

Office of Youth Ministry | Catholic Diocese of Richmond

Diocesan Youth Conference 2009 Initial Information March 13, 2009

This communication contains initial information concerning the Diocesan Youth Conference for 2009. Please read all the information contained in this communication to ensure you have a full understanding of the event.

What is the Diocesan Youth Conference?

The Diocese Youth Conference (formerly known as the Diocesan Youth Convention) is a weekend event held in the summer of each calendar year to gather high school youth from all 152 parishes located in the Diocese of Richmond to one central location. The Conference is a highly energetic, engaging, and awesome opportunity for our high school teenagers to gather as a larger Church community and celebrate the amazing richness of our Catholic Christian faith.

Who should attend the Diocesan Youth Conference?

The Conference is open to all rising 9th graders through graduating 12th graders.

Where and when is the Diocesan Youth Conference?

The Diocesan Youth Conference will be held on Friday, July 24 through Sunday, July 26, 2009 at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. For many years the Convention had been held at Lynchburg College, but due to an anticipated rise in attendance, the venue has been changed to the College of William and Mary to accommodate larger numbers.

What is the theme and who is the keynote speaker?

The theme this year is **Anchored by Christ** and the keynote speaker is Cooper Ray (www.cooperray.com).

What's new for 2009?

Of course, the biggest change is the venue! Having an opportunity to be in one of the most historical areas of our state along with the beauty of the campus at the College of William and Mary is quite a treat. In addition, there are a few other significant changes for you to be aware of:

- **Keynote Speaker.** Our keynote speaker will be addressing attendees multiple times during the course of the weekend rather than just once on Saturday morning.
- **Saturday Night Social.** In the past, Saturday evening has been an opportunity for attendees to participate in a dance or coffeehouse. These events have been changed to now be an evening at the William and Mary Rec Center with games, a rock-climbing wall, swimming pool, basketball courts, and more fun. In addition, there will be an "adults-only" reception during the evening for adults to get away.
- **Saturday Night Banquet.** Due to space constraints, we will not longer be able to offer a banquet on Saturday evening, but will provide an opportunity to give out youth and adult awards that were traditionally given out at this banquet.
- **Sacraments.** Mass will be celebrated during the weekend on both Saturday and Sunday with all attendees. In addition, the sacrament of reconciliation will be available during the course of the weekend. There will also be an opportunity for attendees to spend some time in prayer and reflection during the weekend.
- **More Sessions.** We will be offering more breakout sessions for adults and youth during the course of the weekend with topics that have been requested based on feedback from previous years.

What is the registration fee?

The cost per individual (youth OR adult) is \$145. The cost this year has gone up slightly due to the fact that the Diocese is unable to subsidize the Conference at the same level as it has in the past due to our current economic climate. For adults who request a single room, the cost is \$175. For attendees who would like to visit for the day and not stay overnight, the cost is \$100. For members of the Diocesan Youth Council, the cost is \$100.

What does this registration fee cover?

The registration fee will cover lodging on Friday and Saturday evenings at the College of William and Mary. In addition, Saturday breakfast, lunch and dinner as well as Sunday breakfast are included. This year, t-shirts and pizza socials in the evenings will also be included in the registration fee.

How do I register and what are the registration deadlines?

Registration will work VERY differently than in past years. We are moving to an online, self-service registration process to make registration as easy for parishes as possible. There is a two-step process. The first step will be to fill out a pre-conference forecast form with forecasted numbers of attendees. The second step will be to complete your registration

online. We will be sending out the pre-conference forecast form under a separate email with instructions by March 20, 2009. This form will be due by April 15, 2009. Online registration will be available by May 1, 2009 and will close on June 15, 2009. **More details will be coming over the next few weeks about the registration process.**

Will there be caps on registrations this year?

Initially, there will be NO caps on registrations this year. In the event that registrations exceed capacity, we will limit the number of adults who can attend the Conference. The rule of thumb for adult attendance is a minimum of 2 adults which will cover up to 16 youth attendees. If you exceed 16 youth attendees, you will need to provide 1 adult for every 8 youth attendees. If you cannot cover the adult requirement, you are able to partner with other parishes.

Will marketing and promotional materials be available for my parish?

Yes! We will be providing posters and a promotional DVD for the Conference. Each parish will receive a package of marketing materials via USPS by the beginning of April. Additional materials can be requested through the Office of Youth Ministry.

Is transportation provided?

Transportation is the responsibility of each parish to coordinate. The Office of Youth Ministry can assist parishes by advertising additional spaces on buses that may be available, but we cannot provide financial support for these available seats. For parishes in regions 9, 10, and 11, the Office of Youth Ministry has received a grant to provide two 55-passenger buses to assist with transportation. There will be no cost for these parishes to reserve seats on these buses. Space will be allocated based on the number of attendees forecasted on the pre-conference registration form which is due by **April 15, 2009**.

Diocesan Youth Council Election Process

Traditionally, the members of the Diocesan Youth Council are nominated and elected to represent their region at the Diocesan Youth Conference each year. Due to the changes in the geographic structure of our Diocese (i.e. the movement from regions to LPAs), the process for nominations and elections will be changing. At this time, the Office of Youth Ministry is looking at a variety of options to best serve the needs of the Diocese and the parishes. Details will be available by June 1, 2009 about this process.

Diocesan Awards

Details regarding adult and youth awards traditionally given out during the Conference will be available by June 1, 2009.

Where do I go for questions or additional support?

For all questions or support, contact the Office of Youth Ministry directly via email at mschool@richmonddiocese.org OR 804-622-5115.

In addition, we are offering conference calls for ALL adults to attend to ask questions and learn more about the Youth Conference. These conference calls are FREE to participate in and you will not need to register. You can attend any of the following conference calls, they will all have the same agenda and content.

- Monday, March 23, 2009 at 8:00 pm
- Tuesday, March 24, 2009 at 3:00 pm
- Monday, March 30, 2009 at 11:00 am
- Thursday, April 2, 2009 at 7:00 pm

To access the conference calls, follow these instructions:

1. Dial 1-877-655-3570 (a toll-free number for you)
2. Enter conference code: 8042846804#