



NEW Diocese of Buffalo Youth Council

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Attention: Parents and Guardians

Establishing the New Diocesan Youth Council for 2022

Pope Francis, in section 135 of his beautiful document *Christus Vivit (Christ is Alive)*, tells us, “God is the giver of youth and he is at work in the life of each young person. Youth is a blessed time for the young and a grace for the Church and for the world. It is joy, a song of hope and a blessing. It is very evident that youth have plenty to offer the family, school, and Church. It is the desire of Bishop Fisher to listen carefully to each person here in the Diocese of Buffalo, and certainly, this includes our youth.

PURPOSE

The Diocesan Youth Council (DYC) seeks to provide opportunities for young people to participate in the renewal of the life, mission, and work of the Diocese of Buffalo through gatherings with the Diocesan Bishop and appropriate adult lay leaders. There will be two groups established within the Council: students in grades 6-8 and students in grades 9-12. Each group will receive training and formation before and while they serve on the Council.

The representatives will:

- Advise and consult with the Bishop and Catholic Center leadership regarding youth and Church issues
- Advocate for youth across the Diocese of Buffalo
- Provide witness of missionary discipleship to parishes, Family of Parishes, and Diocese of Buffalo

STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP

Youth ministry has to be synodal; it should involve a “journeying together” that values “the charisms that the Spirit bestows in accordance with the vocation and role of each of the Church’s members, through a process of co-responsibility... Motivated by this spirit, we can move towards a participatory and co-responsible Church, one capable of appreciating its own rich variety, gratefully accepting the contributions of the lay faithful, including young people and women, consecrated persons, as well as groups, associations and movements. No one should be excluded or exclude themselves”. Christus Vivit, #206

- The Council will be composed of teen representatives from each vicariate (representing grades 6-8 and representing grade 9-12) and fourteen representatives (two from grades 6-8 and two from grades 9-12) chosen from various apostolates. Each representative will serve a one or two-year term.
- Diocesan Youth Council applications for youth will be available annually.
- Adult representatives serve one or two year terms (renewable once) as members of a Youth Council Advisory Board under the leadership of the Diocesan Director for Youth and Young Adult Missionary Discipleship.

- In addition to regular bi-monthly gatherings (six times per year) usually with the Bishop, youth will be expected to participate regularly in their local parish and Family of Parishes. Time commitment per bi-monthly Diocesan Youth Council meetings will be about 90-120 minutes in addition to travel time. There may be additional Zoom meetings throughout the month.
- Representatives are expected to communicate with the pastor and appropriate lay leaders of their parish and Family of Parishes.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

Appointed representatives are:

- Practicing Catholics
- Available for formation opportunities previous to and during their time of service on the Council
- Supported by the Pastor and Youth Minister (or similar parish leader) and Parents/Guardians
- Able to inspire other teens by word and action
- Be aware of the hopes and desires of youth
- Attending junior high school or high school
- Committed to attend regularly scheduled meetings **at various locations** throughout the Diocese of Buffalo
- Able to serve at various Diocesan special events

WHY SERVE ON THE DIOCESAN YOUTH COUNCIL?

Appointed representatives will meet regularly with the Bishop and share in the renewal of the Diocese of Buffalo. They will also have the opportunity to grow in Faith through prayer, conversation, collaboration, and witness to the Gospel. This service to the Diocese will bring many blessings for years to come.

CONSIDERATION AND ACTION

Interested youth in grades 6-8 and 9-12 should discuss this commitment with their parents or guardians, Pastor, Catholic school principal or other administrator, Director of Religious Education/Faith Formation, Youth Minister, and anyone else who could be helpful. Commitment to the Council is a serious one and that should not be taken lightly. It is also a family commitment. Parents/guardians will receive all information and notices provided to the Council members.

If your child/teen makes the decision to complete an application, please follow the directions on the application carefully.

Please feel free to contact Mr. Theodore Musco, Director of Youth and Young Adult Missionary Discipleship, at tmusco@buffalodiocese.org or 716-847-8374.

May the Holy Spirit fill us with his many special gifts.

To access the digital version of the application and to request further information, go to <https://www.buffalodiocese.org/who-we-serve/youth/>