

***Catholic Youth, Young Adult,  
and Family Ministry  
Annual Recognition Dinner  
May 20, 2026  
Celebrating 22 years***



**Catholic Youth, Young Adult, and Family Ministry**  
**Annual Recognition Dinner**  
**May 20, 2026 – Royal Prime Events**

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6:50 pm

**Welcome**

Dan Pin

Director

Catholic Youth, Young Adult, and Family Ministry

**Opening Prayer**

7:00 pm

**Dinner**

7:45 pm

**Presentation of Awards**

***Volunteer of the Year Award***

***St. John Bosco Award***

***Coach Jim Blunt Memorial Award***

***St. John Paul II Courage in Athletics Award***

***St. Timothy Youth Award***

**Remarks**

Dan Pin

*Remarks on Youth Ministry*

**Final Remarks and Blessing**

Most Reverend William E. Koenig

Tenth Bishop of Wilmington

## Opening Prayer

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L:/ Brothers and sisters, tonight we acknowledge and honor those who have answered the call to serve our young church. Let us pray together...

*As each group is named, please stand at your place and remain standing.*

L:/ For our Volunteers of the Year, whose contributions of time and talent change lives, we pray:

**R:/ Bless them, O Lord**

L:/ For recipients of the *St. John Bosco Award*, whose generosity of spirit challenges us, we pray:

**R:/ Bless them, O Lord**

L:/ For the recipients of the *Coach Jim Blunt Memorial Award*, whose unique response to God's call gives us hope, we pray:

**R:/ Bless them, O Lord**

L:/ For the recipients of the *St. John Paul II Courage in Athletics Award*, whose courage and perseverance in the face of extraordinary challenges inspire us, we pray:

**R:/ Bless them, O Lord**

L:/ For recipients of the *St. Timothy Youth Award*, whose lives are an example to us all, we pray:

**R:/ Bless them, O Lord**

L:/ For the families of our award recipients, who have modeled the love of the Holy Family and shared their gifts and talents with us all, we pray:

**R:/ Bless them, O Lord**

L:/ For all involved in Youth Ministry throughout our Diocese, who labor in the vineyard sharing the joy of the Gospel, we pray:

**R:/ Bless them, O Lord**

L:/ Eternal God, source of every gift, through your Son, Jesus Christ, you grant us your blessings that the Church might be sustained and strengthened. Bless the food we are about to receive, may it nourish us in mind and body. Bring us all into the peace of your kingdom, where all honor and glory are yours, forever and ever.

**R:/ Amen.**

## **Volunteer of the Year Award**

*When announced, gather in the lobby. As your name is called, greet Bishop Koenig to receive your award. Then, please move to the side of the room for a group picture. Once all recipients have come forward, the assembly will show their appreciation.*

### **Michelle Brakhage – Resurrection Parish**

As an artist, Michelle brings creativity to our middle and high school programs. The various forms of expression she integrates into the programs resonate with students. When the lead middle school catechist was unavailable for an extended period, Michelle stepped into the lead role, ensuring the program continued seamlessly. Michelle also shares her time and talent as a theater set designer/scenic artist and creator at St. Mark's High School. She encourages students to step beyond their comfort zones, try new things, and broaden their knowledge base.

### **Matthew Buckery – Saint John the Beloved Parish**

Matthew is a hard-working and dedicated volunteer who shares the Gospel message through his words and by the example he sets for others. He serves as a Sunday morning catechist, teaching first grade, a role in which he excels. His students love being a part of "Mr. Matthew's" class. He also volunteers for Vacation Bible School, the parish carnival, the fish fry, the Christmas tree lighting, and any other event for which he can help. He is a positive role model in the faith, always helping others with great patience, kindness, and joy.

### **Sue Cordie – Holy Cross Church**

Sue has been our OCIA-adapted-for-Children catechist for the last six of the thirteen years she has served our parish. She is loved by her students and has a profound impact on their lives. She leads her class by example, sharing her love for the Catholic faith openly with all her students. She is a passionate and joyful witness not only to her students but also to their parents, catechists, and other parishioners. When you look at Sue, you see the love of Jesus glowing through her!

### **Margaret Haass – Immaculate Conception, Marydel**

Margaret has been an integral part of the Religious Education, Sacramental Preparation, and Vacation Bible School teams for at least 15 years. She began helping in Religious Education after confirmation and is now the lead catechist for first grade. She has co-directed Vacation Bible School for many years and is an active team member in all planning. She is a catechist for First Reconciliation and First Communion and assists with the retreats and liturgies for both. Her devotion to her faith is evident in her willingness to step up and lead when needed.

### **Mary Maloney – Immaculate Heart of Mary**

Mary demonstrates an extraordinary commitment to serving others through quiet, faithful, and compassionate ministry. She fulfills the ministry of outreach by visiting nursing homes, accompanying individuals and families through times of loss, and serving as a founding member of the Bereavement Committee. She also serves as a sacristan and Eucharistic Minister with great care and devotion. Through selfless service, generosity of spirit, and a constant presence for those in need, she is a true blessing to the parish community.

### **Marianne McCarthy – Padua Academy**

Marianne has served as the nurse at Padua Academy for the past 5 years. She is an active member of her parish, Assumption BVM. Marianne is a Padua graduate and co-moderator of the Blue Gold club, which supports Delawareans with intellectual differences through fundraising and volunteerism at events. She also helps with the Encounter Retreat program and Salsthon. She is a vital part of the Padua Community and is always ready to lend a helping hand

### **Mike McGroerty – Our Lady of Lourdes**

Mike has forty years of service to religious education and youth activities at Our Lady of Lourdes. He has been a constant source of wisdom, encouragement, and joy for the youth of our parish. His positivity has touched countless lives, creating a welcoming environment for youth. Mike goes above and beyond by organizing and leading numerous outdoor trips that have become cherished memories for generations of our parish youth. Through these experiences, he has not only taught lessons of faith but also fostered friendship, confidence, and a deep appreciation for community and God's creation. His work speaks to the selfless way he shares his time, gifts, and heart with others.

### **Ryan McLaughlin – Saint Francis de Sales Parish**

Ryan has shown tremendous dedication to our high school students. He has given himself wholeheartedly to them, guiding them toward a life of service to our Lord. Whether offering a kind word of encouragement, gentle direction, or instruction on a construction site, his words have always reflected Christian love and admonishment. His assistance with the Appalachia Service Project has given our students the opportunity to grow into confident young people who make a difference in their church and community. We've been abundantly blessed by the multifaceted leadership he has provided over the past few years.

### **Tamera Shell – St. Dennis**

Tamera has been a blessing to the Youth Ministry. She serves as the ninth-grade catechetical assistant each week. She helped with the Youth Group fundraiser and Christmas party, and devoted a weekend to chaperoning the youth at the Mount 2000 youth retreat. A recent convert to Catholicism, Tamera is on fire with the Holy Spirit and shares her enthusiasm with everyone she meets. She is a member of the Pastoral Council and the Christian Formation Committee and is always eager to find ways to share our Catholic faith with others.

### **Susan Stith – Holy Rosary Parish**

Susan came to us in 2016, after her "retirement" from a career in ministry in the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown. Her love of children's formation would not allow her to fade into the background. She introduced our parish to the "Montessori" style early childhood catechesis program, "Catechesis of the Good Shepherd". She leads the ministry. Through her time, talent, treasure, and genuine love for the children, the program has blossomed outward to the Catholic homeschool population as well. She is currently raising awareness of the spiritual richness of the "Good Shepherd" methods among others in our Deanery.

### **Joyce Tolson – St. Polycarp**

Joyce is a dedicated parishioner involved in several ministries. Her passion and greatest strength lie with her students in the classroom. Joyce has been involved in religious education for many years, taking on various roles. She is now the catechist for PreK/Kindergarten. Her students enjoy her creativity, and she enjoys watching them grow in their faith. Joyce is also a member of the Christian Formation Committee, always coming up with great ideas and helping wherever she is needed. Joyce is a blessing to the parish, the community, and the CRE.

**Heather Ulmen – Immaculate Conception, Elkton**

Heather started as an Assistant for Faith Formation in 2018 and soon became a Catechist. She teaches both our primary and upper grades. She is also a member of our Religious Education Core Team, which plans the Academy of Faith, Academy Events, and Family Catechesis. She comes in to teach children how to make Rosaries. Heather is a member of the Life Teen/Edge Core Team, which plans events for grades 6-12. Heather will do anything she can to help the parish. She is also a member of the Divine Mercy Group and interprets at the Sunday Masses.

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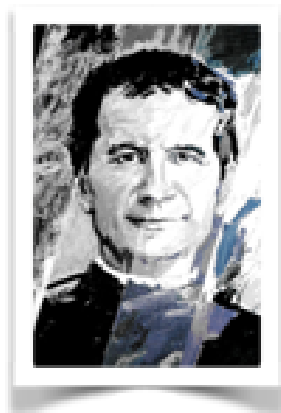


## **St. John Bosco Award**

*When announced, gather in the lobby. As your name is called, greet Bishop Koenig to receive your award. Then, please move to the side of the room for a group picture. Once all recipients have come forward, the assembly will show their appreciation.*

St. John Bosco is the founder of the Salesian Society and is the patron saint of young people.

The **St. John Bosco Award** is given to adult leaders (21 years or older and cleared for service in the diocese) who have been involved in youth ministry for five or more years and have been positive role models in one of several categories. Recipients may be volunteers or salaried, lay or religious.



### **Athletics**

#### **Marty Barnes – St. Mary Magdalen**

Marty embodies faith-driven leadership, selfless service, and a lifelong commitment to developing young people. Since 1986, he has been the cornerstone of JV football at St. Mary Magdalen, mentoring generations through the values of Catholic Youth Ministry. He has guided more than 1,000 athletes, instilling discipline, humility, and accountability on and off the field. His impact extends beyond championships, as many players have advanced to high school, college, and the NFL. Marty's true legacy is the character and leadership he instills in every athlete he coaches.

#### **John Parlamenti – St. John the Beloved**

John has been a pillar of the SJB basketball community for more than three decades, offering unwavering dedication to the young people of our Diocese. His commitment is remarkable, reflecting the depth of his character and his genuine care for developing student-athletes. He continues to embody what great coaches strive for, shaping young people into strong athletes and even stronger individuals. His leadership, consistency, and passion have left an enduring mark on countless players, and his legacy includes an impressive eight CYM championships.

## **Catechesis**

### **Kathleen Cummings – St. Ann, Bethany Beach**

Kathleen's life has been defined by compassion, faith, and devotion. A registered nurse for more than 40 years, she dedicated her career to caring for those in need, including 15 years as a hospice nurse, bringing comfort and dignity to patients and their families. After retiring, she volunteered to comfort newborns experiencing withdrawal and taught Sunday school for 31 years. She and her beloved husband, Michael, raised three children and are proud grandparents of five. She is admired for her kindness, strength, and generous heart. Her life reflects a legacy of faith, service, and unconditional love.

### **Jennifer Martinez Ulloa – Our Lady of Lourdes**

Jennifer is a remarkable young woman whose dedication, generosity, and faith-filled service have made a lasting impact on our parish community. Through her commitment to teaching a religious education class, she has helped nurture the spiritual foundation of our youngest members with patience, kindness, and enthusiasm. Her ability to share the message of faith in meaningful ways is truly remarkable. She generously offers her time and talents in many other areas. In particular, her leadership in organizing Confirmation interviews and her faithful presence at each one ensured that every candidate felt welcomed and supported during this important step.

## **Catholic School**

### **Rita Crowley – St. Ann School**

Rita, a fifth-grade teacher and Religion Committee Coordinator at St. Ann School, is exceptional with the youth. She organizes school liturgies and prayer services that include student leadership, training of altar servers, guiding teachers in sacramental preparation, and leading key initiatives such as the Religion Bee and the care package collection for the Sisters of St. Francis. Rita volunteers at parish events, often supporting the Knights of Columbus, and recently served as a Confirmation sponsor for a faculty member undergoing the rites of initiation. She is a powerful witness to Catholic discipleship with her unwavering faith.

## **Clergy**

### **Father Rich Jasper**

Father Rich's journey toward the priesthood began as a middle school teacher in Catholic schools in Delaware County, Pa. During his formation at St. Mary's Seminary, he served in summer ministry, completed a pastoral year at St. Elizabeth Church, and was assigned to diaconal ministry at St. Mary Magdalen Church. He spent his first six years of the priesthood as Associate Pastor of St. Ann Church. In June 2023, he came to Immaculate Conception Parish as Parish Administrator and was appointed Pastor of Immaculate Conception and St. Thomas More Oratory. Father Rich's path has been a remarkable one for others to follow.

## **Multi-Cultural Setting**

### **José Cantoran – St. Dennis**

José has been instrumental in uniting the two cultural communities at St. Dennis into one parish community. He serves as the liaison between the Parish Pastoral and Finance Councils and as a member of the Hispanic Council. José serves young adults as a catechist for Baptism Preparation. He is known for sharing stories from his own journey as a Catholic father to encourage other men in their role as fathers. He also serves as an OCIA catechist, sharing his faith with enthusiasm. He steps forward to meet any need he can and is a willing servant of the Lord. He is a bridge of unity.

## **Parish Youth Ministry**

### **Emily Effinger – Ss. Peter and Paul Church**

Emily demonstrates commitment to Christ by encouraging young people to develop a personal relationship with Christ and to know, love, and serve. Her role as a Middle School Theology teacher keeps her busy by day, but her amazing work continues. She still finds the time, expertise, and space in her heart to work with Confirmation Prep, Mission Team, and Catechetical events. Her walk has clearly enriched the lives of our young people and everyone in her path.

**Uwemedimo Etyit – St. Francis de Sales**

Uwem has been an exemplary Christian leader, sharing his bold faith and love for Christ. His incredible dedication to the Faith Formation program has helped our teens develop a joy for Sacred Scripture and the Catholic Church. His excellent teaching gifts, paired with a love of learning, study, and preparation, have directly impacted our young people. Uwem has been a key leader in many service projects, Youth Conferences, and Catholic Heart Work Camps. Through servant leadership, he has modeled the importance of a deep, abiding faith in our Lord, expressed in a life of service.

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## Coach Jim Blunt Memorial Award

In November 2007, Catholic Youth Ministry lost a dear friend, Jim Blunt. Jim coached many different sports in the CYM program over the course of 35 years. In 2008, CYM instituted the **Coach Jim Blunt Memorial Award** to recognize individuals who have either coached within CYM sports or who have had a positive impact on the athletic program. Recipients of this award are examples for CYM athletes by promoting Christian values, good sportsmanship, the spirit of fair play, and gentle discipline.



This year, we are pleased to present the Coach Jim Blunt Memorial Award to **Chris Krawczyk**.

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If you are a coach or official in basketball, you have surely come across Chris Krawczyk along your travels. His bright personality, smile and passion for youth sports development has been unwavering throughout the years.

Chris Krawczyk's involvement with CYM Sports dates to the turn of the 21st century. In 1999, Chris began coaching at St. Thomas the Apostle School where he coached basketball and soccer. During his time at St. Thomas, he was instrumental in helping kick-start the intermural basketball program for preschool kids and helped in the development of a new gym. He became Athletic Association President at St. Thomas in 2004, and provided the guidance and leadership for the program, until the school's closing in 2008. Chris would go on to St. Catherine of Sienna Parish, to continue teaching the game as a girls' basketball before moving fully to officiating in CYM.

While enhancing and developing the local programs, Chris provided support in basketball as a CYM youth referee. For two decades, Chris has been instrumental in working alongside fellow CYM Coordinators, to enhance the modern game of basketball and provide teaching opportunities that focused on the mission. Chris will begin his 20th year as a CYM basketball official this upcoming winter.

His dedication over the years led Chris to take on the Coordinator of Basketball Officials with the office in 2019, where he continues today teaching the fundamentals of officiating. He is tasked with monitoring the scheduling of officials for 1500 games annually, and review opportunities to teach the next wave of future youth officials. Chris continues to provide the administrative support, and direct support for youth and coaches, with precision, accuracy, and dedication to the basketball program.

His 25+ years of service as a coach at St. Thomas the Apostle and St. Catherine of Sienna, as a CYO Basketball Referee, and as a CYM Coordinator has no boundaries; his dedication to the development of youth sports has expanded further beyond our community. In addition to his work with CYM, Chris was heavily involved in youth baseball outside CYM, as an organizer and President of Elsmere Little League for seven years and also officiated football for over 10 years.

It takes a level of passion and heart to continue in youth sports beyond the years of their family's involvement. Chris has shown his commitment and love for the development of youth sports over a quarter of a century and, in tandem with his colleagues, have significantly enhanced the CYM program in the modern era.

We will be forever grateful for all he has done to enrich and enhance the opportunities in our CYM Sport's community.



## ***St. John Paul II Courage in Athletics Award***

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The St. John Paul II Courage in Athletics Award is presented to individuals who exhibit special courage by overcoming personal challenges to participate in the CYM Athletic Program. Their examples are an inspiration to teams, parishes, schools, and the entire CYM community.



This year, the CYM Office is profoundly honored and humbled to recognize **Ethan and Sofia Aaron** from St. John the Beloved with this award.

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## ***St. John Paul II Courage in Athletics Award***

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Ethan and Sofia Aaron embody the very spirit of the St. John Paul II Courage in CYM Sports Award. In the midst of unimaginable heartbreak following their father Pat's devastating and ultimately terminal stroke, these two young athletes chose to continue stepping onto the basketball court for St. John the Beloved, Ethan at the JV level and Sophia at Pre JV. Their decision to keep playing was not simply about sports; it was an act of profound courage, resilience, and faith.

Pat had coached Ethan's earlier teams, and returning to the court meant stepping back into a space filled with memories of their father's guidance, joy, and love for the game. In choosing to stay connected to their teams, they demonstrated a strength of character far beyond their years and a determination to honor their father's love and legacy.

Throughout this difficult journey, Ethan and Sofia found healing and hope in the unwavering support of their teammates, coaches, and the entire SJB community. The gym became a place of comfort, encouragement, and belonging - a reminder that in CYM sports, we lift one another up not just in victory, but in life's hardest moments. Their perseverance, grace, and quiet bravery have inspired everyone around them and reflect the very best of what Catholic youth athletics strives to cultivate: young people who face adversity with faith, courage, and an open heart.

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## **St. Timothy Youth Award**

*When announced, gather in the lobby. As your name is called, greet Bishop Koenig to receive your award. Then, please move to the side of the room for a group picture. Once all have come forward, the assembly will show their appreciation.*

The **St. Timothy Youth Award** is given to a junior or senior high school youth who lives as a disciple of Christ, sets a positive example for other youth, witnesses to their faith by exhibiting Catholic morals and integrity, demonstrates Gospel values through service to others, and exhibits Christian leadership in parish, school, and/or community settings.

### **Grace Coyle – Holy Cross**

Grace is a junior at Polytech High School and an active member of Peer Ministry, where she assists with Confirmation classes and retreats. She is welcoming and encouraging, creating an atmosphere where candidates feel supported and valued. Grace openly shares the importance of her faith and leads by example through her increased involvement in youth group activities. She regularly attends Catholic Heart Work Camp, encourages others to participate, and invites peers to the MOUNT 2000 retreat. In every aspect of her life—church, family, school, and sports—Grace lives as a joyful and faithful disciple.

### **Hunter Curley – Holy Cross**

Hunter is a senior at First State Military Academy and serves as a peer leader in the Confirmation program. He approaches his faith with sincerity and generosity, creating a welcoming environment as a small-group leader. Hunter regularly offers witness talks at retreats and is always willing to volunteer when help is needed. He also serves as a lector at Mass and actively invites fellow teens to become more involved in parish life. His kindness and steady faith reflect a true and faithful witness.

### **Diana Aguilar-Luna – Holy Rosary Parish**

Diana has grown into an active disciple. Beginning in 8th grade, she served during Confirmation preparation. She (somewhat reluctantly) trained as an altar server. As she became more confident in the ministry, her faith grew, and her deepening relationship with Jesus became evident. After Confirmation, when some students drift away, she became a catechist aide and a peer instructor for newer altar servers. Her kindness and compassion for others are also evident in her school activities. She has been accepted into a volunteer program through Christiana Hospital, where she will work with pediatric patients this summer.

**Armando Gines-Romero – Holy Rosary Parish**

Armando is an essential member of our liturgical team; the Pastor has come to rely on him for special liturgies. After two years as an altar server, he was chosen to be trained as an acolyte and is now on the leadership team for the ministry. Many parishioners have commented on his reverence and poise during Mass. His gentle nature has also inspired other young people to want to serve. In addition, he volunteers as an administrative assistant for our RE program and can be relied upon to take on any duty at a moment's notice.

**Andrew Ulmen – Immaculate Conception Parish, Elkton**

Andrew is an active member of the Confirmation class and the Life Teen Program. He serves as an altar server at both Immaculate Conception in Elkton and St. Mary's Parish in Clayton, NY. Andrew is a first-year member of the Diocesan Youth Leadership Team and holds leadership roles in Trail Life USA and the Sea Cadets. He is also a graduate of the Elkton Police Junior Police Academy and continues to assist officers with youth programs. He is a sincere example to his peers.

**Kimberly Escalante Garcia – Immaculate Conception Church, Marydel**

Kimberly has been a tremendous asset to her parish, regularly helping in the kitchen for Sunday morning fellowship events. As a bilingual parishioner, she is a gift to both English- and Spanish-speaking members of the community. A year ago, Kimberly volunteered to serve as a lector, a role requiring confidence and preparation. She takes this responsibility seriously, practicing diligently to ensure the Word of God is proclaimed clearly and reverently.

**Katie Perez Galan – Immaculate Conception Church, Marydel**

For more than five years, Katie has generously shared her time and talents at Immaculate Conception. Beginning as a Vacation Bible School crew leader, she has continued to serve in a variety of leadership roles. After Confirmation, she stepped into the role of peer leader and first-grade religious education assistant. She is also an active member of the liturgical choir and serves as a cantor at both English- and Spanish-language Masses and parish events. This past year, she added lector to her many ministries. Her faith shines through her willingness to serve, her leadership, and her reliability.

### **Ella McGeady – Immaculate Heart of Mary**

Ella, a high school junior, serves as a devoted teen aide in the eighth-grade Religious Education classroom at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish and is a worthy recipient of the St. Timothy Award. She lives as a disciple of Christ through consistent witness to faith, integrity, and Catholic values. Through service to younger students, Ella demonstrates patience, kindness, and compassion while supporting catechists in their responsibilities and leadership. She embodies the mission of servanthood.

### **Alondra Garcia-Martinez – Our Lady of Lourdes**

Alondra is an outstanding high school student whose dedication to her Catholic faith is evident in all she does. She faithfully assists with religious education classes, serving as a patient and kind role model for younger students. Alondra also actively participates in parish activities, including Stations of the Cross, fish fries, and Vacation Bible School. Her consistent service and leadership reflect what it truly means to live one's faith daily.

### **Yohana Velasquez de Leon – Our Lady of Lourdes**

Yohana is a remarkable young woman with a servant's heart. Her dedication and positive presence make a meaningful impact on every parish activity she participates in. Whether assisting at events or stepping in wherever help is needed, Yohana serves with eagerness, generosity, and love for the Church. She is a living example of how faith is expressed in joyful service to others.

### **Elena Sangemino – Padua Academy**

Elena is a senior and a member of St. John's Holy Angels Parish. She serves on the Peer Leadership Team, the Encounter Team, and the Diocesan Youth Leadership Board. Elena volunteers regularly with the Donor Life Soup Kitchen and 5K, and she participates in service initiatives through Students in Action. She consistently shares her gifts and talents and serves as a positive ambassador for both her school and her parish community.

### **Vesna Vuckovic – Padua Academy**

Vesna is a senior at Padua Academy and a member of St. Joseph Parish. She serves on Padua's Peer Leadership Team, as a Senior Class Officer, and on the Diocesan Youth Leadership Board. Vesna volunteers with her parish's carnival and the Stocking for Soldiers program, and she attended DeSales Leadership Camp. Her leadership and service have greatly enriched both her school and parish communities.

### **Abner Murillo – Resurrection Parish**

Abner is a cantor at Resurrection and serves as pianist and cantor during the Children’s Liturgy of the Word. He also cantors and plays piano during Mass at the UD Newman Center. Abner coded an app for our annual youth-led soup supper, allowing students to take orders on their phones and submit them to parents. Abner attended workcamp in the summers of 2022, 2023, and 2024. He has volunteered at CYM and at St. Mark’s High School sporting events and is involved in several school organizations. He has performed in a concert to combat human trafficking for the past three years.

### **Charlotte Zolandz – Resurrection Parish**

Charlotte served as an altar server at Resurrection Parish during elementary school and has represented the parish on the Diocesan Youth Leadership Team for the past two years. She participated in work camps in Cumberland, MD, and North Haledon, NJ. Charlotte volunteers at the Ronald McDonald House, participates in its annual 5K fundraiser, and is actively involved at the Charter School of Wilmington through honor societies and a book club, and as an English teaching assistant.

### **Nathaniel Peregoy – Sacred Heart Parish**

Nathaniel has been a dedicated member since a young age. He began as a greeter and later served as a longtime altar server. Nathaniel continues to support religious education and recently completed his Eagle Scout Project by installing a prayer garden at the parish cemetery. He also serves on the Diocesan Youth Leadership Team, helping to plan and coordinate the annual Diocesan pilgrimage.

### **Paula Abreu – Saint Mark’s High School**

Paula has served as a student leader and interpreter on the school’s mission trips to the Dominican Republic. She has led numerous religious retreats for both her school and the Diocese, and has been an active member of the Diocesan Youth Leadership Team. As a founding member of the Golden Hearts Club, Paula organizes donations of time, resources, and funds to Marydale Retirement Village. Her life reflects that of a true disciple of Christ, inspiring others through her compassion, joyful witness, and unwavering commitment to serving those in need.

### **Lilly Weisenfels – Saint Mark’s High School**

Lilly is an inspiring leader with a deep commitment to her faith. She founded her school’s Grow in Grace Club, organized a schoolwide worship day, and has spoken at and helped lead religious retreats for her school and the Diocese. Lilly also volunteers with A Night to Shine and serves as a captain on her school’s cheerleading team. Through her joyful witness, she encourages others to grow closer to Christ and to live the Gospel.

### **Nicholas Angell – Ss. Peter and Paul Church**

Nicholas is an exceptional teen whose deep faith is reflected in his sincere desire to serve others. A dedicated member of the Teen Mission Team, he faithfully returns each summer to support Vacation Bible School. He confidently takes on leadership roles as a skit leader, set builder, and encourager, helping children grow in their understanding of Christ. His generosity extends throughout the year—whenever help is needed, Nicholas is quick to respond. Through his joyful service and faithful example, he is a true role model within the Church community.

### **Tara Foley – Ss. Peter and Paul Church**

Tara walks confidently in Christ with grace, commitment, and compassion. Helpful, respectful, and dependable, she never wavers in serving the parish or the community. Through years of service in the parish Summer Academy and Vacation Bible School, Tara brings confidence and joy to the classroom while faithfully pointing students toward Christ. Her leadership during mission trips has earned recognition from other parishes and schools. Tara’s faith shines brightly, and others easily see Christ through her actions.

### **Annie Albright – Ss. Peter & Paul High School**

Annie brings joy and hope to all those around her with her quiet disposition and warm smile. She embodies perseverance and resilience rooted in Christ, allowing all that she does to flow from her relationship with Jesus. She serves as the Senior Class president and the president of the Spanish Honor Society. Last summer, Annie joined several of her peers on a mission to Rome, serving the less fortunate and caring for the environment. Whether in the classroom, in the community, or on the field and court, Annie strives to always show forth Christ.

### **Angela Webb – Ss. Peter & Paul High School**

Angela is a faith-filled student-athlete who truly puts Christ first in all she does. She has served as an altar server at her parish and as a lector at school liturgies. As a member of the Respect Life and Rosary clubs, Angie participates in the March for Life in both Washington, D.C., and Maryland, bearing witness to Christ, who is our Way, our Truth, and our Life. She regularly prays the rosary in the school chapel. She also serves on the Diocesan Youth Development Board, collaborating with other young people to make Christ known to all.

### **Maribella DiCenzo – St. Ann's, Bethany Beach**

Maribella is a highly motivated young woman who has made invaluable contributions to Saint Ann's Youth Ministry by providing insights on refining existing programs, offering ideas to lay the groundwork for new activities, and serving as a peer leader at Youth Ministry events. Maribella is an honors student active in Girl Scouts, Technology Student Association, sports, a youth public health board, and much more. She will be attending Villanova University as an engineering student, and most of all, she has a great enthusiasm for the Catholic faith.

### **Joann Cantoran – St. Dennis**

Joann is a senior who exemplifies dedication, leadership, and service. She is an active member of both the Blue Gold Club and the Honor Society and generously volunteers as a tutor to support struggling students. From a young age, Joann served as an altar server and now continues her ministry as a lector while assisting with coordinating youth participation at Mass on Youth Sundays. Through her joyful spirit and commitment to service, Joann inspires others to serve the Lord with enthusiasm and faith.

### **Marijose Cantoran – St. Dennis**

Marijose is a senior actively involved in cross country and track and field, as well as the Spanish Club and Honor Society. She shares her musical gifts through the school's music ministry, playing guitar at Mass every other week and on Youth Sundays. In addition, she serves as a school tutor, offering her time and support to others. With a joyful and willing spirit, Marijose uses her talents to serve both the Lord and her community, making her a wonderful role model for her peers.

### **Noah Dzielak – St. Elizabeth Parish**

Noah is a devoted altar server at St. Elizabeth and St. Patrick Parishes, serving with reverence and consistency. He has twice assisted in bringing the Eucharistic Miracles exhibit of St. Carlo Acutis to St. Elizabeth Parish, helping deepen the community's faith. For three years, Noah served on the Youth Leadership Team, helping organize the Diocesan Youth Pilgrimage. He also live-streams Cathedral events, assists with Holy Hours, and helps train younger altar servers across multiple parishes. Through his encouragement and service, Noah supports others on their faith journeys.

### **Uruakobong Etteyit – St. Francis de Sales Parish**

Uruak is a wonderful young man who has been a faithful disciple of Christ. Whether volunteering as a lector or usher, participating in service projects, or attending youth conferences, he has been committed to growing as a youth leader. Through the Catholic Heart Work Camp, he served the community through various non-profits. He has also served in the local shelter kitchen, been active in fundraising, and as a leader at Vacation Bible School. His Christian faith and leadership have been a model for young people and a blessing to our church family.

### **Camille McLaughlin – St. Francis de Sales Parish**

Camille has been an outstanding volunteer, demonstrating faith through action and service. She has dedicated many hours to the Appalachia Service Project, parish dinners, Masses, and local homeless shelters. Camille has also assisted with home repairs for families in need and contributed to her thoughtful, creative leadership as a board member of this ministry. She is always ready to serve, having become an exceptional role model for other young people to follow her compassionate and giving ways.

### **Catherine Shaposky – St. Joseph on the Brandywine**

Catherine has been a devoted member of the youth choir since the age of six. She serves with sincerity and enthusiasm, always participating wholeheartedly and offering encouragement to younger students and those seeking guidance. Beginning in third grade, Catherine began cantoring the Psalm at Sunday Mass and now regularly shares her God-given gift of song, helping to lead the community in prayer from the sanctuary. Her humility, dedication, and quiet faith make her a beautiful example of discipleship for all ages.

### **Lucy Weinig – St. Joseph on the Brandywine**

Since her Confirmation in her freshman year, Lucy has faithfully served the faith formation program at St. Joseph on the Brandywine, generously sharing her time and talents in response to God's call. As her faith and confidence grew, she discerned a greater role and stepped into serving as primary catechist for the first-grade class during her senior year. Through her kindness, dedication, and Christ-centered witness, Lucy has been a blessing to her students and parish community, and we trust God's continued guidance as she begins her college journey.

### **Ella Dietz – St. Jude the Apostle**

Ella is a senior at Cape Henlopen High School who has served with quiet dedication as a Sacramental Prep and Grade 2 aide in St. Jude the Apostle's Religious Education program since her Confirmation. She has been an active member of the parish's Religious Education community since 2017. Her gentle leadership naturally draws younger children to her, especially First Communicants. Most recently, Ella has continued her service through the youth leadership corps, helping the parish's youth ministry grow and flourish.

### **Isabella Mekulski – St. Jude the Apostle**

Isabella has been an active classroom aide in Saint Jude the Apostle's Religious Education program since her final year of preparation before being confirmed. After three years (2023 to present) serving some of the parish's youngest students in Grade 1, the parish is unsure how we will replace her. Isabella has shown gentleness and compassion in a growing classroom program that can frequently have as many as 25–30 six- and seven-year-olds. The children are naturally drawn to her kind and caring spirit. Isabella heads off next year to Ursinus College (Collegeville, PA) to study Biochemistry.

### **Kimberly Gudino Peña – St. Mary Refuge of Sinners**

Kimberly completed her catechism classes and felt called to continue serving her parish. She volunteers at the local homeless shelter, helps clean church facilities, and previously served as an altar server in elementary and middle school. In high school, she became a catechist aide and now serves as a first-grade catechist. Kimberly encourages her younger siblings and fellow parish youth to assist in teaching catechism, leading by example through dedication and faith.

### **Osvaldo Hernández Gervacio – St. Mary Refuge of Sinners**

After completing his catechism, Osvaldo felt inspired to become an altar server. In high school, he began training other altar servers and continues to serve during Sunday, Holy Week, and holiday Masses. Osvaldo volunteers at a homeless shelter, assists the DRE with office work, and helps translate for Hispanic families. He willingly volunteered to help teach third- and fourth-grade catechism, serving with enjoyment and Christian leadership as he impacts lives for the better.

### **Jalayah Mercado – St. Paul, Wilmington**

Jalayah has been an assistant teacher in religious education for about 2 years. Jalayah has always been very responsible with the students and consistently positive. Jalayah also helps as an usher in the mass along with her father. Her willingness to serve is always accompanied by a smile. Jalayah is a true role model for many youth at St. Paul's.

### **Brianna Goldsboro – St. Polycarp**

Brianna is an amazing young lady, focused on becoming the best version of herself in every aspect of her life. She approaches everything with a positive attitude and a smile. She is committed to sharing her faith with others. Brianna is in her 3rd year as a dynamic young leader on the Diocesan Youth Leadership Team. She serves as a reader at Mass and as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion. Her vibrant personality shines through in all that she does. She is a role model for her peers and a good example of discipleship.

### **Clare Louden – Ursuline Academy**

Clare is in 11th grade and a compassionate, faith-centered leader who inspires others to walk in Christ's footsteps. Driven by her strong faith, she co-founded the Youth Group at Ursuline to help peers grow in their faith through Bible study, service projects, meaningful reflection, and shared participation in the liturgy. She was also a member of the Youth Leadership Team and participated in the CYM Pilgrimage. Clare is very active at her parish, St. Helena's. She leads with enthusiasm and a deep-rooted faith that will continue to inspire others.

## **Sara Smith – Ursuline Academy**

Sara is in 11th grade, and over the past year, Sara has played an integral role in expanding our religious education programs at Ursuline. With her passion for her faith and for sharing it with others, she co-founded the Youth Group, a club where students come together for Bible study, service projects, meaningful reflection, and participation in the liturgy. Sara was a member of the Youth Leadership Team and participated in the CYM Pilgrimage. She is vibrant, with a faith-filled energy that uplifts those around her and encourages others to live their faith proudly.

***“Let no one regard you with contempt because of your youth, but serve as an example to the believers in your speech and conduct, in your love, your faith, and your purity.” 1 Timothy 4:12***

## ***Acknowledgements***

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**Catholic Youth, Young Adult, and Family Ministry** is thankful for the assistance of many individuals who contributed to and helped with this event. We want to acknowledge:

- All those from the parishes and Catholic schools who recognized individuals as award recipients this evening.
- Our volunteers and Diocesan colleagues who helped with preparation and set-up.
- Brianna Goldsboro and Nate Peregoy from the CYM Youth Leadership Team for graciously accepting the invitation to emcee.
- The award recipients for their contributions, hard work, dedication, and service to His church.

**Dan Pin**

*Remarks on Youth Ministry*



**Most Reverend William E. Koenig**  
Tenth Bishop of Wilmington

*Final Remarks and Blessing*





# CYM

CATHOLIC YOUTH MINISTRY

FAITH • PURPOSE • COMMUNITY • MISSION

# MORE THAN A GAME. WE ARE A CALLING.



## OUR MISSION

To empower parishes, schools, and our community within the Diocese of Wilmington by accompanying participants in authentic life encounters.



## OUR VISION

To prepare youngsters for their futures and effectively function in everyday life in our community.



## OUR PURPOSE

To organize events, facilitate leadership and formation opportunities through promoting Christian values.



“Whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.”  
1 CORINTHIANS 10:31

## PLAY WITH PURPOSE. FIND YOUR SEASON IN FAITH AND FRIENDS.

### FALL SPORTS

A SEASON OF FOCUS, FITNESS, AND FOUNDATIONS.



FOOTBALL



SOCCER



GIRLS VOLLEYBALL



CROSS COUNTRY

### WINTER SPORTS

A SEASON OF DISCIPLINE, TEAMWORK, AND GROWTH.



BOYS BASKETBALL



GIRLS BASKETBALL

### SPRING SPORTS

A SEASON OF RENEWAL, PERSEVERANCE, AND EXCELLENCE.



FLAG FOOTBALL



BASEBALL



SOFTBALL



BOYS & SENIOR CO-ED VOLLEYBALL



TRACK & FIELD

## JOIN THE FUN. BUILD CHARACTER. GROW IN CHRIST.



VISIT [WWW.CYMSPORTS.COM](http://WWW.CYMSPORTS.COM)  
FOR SPORTS INFO, REGISTRATION  
AND SEASON UPDATES



VISIT [WWW.CDOWCYM.ORG](http://WWW.CDOWCYM.ORG)  
FOR MINISTRY INFO,  
EVENTS AND PROGRAMS



## LIVE THE ADVENTURE: DAMASCUS SUMMER CAMP 2026

### REGISTRATION OPEN NOW!

WHERE FAITH MEETS HIGH ADVENTURE

Damascus Summer Camp invites young people into a joy-filled immersion in the Gospel. Located at the newly renovated Summit Lake Camp in Emmitsburg, MD, campers will encounter Jesus Christ through vibrant Catholic tradition while pushing their limits in high-adventure activities.

#### Who is it for?

- Middle School: Entering grades 6–8
- High School: Entering grades 9–12



Scan Here to Register Now!

#### When is it?

The Diocese of Wilmington has 100 spaces reserved for:

- July 5-10 (middle school)
- July 12-17 (high school)

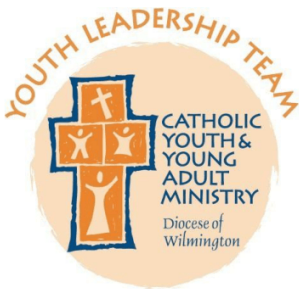
Campers may register for any week, but are not guaranteed space.

#### Cost and Registration

- \$645 per camper (Includes all food, lodging, and activities)
- **Use code WILMINGTON26 for \$145 off registration!** (Valid for the first 100 registrations only)
- Additional financial aid available
- For more info, visit <https://cdowcym.org/register-for-damascus-camp-now/>

# Calling All Youth Leaders!

Come experience an opportunity to develop faith leadership skills and engage with the Diocesan and National Church while building relationships with young Catholics across the Diocese on the **Youth Leadership Team!**



- We are looking for two promising leaders in grades 9-12 from each parish and school in the Diocese of Wilmington. Leaders should display a desire to grow in their personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and a willingness to learn the skills to bring their faith into active roles in their parish/school and community.
- YLT members will engage in team building exercises, engage in leadership training, design and implement faith-sharing activities, and assist with the annual CYM Pilgrimage.

- Five meetings at various locations across the Diocese. Meetings are usually from 1:00pm-3:00pm.
- Dates and locations will be announced once the team is finalized.
- The Pilgrimage is an all-day event in Wilmington scheduled for **Saturday, March 20, 2027.**
- YLT Registration information and deadlines will be available later this summer. Young people can register at [cdowcym.org](http://cdowcym.org).

**Any young person can sign up, but must be approved by local pastor or principal.**

The cost is \$50 per person, ordinarily paid for by the parish or school.

Registration and more info can be found at

<https://cdowcym.org/diocesan-youth-leadership-team/>

# *Save the Date*



*16<sup>th</sup> CYM Pilgrimage  
March 20, 2027*