



Stayin' Connected

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

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Keeping our kids safe online: A preview of this month's meeting

By John DeLaporte, Director of Youth Ministry and Religious Education

About 1 year ago I had my first meeting with our then newly installed Bishop, Shawn McKnight. I assumed we would talk about my role, youth ministry, as well as his priorities for young people in our diocese. His very first question to me was, "What are we doing to keep our kids safe?" This was followed by another more specific question, "What are we doing to keep our kids safe online?"

Later this month, youth ministry and catechetical leaders will gather and learn the answer to this question. I left that meeting tasked with developing a robust, comprehensive policy concerning online, digital, and social media communication with youth. Myself, as well as our Safe Environment Coordinator, Mr. Mike Berendzen, worked together to create such a policy. After months of research and wide ranging consultation with Virtus, law enforcement, legal experts, and ministry leaders, we composed a policy which was later approved by Bishop. This month I will be sharing the fruits of this labor.

We know from studies and experience that the battle for child and youth protection is being increasingly fought in the digital realm. Many of the more recent cases of abuse of minors both in the Church and secular society involve some form of digital interaction that precipitated the abuse. Predators increasingly turn to online and digital methods to identify vulnerable young people, engage in grooming behavior, and create scenarios where abuse is possible. Thus, it is incumbent upon us as ministry lead-

ers to ensure that we are doing all we can to keep our kids safe within the context of our ministries.

But policies for youth are not just for the safety and security of our children. It is also for the safety and security of those serving in ministry. I frequently get calls with questions about what's permissible when it comes to digital and online communications with youth. Youth ministry and catechetical leaders want to communicate with young people through these mediums, but also want to protect themselves from liability or suspicion of impropriety. Is it appropriate to post images of young people to social media without the permission of their parents? Can I or should I text a kid from my private cell phone? Should I be texting back and forth with a young person on a private cell phone at 11pm at night? Is it ok to "tag" a kid in a picture I posted to our parish Facebook page? These are just a few examples of common questions that arise in our ministry to this generation of "digital natives."

In his 2018 message for the 48th World Communication Day Pope Francis said, "In the area of communication too, we need a church capable of bringing warmth and stirring hearts." It is my hope that our new policy and guidelines on digital, online and social media communication with youth will enable us to do that in a way that is safe and responsible for all involved.

Thanks for all you do!

“Brothers and sisters, the Lord and his mission are not a “meantime” in our life, something temporary; they are our life!”

-Pope Francis, final homily, World Youth Day, Panama, 2019

Ahead of Pope’s Abuse Summit experts warns there’s no “one size fits all” fix. By Elise Harris and John Allen

ROME - A leading expert in the field of child protection has said that while one goal of the upcoming Vatican summit on abuse prevention is to get the world’s bishops on the same page, a uniform solution to the clerical abuse issue doesn’t exist.

Speaking to *Crux*, Jesuit Father Hans Zollner said he believes the reason for calling the Feb. 21-24 anti-abuse summit is because “this is a very urgent, very challenging moment for the Church and an urgent question which the Holy Father has made a priority for himself and for the Church, by calling for this unique meeting.”

Zollner, head of the Center for Child Protection at Rome’s Pontifical Gregorian University and a member of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, is a member of the organizing committee for the February meeting along with Cardinal Blase Cupich of Chicago; Cardinal Oswald Gracias from India and Archbishop Charles Scicluna of Malta, the Vatican’s former top prosecutor of sex abuse crimes.

[Read full interview](#)

Final Mass Homily by Pope Francis at World Youth Day - January 27 in Panama City

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!

- [How to Survive Burnout and Thrive in Youth Ministry Tuesday, February 12, 2019 at 2:00 pm ET. Presented by Christopher Wesley](#)
- [Pastoral Juvenil: Pastoral en Acción Models. Wednesday, February 27, 2019 at 2:00 pm ET. Presented by Mirna Ochoa, Fr. Alejandro Lopez Cardinale, and Alex Barraza.](#)
- [Going, Going Gone... What Now? Thursday, February 28, 2019 at 2:00 pm ET Presented by Dr. Bob McCarty](#)

“The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them: ‘Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing’” (Lk 4:20-21).

With these words, the Gospel presents the beginning of Jesus’ public ministry. It started in the synagogue that saw him grow up; he was in the midst of neighbours and people he knew, and perhaps even some of his childhood “catechists” who had taught him the Law. It was an important moment in the life of the Master: the child who was educated and grew up in that community, stood up and took the floor to proclaim and put into action God’s dream. A word previously proclaimed only as a future promise, but now, on the lips of Jesus alone, could be spoken in the present tense, as it became a reality: “Today it has been fulfilled”.

Jesus reveals the now of God, who comes to meet us and call us to take part in his now of “proclaiming good news to the poor... bringing liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, setting at liberty those who are oppressed, announcing the year of the Lord’s favour” (Lk 4:18-19). This is the now of God. It becomes present with Jesus: it has a face, it is flesh. It is a merciful love that does not wait for ideal or perfect situations to show itself, nor does it accept excuses for its appearance. It is God’s time, that makes every situation and place both right and proper. In Jesus, the promised future begins and becomes life.

[Read full homily](#)



Bishop McKnight grateful for Holy Spirit's help throughout his eventful first year in office By Jay Nies, Catholic Missourian

Bishop W. Shawn McKnight says he never would have chosen himself for the episcopacy. But his first year as bishop of the Jefferson City diocese has convinced him that God is in charge and is always bringing His good plans to fruition.

"The fact is, I have been called — I was summoned by the Holy Father to serve the people of this diocese — and with that great responsibility comes the necessary graces," said Bishop McKnight, who was ordained and installed on Feb. 6, 2018.

He noted that a bishop is both a fisherman and a shepherd of souls. "A bishop has the responsibility of providing vision and leadership that takes into account the challenges we face as well as the opportunities and resources we have available to us, particularly the charisms of the People of God."

Charisms are gifts of the Holy Spirit, presented to individuals for the benefit of the whole. They are essential for spreading the Gospel and growing the Church. For me — getting to know people, the priests, the religious and the deacons of the diocese and figuring out how to match their skill set with what we need," said Bishop McKnight.

[Read full article](#)



Pro-life pilgrims reflect on traveling, marching, encountering By Jay Nies, Catholic Missourian

Alyssa Donehue did a quick 360 as the dome of the U.S. Capitol came into view.

There were people as far as she could see.

"There's a lot of love out here," said Alyssa, an eighth-grader at Immaculate Conception School in Jefferson City.

This was her first time attending the national March for Life in Washington, D.C.

She doubts it will be her last.

"We're here to protest legalized abortion," she said. "I like how people are doing it out of love and everyone is so supportive and doing it together."

Moving with the crowd, reading the signs and talking to people gave her insights that she hopes will motivate her for the rest of her life.

"Together, we can stand up and show people what life is," she said.

[Read full article here.](#)



FEBRUARY CONNECTIONS

Holidays to Connect Youth With This Month

- ◆ World Day for Consecrated Life, Feb 2
- ◆ Groundhog Day, Feb 2
- ◆ Boy Scouting Sunday, Feb 3
- ◆ World Cancer Day, Feb 4
- ◆ Rosa Parks Day, Feb 4
- ◆ International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking, Feb 8
- ◆ World Day of the Sick, Feb 11
- ◆ World Day of Marriage, Feb 10
- ◆ Valentine's Day, Feb 14
- ◆ President's Day, Feb 18
- ◆ World Day of Justice, Feb 20

Holy People to Profile this Month

- ◆ St. Valentine
- ◆ St. Peter Damian
- ◆ St. Josephine Bakhiti
- ◆ Our Lady of Lourdes
- ◆ Abe Lincoln, George Washington, Rosa Parks

Celebrating "World Days" in February

A quick glance over the month of February reveals a wealth of "World Days" to celebrate. World days are great opportunities to connect your kids to important topics and find creative ways to pray, serve, or learn about an issue facing our world. Choose a day to focus on this month. Say a simple prayer or show a short video clip to raise awareness. Organize an entire youth night or prayer experience to go deeper on a topic. Invite a guest speaker in to talk to the kids about the particular day of celebration. Here are a few ideas to get you started.

World Day for Consecrated Life, Feb 2

- [World Day of Consecrated Life prayers and prayer cards](#)
- [Resources, lessons, and activities for discernment with youth](#)

World Cancer Day or World Day of the Sick, Feb 4

- [Teach about and pray to St. Peregrine, the Patron Saint of Cancer Patients](#)
- Have youth write cards to people in your parish who are sick or hospitalized.
- Partner with your Social Concerns Committee to see how your youth could help.

Int'l Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking, Feb 8

- Great resources and activities from the USCCB's ["Become a Shepherd" program](#)
- [Teach about and pray to St. Josephine Bakhiti](#)
- [Raise awareness by sharing stories of survivors of human trafficking.](#)

St. Valentine's Day Feb. 14

While there are many popular saints in our Catholic tradition, few are more popular or widely known than St. Valentine. He is especially well known amongst adolescents as they seek that perfect gift to give their boy/girlfriend year after year! Yet many don't know the real story behind the holiday or its namesake. Let your kids know that there is much more to this saint than the chocolates, candy hearts, and Hallmark cards that are associated with the secular celebration of this holiday.

1. [Teach them about the REAL St. Valentine \(video clip\)](#)
2. [Teach them about the historical origins of the holiday and how it came to be what we know it as today \(Video clip\).](#)
3. [Help them connect the life of St. Valentine to how they can live God's love more fully in their life \(Short lesson\)](#)
4. [Pray and reflect about what love is really all about \(slideshow\)](#)

Our Lady of Lourdes Feb 10

One of the most widely known and well researched Marian apparitions occurred in 1858 in Lourdes, France. The story of St. Bernadette and Our Lady of Lourdes is a wonderful and engaging story to share with young people. Take a few moments this month to teach on this story and connect it to Mary.

- [Info about the story and the shrine](#)
- [Bishop Barron visits Lourdes video clip](#)
- [Prayer to Our Lady of Lourdes](#)





4 Ways to Worship Well

By Julianne Wallace, Busted Halo

We all know the drill. We should go to Mass on Sunday. We should go to Mass on Holy Days. And really, in general, we should worship God more in our daily lives.

Now, consider this: Stop “shoulding on yourself.” [Fr. Jim Martin, SJ, wrote](#) that if we are too busy focusing on what we “should” do, then we miss out. When we are too busy worrying about whether we should be in the pew — we are actually missing out on engaging in the worship experience. So skip the “shoulds” and get right to worship. Don’t just think you should go to Mass more. Don’t just try to go to Mass more, be more involved in the worship experience.

Here are four ways to help you stick to worship:

Find your worship community.

The church that is most convenient to you may not be the best place for you to worship. An ideal worshipping community is a place where you feel welcomed and you feel comfortable. When you leave the church building, you should think to yourself, “I can’t wait to be back next week!” Finding this worship community [may not be easy](#) (ok, it can be downright challenging), but don’t be dismayed. Begin with your own personal “Church Search” and explore some of the different [churches and Masses](#) in your area. Ask friends for suggestions and maybe to come with you on your visits.

[Read Full Article here](#)

Beatitudes and the Catechist

By Bob Burnham, [Catechist's Journey](#)

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.” (Matthew 5:8)

Happy are the catechists who are authentic, for the young people will see how much they rely on God.

Some days, I find it very hard to be motivated to prepare for my faith formation classes. On these days, more than ever, I need purity of heart. I need to approach the young people with authenticity. I cannot just go through the motions of teaching, nor can I fake my enthusiasm—young people can easily tell when our hearts are not into whatever it is we do.

I know that prayer will help purify my heart so I can teach my class with the authenticity and passion that young people desire. Fortunately, good curricular materials provide prayers for catechists as they plan their lessons, as well as prayers to begin and end their classes. Here are a few ways to use these prayers—and our own—to help us be authentic disciples.

- **Assess my mood.** Before planning a lesson, I take a moment and ask myself, *How do I come before the Lord as I prepare this lesson? Am I tired or burnt out? Am I excited and hopeful?* I tell the Lord how I feel as I begin to prepare a lesson and ask for whatever grace I need.

[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. [Pintastic Love \(funny clip from Skit Guys\)](#)
2. [St. Valentine's Day History for kids](#)
3. [You Don't Know Jack...about Valentines \(humorous clip\)](#)

Activity of the Month: Change 3 Things

This partner game is a fun way to engage your youth and introduce your message for a session. This game fits well with themes related to change, transition, conversion, or seeing things differently. It can also connect easily to a New Year's session as youth reflect on how they want to change in the year ahead.

1. Have youth get with a partner. Groups of 3 are possible. Ideally it is a partner of the same gender (but need not be).
2. Stand back-to-back with your partner (but give yourself some space!) and change 3 things about your appearance (ie: tuck in your shirt, remove a shoe, take off a necklace, etc). Give youth 1 minute to do this.
3. Have youth turn and face each other and see if they can identify the 3 things their partner changed about their appearance.
4. Turn back-to-back again and repeat this process. Keep the original 3 things changed, and change three more to make 6 things changed about your appearance.

5. After 1 minute have youth face each other to identify these 3 new changes.
6. Repeat this process one more time for a total of 9 changes!

For Discussion:

1. What did you notice during the course of this activity? What was challenging?
2. Was it difficult to think of different things to change each round? Was it difficult to notice the changes in your partner?
3. What changes have you recognized in your own relationship with God this past year? What changes do you want to make in your life and your faith in the year to come?

Connect:

Change is an important part of our faith journey. We have to be able to recognize those things about ourselves we need to change, and be able to change how we view ourselves and others? As we prepare for 2017 ask God to help you change what you need to in order to grow closer to him and others.

Adventures of a New Evangelist With Katie Prejean McGrady

Next month we will be hosting author, youth minister, and national speaker Katie Prejean McGrady. Katie is a dynamic and engaging youth minister and trainer who, in addition to writing several books, produces a lot of helpful digital content for youth ministry. Back in 2016 she did a series of short catechetical youtube videos called "Adventures of a New Evangelist" for the Catholic TV Network. These 5minute clips explore numerous themes related to our faith and are great tools to integrate into any youth night.



[Check out this clip on "The Gift of Joy."](#)

To watch more simply type her name or "Adventures of a New Evangelist" into Youtube's search bar. We look forward to a great workshop next month!

Catholic Bible App *Scripture at your fingertips!*

Looking for a great scripture app to use with your youth, or for your own personal devotion. [Check out this review of the Catholic Bible App from Catholicapps.com.](#)



RELIGIOUS ED RESOURCES

Open Wide Our Hearts

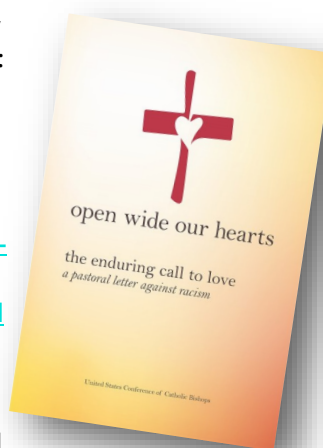
Educational resources on the new pastoral letter combatting racism

In November, the USCCB approved the final draft of a new pastoral letter against racism called “Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love”. We encourage our members to read the letter and to become familiar with its message. The text of the pastoral letter is available in English and Spanish at the [USCCB website](#):

1. [Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love - A Pastoral Letter Against Racism](#)
2. [Abramos nuestros corazones: El incesante llamado al amor – Carta pastoral contra el racismo](#)

The USCCB has created resources that can be used in educational and parish settings. Both educational resources and parish resources are available for free online

1. [Educational Resource](#) (k-8, high school, College and Adults lessons)
2. [Parish Resource](#)



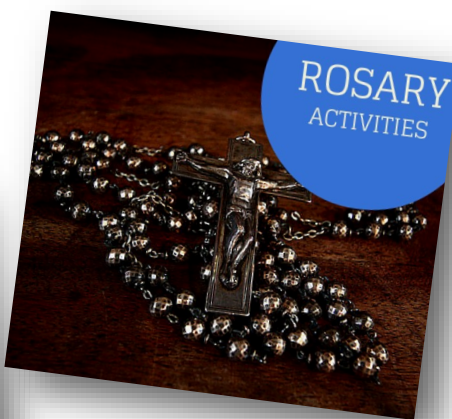
Templates to help you plan your religion lessons

From the Religion Teacher

Many religion instructors express frustration with the rote, predictable lesson plans provided by publishing companies through their workbooks. A good plan should include a clearly stated objective, an opening, guided practice, and a closing assessment. It should be diversified and draw from a variety of different mediums to create an engaging, cohesive lesson relevant to our kids' experience. Using templates to plan a lesson can be helpful to this end. [Here are a few great templates to check out and use accordingly.](#)

Rosary Activities for Kids!

[Click here](#) for a great list of handouts, meditation and prayers on the rosary to use in any catechetical setting.



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](#)

When we begin to separate people in our thoughts for unjust reasons, when we start to see some people as “them” and others as “us,” we fail to love.

- Open Wide Our Hearts

EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

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](#)



Regional Meetings for Directors of Religious Education and Parish Catechetical Leaders

If you are a DRE, Parish Catechetical Leader, or Youth Ministry Leader please plan to attend one of our upcoming regional meetings. We will be discussing several important subjects relevant to your parish ministry with young people:

- The new policy on digital, online, and social media communication with youth
- Examining Confirmation in our Diocese
- Submitting PSR Program Reports and Teaching Touching Safety

[Click here to Register!](#)

Choose one of the following dates to attend. Lunch provided!

February 22 from 9-12

Schwartz Catholic Center

February 23 from 9-12

Immaculate Conception, Macon

March 1 from 9-12

Schwartz Catholic Center



With internationally renowned speaker and author, CHRIS STEFANICK

WEDNESDAY, May 1, 2019, 7:00 – 9:30PM

at the Cathedral of St. Joseph

[Click here for tickets and more information!](#)



March 16 from 8am - 7pm at the Cathedral of St. Joseph

[Click here to download flyer!](#)

2019 ANNUAL SEMINAR

THE ART OF ACCOMPANIMENT

*"AND IT HAPPENED THAT WHILE THEY WERE CONVERSING AND DEBATING, JESUS HIMSELF DREW NEAR AND WALKED WITH THEM."
-LUKE 24:15*

FOR YOUTH MINISTERS, CATECHISTS, AND PARISH CATECHETICAL LEADERS

SATURDAY, MARCH 30 FROM 9AM-3PM

SCHWARTZE CATHOLIC CENTER, JC

SUNDAY, MARCH 31 FROM 10AM-3PM

ST. MARY'S CHURCH, SHELBYNA

In his address to Bishops at World Youth Day, 2013 Pope Francis said, "We need a Church capable of walking at people's side, of doing more than simply listening to them; a Church which accompanies them on their journey." Join with your colleagues in Christ to explore how we, as ministers to the young Church, can more effectively accompany our kids in their journey of faith. Our ministries must go beyond a workbooks, outings, and programs. They must provide youth with the authentic relationships they need to grow in faith and in their involvement with our parish communities.



Katie Prejean McGrady is an international speaker and the author of *Room 24: Adventures of a New Evangelist and Follow: Your Lifelong Adventure With Jesus*. She has been traveling across the country since 2007, engaging audiences of all ages and sizes with theological truths and a unique blend of humor. Katie has appeared on EWTN, Catholic TV, Radio Maria, Sirius XM's Catholic Channel, writes for Ave Maria Press, LifeTeen, and EpicPew, and has spoken in parishes and dioceses from L.A. to New York. She has a bachelor's degree in theology from the University of Dallas and lives with her family in Louisiana.

CLICK HERE TO REGISTER ONLINE

\$10 PER PERSON

INCLUDES MATERIALS, LUNCH AND REFRESHMENTS.
OPEN TO ALL YOUTH MINISTRY LEADERS, DRE'S, CATECHISTS.
PAY IN ADVANCE OR AT THE DOOR.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

JOHN DELAPORTE

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573-635-9127 X233

[Click here for registration and full details!](#)

2019 YOUTH EVENTS

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	SUSPENDED FOR 2019	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	July 28-Aug 1	St Patrick Laurie, MO	\$150
Camp Maccabee III	High School Boys	July 21-26	St. Robert, MO	\$150
Teens Encounter Christ	Juniors and older	August 3-5	TBD	\$40
NCYC	High Schoolers	Nov 21-23	Indianapolis	TBD

Visit www.oymdiojeffcity.com for information and registration on all our events!