



To: Pastors, DRE's, and Youth Leaders
From: Jerry White, Director of Youth Ministry
Date: December 3, 2007
Subject: 18th Annual State High School Youth Conference

The theme for this year's High School Youth Conference is "Lost in Christ!" The theme deals with surrendering to Jesus Christ, and turning all that we are over to Him. To be lost in Christ is to know the joy and the eternal hope that comes only through Jesus Christ.

Come join over 700 youth and adults from all over the state for the 18th Annual Diocese of Charleston's Catholic Youth Conference, scheduled for March 7-9, 2008 at the White Oak Conference Center.

This year's lineup of speakers is a blend of national and local speakers. Each presenter brings a unique gift to the table. Having a variety of presenters allows us to have something for everyone in the audience.

Friday Night Keynoter – Father Jeff Kirby

Fr. Jeff Kirby is a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ and a priest of the New Covenant. He currently serves as parochial vicar at St. Mary Help of Christians in Aiken. Fr. Kirby is an alumnus of Franciscan University of Steubenville where he studied history and philosophy, and was a member of the Brothers of the Eternal Song household. He was sent to seminary in Rome and has specialized training in moral theology. He has written several theological articles for different journals and magazines, and is a regular columnist for South Carolina newspapers, including our own "Catholic Miscellany."

Fr. Kirby is committed to the New Evangelization and regards the Servant of God, John Paul II, as a personal hero.

Saturday Morning Keynoter/Special Young Ladies Session – Tammy Evevard

Tammy Evevard spends whatever time she isn't shopping for shoes traveling the country sharing the amazing truth of how much our God loves us! Tammy has presented to countless audiences, large and small as well as been featured on several television programs including EWTN and CNN. Tammy is known to be a dynamic, passionate speaker who captures audiences with her enthusiastic style and story telling. She was recently a keynote at the National Catholic Youth Conference in Atlanta, Georgia. Tammy is a past member of National Evangelization Team and Reach Youth Ministry Team, both traveling retreat teams and is currently a vice president with Life Teen, Inc. Tammy lives in Boulder, Colorado with family.

Saturday Night Music – Bryan Murdaugh

If St. Francis played Guitar Hero, he'd want to play a track by Bryan Murdaugh with Total Strangers. A Lexington, South Carolina based Catholic rock band, each member of the Godly crüe disguises himself as a mild mannered lad. But one phone booth change later and they become rhythm blasting

rock stars. Bryan Murdaugh, an off-the-wall youth minister at Corpus Christi Catholic Church, travels the land as a Eucharistic speaker and leads the band with mad guitar/synth skills and inspiring vocals. When college student Joey Toohey isn't perfecting his American Sign Language Skills, the St. Louis native is rocking out on guitar. A Department of Energy employee by day, a Berklee-Trained rock star by night, Bostonian Mike Anzalone wows the crowds with his guitar abilities. The best new media professional/bassist in South Carolina, Michael Ball grew up in Alabama listening to the kind of rock music that involves head banging and some sort of dragon imagery. High schooler Eric Bouchard, the youngest Stranger and the band's resident Canadian, bangs on the drums all day. When their powers combine with God's grace, they become a rock and roll army for the Gospel.

Saturday Night Keynoter- Charlie Cantrell

Charlie Cantrell lives in the great state of Louisiana. He has been married for five years, to the prettiest girl in the world and not to mention the most patient, named Ali. He has a beautiful three-year-old daughter, Ella Marie, and an extremely handsome two year old son, "Dude." The Cantrell family is eagerly awaiting the arrival of their fifth family member in November, when they will welcome their new daughter and sister into the world. Charlie worked in parish youth ministry in Louisiana and Texas for six years, and now travels the Country sharing the Gospel of Christ with teens and adults alike. His ability to incorporate life's more humorous moments into the Gospel message has allowed him to reach out to people in all walks of life. When not doing ministry Charlie spends his days taking long walks on the bayou and reading poetry by candle light with his pet alligator "Francine."

House band for the Weekend – Wannabe Stephen

Our house band this year will be "Wannabe Stephen." This band is a huge hit at diocesan events, retreats, and week-long Christian Leadership Institutes. "Wannabe Stephen" is comprised of youth ministers and college students from around South Carolina

Special Men's Session – Soccer player Luke Vercollone

At 25 years old Luke is the second oldest of 11 siblings raised in south shore Massachusetts. He started as a wrestler (3 times "All New England") and soccer player at Silver Lake High School. Vercollone walked onto Seton Hall University's soccer team quickly to become a starter and helped lead the Pirates to three consecutive NCAA tournaments. As senior captain of the team in 2004 he earned 1st team "All Big East" honors and was picked in the MLS draft. Luke won two PDL national Championships with the Cape Cod Crusaders (2003, 2004 – Captain and MVP), played 2 seasons with New England Revolution winning the Eastern Conference and making the MLS Finals in 2005, and 2 seasons with the Charleston Battery (USL 1st division.) As a part time coach he enjoys working with kids and teaching the game he is passionate about. Vercollone is an active server of the Diocese of Charleston and in the community. Luke enjoys sharing his faith and passion for the Lord and has been honored to give numerous talks to youth on the topics of faith and athletics. Luke Volunteers with "Catholic Athletes for Christ" and is part of their Speaker's Bureau.

"My faith in Christ is the most important thing to me. This gift has helped me as an athlete but most importantly enriched all areas of my life. I do my best to practice my Catholic faith in the environment the Lord places me. My aim is to be an example of Christ's love – an instrument of His peace – in my profession."

Luke engaged to the wonderful and beautiful Andrea Rutherford.

White Oak Conference Center

We are excited to return for a 8th year to White Oak. For those who have not been to White Oak, it is located 40 minutes north of Columbia off of I-77. The White Oak facility offers large conference and hotel-type accommodations, with a spacious stage and hall to allow us to configure the room to ensure that everyone has a good view no matter where they sit! White Oak lecture rooms allow us to offer numerous workshops for both youth and adults. The most important aspect is that it is a large, modern facility which allows us to host many people while still comfortably meeting the needs of our group.

Registration Forms Enclosed

Registration/General Information Materials	Registration/Housing Form
Packing List	Code of Conduct Youth/Adults
Emergency Contact Numbers	Pizza Order Form
Map to White Oak	Chaperone Letter

(Note: For driving directions from your specific location, please use an internet search engine such as mapquest.com.)

High School Youth Conference General Information

Date: March 7-9, 2008
Start Time: Friday registration begins at 6:30 p.m. and ends at 8:00 p.m.
End Time: Sunday morning at 11:45 a.m.
Location: White Oak Conference Center, White Oak, SC
Participants: Students in Grades 9 - 12 may attend

Cost: \$130.00 per each Youth Early Bird Registration **before February 15**
\$150.00 per each Youth Registration after February 15

\$100.00 per each Adult Early Bird Registration **before February 15**
\$110.00 per each Adult Registration after February 15

Scholarship Information

There are a limited number of scholarships available on a first come, first serve basis.

Diocesan Conference Registration

1. Forms -- Please use only the diocesan forms to register the youth and adults from your parish as **they will be the only form of registration accepted by the Youth Office.** You may xerox as many copies as needed. Please retain a copy of all forms submitted for your own records. All forms need to be properly completed and returned with payment to the Youth Office by **Friday, February 15, 2008.** Please ensure that the correct t-shirt sizes are written on the registration form as there will be no exchanges at the conference. Also, if ordering size XXL/2XL or XXXL/3XL, please submit an additional \$2 per shirt. The largest size available is XXXL/3XL.

Special Notes:

- ♦ There are separate forms for registering and housing youth boys and girls, as well as adult males and females. Please review them carefully before completing.
- ♦ Everyone attending the conference must be registered by his/her parish, using the appropriate form, submit a signed medical release form, and pay the registration

fee, **including chaperones**. The deadline for early bird registration at the rate of \$130 per youth and \$100 per adult is **Friday, February 15, 2008**. Beginning Monday, February 18, the registration fee will be \$150 per youth and \$110 per adult. Any additions to your registration roster received after the early bird deadline will be at the \$150 rate. Please understand that your registration packet is not considered complete until all forms are submitted and money received.

There are no refunds.

2. Housing -- Housing at White Oak will be in two separate areas. We will be using both the motel rooms and the group housing (group housing holds 64 people). We will assign youth in groups of 4-5 per room. (Each of the motel rooms are equipped with two double beds.) We will assign 3 adults per room. Please submit your housing lists accordingly. Housing is on a first come, first served basis. Once White Oak housing is full, the rest of the participants will be assigned to the Holiday Inn.

For overflow housing, we will be using the Holiday Inn in Blythewood which is approximately 20 minutes from White Oak. You will be responsible for your own transportation to and from the conference site. A continental breakfast will be available for those staying at the Holiday Inn. Those who are housed at the Holiday Inn will incur an extra \$60 per person cost. If you prefer to be housed at the hotel, please note this on your housing form.

For those needing housing accommodations for the disabled, please note that on your housing form.

3. Chaperones/Youth -- Please help us put on a great youth conference by ensuring the safety of our young people through adequate supervision. I would like to keep a 7:1 ration of youth to adults. Please be sure to have adult male and female chaperones, 21 years of age or older and virtue trained. All adults should sit with their young people during all general sessions. Please remember that chaperones are responsible for their youth both day and night.

Persons under the age of 21 are not considered to be chaperones. They can be a helper, but should **not** be considered as chaperones.

Special Note:

- ♦ It is your responsibility to ensure that your youth understand and follow the diocesan youth conference guidelines.

Upon Arrival at the Conference Site

Registration begins at 6:30 p.m. and ends at 8:00 p.m. (Those groups arriving after 8:00 p.m. will be asked to register after the Friday night program. An announcement will be made regarding where you should report if you have not yet checked in.)

Upon arrival, you will be directed to parking. A greeter will meet your vehicle and direct the sponsoring adult to the registration area for your group. Please do not bring your entire group to the registration tables. All participants but the sponsoring adult, including chaperones, should wait in their vehicle until registration is complete.

If you have any questions or changes, please report to the "trouble-shooting table" located in the registration area.

Special Note:

- ♦ We will only accept replacements/changes of the same gender. (For example, Johnny gets sick the day of the conference, you may not send Suzy in his place.) If you have changes the day of the conference, we will not be able to exchange the shirt which was on the original order form for a different size.

There is to be absolutely NO room switching without prior written permission from the Director of Youth Ministry. People will be assigned to rooms to help us ensure that there are enough beds for everyone, but more importantly, it is imperative that we know in which room participants will be staying in the event of a nighttime emergency.

When you register, you will receive an envelope for your group containing:

- 1) A list of the adults/youths registered from your parish.
- 2) A name tags for each participant which **MUST** be worn the entire weekend. Name tags will contain the following information: first and last name, parish, and city. Name tags are \$5.00 to replace.
- 3) A schedule for the weekend.
- 4) T-shirts for all registered participants.
- 5) Housing assignments

Packing List

Appropriate Casual Clothing
Sweatshirts/Jackets
Toiletry Items
Sleeping Bag

** Do not bring iPods, CD players, electronic games, or cell phones. At past conferences, we have had several items stolen. Do **NOT** bring these items to the conference!

Friday Meal

Again this year we will be selling pizza and sodas. I am happy to offer you a meal option of pizza from Pizza Hut in your choice of either cheese or vegetarian pizzas. The cost for either pizza is \$10.00 each. Those wishing to do so may purchase sodas from the White Oak staff for \$1.00 each.

If you wish to order pizza or sodas for your group, simply complete the enclosed order form and return it with your registration packet by the deadline of February 15, 2008. When you arrive on Friday night, your pizza will be waiting for you. We ask that you arrive between 6:30 and 7:30 p.m. in order for your group to have plenty of time to eat before the conference begins at 8:00 p.m.

Free Time

On Saturday afternoon, the youth will be given free time. The youth are invited to participate in several different team sports tournaments, including volleyball, and basketball. Sign-ups for these sports will take place on Saturday morning.

First Aid Station

We will again have a first aid station set up in Beacham Auditorium. We are in need of either doctors, nurses, or EMT's who would be willing to help "man" this station.

Emergency Contact Numbers

Please use these numbers only in the event of an emergency!

White Oak Conference Center (803) 635-4685
Jerry White, Director of Youth Ministry Cell Phone (843) 709-9025

Banners

Each parish group is invited to make a banner that represents the theme and occasion of the weekend. Banners will be judged by the Conference Committee and ribbons will be awarded to the top three. We ask that each banner be made so that it can stand by itself. (For example, use PVC pipe, wooden dowels, etc.) Banners should be no larger than 4' x 6'.

Extra Money

Please let your youth know that speakers/presenters will be selling T-shirts and CD's. Also, we will be taking up a collection for the Diocesan Youth Scholarship fund and Home Works at the Sunday Mass.

YOUTH CONFERENCE GUIDELINES

We ask that the following rules be reviewed and explained to the youth by the sponsoring adult:

1. No alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or weapons may be brought or used in accordance with the laws of the State of South Carolina and diocesan policies and guidelines. Anyone disregarding the law will be subject to immediate dismissal. Parents, as well as the police, will be notified.
2. Each person is to treat others the way they would treat Jesus. Each participant is to respect themselves, each other, staff, and all areas of the White Oak Conference Center.
3. NO person shall leave the grounds at any time during the course of the weekend without the consent of the diocesan Director of Youth Ministry. Once the vehicles are parked, they are to be locked and remain locked and parked throughout the weekend.
4. Participants are expected to attend all planned activities unless excused for a valid reason and with written permission from their adult sponsor.
5. Separate dorm areas will be designated for boys and girls. At no time is there to be visitation in housing areas designated for the opposite gender.
6. Name tags must be worn at all times (except when playing sports). If you lose or misplace your name tag and need a replacement, there will be a cost of \$5.
7. No furniture is to be removed from any room. Any broken or damaged items will be charged to the occupants of that room if the responsible party cannot be identified.
8. Gatherings are only permitted in public places. We ask that during free time, youth are either on the playing field or at a public gathering.
9. Quiet time is observed between midnight and 7:30 a.m. **Curfew is midnight!** All conference participants are expected to remain in their rooms after curfew! Anybody found outside his/her room after curfew will be subject to dismissal.
10. All rooms and adjacent grounds must be cleaned prior to leaving or there will be an additional charge to your parish.
11. Meals will be served in the cafeteria, beginning on Saturday morning. There will be no refunds for meals missed. Meals may not be purchased from any other source.
12. All participants are required to stay in their assigned rooms. No changing!
13. When motel rooms are unoccupied, drapes must be open.
14. All youth participants are required to bring a sleeping bag with them.