

WE FOCUS ON YOUTH!

Our mission is to empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in the world, to draw youth to responsible participation in the life, mission and work of the Catholic Church, and to foster the total personal and spiritual growth of the young people in our faith community.

THE TWO YEAR PROCESS

The two year process refers to the Confirmation Preparation program for all ninth to twelfth graders of St. Joseph Parish. This practice has been in place since September 2002. Students experience the first year as **Youth Ministry** students. If desired, they go into the second year as **Confirmation** candidates.

First Year

YOUTH MINISTRY – 9TH to 12TH grade

Youth Ministry (YM) is for 9th to 12th graders. The group consists of teenagers who attend a public, parochial or private school. This program is for high school youth interested in a faith formation experience and for those who have not had previous parish youth ministry experience.

Requirements & Attendance

Youth Ministry meets on Mondays in the St. Joseph School gym at 1961 Plum Street (behind the police department). From 6:15 to 6:30 p.m. youth may arrive, take time to socialize or direct questions to the peer ministry team. We begin at 6:30 p.m. and we usually end by 8:30 p.m.

For students interested in continuing into the second year, to enroll in Confirmation in late spring of their first year, and prepare directly for the sacrament, students must meet the mandatory requirements of Youth Ministry class attendance, the December retreat weekend, and second Sunday 5:30 pm youth Mass attendance for the months listed on the class schedule.

Attendance is recorded for class and youth Masses listed on the schedule. We allow for 5 class absences for the first year. Students should arrange extracurricular schedules to accommodate

Youth Ministry. To further expand the sense that church is larger than just St. Joseph Parish, we strongly recommend that students attend the annual Youth Rally.

Class activities:

Having a two year program helps YM students build community among themselves before focusing on the intense direct preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation. Students interact with one another through hands on activities, faith sharing conversations, team building tasks or games, and prayer experiences. All activities are led by trained Emmaus Peer Ministers who are of high school or college age.

Youth Ministry retreat:

It is mandatory for Youth Ministry students to attend the parish Youth Ministry retreat for the weekend of *December 9-11, 2011* at the Diocesan Youth Retreat Center in Lafayette. The retreat weekend is a special opportunity and privilege for students experience a stronger sense of community. On retreat, we focus on building community, prayer, faith sharing, having fun together and strengthening friendships. The retreat helps students make connections between their faith and their everyday lives; we strive to help them become aware of their Catholic faith and of God's love existing around them.

December is the only retreat date we offer and there are no exceptions. The cost of the retreat is separate from the registration fee. It is mandatory that students attending a Catholic high school experience the parish youth ministry retreat. A strong, unique camaraderie usually builds on retreat that is not possible to duplicate at the Monday night meetings.

Youth Mass Requirement:

Because we offer a total youth ministry experience, we emphasize community worship. It is mandatory for students to attend the *Sunday 5:30 pm youth Mass on the 2nd Sundays listed on the class schedule*. Students must check in for attendance after the last song for Mass ends.

Youth Rally:

The young Catholic Church of today is larger than what exists at St. Joseph. Students have the option and opportunity of attending a one day youth rally. We have been taking groups to

youth rallies since the fall of 2003. Imagine a gym filled with 800+ Catholic teenagers and a day filled with workshops, music, prayer experiences, fun and games, and Mass. We strongly encourage students to consider attending this extraordinary, positive experience. Please contact Teena Posas if you would like more information about the youth rally that takes place this year.

Emmaus Peer Ministry

We have focused on a Peer Ministry model to foster leadership among youth since June of 2001. We use the example of the *Gospel of Luke 24:13-35*, the story of the Walk to Emmaus (ee-MAY-us), as a model that we journey with the Lord, in our everyday lived experiences.

Responsibilities of Emmaus Peer Ministers include active involvement on Monday evenings: leading icebreakers and prayer for meetings and assist small group discussions. Emmaus Peer Ministry consists of high school and college students who are willing to serve the Church for one year. The Peer Ministry application period for interested students takes place in the spring. For those accepted, we hold an annual weekend retreat in the summer (usually July) to train them to be peer ministers.

Second Year

CONFIRMATION PREPARATION – 10th to 12th grade

Students can enroll as a candidate for Confirmation as early as May of their youth ministry year, provided they fulfill all mandatory first year requirements. Enrollment for the second year is completed by families attending an enrollment meeting and an enrollment appointment.

Confirmation Preparation class (the 2nd year group) usually meets on the 2nd and 4th Sundays from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. Whenever class is scheduled on Sundays, it is mandatory for candidates to attend the Sunday 5:30 pm youth Mass. Three absences are allowed for the second year.

Being in confirmation requires: scheduled classes, youth Mass, a youth rally, a weekend retreat in January, community service projects, two sponsor-candidate classes, and celebrating the sacrament of Reconciliation. The Rite of Confirmation Mass usually takes place in the spring of the candidate's second year.

THE TWO YEAR PROCESS... ***Youth Ministry & Confirmation***



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