

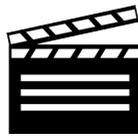


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THE GREAT  
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# Movie Night: Why Media Matters

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*A free lesson plan for Catholic youth ministers*



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# Catechetical Lesson Plan

Structured on the ecclesial method of Msgr. Francis D. Kelly

## About this Resource:

This lesson plan was created as a free resource for Catholic youth ministers and confirmation teachers to teach **media literacy** in a fun and interactive way, grounded in the Catholic Church's wisdom on media. Please feel free to share and adapt this resource in whatever way suits your group best.

## Objectives for Deeper Understanding:

This night is intended to help teens come to a deeper understanding of the influence of media, especially movies. They will learn to **identify messages and attitudes in film**, whether subtle or overt, and discern whether they align with the Catholic worldview. While media content (sexuality, violence, etc) may be discussed, the primary focus is media *messages*.

## Objectives for Inviting Learners to a Change of Heart:

The primary goal is simply for teens to start asking the right questions about their media choices, and to increase their media literacy (regardless of their media choices). The subsequent goal is for them to internally decide to limit their intake of negative content.

## Proclamation:

"Your media choices matter" /  
"You are what you eat."

## Scriptural Foundation:

"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will." (Romans 12:2)

## Church Teaching Foundation:

"The first duty of recipients of social communication is to be **discerning and selective**. They should inform themselves about media—their structures, mode of operation, contents—and make responsible choices, according to ethically sound criteria, about what to read or watch or listen to." (Ethics in Communication, 25)

## Materials Needed:

- Laptop
- Projector
- Speakers
- Visual presentation files
- Icebreaker materials
- Small Group Questions handout
- Quote Handout for the teens

## Additional Files:

All the accompanying files you need are available for free download at:

[www.jpccatholic.com/movienight](http://www.jpccatholic.com/movienight)

These include the "Prezi" visual presentation files with movie clips embedded, more ice breakers, handouts, further reading, and promotional flyers.

# Movie Night Outline

## 90 MINUTES TOTAL

### Preparation:

- ▶ Icebreaker (15 min)
- ▶ Opening Prayer (5 min)

### Proclamation & Explanation:

- ▶ Youth Minister Talk “What’s in your media diet?” (15 min)
- ▶ Group Discussion of Movie Clips (30 min)

### Application:

- ▶ Witness talk by youth core team member (5 min)
- ▶ Small Groups (10 min)

### Celebration:

- ▶ Optional: JPCatholic info and “Letter to Artists” video (5 min)
- ▶ Closing Prayer (5 min)

# Preparation

## ▶ Icebreaker

Start off the night with an icebreaker conducive to your group size. Below are three options that tie-in to the theme, with Option 1 being most relevant.

### OPTION 1: Blindfolded Eating Contest

Best for: 20-500 teens

**Before:** Purchase a variety of single-serving pies (or any other dessert – the messier and healthier the better). Decide how many contestants you will have (3-5 works best), and prepare each portion beforehand, out of sight. Set up a table in front of the group with a chair for each contestant.

**To begin:** Ask for 3-5 brave volunteers for a “blindfolded eating contest.” Select a mix of guys and girls. Once your chosen volunteers have come up to the front, explain the game: This is a blindfolded, hand-tied food-eating contest, and you don’t know what food you are going to get until you bite into it. (Make sure that none of the contestants have food allergies). The first contestant to finish everything on their plate will win a prize.

Seat them down and blindfold them. Tie their hands behind their backs. Bring out the pies, setting an equal portion in front of each one. Explain that they need to keep eating until you take their blindfold off, signifying that they have successfully finished everything on the plate.

On “Go” the contestants bury their face in their plates and try to finish first. Everyone else watching cheers them on. Once the first person is finished, end the contest and take everyone’s blindfolds off. Give a prize to the winner.

**OPTION 2: Movie Charades**

Best for: 8-30 teens  
See attached resource

**OPTION 3: Character Mingle**

Best for: 30-60 teens  
See attached resource

**► Opening Prayer**

Begin by briefly introducing the night:

- First reference the pie-eating icebreaker. Ask the volunteers how they felt about not knowing what they were about to bite into.
- Ask them if they've heard the phrase **"You are what you eat"**
- Ask the group to suppose that all they ate for a year was pie. What would happen to their bodies?
- Draw the comparison with media. Ask them if they've ever considered their choices in movies, music, TV as a "media diet"
- Tonight is about how our life in Christ relates to our entertainment decisions, and how they have the potential to affect our minds and souls.

**Opening prayer:**

*Jesus, we thank you for the opportunity to gather here tonight and reflect on what it means to be your disciples. Holy Spirit, we ask that you come and enlighten our minds to always be open to your guidance, and to your gifts of understanding and right judgment. Help us to see all things as God sees, to love what is true and good and beautiful. And to be saddened by all that is contrary to your law of love, contrary to our dignity as individuals, or opposed to the Truth. Lord, we want to be your disciple in all aspect of our lives. Give us the gift of discernment to make wise decisions in all things, including what we choose for entertainment.*

*Saint John Paul II, we ask for your intercession to be responsible media consumers, to always seek truth, beauty, and goodness in art.*

*Our Father...*

# Proclamation & Explanation

The proclamation is the key concept or phrase that teens should be able to remember at the end of the night. Depending on your age group, word the proclamation as either:

- **"Your media choices matter"**
- **"You are what you eat"**

The proclamation should also be visibly present in the room.

## ► Youth Minister talk: ***What's in your media diet?***

This talk is the primary catechesis of the night, and should establish five key points. Before you start, give a copy of the **"Quote Sheet" handout** to each teen. This handout gives them something to hang on to, and it will allow you to ask teens to read each quote as it comes up.

### **1. We spend a lot of time with media**

- Ask the group how much time they think the average teen spends consuming media every day, then show the infographic. Teens spend an average of **7.5 hours per day** using and consuming media in some way or another. TV, internet browsing, social media, texting, video games, listening to music, multitasking, etc. To compare, they spend an average of 7.25 hours every day sleeping. And an average of 7 minutes per day in meaningful conversation with their family.
- [It can be tempting to launch into a discussion of whether or not so much media is healthy. For right now, just use this statistic to reinforce the following point.]

## 2. Media does affect us, for better or for worse.

- Ask the question: *“Do you guys really believe that media affects you? That movies, music, books, and TV influences how you think or behave? Show of hands.”*
- **Draw the distinctions between different kinds of effects.**
  - » For virtually all of us, watching a movie about a serial killer does not incite us to go on a killing spree. But there are much more subtle and gradual ways that media can affect us.
  - » Ask them how many characters with their TV shows and movies are sleeping together before they’re married. The number is too large to count. A lot of young people can feel that they are crazy for saving sex for marriage, because so many of their peers and people on TV have “normalized” it.
- **Objection: “Culture influences media”**
  - » Some might just say that movies simply reflect the way culture is these days. Ask the group: *“Does culture affect what’s in movies, or do movies affect what’s in culture?”* Hopefully you will get answers on both sides, because the answer is “both/and.”
  - » Have a teen read **Quote #1- “Media is a mirror that helps shape the reality it reflects.”** (Ethics in Advertising, 3) The Church says it’s a two-way street! Media is made by people who are part of culture, but it can also reinforce or change what that culture looks like.
- **Science agrees.** An important point to mention is that aside from what the Church says, sociologists have also measured such effects. Several studies have shown that media can influence attitudes, beliefs, and even behavior. What kind of effects and to what extent is more up for debate, but many agree that media - film, books, video games, music - can have a formative power, especially on young people.
- For example, Common Sense Media, an organization which helps study and publish research on media, says: “We believe that

media has truly become “the other parent” in [kids’] lives, powerfully affecting their mental, physical, and social development.”

- **When is the human brain fully developed?** See if anyone knows the answer. It’s approx. age 25, with females usually slightly faster than males. Emphasize that they are at a point in their life when they are still very affected by peer pressure. Media is a type of peer pressure.

## 3. Each piece of media has a worldview, and it may or may not align with the Catholic worldview.

- Media such as Hollywood blockbusters are essentially huge broadcasts where a few individuals – directors, producers, screenwriters, editors – get to send their message out to massive amounts of people. Their art is something that is entering millions of homes, being seen by millions of people.
- Every single person has a worldview - a set of beliefs or a philosophy about the world. And it may not always align with the Catholic worldview – of human dignity, of sexuality, of religion, of violence, of marriage, etc. (A very common philosophy in our postmodern culture is moral relativism.)
- **Art reflects the artist**, whether it’s intentional or not. A screenwriter may not always be meaning to send a message, but some kind of worldview is essentially inherent in every story because that story came from an artist’s mind. Sometimes it’s subtle and unintentional, and other times it’s quite obvious they have an agenda (whether that be positive or negative).
- Have a student read **Quote #2 “...the cinema is a universal and esteemed medium from which messages are often sent which are capable of influencing and conditioning the choices of the public, and especially young people”** (Saint John Paul II, 29th World Communications Day)
- Many of the people who work in Hollywood don’t have the same worldview as we do, which means some dangerous attitudes get mixed in to their movies. Or more likely, it may be beautiful and truthful, but with some

dangerous untruths mixed in.

#### 4. Media is a tool, and it can be used for great good or great evil.

- It's important at this point to bring a positive aspect into the conversation, and mention how the Church has embraced social communications as a force that can be used for good.
- Have a student read **Quote #3 "Do not be afraid of new technologies! These rank among the marvelous things which God has placed at our disposal to discover, to use..."** (Saint John Paul II, *The Rapid Development*)
- Use the analogy of a stone, a neutral object that can be used to build a house or kill a person. So too media is a tool that can be used for good or evil.
  - » At the negative extremes we find media such as pornography or Hitler's propaganda videos.
  - » On the other hand, mention some positive examples of media (Maybe *The Passion of the Christ*, or more secular movies such as *The Blindside*, *The Lord of the Rings*, or *Up*. Or documentaries such as *Bully* that put you in someone else's shoes.)
- **Stories are extremely powerful.** They reach us in ways that rational argument sometimes cannot, by appealing to our emotional side and introducing us to characters with which we identify. This can move us closer to goodness, or incline us away from it. Ask the group how many of them have been deeply inspired and moved by a story before? Ask them which stories.
- Have another teen read **Quote #4 "The cinema, with its vast possibilities, could become a powerful means of evangelization."** (Saint John Paul II)
  - » Evangelization may not always mean an explicitly Christian message. Sometimes it's simply opening people's hearts up to start asking questions and seeing the world in a new light.

#### 5. Our entertainment choices matter

- Bring back the analogy of media choices being a diet. You may want to reference the documentary film *Supersize Me*, in which one man actually did eat fast food three meals a day, for a full month.
- One Big Mac might not have an effect. Or even two or three. But over time, if all we're putting in our bodies is junk food, it's going to wear on our bodies. **"You are what you eat."**
- How much more important than the health of the body is the health of the soul! What kind of effect is our music and movies having on our minds? Is it drawing us closer to truth and beauty and goodness, or moving us away from that, ever so slowly?
- It's "just entertainment" isn't a good excuse. Because over time the entertainment we consume - just like the friends we choose - has an effect on the kind of person we become.

Order	Middle School Groups	High School Groups
1	Easy A (PG-13)	The Hangover (R)
2	Catching Fire (PG-13)	The Fellowship of the Ring (PG-13)
3	Twix Commercial (TV)	Twix Commercial (TV)
4	Chronicle (PG-13)	Saving Private Ryan (R)
5	The Big Bang Theory (TV)	The Change-Up (R)

## ► Group Discussion of Movie Clips

This serves as an interactive part of the night, where teens get the chance to exercise their critical thinking on real examples. Each movie clip should serve as an occasion for specific talking points. The more of a discussion it is, the better, because hopefully the teens will come to the relevant conclusions without you needing to reveal them. Let a couple teens voice their thoughts after each video, and then before you move on, make sure the correct conclusions are reached and then confirm them.

Based on your group’s age and maturity level, there are two different sets of video clips to watch. If you have longer than 90 minutes for this night, you might choose to screen more than just 5 clips. All 9 clips are embedded in the one visual presentation file (Prezi).

Disclaimer: Some of the High School Group clips are from R-rated movies; however, the scenes chosen are not explicit.

**Note: this discussion is not necessarily about giving any movie a “thumbs up” or a “thumbs down” - it’s about analyzing short clips in and of themselves, and training teens to spot messages and worldviews.**



### Easy A (middle school 1)

**Introduce clip:** *Easy A* is a modern day retelling of *The Scarlet Letter*, centered on Olive, a high school student who is labeled the “school slut” based off of a lie she told combined with malicious teenager gossip. Marianne is a Christian classmate who helps spread this rumor and is extremely judgmental of Olive for her reputation to sleep around.

**Play clip:** *Marianne is leading a small group of high school Christians in a prayer circle on campus. She says of Olive: “We need to pray for her... but we also need to get her the hell out of here.” Her attitude is one of self-righteousness, condescension, and false charity. (1:33)*

**Discussion:** Ask the teens if they think this clip had positive or negative messages.

**Context is key.** Point out how some true things were being said, but they were coming from characters who were antagonists. Christianity was mocked and chastity promises were made out to be cheesy. Remind the teens to constantly be aware of how our faith and our worldview are being treated on screen.



## Catching Fire (middle school 2)

**Introduce clip:** This scene from the second installment of *The Hunger Games* franchise follows Katniss and Peeta as they embark on a victory tour to all the districts of Panem. They arrive in District 11, which is an especially poignant moment for Katniss, because her fellow tribute Rue – who died in the first movie – was from this district.

**Play clip:** *Peeta and Katniss have cards from Effie, who instructed them to give a scripted speech she wrote for them. Peeta ditches the cards and starts speaking from his heart, offering the families of Rue and Thresh a portion of his winnings for the rest of their lives. Katniss follows it up with an emotional speech about how Rue was too young, too gentle to die. And how she tried to save her but failed. This provokes among the crowd a peaceful expression of solidarity and rejection of tyranny. The soldiers from the Capitol pull Katniss off stage to end her speech, kill a man in the crowd, and beat down the civilians. (3:26)*

**Discussion:** Ask the teens what are some of the positive themes coming across in this clip? This scene is a **beautiful expression of the dignity of each and every life**, and the impact they have on those around them.

If you are not showing the *Saving Private Ryan* clip, you may also use this clip to springboard a discussion of “when is violence appropriate in movies?” Context is important, and this movie utilizes portrayals of violence to point out its wickedness.



## The Hangover (high school 1)

**Introduce clip:** Ask them how many have seen *The Hangover*, to get a feel for their perspective. For those who haven't seen it, explain the context of the scene: Stu and his buddies are about to leave for Las Vegas for a bachelor's party weekend.

**Play clip:** *The scene is in Stu's house with his live-in girlfriend Melissa. She expresses her concerns that Stu and his buddies are going to exploit young women at a strip club; she laments how disgusting those places are, and reminds Stu that the woman on stage is somebody's daughter. (1:25)*

**Discussion:** Ask the teens if they thought the messages in the clip are positive or negative. You'll want to make sure the following points are brought up before you move on:

- Were truths being said? Yes. But who was saying them? A character whom the movie leads us to view as nagging and overprotective.
- **Context is key.** What message comes across now, when the truth is coming out of the mouth of a character we are made to dislike? The truth is being mocked in a way.
- Stu is lying to his girlfriend about where he's going. Does the film show this to be harmful, or amusing?
- Stu and his girlfriend live together before they're married – along with the countless other couples on TV. This issue is not even questioned. It just contributes to the factor where we are supposed to consider this normal.



## The Fellowship of the Ring

(high school 2)

**Introduce clip:** Ask them how many have seen *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy. Just explain that the scene is a conversation between Gandalf the wizard and Frodo the hobbit, as Frodo grapples with the burden of his quest to destroy the One Ring.

**Play clip:** *Gandalf and Frodo talk in the Mines of Moria. Frodo says it's a pity that his uncle didn't kill Gollum when he had the chance. Gandalf responds: "Pity? It was pity that stayed Bilbo's hand. Many that live deserve death, and many that die deserve life. Can you give it to them, Frodo? Do not be so quick to deal out death and judgment." Gandalf later offers more wisdom: "All you have to decide is what to do with the time that is given to you." (2:06)*

**Discussion:** This clip has several positive messages and themes:

- Gandalf's words are reminiscent of Christ's: "Let those without sin throw the first stone."
- It can lead the audience to ask "What are YOU doing with the time given to you?"
- This may not be a "Christian" movie, but there are a lot of Christian truths underneath the surface.
- If you wish, ask the youth how they can tell the truthful messages are being taken seriously:
  - » It's coming from a good character that we are made to respect.
  - » Even the music disposes us to find it inspiring.



## Twix Commercial "Need a Moment?"

(middle school 3 / high school 3)

**Introduce clip:** The next clip is not from a movie at all; rather, it's a commercial. Some studies suggest we are exposed to up to 5,000 ads of various types per day. Mention that even though commercials are created to sell a product, oftentimes other worldviews or messages may come through.

**Play clip:** *The commercial is set in a café, where a man and his girlfriend - or wife - are having coffee. His phone buzzes on the table while he's up, and she reads his text. When he returns she accuses him: "Someone named Terri says 'I need you right now?'" Caught in cheating, he scrambles for a lie to save himself. He bites into Twix and comes up with an escape: "Oh, Terri... that's my boss! He is so demanding." They laugh it off. The phone buzzes again and she looks at it: "Don't forget the whipped cream???" He scrambles: "For ... his latte." She believes him and they laugh it off again. (0:30)*

**Discussion:** Ask the teens for a show of hands: "Who laughed?" If it's true, admit that you did too when you first saw it. It's hard not to laugh, because the commercial is designed to evoke that response. However, ask them if there's anything wrong with this commercial:

- The main problem: **this commercial makes light of an issue that is not funny.** Adultery is not a laughing matter. It can tear apart even good Catholic families, and causes a lot of heartbreak. Maybe you know some people affected by it. Cheating (whether it's on a wife or just a girlfriend – we don't know) shouldn't

be treated so lightly.

- The commercial goes even further, and makes it seem humorous that the man is lying to his wife to cover the affair up.
- Ask the youth if any stereotypes are present in the ad: The woman is made out to be completely naïve and gullible, to fall for so obvious a liar.
- Adding to that there is a sexual reference with the whipped cream. What is this doing in a candy commercial?



## Saving Private Ryan (high school 4)

**Introduce clip:** Ask them how many have seen *Saving Private Ryan*. The movie takes place in WWII and is about Captain John Miller and his unit who have been tasked to retrieve a soldier named Ryan, who is fighting on enemy lines somewhere deep in France. This clip takes place right after Miller's company of American soldiers finish a skirmish with some Germans. Rather than executing the surviving captured German, Miller has mercy on him and lets him go, despite the bitterness of several American soldiers. One soldier gets angry and tries to desert, causing a confrontation among the American soldiers.

**Play clip:** *One American soldier is pointing a gun at the deserting American soldier, keeping him from leaving. The situation is very tense. Captain Miller interrupts the verbal barrage: "What's the pool on me up to now?" He is referring to the bets*

*his company has been placing on what Miller's job was before the war. "I'm a school teacher." And he proceeds to launch into a simple yet inspiring speech about what his life was like before the war. He ends with "Just know that every man I kill, the further away from home I feel." (3:35)*

**Discussion:** Ask them what messages they believe came through in the clip, and if they are positive or negative:

- The highlight of this clip is Captain Miller's attitude toward violence. He values human life, and views violence as the tragedy it is. "Every man I kill, the further away from home I feel." Overall the clip has very positive messages.
- This clip was also chosen to be a springboard for discussion of violence in films. When is it appropriate and when is it inappropriate?
- *Saving Private Ryan* was rated R for graphic violence. *Saw* was rated R for graphic violence. Ask the youth if there is a difference between the two movies' portrayal of violence.

» **When it comes to violence, context is extremely important!** *Saving Private Ryan* uses depictions of graphic violence to remind us of the horrors of war, so that we do not repeat it again. *Saw* uses depictions of graphic violence for what? To disgust us? To terrify us? It is the focal point of the movie.

» Ask them if they have ever seen a movie where violence and revenge is glorified? Or movies where graphic violence is made out to be a source of comedy? Is that an appropriate treatment of violence?

» The MPAA ratings are merely a starting point. They don't always take context and messages into account. Don't automatically condemn an R-rated film, but on the flipside don't automatically think a PG-13 movie will be OK. Judge each movie individually by its messages and content. (And use trailers and reviews to help you in your decisions.)



## The Change-Up (high school 5)

**Introduce clip:** Ask them how many have seen the *Change-Up*. It's about two men who are dissatisfied with their lives and both wish that they could be in the other's shoes. Due to magic, they somehow unwittingly switch bodies. By the end of the movie, both of them realize their mistake and come to wish they had their own lives back. The following clip is at the end of the movie when Dave finally wakes up back in his own body.

**Play clip:** *Dave wakes up next to his wife in their bedroom, hearing a baby's cry down the hall. He looks in the mirror and is overjoyed that he is back in his own body. He excitedly wakes up his wife and apologizes to her for being a jerk and a workaholic over the past five years. He promises to change, and he means it. Their baby cries again, and his wife says, "It's my turn." Dave insists that he'll take care of it instead, and goes to the babies' room and has a heartwarming moment with his three kids, as he realizes how much he loves them.*

**Discussion:** Ask the teens if the messages in this clip were positive or negative.

- Hopefully they will respond with "positive." Ask them why. The primary message in this clip is that family is the most important thing. Dave finally realizes his mistakes from the past several years and has come to a point of conviction, resolving to be a better husband and father.
- However, to all those teens who have seen the FULL movie... ask them if they would

recommend the movie to their parents, or to their friends at youth group?

- Is wading through a pit of negative content worth it just to get a positive message at the end?
  - » Mention the heaps of troublesome content in *The Change-Up* (which is an R-rated comedy). There is a lot of nudity, a false perception of human sexuality, raunchy humor, excessive profanity, graphic sexual dialogue, and part of the film even takes place at a porn set.
  - » There is so much offensive and immoral content in *The Change-Up* that it's hard to recommend, regardless of any positive messages it might have.
- The primary lesson youth should take from this clip: **a positive message may not justify a movie, if it is bogged down with excessive immoral content.**



## Chronicle (middle school 4)

**Introduce clip:** *Chronicle* is a found-footage sci-fi film about three teenage boys who mysteriously receive telekinetic powers. This scene takes place at a party after Andrew - who has previously been a social outcast - starts to receive social recognition from his classmates for his "magic trick" abilities at the talent show.

**Play clip:** *Andrew and his two friends are enthusiastically welcomed to the party. Drunken teens are drinking out of red solo cups, playing beer pong, and having a typical underage party. A*

girl starts flirting with Andrew, and they eventually go upstairs to a bedroom. His friend Steve, stands outside the door and says to the camera with a big grin, "Tonight, Andrew becomes a man." (2:42)

**Discussion:** Ask the youth if they see any issues with this particular clip.

- **How is substance abuse portrayed?** Does it portray underage drinking to be cool, and a path to social acceptance? Does it mention any real-life consequences of alcohol abuse, such as death, injuries, increased risk of sexual assault, or brain development problems?
- **Losing one's virginity is portrayed as the entryway to adulthood,** regardless of love, commitment, or maturity.



## The Big Bang Theory (middle school 5)

**Introduce clip:** During this episode (Season 7: Episode 4 "The Raiders Minimization"), Leonard has been upset over a book his mom wrote about him called "The Disappointing Child". His girlfriend Penny tries to cheer him up, and Leonard takes advantage of her sympathy.

**Play clip:** Howard knocks on Leonard's office door to get lunch. Leonard opens the door a little out of breath, and we see Penny in the background buttoning up her blouse. After Penny leaves, Howard congratulates Leonard on having sex with Penny at work. Leonard explains how he's been manipulating Penny to do whatever he wants, and says "I'm not proud of it, but it does work." Howard says, "You sound kind of proud of it." Leonard responds, "I really am" and the laugh track punctuates the scene. (0:56)

**Discussion:** Ask the youth what attitudes are present in this clip. First off, Leonard is manipulating his girlfriend for sexual pleasure, and the laugh track tells us it's funny. Discuss how **laugh tracks can manipulate responses from us.**

Second, even deeper than that, **this TV show assumes a world in which it is completely healthy and normal for two people to have sex before they're married.** If we're not careful, this kind of show can contribute to the "normalization" of such behavior in our minds.

## Conclusion of Movie Clips

To wrap up this section of the night, have a teen read **Quote #5:**

- **"The first duty of recipients of social communication is to be discerning and selective. They should inform themselves about media—their structures, mode of operation, contents—and make responsible choices, according to ethically sound criteria, about what to read or watch or listen to."** (Ethics in Communication, 25)
- Tell the youth they have two choices: They can be **passive** media consumers who blindly eat what is given to them (reference the blindfolded icebreaker), or they can be **active** media viewers, who think critically about the messages coming across in their favorite TV show, or the lyrics being sung, or the attitudes in their books. To be constantly on guard and able to recognize that which is contrary to our Catholic worldview.
- **Action Items:** Give the teens some specific ways in which they can be "discerning and selective" media viewers. Bring back the analogy of the media diet - usually you look at a menu or get some recommendations before ordering at a restaurant.
  - » **Read Movie Reviews** (some links are listed on their Quote Sheet)
  - » **Watch Trailers.** These can give you a great sampling of what a movie will be like.
  - » **Ask trusted friends** for their opinion.

# Application

## ► Witness Talk

This is a chance for a mature youth member of your core team to give a witness talk relating to media consumption. Remind your potential speaker that it doesn't have to be very long; it's just good for the teens to hear the message reinforced by someone their own age. Here are some potential talking points:

- They can tell of a time when they felt **peer-pressured** into watching a movie or show they knew they shouldn't.
- They can discuss experiences in their own life where they have realized the impact of the media on their way of thinking or behaving.
- They can tell of a time where they decided to stop watching a TV show or deleted certain songs because they felt convicted to live out the Gospel in all aspects of their life.
- They could discuss the balance between being in the world and not of it. On how to be both **relevant to culture** and in touch with what's popular, but **without compromising** our values. Being a smart media viewer doesn't mean we need to "hide" from popular culture.
- This Scripture verse from Romans should be mentioned by someone at some point during the night. ***"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will."*** (Roman 12:2)

## ► Small Groups

Have the teens break into small groups of 4-8 teens each. Try to have a leader in each group to facilitate the discussion, using the questions below as a guideline (handouts are also attached):

1. **What was the last movie you saw? Overall did it have positive messages, negative messages, or mixed? Explain.**
2. **Was there ever a time when you felt peer pressured into watching something you knew was inappropriate? What was it, and what happened?**
3. **What is the movie or TV show that has inspired you the most to be a better person?**
4. **Has this night changed the way you look at media? Do you think your next viewing experience will be any different?**

# Celebration

## ► JPCatholic Info

This entire Media Night was put together by **John Paul the Great Catholic University** (nicknamed “JPCatholic”), and if there’s time at the end of the night, you are welcome to give a short plug for the University.

- This whole night has been about media consumption – because after all, everyone is a media consumer. But what about those Catholics who feel called to be **media creators**? To be artists of cinema or video games?
- John Paul the Great Catholic University is a solid Catholic college with hands-on programs in **film production, directing, screenwriting, animation, game art & design, acting, business, and theology.**
- Our mission is to “**Impact Culture for Christ**” – to create compelling entertainment that reaches mainstream audiences with Truth, Beauty, and Goodness.
- Students learn hands-on filmmaking from professors who are Christians in Hollywood
- If you have time, you can show the included **3-minute inspirational video** of JPCatholic media students reading some excerpts from **Saint John Paul II’s Letter to Artists.**

## ► Closing Prayer

Have an adult or youth team member lead the closing prayer. Perhaps something like:

*Heavenly Father, we thank you for bringing us together tonight and giving us the chance to learn more about messages in the media. We thank you so much for these amazing technologies that are able to bring such powerful stories to screen. We thank you for the gift of stories, stories that make us laugh, stories that inspire us, and stories*

*that give us a deeper understanding of who we are, and who you are. We ask you for the strength and resolve to be discerning and selective in our choices of entertainment, to always be aware of messages that are not in accordance with your Truth. Holy Spirit, give us the mind of Christ – help us to see everything through his eyes. Help us to be actively engaged in our culture without compromising our values. To be in this world but not of it. Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make our hearts like yours.*

*Hail Mary...*

*St. John Paul the Great...pray for us.*

# Footnotes

## Media File Instructions

This resource is accompanied by a visual presentation powered by Prezi ([www.prezi.com](http://www.prezi.com)). This presentation is ready to go and includes all of the movie clips embedded for your convenience.

Prezi is similar to Microsoft Powerpoint, but many find it more visually engaging. The file will work with both Macs and PCs. To view it, simply go to: <http://tinyurl.com/o4w5k5o>

- You can play the presentation from there as long as you are connected to the internet.
- If you will not have internet connection when you present - or if you have a slow connection - you will need to download the file to your computer (**450 MB**)
- Once the file loads, you can navigate between "slides" by using your mouse or keyboard.

## Additional Materials

To access additional resources, please go to [www.jp catholic.com/movienight](http://www.jp catholic.com/movienight) and download the .zip file including:

- **Further Reading** for you as the youth minister to help prepare for the night. This includes a selection of Church documents on media, relevant Scripture passages, and additional links.
- **Quote Handout** to give to the teens
- **Additional Ice Breaker options**
- **Small Group Questions** handout
- **Promotional Flyer** to hang up in your parish

## Sources

For specific sources on time usage statistics, Church documents, and more, please see the attached "Further Reading" document.

## Fair Use

Movie clips are property of their respective owners, and are able to be used as a tool for media literacy education in accordance with the guidelines of Fair Use. For more information, please read:

<http://www.cmsimpact.org/fair-use/related-materials/codes/code-best-practices-fair-use-media-literacy-education#general>

*Easy A* (2010) was produced by Screen Gems, Olive Bridge Entertainment. *The Hungers Games: Catching Fire* (2013) was produced by Color Force, Lionsgate. *The Big Bang Theory* (2007- ) is produced by Chuck Lorre Productions, Warner Bros. Television. *The Hangover* (2009) was produced by Warner Bros., Legendary Pictures, Green Hat Films. *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* (2001) was produced by New Line Cinema, Wingnut Films, The Saul Zaentz Company. *Need a Moment* commercial and the Twix brand is property of Mars. Inc. *Saving Private Ryan* (1998) was produced by DreamWorks SKG, Paramount Pictures, Amblin Entertainment. *The Change-Up* (2011) was produced by Universal Pictures, Relativity Media, Original Film/Big Kids Pictures.

## Contact

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