

Youth Ministry News

St. James/S.St. Elizabeth Ann

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Edition 3

Steubenville 2017

a springboard for us all



If any of you have sent teens to a Steubenville Youth Conference in the past, you can no doubt testify that it is a moving experience for everyone

who attends. We have taken teens to this weekend conference for many years now and it is always powerful, prayerful and thought provoking. This year's theme is "Elevate" based on Revelation 21:5. We have an awesome line-up of Catholic speakers and musicians including Bob

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Rice, our host. I call this event a "springboard" for your faith. It is an emotionally charged weekend where teens experience Christ in a way that is unmatched at home simply because we don't have thousands of teens all at the same Mass every Sunday. It helps launch them into a new zone of faith. Teens can begin to form their identity as Catholics, not because they go to Mass with their parents, but because they see that they are a part of something much bigger. And they are not alone. If your teen needs a boost in his or her faith, the Steubenville conference could provide that opportunity. Not only is the event itself powerful, but the

relationships formed with other teens and adults from the parish are long lasting and supportive. Many young men and women begin to hear their call to priesthood and religious life at events like this. Others

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Consider donating food for one of our Overflow nights by checking out our sign up genius:

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090d4daaa82aa1fa7-overflow>

"If you judge people, you have no time to love them. Spread love everywhere you go. Let no one ever come to you without leaving happier. Be faithful in small things because it is in them that your strength lies."

-St. Teresa of Calcutta

are affirmed in what they have already been hearing in their prayer. Still others meet Christ as a real person for the first time in their life and are never the same. I can't promise that your teen will have the same experience that other teens have, but I can promise that Jesus will offer a unique message to your teen through this conference and will strengthen them in some way as a young individual Catholic who is not alone. To sign up, turn in registration forms found on the parish website along with a \$50 deposit no later than Sunday, January 29th. And there are really good scholarships available, so don't let the cost scare you away. God bless,

- Hannah

Did you know this about refugees?



Refugees come to the U.S. by means of a travel loan that they must start repaying to the US government 6 months after arrival. For a family of 5, that would be about \$3400. Refugees arrive legally to the US and they apply for their green card one year after arriving. A green card application costs \$350 per person in the family. Refugees can become US citizens after 5 years. The citizenship application runs \$700 a person.

All of these costs make it very difficult for a refugee family to get on their feet in the US especially when the culture here is shockingly different. I have seen and heard of families where the kids get into drugs and the parents live in poverty because there are limited options for them to make a decent income with their language and cultural barriers. They also can fall prey too financial scams, not knowing that the letter that comes in the mail is a lie promising them a million dollars and infinite lines of credit.

How can we help? Consider helping mentor a refugee family. Be a direct support for them. Catholic Charities and Lutheran Family Services can help connect your family with a refugee family in need. This means, helping them learn their way around and understand where their resources are. You can also help these families financially by donating to either of the above charities and earmarking your donation for refugee families. As Catholics, we are called to see Christ in everyone, even those who are not Christian. Look at the loving example of St. Teresa of Calcutta. Let us all strive to be the hands and feet of Christ for these people who are in most need.

The numbers matter

Overflow attendance has been growing

When you hear the title "Youth Group" you might think it old fashioned or irrelevant to today's teens. Teens who are as connected as

ever today on social media and who don't need a church to plan their social activities for them. Not to mention, they don't need someone telling

them how to pray. All that said, I have numbers to prove otherwise. In the last couple years I have seen growth. From rock-bottom, zero attendance nights all the way to a night where 8 pizzas was not even close to enough. Teens are proving that they still need and desire community within the Church. If we can learn one thing from them, it's that this generation needs to feel like they belong before they will trust us with their spiritual formation, a deeply personal thing. And yes, we have strategized and done our best to provide quality experiences for the teens. We haven't just hoped for the best thinking the teens would just find us on their own (even though a handful of them did). We took action. We have been seeking them out, inviting them, asking them to invite their friends. We have been caring for them, listening to them, and also making space for Christ to speak to them. We have some of the best volunteers I could ask for. They are dedicated to Christ and dedicated to forming true disciples who know their faith and know



that Jesus is real.

So, the numbers do matter. Numbers equal souls. And these souls (the ones of our teens) are in need of us. A little over two years ago our average attendance was lower than 10. This past summer our average attendance was 28. This growth, although just a start, should be encouraging to us all. Please keep encouraging teens to attend the Overflow youth group and get involved in youth ministry events. The Church needs them, and they need us!

Check it out! TEEN RESOURCE

I want to share with you an online Lectio Divina resource for teens featuring guided meditations based on the daily Mass readings. It's called "Carpe Verbum," and you can read more about it here: <http://www.carpeverbum.org/about.html>. Click on the "Home" tab to return to the main page with the daily meditation.

2017 Spring CALENDAR:

- 1-11-17 Youth House 7-9pm
- 1-15-17 Overflow: friends matter (moved to 1-22 due to weather)
- 1-29-17 Overflow: Eucharistic Miracles
- 2-8-17 Youth House 7-9pm
- 2-12-17 Overflow: anxiety and school
- 2-26-17 Overflow: bring a friend night
- 3-5-17 Girls Day Retreat "CHERISHED"
- 3-8-17 Youth House 7-9pm
- 3-12-17 Overflow: Netflix overload
- 3-26-17 Overflow: "Like us" social media night
- 4-9-17 Overflow: real super powers of prayer
- 4-12-17 Youth House 7-9pm
- 4-23-17 Overflow: poverty, our neighbor
- 5-7-17 Overflow: Catholic teachings on marijuana
- 5-10-17 Youth House 7-9pm
- 5-21-17 Overflow: Grill the Priest grill-out

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