

Registration Letter
Our Lady of Sorrows and St. Joseph's 7th & 8th Grade Youth Ministry

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are pleased to announce the formation of a Youth Group for 7th and 8th graders for members of Our Lady of Sorrows in Essex and St. Joseph's in Chester. The goal of this ministry is to provide monthly social, service, and faith building activities for our children. It is hoped that these activities will bring them closer to God by helping them form positive Christian relationships with their peers. ***We ask that you review the enclosed material and return the signed registration form and your registration fee as soon as possible.***

The kick off event for the Youth Group is a pizza party and game night at St. Joseph's Parish Center on Saturday September 12th. It will start following at 5:45 PM following the 5:00 PM Saturday evening mass at St. Joseph's and end at 8:30 PM. In addition to group activities, your child will have a chance to play foosball, shoot pool, play ping pong, use the Wii, and eat as much pizza and ice cream as they can in one sitting. We also plan some cool door prizes. See the enclosed flyer more details.

As this is a new ministry, hopefully the following will answer some questions you may have.

- **Who May Attend ?** Any 7th or 8th grader who is a member of St. Joseph's or Our Lady of Sorrows parish may participate. Members of other local parishes are also welcome provided they complete a registration form and their parents agree to help chaperon at least one event during the year.
- **Do I Have to Attend Every Event ?** No. Between sports, volunteering, and family outings we realize that no one will be able to attend every event. We are planning a variety of events that will be of interests to different people and will be seeking input from parents and the teens themselves.
- **When Will Events Take Place ?** Youth Group events will generally take place the second Saturday of each month from 6:00 PM to 8:30 PM.
- **How Much Will It Cost To Participate ?** There is a \$10 registration fee to join the Youth Group. In addition, each event will have an admittance fee to cover the cost of the event. The kick off pizza party will cost \$5 per person to attend. The Alpine Tower will cost \$15 to attend. In general we expect each event to cost between \$5-\$15. Parents of children who chaperon an event will attend that event for free.
- **Are There Any Scholarships Available ?** No child will be turned away who cannot afford the cost to attend. If you need assistance covering these fees, please contact the parish office and we will arrange for a scholarship to cover the cost.
- **Is There A Code of Conduct ?** Yes. The Youth Group Code of Conduct is enclosed and must be signed by all participants and their parent or guardian.
- **Can I Bring A Friend Who Is Not Catholic ?** Each registered member can bring one friend who is not Catholic to each event. The friend must complete a registration form and have it signed by their parent or guardian. They also must also must sign the code of conduct.
- **Is Dating Allowed At Youth Group Events ?** No. Youth Group events are a date free zone. No public displays of affection will be allowed. Please see the code of conduct for details.
- **Does The Youth Group Replace CCD Classes ?** No. Each parish will continue to have CCD classes that the children should attend. We do expect the Youth Group will enhance CCD classes as the students get to know one another better.

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- **Who Will Serve As Chaperons For These Events ?** Parents, guardians, and parishioners will serve as chaperons. All chaperons will have completed the required SAFE Environments training as mandated by the Diocese of Norwich and will have completed a background check. We ask that one parent of each participating child complete this training and agree to chaperon one event during the year. We will hold the next training session at 7:30 PM on Thursday September 3rd in the St. Joseph's Parish Center.
- **How Can I Make A Donation To Support The Youth Group ?** You can send a donation to the church marked Youth Ministry. You can also help by participating in the EScript program through Adams Grocery Store. Simply logon to www.escrip.com to registration your Adams card and 1% of your purchase price will be donated to the Youth Ministry program. Our group number is 500022150.
- **Who Is The Point Of Contact If I Have Additional Questions ?** Additional questions can be addressed to Jim Tabor at 526-8871 or james.a.tabor@gmail.com or to Joyce Leach at jaleach2@comcast.net or 860-227-8878.

Enclosed in this registration packet you will find the following:

- Registration Form – please complete and return promptly with \$10 registration fee.
- Code of Conduct – please review with child, sign, and return with registration form.
- Schedule of Events For The Year – please note this schedule may change for the second part of the year based on input from parents and the participants.
- Flyer For Pizza Party and Alpine Tower Events
- Permission Slip For Alpine Tower – please complete and return with registration form and payment of \$15 for this event no later than September 12th.

All of these forms are also available on the St. Joseph's Church website at www.stjosephchester.parishesonline.com.

The success of the Youth Ministry program will rest in a large part with you as parents and guardians. If you encourage your children to participate, we have no doubt they will have a lot of fun being with other kids their age in a positive Christian environment. In addition, if every parent will volunteer to chaperon just one event a year, we will spread the work load to prevent chaperon "burn out" from occurring.

In closing, we ask that you pray to our Mother Mary and St. Joseph for the success of this program. No ministry in the Church is successful without prayer. We will certainly need their guidance and inspiration as we begin this program. With your prayers and support, I have no doubt we will have a successful year.

Yours in Christ,

R. A. Murphy
Pastor, St. Joseph's Church

Paul Gaumont
Pastor, Our Lady of Sorrows Church