

Youth Ministry News

News for teens, their parents, and all who know a young person in the STM community! Distributed by the Youth Ministry Office.

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A national study, “*New Directions in Youth Ministry*,” documented that “*adolescents who participate in parish youth ministry identify faith and moral formation as a significant contribution to their life, have a profound sense of commitment to the Catholic Church, attend Sunday Mass regularly, and show continued growth while they remain involved in youth programs. These are positive signs that the Church’s investment in ministry with adolescents is making a difference in their lives and in the life of the Church.*”

St. Thomas More Parish is committed to youth and families to work in partnership to form disciples of Jesus Christ, to help them live as disciples in our world today, to guide them to participate in the life, mission and work of the Catholic faith community, and to foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person. The requirements for grades 6-11 help provide a well-balanced program to encourage personal & spiritual growth.

The requirements are:

Attendance at all scheduled classes
&

A Minimum of:

2 hours of parish service each year grades 7- confirmation
2 hours of community service each year grades 7- confirmation
1 Class Retreat each year grades 6- confirmation

Classes

Class sessions for grades 6 – high school are mainly presented in individual classrooms with a catechist and 8-12 students. Group service outings may also be a part of the class experience. Parish-wide Generations of Disciples events occur in the fall and spring of each year and are included as **required class nights** for junior high and high school students. As stated in the Board Policies in the Faith Formation Handbook, “Classes missed for any reason are expected to be made up by the students.” Make-up lessons are provided and students must complete and return.

Class Retreats

Retreats provide an opportunity for reflection, spiritual growth, & community building. The extended time on retreat helps teens deepen their personal relationship with Christ and reflect on their relationships with self and others. The class retreat is a very important component of the Youth Ministry program. Please be sure to mark your calendars!



Service

Participation in service projects helps us to not only hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ, it helps us to live it out. It is in living the Gospel that we can really begin to understand Jesus. Students in Grades 7 - Confirmation are required to complete a **minimum of 2 hours of parish service and 2 hours of community service each** school year (all 5 years). Service projects should total 20 hours by the completion of the Confirmation Program. Serving others is a way of life; it is highly encouraged, even beyond the program requirements. If a student completes more than the minimum requirement, the hours will be kept on file, **but are not held over** for the next year’s requirement. It is important that teens experience service at the different ages as they mature. Service opportunities are posted in the bulletin and in the weekly newsletters sent out by email.

Generations of Disciples: These parish-wide, intergenerational faith festivals are a way to grow in faith as an entire church community. The G.O.D. sessions are **required class nights** for youth in the Faith Formation program. Families are required to attend together. Check the Faith Formation calendar for dates.

Retreats: Students in grades 6-7 are **required to attend** Youth Jam. Check the Faith Formation calendar for this date.

Canceled classes will be announced on www.stmcath.org.

Parking Lot: Please exercise caution when dropping off and picking up your son/daughter on class nights. We ask you to drive in and park in the Glendale Parking lot. Please do **not** drive under the car port of the Church! *Students who drive are expected to drive cautiously.*

Parental Role: The Catechism of the Catholic Church states, "Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children." (#2223) Since you have such an impact on your child(ren)'s faith life, we ask that you support their discipleship development by:

- * Participating in the celebration of the Eucharist with your child(ren) each weekend
- * Encouraging them to take a more active role in the parish's life and ministry, in keeping with their age and abilities (serving, ushering, music, etc)
- * Including prayer as a part of their daily routine
- * Helping them to identify opportunities for service in the parish and local community
- * Encouraging regular participation in the Sacrament of Reconciliation

www.stmcath.org: Check out our website for up-to-date calendars, parent news, youth events and more.

