minutes)

After turning off or dimming all overhead lights, place a small lamp on a table or desktop. Turn the lamp on and place a bushel basket over the lamp. Ask the teens to pause for a few moments of silent prayer in the darkness. Then remove the basket allowing the light to shine. Standing close to the lamp, proclaim Matthew 5:14-16 from the text pages in the **Fireside Catholic Youth Bible – NEXT**. Then discuss the teens’ answers to these questions:

In this Scripture passage, what do you think the light represents?

Why does Jesus say we shouldn’t put a bushel basket over the light?

What does the bushel basket represent in our lives?

Why does He say that the light must shine? How do we “let our light shine” in life?

Share a time when he/she was influenced by the actions of someone else in a positive way. Emphasize that the other person’s actions represented “the light” for you in that instance. Discuss how peer pressure between teens can be a positive thing. Follow-up by discussing the teens’ answers to these questions:

Can you give a specific instance of how one of your friend’s actions or example influenced you in a positive way? (Encourage the teens to share from their experiences times when they saw Christ in someone else’s good deeds. -- Remember, these don’t have to be big things. Discuss even how the smallest gestures can provide a positive influence on others.)

Conclude by reading the What Jesus Said article on page L-6 in the **Fireside Catholic Youth Bible – NEXT**.

What Jesus Did

Large Group Discussion – “The Risk of Believing in Christ” (15 minutes)

Proclaim John 12:42-43 on top of page L-5 in the **Fireside Catholic Youth Bible – NEXT**. Then discuss the teens’ answers to these questions:

What is happening in this Scripture passage?

What were the believers in this passage not willing to risk?

What role do you think risk plays in both positive and negative peer pressure?

Together, read the What Jesus Did article on page L-5 in the **Fireside Catholic Youth Bible – NEXT**.

Putting My Faith Into Action

Small Group Activity – “Peer Pressure Skits” (20 minutes)

Read the To Make or Break and Tips for Talking entries on page L-7 in the **Fireside Catholic Youth Bible – NEXT**. Then, divide the teens into smaller groups. Have each small group develop a skit to demonstrate one of the following scenarios:

What Jesus Did – Develop a skit demonstrating a “real-life” situation where a person might deny their belief in Jesus because they want approval of their peers.

Make – Develop a similar scenario to demonstrate how your response to peer pressure could produce a positive example of peer pressure.

Tips for Talking – Develop a skit demonstrating how you could respond to other teens who might be pressuring you to participate in some sinful behavior similar to the use of bad language.

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Read the In My Example article beginning at the bottom of page L-7 in the **Fireside Catholic Youth Bible – NEXT** as a prayer reflection. Close by praying together an “Our Father,” a “Hail Mary” and a “Glory Be.”

Mindful in the Morning

When you wake up in the morning, before you get out of bed . . .

Pray for the courage to let your light shine today.

(Type this message on a small piece of paper and give to each teen as they leave.)