

Stewardship in Action at St. Bernard

New Horizons for Youth and Young Adult Ministry

Following in the footsteps of many dedicated Youth and Young Adult Ministry leaders at St. Bernard, new Director Dan Konkel is rising to the challenge. After a number of years of assisting Director Christine Falk D'Alessio, who stepped down at the end of 2012, Dan saw an opportunity to use his creativity and talents to energize the program when he took over as the new Director.

From the start, Dan has put his all into guiding the Youth Ministry Program and promoting youth involvement. He began last Fall by passionately presenting his vision for the Youth Ministry via pulpit announcements at mass, and then he wisely enlisted the support of many Youth Ministry leaders including Scott Pachuta, Sean O'Brien, Mike Ortiz, Ann Molnar, Amy Bocchino, Angelina Pecoraro, Nicole Peterson, and Natalie Flynn.

As a result of Dan's efforts, word spread and excitement grew in advance of the first Youth Ministry meeting in September 2012, which over 60 young people attended. Increased attendance has continued with between 40 and 50 attendees at every Tuesday night meeting, and high school freshman participation is at an all-time high.

Dan's creative flair has also helped make a number of Youth Group events successful, such as the group's first event "The St. Bernard Road Rally." Youth Group members had a blast participating in this scavenger hunt, which consisted of one adult driver, four young adults, a camera, a stopwatch per vehicle, and a mission to find items categorized as "Common," "Funny," and "Random" within the community.

A short time later was the Youth Retreat. Accompanied by Dan, many members of the Youth Group attended, leaving St. Bernard on a Friday night and rejoining their families at 12pm mass on Sunday afternoon. During that time the group became a family. They shared meals, prayed, sang, and watched movies. During the retreat, with equipment on loan from Dan's company, **Daniel J. Photography**, Youth Group members even had a chance to get creative, making a video that can be seen on the Youth Ministry website.

Dan reports that his creativity is inherited from his father, a NASA Engineer on Space Station Communications, whose design tools were even featured on the popular TV show "Home Improvement" back in the 1990s.

His adaptability and interpersonal skills stem from his upbringing, growing up a quasi 'Military Brat,' and living in Alabama as a young child, Maryland during his junior high school years and then Texas during his high school years. Dan credits moving to different locations with teaching him to work with and get along with new people, skills which are definitely an asset to the Youth Ministry program.

On the home front, Dan has the support of his wife, who just gave birth to their second child, Calvin Thomas, on March 18th. The Konkels, who live in Bedminster, also have a daughter who is nearly two.

With a degree in Theology and Philosophy, Dan has the instincts of a teacher, the openness to share his experiences, a youthful exuberance, a vision to move forward, and the wisdom to know that he can not do this alone. Dan and all of our Youth Ministry leaders are fine men and women of the parish community. They share their time, talent and treasure with our sons and daughters. We are grateful for their service and should support them in their efforts. They are our future.

STBYG.COM
ST. BERNARD YOUTH GROUP



Participants at the 2013 Winter Retreat, held at the Crossroads Retreat Center

To see the retreat video, and lots more . . .

Check out stbyg.com or visit the Youth Ministry section on the parish website.



ST. BERNARD YOUTH GROUP
all high school students are welcome! We meet every Tuesday from 7-9pm. Follow our website for more info and the latest buzz!

↪ **STBYG.COM** ↻

Interested in learning more about the Stewardship Council?

Please contact Mark Dransfield (mlrek@optonline.net or call 908-526-6649)

