



This communication (**adapted for St. Mary's Parish-use**) contains initial info concerning the DYC. Please read all the info contained in this communication to ensure you have a full understanding of the event.

What is the Diocesan Youth Conference?

The Diocesan Youth Conference (DYC) is an annual weekend event that gathers high school youth from Diocese of Richmond parishes in one central location. DYC is a highly energetic and engaging opportunity for our high school teenagers to gather as a larger Church community and celebrate the richness of our Catholic faith. **Some key pieces of the conference are:**

- **Sacraments & Prayer.** Mass will be celebrated on both Saturday and Sunday. The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available on Saturday afternoon. All attendees will experience Eucharistic Adoration during program, including praise & worship music and a time of Eucharistic Procession
- **Free Time.** Do something fun on Saturday afternoon. Want to climb a rock wall? Play a giant version of a game from your childhood? Meet-and-greet college students from your future campus ministry? Go head-to-head answering Catholic trivia? There's something for everyone!
- **Breakout Sessions.** There will be two rounds of breakout sessions for adults and teens focused on a variety of topics – pick your own adventure! Everyone will also attend a men's or women's session on Saturday evening.
- **Choir Opportunity.** Do you have a teen who sings? Invite them to be part of the Diocesan Youth Choir that sings at the Sunday Mass. Music is sent out before the conference, but rehearsals occur during DYC.
- **Community Service.** Saturday afternoon includes a meal-packing service project event with Rise Against Hunger, giving teens a way to put their Catholic faith into action during the conference. These meals are sent to our brothers and sisters in need in the international community.

Who should attend the Diocesan Youth Conference?

- DYC is open to 8th - 12th grade youth for the 2026-2027 academic year. Those who have graduated high school and are older than 19 are not allowed to attend DYC.
- Youth Ministers reserve the right to determine if 8th graders are mature enough to be fully present during the conference.
- Any high school teen who has a disability, such as autism, and might need accommodation to attend, please email Chris at cjenkins@stmarysrichmond.org right away so we can reach to the Diocese to start the appropriate conversations. The Diocese seeks to make all of their events as accessible as possible!

Where and when is the Diocesan Youth Conference?

- DYC will be held on Fri., Feb. 19 through Sun., Feb. 21, 2027 at the Greater Richmond Convention Center in Richmond. Parishes are asked to travel and arrive **as one complete group**; this aids us in the check-in process and guarantees youth are with their chaperones. **Our group will depart together at 4:30pm from St. Mary's Church with chaperones carpooling teens downtown. If we need help from parents in shuttling teens, we'll organize those arrangements closer to the event.** Our parish group aims to arrive at The Marriott between 5:15-6pm on Friday. Our Youth Minister will check in with our conference staff while the group waits together in the DYC waiting area.
- Most parish groups will be housed in the Richmond Marriott Downtown hotel located at 500 E. Broad St. in Richmond. Some groups will be housed in our two overflow hotels near the Marriott: the Hilton Richmond Downtown (501 E Broad Street) and the Delta Hotel Richmond Downtown (555 E Canal Street). All hotels are within walking distance of the Greater Richmond Convention Center. Parishes who will be housed in overflow hotels will be notified at least 3 weeks prior to the event.

I've heard that college students interact with the Diocesan Youth Conference? Is that true?

- Yes and no. Some of the "Campus Ministry Summit" programming will be happening concurrently with DYC at the Greater Richmond Convention Center. While most activities will remain separate, high school youth and college students will gather together for our Saturday morning Mass with the Bishop.
- All college students will have hotel accommodations in an off-site location, and may not attend DYC.
- A few hand-selected college students help to run our Campus Ministry Fair for older high schoolers that happens during Free Time at DYC.

What is the theme this year?

The theme this year is **ENDURING**, based primarily on two central Scripture passages:

1 Corinthians 13:7-8a

[Love] bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.

Romans 8:37-39

In all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Jesus's love for us isn't a passive or idealistic idea. It is not cheesy or overly pious. The love between God and His people is not merely affection or attraction: it is about a deeper love, one that is willing to sacrifice for the good of the beloved. His love is strong, faithful, **ENDURING**. It is a love that fights for us and waits for us. This love is symbolized in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which inspired this year's logo. The cross, thorns, and wound remind us of His passion and death; the rays symbolize His zeal for us as well as the fire He ignites in our hearts to share the Good News with the world. Open your heart to the **ENDURING** love of God and let Him set your heart of fire so that you too learn how to have a love that endure.

Important DYC Registration Details and Event Fees

Parish Registration Period closes on Fri., Nov. 20, 2027 at 12:00 noon

- All youth and adults must register through their parish Youth Minister
- As much as possible, teens should be able to commit when registering to attending the entire weekend without leaving the conference for other commitments and youth activities
- Please know that once a registration is processed with the Diocese, a spot is locked in and reserved, and cancellations cannot always be guaranteed a full refund.
- If a teen for some reason must cancel, they must email Chris at cjenkins@stmarysrichmond.org **by Sun. Jan. 3, 2027**, so the parish can notify the Diocese ASAP, and try to assist in a partial refund or substitution.

Youth Participants: \$200 (based on 4 youth per room only)

VIRTUS Trained-Screened Adult Participants: Paid by Parish based on 2 adults per room only (\$225 value)

Please pay by check. Make it out to "St. Mary Catholic Church" with "DYC 2027" in memo and attach to form.

See the next page for what the registration fee covers and how the hotel rooms work.

For other questions concerning lodging, email Chris at cjenkins@stmarysrichmond.org

What does this registration fee cover?

- Lodging on Friday and Saturday evenings
- Saturday breakfast, lunch and dinner as well as Sunday breakfast are included.
- A late-night snack on Friday and Saturday
- Conference T-shirt

How do hotel rooms work? What about rooming assignments?

- Most hotel rooms have 2 queen-size beds OR 1 king-sized bed with a pullout couch.
- For our parish group, every room will be assigned 2 adults OR 4 youth of the same sex
- If one of our parish's assigned rooms has less than 4 teens (or 2 adults) The Office for Evangelization will combine parishes to fill open spots in rooms, in order to maximize room allocations.
- Rooming Assignments will be made at Youth Minister's best judgment based on age/grade levels, school affiliations, etc. Please know that while teens may note on their forms who they'd like to room with, and while efforts are made to honor these suggestions; preferences cannot always be guaranteed.
- **If teens wish to "pick" and guarantee their four roommates for one room, that can be honored. Teens must:**
 - organize amongst themselves first
 - have one teen/family gather up all FOUR completed forms/fees together submit these NYC forms/fees together **as a batch** to be processed.

How many teens can our parish take? ...and chaperone requirements...

- For NYC, ONE Adult is required for every EIGHT youth (or part thereof)
 - Volunteer Adults created more youth spaces
 - Youth registrations will be held on a parish wait list and not be placed on the Diocesan system until our group has secured and registered adult chaperones we need
- Adult chaperones must be at least 21 years of age and must be in compliance with the Diocesan Safe Environment Policies

All participants are required to stay at a hotel assigned by the Office for Evangelization for security reasons.

There is NO day-only option available.