

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the 2018 – 2019 Season of Team Pathways!

Let me start off by saying “Thank-You!” Your dedication and commitment to your child/children and their growth in faith continues to keep our program strong.

I ask that you please take the time to read the following information to familiarize yourself with the ins and outs of the Team Pathways Program.

The Structure of the Program:

The program is made up of three components:

(1) Sessions

Our program holds sessions on Sundays at 10am for 7th & 8th grades and at 12pm for 9th & 10th grades **throughout the months of September through April**. Each grade level will also have specific events and retreats that will also occur throughout the year. A typical session occurs as such; **gathering** (children are welcomed and signed-in), **Opening prayer, proclaim** (specific to the sessions topic), **break** (small group time), **send** (closing prayer).

(2) Service

Just as Jesus reminds us at the Last Supper that leadership comes through service to others so too does this program hold service as a key component to leadership and Christian life. **Each teen in our program is expected to complete 10 hours of service each year**. Throughout the year there will be many opportunities for the teens of this program to sign up for a whole variety of service events. Service hours can be completed outside the parish as well. It is the responsibility of the family to keep track of service hours.

(3) Mass

At the heart of this ministry is the Eucharist. It is essential to our Catholic faith and it is an essential part of our continued mission. We receive the Eucharist each time that we go to Mass. As part of our program we ask that parents along with their children attend Mass on a regular basis. In order for our program to fully impact our children, attendance at Mass is really necessary.

Starting this September and running through April we will continue to have our Team Masses (involving Team Pathway children).

Lines of Communication:

Email continues to be the easiest and fastest way to provide information and answer any questions parents or children might have about the program. My email is: moorep285@gmail.com

1. By enrolling your child in this program and providing a valid email when you registered, you will receive **monthly** email updates of schedule and service events.

So why did I write this:

The reason I am writing you is twofold; first I would ask for your **prayers** as we approach a new year. Help us in praying for a successful and faithful year of service, faith and growth in Christ. The second reason I am writing is to provide you with a **layout** of how our program works.

Our first Team Pathways session is on **Sunday, September 9th** in gymnasium, (grades 7&8 at 10am, grades 9&10 at 12pm) This session is for **both the parents and the children. We ask that you attend this session along with your child. We ask that you bring your payment for the Team Pathways program to the session.** Additional information on how parents can get involved in our program and information on confirmation will be addressed.

Some frequently asked questions:

1. When will my teen be Confirmed?

The earliest a teen can be confirmed in this Diocese is 10th grade. Our program is a two year preparation program which will usually occur through a teen's 9th and 10th grade academic years. Participation on a teen's behalf is expected for two years in our program before receiving the sacrament of Confirmation. As we get closer to Spring parents will be informed of the Confirmation date and an online form to be filled out with important information required for Confirmation. A copy of Baptismal certificates must be handed in before student becomes Confirmed.

2. Besides the sessions (classes) what else is expected of my teen planning on receiving the sacrament of Confirmation?

Not only must a teen attend each of the sessions. In addition, there will be a Mandatory Confirmation retreat and Confirmation practice that the teens will need to attend. As Confirmation approaches the teens will be given information on how to pick a sponsor and Confirmation name.

3. What if my teen is in Catholic School?

While the teens in Catholic school do receive religious education every day it is strongly suggested that the teens still attend each of the sessions in the Team Pathways program. **A Catholic school student must complete the two year Team Pathways program (9th and 10th grade)** It is our belief that attending this program will help your teen to grow in community with other teens of this parish. Please note, daily religious education is not suitable for confirmation preparation.

If you have any questions about any of this information you can contact me at moorep285@gmail.com

Yours in Christ,
Paul Moore
Youth Ministry Director/Saint Jude the Apostle Parish