



# Stayin' Connected

A resource for youth ministry and catechetical leaders in the  
Diocese of Jefferson City

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## Take Aways and Reflection Questions From the 2018 Synod

By John DeLaPorte, Director of Youth Ministry and Religious Education

Last month the 2018 Ordinary Synod on Young People, Faith and Vocational Discernment wrapped up in Rome. The 3-week gathering of Bishops, young people, and regional delegations was rich with discussion, and at times controversy, over how the Church can more effectively engage and evangelize the next generation of Catholics. While the final text has yet to be released in English, it covers an array of topics and issues relevant to the young Church universal. Far too rich to cover in depth here, I offer a few key takeaways relevant to our local situation in the Diocese of Jefferson City.

### **Young people desire a Church that listens.**

For many young people in our diocese they go to Church and listen to the priest. They sit in PSR and listen to the catechist. They go home and listen to their parents. And when we do ask them to share their thoughts it often becomes a springboard to share our response. At what point do we stop and listen deeply to them? Are we attune to their needs? Are we cognizant of the topics and issues that weigh on their hearts? Do we allow them a platform within our ministries or parishes to speak while we listen?

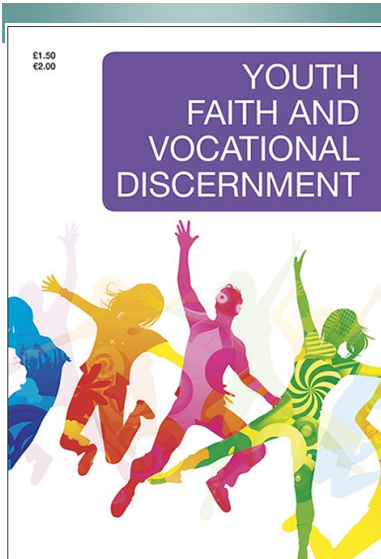
**Young people desire a Church that will accompany them on their journey of faith.**

Many of our parish programs adopt a school model of faith formation that advances young people through grade-levels until they are confirmed after which many stop coming. What is clear from the synod is that young people desire a Church that walks with them through the joys and challenges of their lives. How are we present to kids when they transition from middle school to high school, or to college and beyond? How do we walk with the kid whose parents are going through a divorce or whose grandparent just died? How do we celebrate the milestones of their lives that are so important to them? How do we help them recognize Jesus in it all?

### **Young people want to evangelize the Church.**

So often we fixate on how we are evangelizing young people. This is a worthy goal. However, it falls short if we don't also allow ourselves to be evangelized by them. Young people bring hope, optimism, gifts and a desire to serve. They bring a unique perspective, and hold within them the potential our Church desperately needs. The Holy Spirit is trying to tell the Church something at this critical juncture in Her history. Let's allow ourselves to receive that message through the young people in our midst, and create a space to be evangelized by the next generation.

# 2018 SYNOD ON YOUNG PEOPLE



## The 2018 Synod on Young People, Faith and Vocational Discernment has Concluded

The much anticipated 2018 synod on Young People, Faith, and Vocational Discernment concluded on October 28th. The 3 week synod brought together bishops, young people, and regional representatives from around the world to listen to the current and next generation of Catholics, and explore how She can more effectively share the Gospel with young people worldwide. The final document was passed on October 27th, and will be available in English in the weeks ahead. It explores a wide range of topics relevant to the Young Church today. While several of the subjects addressed in the final document provoked controversy and debate, overall the final document calls the Church to be one that listens to, learns from, includes and accompanies young people on their journey of faith.

To learn more about the synod please visit the [Official Website](#). For a great list of news stories about the synod visit the USCCB's website.

*"The gift of that ability to listen, sincerely and prayerfully, as free as possible from prejudice and conditioning, will help us to be part of those situations which the people of God experience,"*  
- Pope Francis, Opening Homily at the 2018

### Upcoming Webinars

Webinars are a great way to get high quality formation in a convenient (and often free!) way. They typically last one hour and encourage interaction and discussion amongst participants. Here are webinar options coming up this month. I highly recommend you check them out!

- [Trauma-Informed Pastoral Care. Monday, November 19 at 3:00 pm ET Presented by Fr. Jeff Putthoff, SJ.](#)
- [The Elite Tormentor-- How to Handle Exclusionary Bullying Tuesday, November 13, 2018 at 4:00 PM OR 7:00 PM ET Presented by Jodee Bianco](#)

[Click here to view past webinars on a wide array of relevant topics in youth ministry.](#)

## Youth Synod Urges Accompaniment and Endorses Women in Church Leadership

By Gerard O'Connell, America Magazine

In the final document from the Synod on Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment, the synod fathers wrote about the great diversity of situations of young people in a globalized world marked by grave injustices, poverty and violence, as well as the opportunities and the challenges they face in the new digital world. The document also covers the phenomenon of migration, sexuality in the lives of young people, the various kinds of abuses in the church, the role of women in the church, synodality and what it means to build a synodal church, and the importance of discernment in the life of the church and of young people as they seek to find their vocation in life.

The final document was approved on the evening of Oct. 27 by a majority vote. But not everyone was happy with the result, which was released to the press in Italian at the end of the session, together with the voting results. A two-thirds majority (166 votes) was required for its approval, and the text was approved by a vote of 191 (in favor) to 43 (against). The opposition to the text did not come as a complete surprise as many synod fathers were distinctly unhappy that the text was only available to them in Italian, a language not all are fluent in, while others do not want change in the church's approach to some issues.

[Read Full Article](#)

## Annual Retreat for Youth Ministry and Catechetical Leaders

On Saturday, October 27th twenty six youth ministry and catechetical leaders from 17 parishes from around the diocese gathered for a day of prayer, reflection and fellowship at the Annual Retreat. The beautiful and rustic grounds of Covenant Point Retreat Center in Holts Summit served as our gathering space, and Fr. Matthew Flatley served as our facilitator. The day began with Mass followed by introductions and sharing. Fr. Flatley led the group through a morning and afternoon session wherein participants explored how to draw deeply from the spiritual reservoirs of our own hearts so that we might better serve as channels of God's grace. Fr. Flatley used insights from the Catholic Contemplative tradition as well as Lectio Devina and Centering Prayer as a means to fill that reservoir and draw from it. Small group breakouts and a closing prayer service rounded out the day. Thanks to everyone who attended. I pray the retreat was just what you needed to re-energize your ministries and your relationship with Christ!





# NOVEMBER CONNECTIONS

## Holidays to Connect Youth With This Month

- ◆ All Saints Day - Nov 1
- ◆ Día del los Muertos - Nov 1
- ◆ All Souls Day - Nov 2
- ◆ Nat'l Vocations Awareness Week - Nov 4-10
- ◆ Veteran's Day - Nov 11
- ◆ Universal Children's Day Nov 20
- ◆ Presentation of the BVM Nov 21
- ◆ Thanksgiving - Nov 22
- ◆ Int'l Day of Elimination of Violence against Women Nov 25
- ◆ Feast of Christ the King Nov 26

## Holy People to Profile this Month

- ◆ St. Leo the Great
- ◆ St. Martin de Porres
- ◆ St. Cecilia
- ◆ St. Andrew

## National Vocations Awareness Week

National Vocation Awareness Week (NVAW) is an annual week-long celebration of the Catholic Church in the United States dedicated to promote vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and consecrated life through prayer and education, and to renew our prayers and support for those who are considering one of these particular vocations. NVAW began in 1976 when the U. S. bishops designated the 28th Sunday of the year for NVAW. In 1997, this celebration was moved to coincide with the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, which falls on January 13 in 2013. Beginning in 2014, NVAW was moved to the first full week of November.

- [Check out the USCCB's NVAW site for prayers, bulletin inserts and ideas](#)
- [Vianni Vocations lesson plans](#) for grades K-12. This phenomenal resource is free with our diocesan teacher access code: **Vocationfriendly123**. Just type this code in the upper right corner of the screen and you are in!



## Thanksgiving

Being thankful is at the heart of our faith tradition. Moreover, Thanksgiving gives us a great chance to organize some prayer and fellowship for our youth. Use this month of where we give thanks to encourage your youth to give back and be grateful for all the blessings God has given them.

- [Teach a Youth Group Lesson on Thanksgiving](#)
- Host a thanksgiving potluck for your youth and families (no link)
- Organize a service project around feeding the hungry in your parish or community (no link)
- [Arrange a fasting and prayer progressive dinner](#)

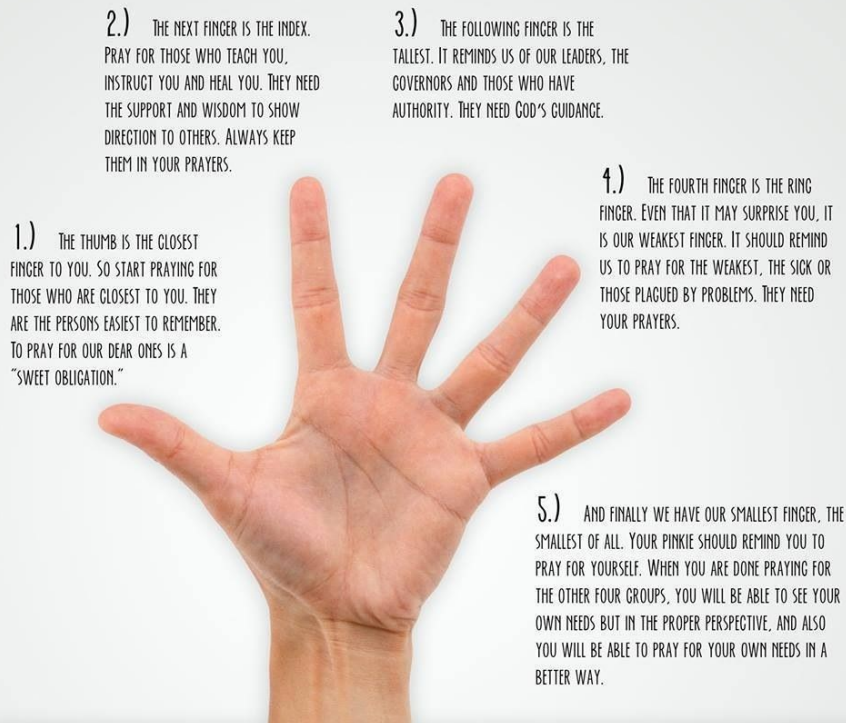
## St. Andrew

Talk about being overshadowed by a younger sibling! St. Andrew was the older brother of St. Peter and was considered to be one of Jesus' closest apostles. Take some time this month as we focus on Vocations during Vocations Awareness Week to teach and pray to St. Andrew, whom Jesus promised to make a "fisher of men."

- [Video and bio on St. Andrew](#)
- [Prayer to St. Andrew](#)
- [Brief animated bio of St. Andrew for Children](#)



## POPE FRANCIS' FIVE FINGER PRAYER



## Self-Care 101 For Youth Ministers

By Cheyanne Vasquez, Lifeteen

Sometimes in ministry you need to make time for yourself. Self-care is important for balance in Youth Ministry. Before you start implementing rules in your life for self-care, you need to start with time management. Creating a work calendar will help keep you organized and hold you accountable to your appointments set up for the day. People ask me at work how I'm able to be so productive, and the truth always come from my skills in time management.

I create an excel spread of my entire week (excluding my Sabbath day). On my calendar, I even have a half-hour set aside to set up my following week's schedule. I calendar everything. Most people say I'm obsessive, but I find a lot of down time in my life for things that I love to do. I can only find the time when I can visually see it on a schedule in front of me. So I encourage you to take a half hour and create a calendar of all the activities you do from day to day. Once you have your calendar, you must follow some simple rules to keeping balance in your life.

[Read Full Article here](#)

## The Sainly Catechist

By Bob Burnham, The Catechist Journey

The director of our faith formation program asked if I could help her develop a saints' syllabus for the eighth- and ninth-grade classes. This was [right up my alley](#).

We met for coffee to work on the syllabus, which would complement our regular curriculum. Our discussion turned to the canonization process: how does someone become a saint? As we talked about the [steps in the canonization process](#), I wondered, "What do we have to do to be saints today?"

The answer is threefold: we have to be people of joy, love, and contemplation.

We do not find joy in the pursuit of pleasure. We find joy in the pursuit of communion. Joy does not exist in isolation. Joy exists in our relationship with others. Joy turns our gaze outward. It is not simply a good feeling or emotion—it involves entering into relationship with others. Catechists are saints because they form their classrooms into joyful communities where faith can be explored and shared.

[Read More](#)

## Top 10 Most Helpful Links for Youth Ministry

1. [Office of Youth Ministry and Religious Diocese of Jeff City](#)
2. [USCCB Youth and Young Adults](#)
3. [Center for Ministry Development](#)
4. [National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry](#)
5. [CRS Education](#)
6. [Life Teen](#)
7. [Project YM](#)
8. [Fe y Vida](#)
9. [Busted Halo](#)
10. [Discipleship Focused Youth Ministry](#)

For a comprehensive list of helpful resources and links [Click Here!](#)

## Top 3 YouTube Clips to use in youth group!

1. [Thanksgiving Glass \(inspirational reflection clip\)](#)
2. [Thanksgiving video reflection](#)
3. [A very social thanksgiving \(funny conversation starter on social media and family\)](#)

## Activity of the Month:

This new take on a classic teambuilder is the perfect activity for Vocations Awareness Week, but can be applied to any theme related to discernment, trust, or making decisions. This activity works best in a large area or outdoors.

**Setup:** Scatter a series of obstacles such as chairs, tables, balls, etc around the "playing area."

1. Ask for a volunteer from the group. This person will be blindfolded and must make their way through the "minefield" by listening to the rest of the crowd.
2. The group verbally takes them through the obstacles but cannot enter the minefield themselves. Members of the group are encouraged to all shout at once!
3. If the person hits a mine they must return to the start. Another volunteer can then enter, but feel free to rearrange the obstacles

### For Discussion:

1. How did it feel to be blindfolded walking through the minefield?
2. Was it easy to communicate? Did you trust the people guiding you?
3. What might be one way this activity can relate to trusting or communicating with God?



### Connect:

*When discerning where God is calling you, there are many obstacles that get in your way. That's why it is so important to listen, communicate and trust others and trust God through the process of discernment. As you discern where God is calling you take the time to pray, trust, and listen to safely reach the other side!*

## Catholic Social Media News

### A Catchy 5mn News Program to Share with Teens

How do we as youth ministry and catechetical leaders attempt to make the faith relevant today? How can we try to help young people connect the Church with issues, people, and events that are current and important in their lives. [Catholic Social Media News](#) is a quick, engaging and topical way to do just that. This low-production ministry of New Catholic Generation has the feel of a college-run student news program with a Catholic flair. The YouTube channel features a weekly 5mn newscast where the host of the program highlights 2 or 3 things from the week that relate to faith, current events, or pop culture.



Use this resource to engage your kids on social media, or to spark conversation at a youth night. It is also a helpful tool to keep those of us of a certain generation connected to and aware of what is happening in youth culture today.

## A New Teen Saint to Inspire Your Teens

### St. Nuncio Sulprizio

Pope Francis recently canonized a new teen saint at the Synod on Young People, Faith and Vocational Discernment. St. Nuncio Sulprizio of Italy lead a short life marred by abandonment, disease, and terrible suffering. Yet through it all he kept his faith and for it was named a saint for his fidelity and holiness. Share this compelling story with your teens this month. Here are a few places to start.

- [YouTube bio of his life](#)
- [News article on his life](#)



## Teaching Children the Lost Art of Being By Joe Popracki



In today's world, there is a lot of emphasis placed on *knowing* and *doing* and not so much on *being*. In other words, we find ourselves focused on *what* we know and do and not enough on *who* we are. As catechists, we have the privilege of helping those we teach to develop a deeper understanding of who they are in relation to a loving God, in whose image they are created. One of the primary ways we do this is through leading reflective prayer (also known as meditation).

Reflective prayer/meditation is not something new. (I was once accused of teaching "New Age" practices by encouraging catechists to lead reflective prayer!) The Gospels tell us that Jesus often went off alone to pray; it doesn't say that he went off to "recite prayers." As important and enriching as it is to recite traditional prayers, we also need to learn the art of just resting in God's presence and meditating on or contemplating some aspect of God's truth, beauty, and goodness.

[Read full article here](#)

## Class Prayer Resources by Jared Dees, The Religion Teacher

Religion teachers and catechists are different from all other teachers because they have the opportunity to pray in class with their students. There are a variety of options that teachers have to choose from when selecting class prayer. The resources below are meant to assist teachers in selecting the best prayers for their classrooms

[Click here for great prayer ideas and resources](#)

## Catholic Crafts for Kids!

With kids being bombarded by technology at younger and younger ages, our crayon boxes, scissors, glue and construction paper approaches can often feel antiquated. But fear not! Arts and crafts in religion class can still provide a fun way to teach the faith and engage kids in creative reflection and learning.

While Pinterest can do wonders to spark creativity it can be hard to find authentically Catholic crafts to connect to lessons.

[Check out this great list of Catholic crafts from Catholic Living.](#) It contains a lot of practical and ready-made ideas to compliment any lesson.

## Top 10 Most Helpful Links for Religious Education

1. [Office of Youth Ministry and Religious Diocese of Jeff City](#)
2. [USCCB Office of Evangelization and Catechesis](#)
3. [National Conference for Catechetical Leadership](#)
4. [Catechetical Resources from the Arch of New York](#)
5. [St. Mary's Press Resource Center](#)
6. [Joe Paprocki Catechist Training Channel](#)
7. [The Religion Teacher](#)
8. [The Catholic Catechist](#)
9. [The Liturgical Catechist](#)
10. [Amazing Catechists](#)

"Actions speak  
louder than words.  
Let your words  
teach and your  
actions speak!"

- St. Anthony of  
Padua



## UPCOMING FORMATION FOR ADULTS



Credible Catholic

DIOCESE OF JEFFERSON CITY  
OFFICE OF YOUTH MINISTRY AND REL. ED



# NAVIGATING SCIENCE AND RELIGION IN THE CATHOLIC CLASSROOM

### 3 OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE!

**FRIDAY, NOV. 30 FROM 9AM - 12PM**

SCHWARTZE CATHOLIC CENTER, JEFFERSON CITY

**SATURDAY, DEC. 1 FROM 9AM - 12PM**

SCHWARTZE CATHOLIC CENTER, JEFFERSON CITY

**SATURDAY, DEC. 1 FROM 3PM - 6PM**

ST. PIUS X PARISH, MOBERLY

Young Catholics are leaving the faith in record numbers often justifying their decision on a false perception that faith and reason are incompatible. More and more, young people are struggling to reconcile their Catholic faith with contemporary scientific theories and discoveries, and educators in the faith often feel helpless to respond. Please join us to explore Credible Catholic, a proven resource for the science, religion, or catechetical classroom. Credible Catholic has received exceptional results in helping young people navigate the complimentary relationships between science, reason, faith and the Catholic Church.

[CLICK HERE TO  
REGISTER ONLINE](#)

**NO COST TO ATTEND**

LUNCH AND DINNER WILL BE PROVIDED. PLEASE REGISTER IN ADVANCE. IDEAL FOR MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL INSTRUCTORS FROM CATHOLIC SCHOOLS, PARISH SCHOOLS OF RELIGION, CONFIRMATION PREP AND YOUTH MINISTRY

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

JOHN DELAPORTE  
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Mr. Mike O'Hara serves as the Executive Director of the Magis Center, a Catholic non-profit educational organization with a focus on faith, reason and Catholic Spirituality. Mr. O'Hara brings a wealth of ministry experience to his work with Magis and Credible Catholic. He is currently working toward his PhD focused on significant problems affecting the loss of Catholic identity. Inspired by the work of Fr. Robert Spitzer, SJ, Michael's primary goals it to save souls "while he has the light."



# 2019 YOUTH EVENTS

Visit [www.oymdiojeffcity.com](http://www.oymdiojeffcity.com) for information and registration on all our events!

## OYM and Rel. Ed Mission

The Office of Youth Ministry and Religious Education strives to empower young people and those who minister to them to live as disciples of Jesus in the Church and world.

## OYM Philosophy

Our approach is comprehensive, understanding that youth ministry works best when the entire parish is involved. Using the principles outlined in *Renewing the Vision*, the Office of Youth Ministry collaborates with parish leaders to draw youth into a deeper relationship with Jesus, and fuller participation in the life, mission, and ministry of the Church. By supporting parishes in the ministry of welcoming, engaging, and forming youth, and by providing effective resources to adult Youth Leaders, we hope to create communities where needs are met, people are supported, families are strengthened, and Christ is served.

## Contact Us

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facebook

**We ALWAYS want to hear from you! *Stayin Connected* is here for your benefit!**

- ◆ Share a success story
- ◆ Write an article
- ◆ Recommend resources
- ◆ Spotlight your program
- ◆ Promote your event

[Click here for upcoming trainings](#)



Event	Who	When	Where	Cost
March for Life	Junior High and High School	January 16-20	Washington D.C.	\$150
Teens Encounter Christ	Juniors and older	January 19-21	Im. Conception, Jefferson City	\$40
NET Ministries Parish Retreats	Junior High and High School	February	Participating parishes	Varies
Vocation Reflection Days	Confirmandi, Parents and Sponsors	March 17, 24, and 31	Cathedral Jefferson City	Free
Encounter Weekend	Junior Boys and older	April 13-14	Conception Abbey	Free
6th Grade Vocations Day	All 6th Graders	May 1	Cathedral of St. Joseph	\$5
Totus Tuus	All ages	June 2-July 19	Participating Parishes	\$1500/parish
Camp Maccabee I	High School Boys	June 16-20	St. Robert, MO	\$150
Teens Encounter Christ	Juniors and older	June 22-24	St. Pius X Moberly	\$40
Camp Maccabee II	High School Boys	June 23-28	St. Robert, MO	\$150
CHRISTpower	Sophomore recently grad.	July 14-20	Helias Catholic High School	\$125
Camp Siena	High School Girls	TBD	St Patrick Laurie, MO	\$150
Camp Maccabee III	High School Boys	July 21-26	St. Robert, MO	\$150
NCYC	High Schoolers	Nov 21-23	Indianapolis	TBD