

SAINT PETER'S YOUTH MINISTRY
PARENT / YOUTH
HANDBOOK
2017-2018



You are about to change
THESE YOUNG PEOPLE'S LIVES.
DON'T LOSE SIGHT OF THAT.

Saint Peter's Youth Ministry
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Parent Letter

Dear St. Peter's Parents,

Welcome to the St. Peter's Youth Ministry. Thank you for allowing us to support you and your teenagers during this important time in their lives. St. Peter's Parish provides many opportunities for families to participate in our parish Youth Ministry. I invite you to read through this handbook with your teen(s) and discover which ways they can be involved.

As there are many opportunities for our teens to be involved, there are many parent roles to be filled, too. Parents, we invite you to...

- **VOLUNTEER** in our youth ministry. There are MANY opportunities, times, tasks: volunteering as a small group leader, help with fundraisers, be a chaperone for one of the social events, help w/session set-up/clean-up, be tech help with audio-visual & multi-media presentations, help video sessions/events and lots more!
- **PRAY...** Pray *for* your teen. Pray *with* your teen. Pray for all the adult leaders and staff who teach, lead and spend time sharing the Word of God with our young people.
- **PARTICIPATE IN THE LITURGICAL & SACRAMENTAL LIFE** of our parish. Go to Mass weekly/regularly. The Eucharist is the source and summit of our faith! Be an active member of St. Peter's Parish. Get involved!
- **SHARE YOUR OWN FAITH STORIES** with your teen. Share why your faith is important to you. Talk about the joys as well as your struggles and doubts in your efforts to live out your Catholic faith. Can they see in your life the joy and freedom that your faith gives you?
- **ENCOURAGE YOUR TEEN** to honestly examine their faith, to seek and listen for God's will in all areas of their life through regular prayer, reflection and time with Scripture.

Let us pray together for this wonderful ministry in our parish and in particular for the young people in our parish.

In Christ,



Angela Busby
Director of Youth Ministry

Notice of Receipt

I _____, the parent of _____ have received

the 2017-2018 St. Peter's Youth Ministry Handbook.

- ❖ I understand that I will be emailed or called to help as needed (make meals, drive, chaperone).
- ❖ I have explained to my teen that he/she is not to leave youth group unless a parent has been notified and the youth minister told.

Signature of Parent

Date

Contact Card

Each student is asked to complete a contact card every year. It provides parent cell phones, so you can be reached in case of emergency.

COMMUNICATION TO YOUTH, PARENTS, and PARISH

Information on youth ministry programs and events are distributed and available through:

- Youth Ministry pages on parish web site: www.stpetersolney.org/spy
- Facebook: StPeters YouthMinistry
- Instagram: Spy20832
- Twitter: @spy20832
- Youth Ministry Email updates. To subscribe, email: angela.busby@stpetersolney.org
- Flyers handed out at youth group
- The Parish Bulletin
- Postcards mailings
- Text messages



Parent Volunteer Form—2017-2018

Please return to Angela Busby.

Name: _____ Cell: _____

Email: _____

- Sunday Night Crew*:
 - Small Group leader
 - Hospitality/welcoming/Set up (needed from 6:45-7:30 pm)
- Food Crew:
 - Assist with picking up dinners for youth group
 - Organizing food and kitchen supplies
- Spiritual Crew: Spiritual support for youth ministry. Prayer chains, Mass Offerings
- Hospitality Crew*: Provide logistical support for special events. Set up, tear down
- Social Crew*: Help plan one youth group social night this year
- Graphics Crew: I make great flyers and social media graphics
- Shopping Crew: Pick up groceries or supplies
- Selling Crew: Sell tickets after Masses, short term, 15 minute commitment
- Organizing Crew: Sort supplies, pull items together for events
- Planning Crew: Plan and chaperone the following events:
 - October 27-29—Camping* March 17—Paintball *
 - November 25—Turkey Bowl (football)* May 12-13—Cupcakes for Life *
 - January 20—Ski Trip *
 - June 15—Beach Trip *
 - January 19—Mass and Rally for Life *
- Fundraising Crew: Plan and implement the following:
 - December 2-3—Christmas Bazaar* March 10—Trivia Night
 - February 13—Mardi Gras Dinner* June 25-29—VBS Aftercare*

* These opportunities require child protection certification. Contact Angela Busby.

YOUTH MINISTRY

Saint Peter's Catholic Church
Youth Ministry Mission Statement

Saint Peter's Catholic Church is committed to the reality that young people are an important and integral part of our parish community. The youth program seeks to foster maturing in faith of the youth of our parish and the surrounding community.

We affirm the gifts of our youth and we foster opportunities for young people to share their gifts with the larger community. The spiritual and social needs of the youth are to be met with the committed leadership, guidance and support of our parish adults. The adults and youth of our parish are therefore provided with the opportunity to grow together in Christian faith.

Through a variety of programs, events and outreach, we seek to draw young people into responsible participation in the life, work and mission of the parish community, to grow as disciples of Jesus Christ, and to foster the total personal and spiritual growth of all the parish youth. We believe this ministry is to, with, by, and for young people and is a blessing for the entire community.

Goals of Comprehensive Youth Ministry

Total youth ministry at Saint Peter's Parish, in light of these missions, calls the community to respond to the needs of our young people, and encourages the sharing of the unique gifts of our youth with the larger community. The Catholic Church has strong concern for our youth. The National Conference of Catholic Bishops have set forth three goals in their document "Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry" (1997). Saint Peter's Parish adopts these goals, as our own in ministering to the precious young people of our parish. These goals are:

- 1) To empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today.***
- 2) To draw young people to responsible participation in the life, mission, and work of the Catholic faith community.***
- 3) To foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person.***

These goals are brought to reality for our parish through the above support and utilization of the following components of comprehensive ministry of the Church.

ADVOCACY – engages the Church to examine its priorities and practices to determine how well young people are integrated into the life, mission, and work of the Catholic community.

CATECHESIS – helps adolescents develop a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and the Christian community, and increase their knowledge of the core content of the Catholic faith; helps young people enrich and expand their understanding of the Scriptures and the sacred tradition and their application of life today, and live more faithfully as disciples of Jesus Christ in their daily lives, especially through a life of prayer, justice, and loving service.

COMMUNITY LIFE – builds an environment of love, support, appreciation for diversity, and judicious acceptance that models Catholic principles; develops meaningful relationships; and nurtures Catholic faith. The ministry of community life is not only what we do (activity), but who we are (identity) and how we interact (relationships).

EVANGELIZATION – shares the good news of the reign of God and invites young people to hear about the Word Made Flesh. It enables young people to uncover and name the experience of a God already active and present in their lives.

JUSTICE & SERVICE – nurtures in young people a social consciousness and a commitment to a life of justice and service rooted in their faith in Jesus Christ, in the Scriptures, and in Catholic social teaching; empowers young people to work for justice by concrete efforts to address the causes of human suffering; and infuses the concepts of justice, peace, and human dignity into all ministry efforts.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT – calls forth, affirms, and empowers the diverse gifts, talents, and abilities of adults and young people in our faith communities for comprehensive ministry with adolescents.

PASTORAL CARE – is a compassionate presence in imitation of Jesus’ care of people, especially those who were hurting and in need. It involves promoting positive adolescent and family development, caring for youth and families in crisis, and providing guidance in making life decisions and moral choices.

PRAYER AND WORSHIP – celebrates and deepens young people’s relationship with Jesus Christ through the bestowal of grace, communal prayer and liturgical experiences; it awakens their awareness of the spirit at work in their lives; it incorporates young people more fully in the sacramental life of the Church, especially Eucharist; it nurtures their personal prayer life; and it fosters family rituals and prayer.

YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMS

EDGE (7th and 8th Graders)

EDGE is open to 7th-8th -8th grade parish youth and friends from both Catholic and public schools. Parents volunteers are needed to lead this group.

Objectives:

- to create a welcoming environment for middle school aged children to foster a personal relationship with Christ and a personal option for the Catholic faith in connection with their parish
- to channel the kids' youthful energy and creativity to intensify parish life for the entire family
- to encourage a spirit of responsibility and initiative amongst the kids, showing them that their love for Christ can make a difference in the world

HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH MINISTRY

The HS Youth Ministry is open to all 9-12th grade parish teens and friends from Catholic and public schools. We offer a welcoming and accepting environment rooted in our Catholic heritage; accepting of their world, expressions, questions, feelings, and insights.

We meet most Sundays throughout the school year and summer following the 6pm Youth Mass. Check schedule details on the website. Topics cover issues important to the life-faith experiences of teens. Christian community is formed through in-depth faith sharing, creative prayer, active learning experiences, and peer ministry.

A variety of other events are held during the year as well. These include guest speakers, games, and outings such as ski trip, scavenger hunts, retreats, service projects, inter-parish activities, regional rallies, national conferences and more.

PARISH YOUTH RETREATS

The Saint Peter's Youth Ministry offers several annual retreats for parish youth. The purposes of these retreats include:

- To evangelize the youth of our community.
- To build and deepen community in our parish, school and youth ministries.
- To deepen a sense of identity and involvement of young people with the Catholic Church.
- To teach about integration of faith and morals in everyday living.
- To foster a personal relationship with Jesus and an ownership of one's faith.

Parents are encouraged to support the participation of their children in these retreat experiences.

LITURGICAL MINISTERS

Youth are encouraged to take an active role in witnessing their faith and serving their parish community. Youth are welcome to serve the Saint Peter's parish family at the liturgies of the Eucharist in the liturgical ministries of Lector, Usher, Greeter, Altar Servers and in the Music Ministries. Training sessions will be arranged several times through the year.

DRAMA MINISTRY

LIVING STATIONS OF THE CROSS: On Good Friday, teens portray Jesus' suffering and death. Practices are on Sundays during Lent.

ATHLETICS

Saint Peter's Parish offers opportunities to young people to be involved in CYO sports. Athletic Ministry at Saint Peter's supports Christian sportsmanship, social and physical skill building, teamwork and more.

Additionally, we compete in activities around the county such as dodgeball, bubble ball, and other sporting events.

FUNDRAISING

There are opportunities to fundraise so that teens can afford some of our activities. Examples include:

Discount Cards

Christmas Bazaar

Mardi Gras Dinner

Fundraising Dinners

CHRISTIAN SERVICE

The life and teachings of Jesus call us to reach out and serve those in need. Our Catholic social justice teachings help us to understand our responsibility of Christian witness and service. Saint Peter's Parish total youth ministry is active in the educating and challenging our young people to live out this call within the parish and broader community.

SACRAMENTS CLASS FOR HIGH SCHOOLERS (RCIT)

We offer weekly classes for those coming into the Church and/or need catechesis for the sacraments. Classes meet on Wednesday evenings in the Youth Center.

WORLD YOUTH DAY

Each year the Church recognizes the value and gifts our young people have to offer. The youth are not the Church of tomorrow, but an active part of our Church today. Saint Peter's celebrates World Youth Day by attending pilgrimages throughout the world. Teens have travelled to Paris, Rome, Toronto, Cologne, Madrid, and Krakow. The next World Youth Day is in Panama in 2019.

NCYC

Every two years we participate in the National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC). This event is the largest gathering in the nation of Catholic high school youth. A range of 200-400 teens from the Archdiocese of Washington join over 25,000 teens from across the nation. At NCYC youth gather with teens celebrating their Catholic identity, are moved by inspiring and motivating nationally respected Catholic speakers, musicians and comedians, experience an awesome celebration of the Eucharist with fellow young Catholics.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP –Peer Ministry

There are multiple opportunities for youth to get involved in leadership within Saint Peter’s youth ministry. Teams involving youth leadership include:

- Junior High Youth Ministry
- High School Youth Ministry
- High School Retreat Team

EVENT GUIDELINES

RELEASE FORMS/PERMISSION SLIPS

In accordance with Archdiocesan guidelines, for each off-site event every youth participating in the function **MUST** have an Off-Site One-Time Activity Release form signed by a parent/guardian in order for the youth to attend. On the Activity Release forms all information must be fully completed (including medical information)

FULL PARTICIPATION

Youth must remain at the site of activity/event during the entire time of event, whether on/off parish grounds unless other pre-arrangements have been made with the parents and the moderator or youth minister has been notified (preferably in writing.)

CELL PHONES

Although cell phones are a convenient form of communication today, they are often a disruption to ministry, especially during extended programs such as retreats and work camps. Youth are asked to be fully present and to set aside the daily distractions. Emergency contact numbers are provided to parents if they need to reach their youth during a program. Phones are made available to youth if needed during a program. Thus it is strongly recommended that parents support the policy that cell phones are not brought on such programs. Exceptions are made for medical needs (e.g. diabetes).

DRIVERS

When traveling as a group to an outing, **adult volunteers/parents** must drive. A “Drivers Form” must be completed and on file in the Youth Ministry Office.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE POLICY

If a young person is suspected of having weapons or drugs in his/her possession, the Youth Minister will have to search. An adult staff member or volunteer will witness the search. The decision to search will involve some suspicion of wrongdoing on a young person's part. That individual will be asked to cooperate. If the person refuses, the parents will be contacted to come to the program site and assist in the search. If the parents do not cooperate, the Youth Minister may impose a penalty, even exclusion from the program.

LOST AND STOLEN ITEMS

Saint Peter's Parish is not responsible for lost and stolen items at youth ministry or parish related functions. Youth are advised not to bring valuable items to youth ministry or parish related events.

FEES

Various events cost a nominal fee to participate in. All youth are welcome, regardless of their ability to pay. Scholarship funds are available to those in need of assistance. Arrangements can be made through the Saint Peter's Youth Office.

SNACK FEE – We ask that each family make a donation of \$30 to cover food for Sunday nights.

PARENT-YOUTH MINISTER COMMUNICATION

Parents are encouraged to introduce themselves to the Youth Minister and Moderators as they drop-off and pick-up their children for group events. Parents are also encouraged to keep the Youth Minister and Moderators informed about:

- achievements of child (sports, academic, extracurricular, etc.)
- illness or hospitalization
- family issues (death, accident, divorce, etc.)
- teen issues (school, peer, dating, etc.)

This information enables us to offer the best pastoral care for our youth. We can celebrate in their achievements and support and pray for them through their struggles.

There are various Parent Sessions as well as Parent/Teen Sessions held through year. Parents are strongly encouraged to take part in these opportunities. Communication also happens through phone calls, emails, newsletters and mailings.

VISITORS

Youth are welcome and encouraged to bring friends of appropriate age (whether members of the parish/faith or not) Youth Ministry events at any time. Youth are to let their friends know of appropriate norms and rules before they come.

VOLUNTEER PARENTS/ADULTS

Volunteers create the success of the Saint Peter's Youth Ministry program. Parents/adults are welcome to visit at any time. There are also various ways to become more directly involved in the programs.

Occasional Involvement - Provides and serves snacks/refreshments, aids with transportation. Present only for time of service.

Frequent Involvement - Aids in leading small group discussions/activities from regular evening gatherings to retreats. Present for entire event.

Regular involvement - Direct involvement in planning, organizing, and leading events/activities Present at prep meetings and for entire event planned.

GROWTH & EDUCATION - There are various opportunities for volunteers and parents to grow in their faith understanding, knowledge of religious education, and youth ministry. The Archdiocesan Offices of Youth Ministry and Religious Education offer courses in these areas regularly. The Saint Peter's Youth Office will provide funds for moderators and facilitators participating in these programs.

All volunteers are required by Archdiocesan policy to attend a Child Protection class, and receive a background check. Schedules of program series are available in the Saint Peter's Youth Office.

STRUCTURES OF PROGRAMS

EXPECTATIONS FOR YOUTH

In order to create a successful Catholic Christian community, members must realize the responsibilities and commitment involved in their membership to the Youth Ministry Community. Here are some expectations, that when modeled appropriately, will promote pride in self, others and the group, building a comfortable and enjoyable atmosphere for all:

- An openness, respect, and willingness to enter into prayer with the group.
- Willingness to take ownership and responsibility for the group, planning meetings, participation, etc.
- Some semblance of emotional balance and/or willingness to deal with their struggles. This is especially true for the extremes when a referral would be more appropriate.
- A spirit of giving and contributing to the group versus taking and getting from the group.
- Attending the proper group as designated by the age/grade level.
- A respect for the diversity of the group's membership.
- A willingness to be open to varied ideas from one's own ideas.
- Youth should work to be inclusive with other members of the group. Exclusive relationships at gatherings should be discouraged, dating behavior, closed friendships, etc.
- Youth should be willing to take legitimate and necessary risks for both individual and group growth.

- Youth should have respect for group and individual confidentiality. They must also know when it is appropriate to break a confidence and know how to do this.
- Youth should work to recruit other young people to join the ministry.

GROUP NORMS

There are several ways the youth can model the above expectations and encourage fellow group members to do the same. Below are guidelines for group gatherings that will help facilitate healthy and prosperous growth of our Catholic Christian community:

- Participate in the group as fully as you are able.
- Be on time for all group sessions/events.
- Be concerned with your own feelings, thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors.
- Accept responsibility for maintaining confidentiality regarding whatever is discussed in the group.
- Always speak for yourself never for someone else.
- Speak in the present tense. This will make you more aware of your own feelings and better able to communicate them to others.
- Work toward accomplishment of the group tasks.
- Suspend negative attitudes and put-downs toward yourself and others.
- When speaking of someone in the group, always speak directly to the person. Instead of saying, "John said," say, "John, when you said."
- Listen to what others have to say. Accept the thoughts, feelings, attitudes, opinions, and ideas of others as honestly being theirs. Avoid doubting what someone is saying before they can even explain their point.
- Stay on topic, keep focuses, avoid rambling and detours.
- Give some acknowledgment to the speaker that his/her message has been heard.
- Remind one another of these group norms.
- Use positive statements towards others.

DISCIPLINE

We are about building Christian community. This calls for respect of self, others, God, and the facilities. It asks for community members to act in a responsible Christian manner. At times, however, unsatisfactory conduct may occur and will be handled in the following manner.

Illegal Behaviors:

The following behaviors will result in a phone call to parents and removal of the youth from the activity no matter the time or place of the activity/incident. The team of Moderators and Youth Minister, along with parents, will decide on any further disciplinary action and suspension.

- Possession, distribution or consumption of alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, cigarettes, or tobacco products
- Vandalism or theft
- Possession of firearms, knives, or other dangerous weapons
- Harassment/abuse of others
- Any other acts which in the leader's discretion creates danger to the safety and well-being of the individual or others

Disruptive Behaviors:

First time occurrences of disruptive behavior will be met with a warning. If misconduct continues, a private meeting with the Moderator/Youth Minister and teen will take place and a sitting out of the activity may occur. If there is no correction of behavior and misconduct becomes prolonged, then the youth will be removed from the activity, parents contacted and conference set-up. A Code of Conduct Contract will be mutually agreed upon. Contract is to be signed by parent/guardian and teen. If there is no cooperation, the youth will be suspended from Youth Ministry activities.

- Use of foul language, especially in ways which show disregard for others
- Put-downs of others; action of disrespect for others
- Disruptive actions

CANCELLATION POLICY

For inclement weather, we follow MCPS. If they close their facilities (weekdays or weekends), our events are canceled. For other cancellations, a notice will be placed on our website, Facebook and Instagram.