



## Most Holy Trinity State of Youth Ministry 2008-09

Youth Ministry is a vital component of our parish and the Church at large. It is so often the vehicle of evangelization to bring young people to the faith for the first time in their lives, and for others, it is an opportunity to build upon a foundation already laid. Youth Ministry finds a unique place within the Church as it represents both the future and the present simultaneously. It offers us a glimpse into those that will become the adults who staff our Parish Councils, those who will bring the Sacraments to the next generation as Ordained Priests, those who will become Holy Spouses and raise the children that we pray will see the fruit of our labors. And yet, the youth of our world also has its place here and now. They are already the faces of those serving their community through volunteer work, those full of energy and hope, those sharing the faith in our homes, schools, and communities. Thank you for taking the time to learn about what our parish is doing for young people and for your support.

For Him,  
Meagan Rippee, Coordinator of Youth Ministry

### **Where We've Been**

*The most significant adjustment to the ministry has been moving Life Nights, our main ministry event, from Sunday evenings to Tuesday nights. Life Night attendance for the '08-'09 school year averaged about 15 teens. While there was still much significant growth among those teens, the desire was to find a way to reach the large number of teens at our parish who were not attending. The change was also largely based upon the Lord's commandment to keep Holy the Sabbath as a day of rest and of family. The average Tuesday Life Night now boasts approximately 50 teens.*

*80 teenagers received the sacraments of Holy Communion and Confirmation (40 in grades 7 & 8 as well as 40 in grades 9-12). We are continually surprised by the steady trend of this many teens seeking these sacraments as the Diocese of Phoenix has fully engaged the Restored Order of Sacraments in which individuals are able to receive these sacraments in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Regardless, these teens offer a tremendous witness of hope as our Catholic family grows with their full initiation into our Church. These 80 teens were taught in two separate classes, H.S. teens on Monday nights and Jr. High teens on Wednesday evenings.*

*JrH LIFE, our middle school ministry for grades 7 & 8, continues its steady growth as well. Due to the high demands of a growing ministry, JrH LIFE continued for a second year to meet on an every other week basis. It was alternated every Wednesday evening with Jr. High Confirmation. Those teens preparing for sacraments came to the Youth Center every week while those who were not preparing for sacraments joined them every other week. Including confirmation teens, JrH LIFE nights average approximately 50 teens at every meeting.*

*Three retreats, 2 for High School and 1 for Jr. High, were offered throughout the year. Teens from St. Bernadette's Parish joined us for our H.S. Fall Retreat offering an opportunity for a bigger retreat with a large collection of teens from different perspectives, while the H.S. Spring Retreat was held with only our parish to supply a more intimate weekend building within our own community. Both retreats were held in Prescott, AZ and attended by approximately 40 teens each. Our retreat fee remained \$100 for the weekend. Over half of the teens attending did so on scholarship due to their financial situations. For the first time ever, an overnight retreat was offered for Jr. High teens. 70 MHT teens joined with those from St. Joan of Arc for the Friday-Saturday event held at St. Joan of Arc Parish. An estimated total of 130 teens attended retreat with MHT this past year.*

*Ten new core members were recruited to help lead and serve the ministry.* 4 new young adults joined the 4 leaders that had previously served as our High School Core. 3 H.S. teens and 1 young adult served on our JrH LIFE Core, 1 new Catechist and 1 adult led our Jr. High Confirmation program, 2 new core members joined our 1 previous core member for the H.S. Confirmation program.

*MHT Youth Ministry is no longer subscribing to the Life Teen curriculum.* When evaluating concerns about the parish budget as well as the content of the Life Teen curriculum, the decision was made to discontinue our status as a Life Teen parish. The change has been made gradually over the past year and is now complete. Tremendous effort was taken to make the transition as seamless as possible. YM Central curriculum is currently being used as a resource. With the transition now complete, there are no significant changes left to be made. The program is now operating under the name of “Youth Ministry” in place of “Life Teen”.

*The ministry has maintained the immeasurable resources of the St. Augustine Youth Center and MHT Bus.* The Youth Center is well used by the entire parish, including the school. The Chapel is available every day during the Parish Office hours for personal prayer as well as Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament every Friday afternoon. We have begun renting our bus to other parishes for a fee to help offset its burden on our budget. We have had generous donations of couches and computers as our study now has 4 internet capable computers for use of the ministry.

*Special events held throughout the year:*

- 3 H.S. teens attended the Notre Dame Leadership conference in South Bend Indiana
- 8 young adults and our Associate Pastor, Fr. Ernesto Reynoso, went on pilgrimage to Sydney, Australia for World Youth Day
- 15 teens attended the Steubenville Conference in Tucson, AZ
- 10 teens attended a volunteer event to St. Vincent de Paul
- 40 teens attended our annual Pot Luck Thanksgiving dinner, most with their families
- 20 teens attended our annual Christmas Caroling to a local hospital
- 20 teens attended our Winter Road Trip to Flagstaff, AZ
- 25 teens attended the Diocesan Pro-Life Rally in Tempe, AZ
- 50 teens attended a Vocations night at MHT held by Fr. Paul Sullivan and Sisters from the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist. (6 individual from the ministry currently express an interest in the Religious Life)

## **Where We're Going**

*Goal #1 – Catechesis and Theology emphasis*

With such rapid growth occurring in our numbers in the past year, it is now time to focus on ensuring that there is a solid foundation to sustain those teens. This focus will largely be worked on in the content of our H.S. Teen Nights. We will focus on challenging each teen on an individual basis to dig deeper in their faith. Tuesday nights are not only a place for a social community, but an opportunity of Catholic formation. We will place our greatest emphasis on the Mass.

*Goal #2 – Implementation of a Formal Support System: Recruitment of Additional Core Members, Creation of a Parental Advisory Board, and Volunteer Listserv*

Due to a variety of reasons, not all of this past year's core members are able to remain serving the ministry. Additional Core members will be needed to increase our teams as the teens increase in number weekly. We also hope to expand the community of support for these teens. We are especially seeking adults to help in ways other than direct ministry on a Core Team, namely a Parental Advisory Board. This small group of parents and other adults in the parish would help monitor the position of the ministry within the parish and assist in brainstorming and planning for the ministry. The Board would help balance a focus on the specific needs of

the teens as well as logistical issues like finances. Additionally an email listserv will be created to help let parents and parishioner volunteers know of our various needs from transportation to couch donations to snack food, etc. The creation of this formal support system will not only strengthen the teens and youth ministry, but the entire parish as well as we help develop a community based on stewardship of the gifts we have been given for the building of God's Kingdom.

*Goal #3 – Reaching out to families*

This ministry will not thrive focused on only teens. Instead we must put our focus on developing entire families. We are currently implementing 2 all ages ministry events: XLT Adoration Nights & our Summer Outdoor Movie Series. These are meant to provide the family something at the parish they can attend as an entire family. Within every event aimed at the whole family, we seek to provide a special niche for each family member. Not only do we want to strengthen individual families, but to help provide support among parents as they connect with each other. We will evaluate continuing our Outdoor Movie Series and seek opportunities to connect teens with parents and families with each other through existing ministry programs and new events.

*Goal #4 – Evangelizing youth and building the larger parish through the 5pm Sunday Mass*

As Catholics, the Eucharist is the source and summit of our faith. It is of the utmost importance to the ministry that the teens both understand and live this foundation of our faith. We will devote attention to the 5pm Sunday Mass specifically as an opportunity to bring teens to the Eucharist and strengthen our parish community. We will do this by ensuring a quality, organized, orthodox liturgy. We will construct and follow a schedule for Extra Ordinary Ministers and Lectors in order to minimize last minute confusion about serving roles in the Mass. A large focus will also be placed on using the liturgical music as an opportunity to invite teens to participate more fully in being stewards of sharing their talents. We seek to provide a well rounded Liturgy that will engage parishioners of all ages, including teens & adults alike. We will continue to invite and encourage all parishioners to serve through the various roles of the Mass.

*Changes to be implemented:*

- We will add an additional H.S. Retreat. Instead of 2 out of town retreats, we will now offer 1 H.S. Confirmation retreat in Phoenix in October, 1 H.S. Youth Ministry (open to all H.S. teens) retreat in Phoenix in November, and 1 H.S. Youth Ministry retreat in the spring in Prescott.
- There are no current plans to attend the Notre Dame Leadership Conference or to take a California Trip. Both events had previously been yearly components of the ministry and were cut in 2009 due to a lack of funding. Both events will be considered for 2010 provided that finances can be secured.