

Dear Parent,

We're so happy to have your son or daughter involved in Sacred Heart Youth Ministry! We feel honored that you have entrusted us with your child and hope that we can assist you in guiding their personal and spiritual development during these crazy adolescent years! As a faith community, it's important that we agree upon these "realistic expectations." Please review this document with your teenager, sign it, and have them return it the next time they participate in one of our gatherings.

YOUR TEEN will... be invited to gather at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, in The Dock every Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. and every Sunday following the 4 p.m. Celebration of Youth Mass. For this to be possible,

YOU will... arrange for teens to leave at 8:00 p.m. on Wednesdays and Sundays. It is also important to note that there can be no "coming and going" or hanging out in the parking lot or in cars. Once a person has left The Dock they should not return until the next gathering unless their parent has specifically discussed it with Ryan.

** Exceptions to this schedule: We do not gather on Easter Sunday, Mother's Day, Father's Day, or the 2 weeks surrounding Christmas. On occasion the location may change. This will be announced in the church bulletin and at the gatherings preceding the change.*

YOUR TEEN will... be supervised and cared for in a safe, welcoming, and spiritually nurturing environment for young people that is free from discrimination, bullying, harassment, or threats of any kind. For this to be possible,

YOU will... ask your teens about their participation and experiences at SHYM gatherings.

YOU will... volunteer at least one night per quarter to make sure young people are able to safely get to and from the parking lot.

YOU will... expect and encourage your child to honor the space they've been trusted with by cleaning up after themselves, not doing things that will damage the property, and being generally respectful.

** It is expected that youth will bring a spirit of excitement, faith, caring, sharing, cooperation, safety, communication, service, kindness, fun, fellowship, love of God, neighbor, and self, peer ministry, positive witness to the Gospel, inclusivity, honesty, and respect. Bringing drugs, alcohol, weapons, foul language, abusive or bullying behavior, disrespect, deception, dishonesty, or an attitude of entitlement to our gatherings or events is unacceptable and cannot be tolerated in order to maintain the safety of the space for everyone involved.*

YOUR TEEN will... develop healthy relationships with other teens and with adult team members. For this to be possible,

YOU will... stay informed about what is going on in your teenager's life and keep us informed on ways we can help out.

YOU will... make sure that your teen's communications with adults fall within reasonable boundaries of time and content.

** Ryan's office hours are Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. through 3 p.m. and by appointment (except when he has class at USM). Also, Ryan is available via his cell phone (601-336-0663) from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. every day. If any information is shared with Ryan or any other adult that involves choices that are seriously harmful to the young person (abuse of drugs, violence, pregnancy, bullying, etc.), that young person can expect their parents to be informed. While a level of confidentiality is important, the wellbeing of that young person is paramount.*

YOUR TEEN will... be shaped and formed in an unabashedly Catholic Christian environment. This does not mean that they must be Catholic (or even Christian) to participate. Rather, it means that while all worldviews are valued and appreciated here, only one will be taught. For this to be possible,

YOU will... encourage your teen to grow spiritually and will integrate prayer into your time together.

YOU will... model healthy spirituality by seeking out spiritual growth and formation for yourself, making sure your teen is part of our Youth Faith Formation (if Catholic), and worshipping with them at the 4pm Celebration of Youth Mass when you're able.

When expectations of young people or parents are not met, the following will occur.

1. Contact will be made with the teen and their parents by Ryan to make them aware of the problem. Depending on its severity, this conversation may be all that is necessary.
2. If necessary, the young person may be asked to "sit out" of youth ministry events for a designated period of time unless accompanied by their parents. By no means does this mean that they are not welcome or valued, only that their behavior is detrimental to the group as a whole and that they may need the presence of a parent to inspire better behavior. This time period will be discussed with the parents and determined by Ryan and Fr. Ken.

I have read and understood these Realistic Expectations, and agree to all that is set forth in this document.

PARENT

DATE

YOUTH

DATE

YOUTH MINISTER