

Dear Parents: Welcome to St. Andrew Youth Ministry!

Our youth ministry exists to reach students, connect them with other Catholics, help them grow in their faith, and to challenge them to grow and discover their ministry and honor God with their lives.

Youth ministry is not mandatory, but rather encouraged in order to help your child become a life-long disciple of Christ. Where God does not force Himself upon us, I too do not desire youth ministry to be something forced upon your child, but something they seek out for themselves.

What does youth group look like? An excellent question. St. Andrew Youth Ministry offers a weekly youth night, primarily for high school students, but middle schoolers will be welcome to join on many occasions. The structure normally will include games and activities; often a faith-based talk accompanied by a video or presentation; small group discussion; a snack (sometimes dinner) shared as a community; and, of course, prayer. We follow AOD (and CDC) guidelines. If we are not able to meet in person we meet on Zoom with many different challenges posted to our website. Each faith-based session will run in a series, building off of one another and geared towards deepening your child's relationship with Christ in order to fulfill His Great Commission: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations." (Matthew 28:19). On that note, your teens are always encouraged to bring friends to any event. We strive to have a welcoming and fun atmosphere for everyone, whether they have grown up in the church or this next week is their first time. In addition, We provide monthly social or service opportunities for them to build community and put their faith into practice.

We do require an RSVP for certain (usually off-campus) events—imagine trying to throw a party with 400 invited guests and no one replies... quite the dilemma! Walk-ins are always welcome on Sunday evenings. Some major events will require costs, permission slips and an RSVP. Those instances will involve a 3rd party (i.e. bus company, hotel, Diocese, material supplier, etc.) that impose a non-negotiable deadline. It is crucial in those cases that parents get all information to me on time. Late responses have previously cost the ministry and parents extra of time and money, so please respect all deadlines.

We have great volunteers helping with this ministry, but we are always looking for more! Please see the attachment—Volunteering ~ Youth Ministry Opportunities. If you have any interest in helping out with any youth ministry activities, let me know!

My contact information is available on every item I send out as well as our bulletin. Please call/text/email anytime. I use Remind to text (Send a text @standpa to 81010)—this is the best way to reach me. I will also send out reminders on events, spiritual and helpful information through Remind. I will do my best to keep our St. Andrew Youth Ministry webpage, <http://www.standrewchurch.org/faith-formation/stayg/>, updated and will email you routinely. If you ever have any questions, or if there is anything we can do to help, please let me know.

I look forward to this upcoming year and to see what the Lord has in store! Remember, all teens are welcome regardless of religion, race, parish affiliation, eye color, hair color, and there is no height requirement. ;D.

The only requirement to participate is parent permission, respect, and a positive attitude! Again, parish teens are encouraged to invite friends.

Make sure to check out the Attachments for 2021/2022 events calendar and ways you can get involved. Thank you for this opportunity!

God bless!

Margaret Kozak *Youth Minister*

Rachael Fleck and Alex Brown *Youth Ministry Coordinators*

Scott Kozak *Youth Ministry Volunteer*