

SMILE Youth Group

2020-2021

St. Andrew

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton



Youth Minister: Catherine Fasano

Important names and phone numbers:

Youth Minister: Catherine Fasano

Phone: (513) 831-8318 or email: smile@standrew-milford.org

St. Andrew Parish: (513) 831-3353

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish: (513) 575-0119

Pastor: Fr. Adam Puntel

Parochial Vicar: Fr. Benson

What is SMILE?

SMILE is a group for teen parishioners currently in 7th-12th grade. As a group, we strive to grow in faith together. Our group is centered on Jesus and the teachings of the Catholic Church. We provide the opportunity to have an encounter with Christ in many different ways such as prayer, fellowship and service. While we are all different, we are all united in our love of the Lord.

SMILE stands for Something More in Life Expected (for you and of you). We were all created in the image and likeness of God which means there is a lot in store and much more in life that is expected of us. Hopefully the SMILE group can help teens figure out what this means for them.

Teens age out of the SMILE program at age 19 or upon graduating from high school, whichever comes first. Parishioners are welcome to bring friends as long as they are open to what we are doing.

We strive to offer a variety of events and activities in an attempt to meet the needs of all who are involved. There are separate groups for the Junior High and High School students. If you find something is missing, let us know and we'll see if we can work it into our schedule of events!

How do I register?

There is no formal registration process for the Youth Group. We do this so people feel they can come whenever they are available, even if their availability comes and goes. We do ask that you fill out a medical release form to be kept on file in the office each year. This release form will be used for all of our local events. Any events that require a bit of travelling will require a separate release form. Information shared on the release form is confidential.

Registration for specific events may vary. All details will be fully explained within the publicity of the event. Please respect and follow registration deadlines. These are put in place to assure everything is ready for the event. No guarantees of being able to participate in the event are made if your forms are not turned in on time.

Communication

The Youth Minister does her best to keep up with communication. She may be reached via email (smile@standrew-milford.org) or via phone (831-8318). The office number is a cell phone and can receive text messages. Personal or confidential information is not to be communicated via text message (see Child Protection for more information).

Though the office phone is a cell phone, it may not always be within reach. Please leave a message if you expect a return phone call. The Youth Minister will not share cell phone numbers without asking permission first.

Parents are encouraged to introduce themselves to the Youth Minister and YM Volunteers as they drop-off and pick-up their children for group events. Parents are also encouraged to keep the Youth Minister and YM Volunteers informed of:

- achievements of child (sports, academic, extracurricular, etc.)
- illness or hospitalization
- family issues (death, accident, divorce, etc.)
- personal concerns for child (school, peers, dating, etc.)

This information enables us to offer the best pastoral care for our youth so we can celebrate in their achievements and support them through their struggles.

How do I find out about SMILE events?

1. Parish bulletins. There is typically something SMILE-related in the bulletins each weekend.
2. Email. SMILE sends out large group emails several times a month. Let us know if you would like to be added to our email list.
3. School Newsletter. If you attend St. Andrew School, you can look for information and updates in the Titan Times.
4. PREP/PRP. If you are in the parish religious education program, flyers may be distributed on Sunday mornings.
5. SMILE has a facebook page (Smile Youth Group) and also an Instagram account (smileyouth).

What does SMILE do?

SMILE tries to offer a variety of activities in an attempt to reach the needs of its members. We have different prayer, social, and service opportunities along with various fundraisers for the program. All events offer the opportunity to get to know and bond with teens that are your age in a fun and safe environment!

Prayer Opportunities:

- High School Retreat
- Monthly Meetings
- March for Life in Washington D.C.

Social Opportunities:

- Monthly Meetings

Service Opportunities:

- Game Nights at SEM Villa
- High School Mission Trip
- Vacation Bible School
- Various other projects that come up on an as needed basis

Fundraising:

- St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Fish Fry
- Family BINGO
- Concessions at Frontier Days Parade
- St. Elizabeth Ann Seton 5th Sunday BINGO

**SMILE Youth Group Calendar of Events
2020-2021**

September

- 11**Junior High Kickoff, Seton Cafeteria 7-8
- 17 Outside activity at SEM Villa 6:30-7:30
- 20 High School Kickoff-St. Andrew Church Hall, 7-8

October

- 2 JH Meeting, Seton Cafeteria-7-8pm
- 4 High School Meeting, St. A Church Hall, 7-8pm
- 15 Game Night at SEM Villa. 6:30-7:30pm
- 18 High School Meeting, St. A Church Hall, 7-8pm
- 24 Confirmation Rehearsal, 9-11am
- 25 Confirmation, 2pm (current 9th grade)

November

- 1 High School Meeting, St. A Church Hall, 7-8pm
- 6 JH Meeting, Seton Cafeteria-7-8pm
- 15 High School Meeting, St. A Church Hall, 7-8pm
- 19 Game Night at SEM Villa, 6:30-7:30pm
- 21-22 Sell Advent Candles after all Masses

December

- 4 JH Meeting, Seton Cafeteria-7-8pm
- 6 High School Meeting, St. A Church Hall, 7-8pm
- 17 Game Night at SEM Villa, 6:30-7:30pm
- 18-19 Bake Coffee Cakes in Seton Cafeteria
- 19-20 Sell Coffee Cakes after each of the Masses
- 20 High School Meeting, St. A Church Hall, 7-8pm

January

- 3 High School Meeting, St. A Church Hall, 7-8pm
- 8**JH Meeting, Seton Cafeteria-7-8pm
- 17 High School Meeting, St. A Church Hall, 7-8pm
- 21 Game Night at SEM Villa, 6:30-7:30pm
- 29 March for Life, Washington DC

February

- 5 JH Meeting, Seton Cafeteria, 7-8pm
- 7 NO SMILE MEETING--Super Bowl Sunday
- 18 Game Night at SEM Villa, 6:30-7:30pm
- 21 High School Meeting, St. A Church Hall, 7-8pm
- 28 Family Bingo, St. Andrew

March

- 5 JH Meeting-Seton Parish Meeting Room, 7-8pm
- 6 Confirmation Retreat for Current 8th Gr @JSC
- 7 High School Meeting, St. A Church Hall, 7-8pm
- 13-14 High School Retreat at Jesuit Spiritual Center
- 18 Game Night at SEM Villa, 6:30-7:30pm
- 21 High School Meeting, St. A Church Hall, 7-8pm

April

- 15 Game Night at SEM Villa, 6:30-7:30pm
- 16**JH Meeting, Seton Cafeteria, 7-8pm
- 18 High School Meeting, St. A Church Hall, 7-8pm
- 25 St. Andrew Grad Mass/Luncheon

May

- 2 High School Meeting, St. A Church Hall, 7-8pm
- 7 JH Meeting, Seton Cafeteria-7-8pm
- 16 High School Meeting, St. A Church Hall, 7-8pm
- 20 Game Night at SEM Villa, 6:30-7:30pm

June

- 3 Frontier Days Parade cookout @ St. A
- 17 Game Night at SEM Villa 6:30-7:30pm
- 20-26 High School Mission Trip, location TBD

All events are subject to change, especially with the way covid-19 impacts our area. If an event is able to take place outside, we will do that to decrease exposure. All events have also been shortened to an hour. Masks are required.

**Not the typical date for this event

Expectations & Guidelines of students at SMILE

SMILE is meant to be a fun and meaningful experience for all who are involved. Please respect the few rules that have been put in place.

1. Please arrive no earlier than 10 minutes before the official start time of an event. Oftentimes adults are still getting things ready for the event in the few minutes before the start time.
2. Once you are at the event, you are there to stay. Meetings are not “drop-in” events. The adult in charge must know if a person is leaving early.
3. Please arrange for transportation ahead of time. Teens are to be picked up on time. Adults are often tired and ready to go home once an event is over. Please do not keep them waiting.
4. Teens must respect all other individuals and property. This includes peers, volunteers, staff and facilities.
5. Teens are welcome to bring guests to events, but are responsible for the behavior of their guests. Please check them in with the Youth Minister.
6. No person shall be in possession of or use any type of tobacco products (chewing tobacco, juules, cigarettes, etc). Parents will be called immediately to pick their child up regardless of the time.
7. No person shall be in possession of or under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Parents will be called immediately to pick their child up regardless of the time.
8. There will be no foul language during any Youth Ministry Events.
9. Appropriate attire is required for all events. Please do not wear revealing clothing. This is a **Church Youth Group**.
10. Please turn off cell phones or put them away during events to be present to the people around you.

*The permission to participate in SMILE events both on and off site is at the discretion of the Youth Minister and/or Pastor.

Adult Volunteers

Volunteers are critical for the success of all of our events, including meetings. Without volunteers our events will have to be cancelled. Parents/adults are welcome to visit at any time. There are also various ways to become more directly involved in the programs and interested volunteers may email the Youth Ministry Office about being involved in the following ways:

- Occasional Involvement: Provides and/or serves snacks/refreshments, chaperone events, assist with transportation. Present only for time of service.
- Regular involvement - Direct involvement in planning, organizing, and leading events/activities from monthly events to retreats. Present at prep meetings and for entire event planned.

Being a chaperone is a great way to work on your relationship with your child and his or her peers. It will also help to open the lines of communication because you will all be experiencing the same things as your child.

Volunteers must be at least 21 years or older and also must go through the Virtus class as required by the Archdiocese. If you think you may want to chaperone an activity, please take the class ahead of time and stay up to date on your monthly bulletins. There is a background check that is done online when you register for the Virtus class. The cost of this is \$25 and you may be reimbursed if you save your receipt. Chaperones who will be driving teens may be asked to give a copy of their driver’s license along with a copy of the first page of their insurance policy for verification purposes.

If you have any questions about volunteering or would like to get involved, please call Catherine at the Youth Office.

Expectations of Volunteers:

To assure that proper care and attention are given to our teens at all of our events, a few expectations have been put in place.

1. Volunteers are **never** to be under the influence of alcohol at any time during a SMILE event. This includes trips where a bar is located in the hotel, etc.
2. If the group is carpooling somewhere, all vehicles must stay together. The Child Protection Decree requires two adults to be present during any activity and the only way to avoid this is when the cars stay together during a carpool.
3. If driving, all individuals must wear seat belts. One person per belt, no double-buckling.
4. If you are a smoker, please step away from the group while smoking. Please make sure there is adequate supervision before leaving and let another adult know you are stepping away.
5. If you have agreed to drive to a particular event, please do not bring any extra people (other children, spouse, etc). If you have noted that you can drive a certain number of people, the Youth Minister will be counting on using that number of seat belts for students.
6. Please do not bring younger children to Youth Ministry events without checking with the Youth Minister first. This may pull you away from the place where you are needed.

If you have any questions about these expectations, please call Catherine.

Decree on Child Protection

The Decree on Child Protection was established by the Archdiocese of Cincinnati in order to prevent the abuse of children and adolescents and to provide a system for handling incidents of abuse after they occur.

The Decree requires that all regular volunteers are fingerprinted and go through the Virtus training program. This includes staying up to date with monthly training bulletins.

It also requires that two adults are present during any activity and the number of adults present should be proportionate to the number of students. One exception to this rule is when an adult is driving a group of students. One adult is permitted to be in each car if the group is carpooling to a common location. **All cars must stay together.**

The Decree also requires that release forms be signed and turned in for activities. As far as communication goes, the Decree states that adults are to use prudence when communicating with a minor. For this reason confidential information will not be communicated via text message.

Ohio law requires all individuals acting in an official or professional capacity to immediately report any actual or suspected act of child abuse to the public children's service agency or to local law enforcement where the child resides or where the abuse is occurring. This law is very clearly enforced at all SMILE functions.

Youth Ministry Policies and Procedures

ACTIVITY PERMISSION/RELEASE FORMS

To ensure the safety of youth and compliance with Archdiocesan guidelines, youth must have an up-to-date Contact/Medical Info form to keep on file with the youth office at all times. This is done so that correct information is readily available for all event leaders and to minimize paperwork for parents/guardians.

In accordance with archdiocesan guidelines, all parents/guardians are REQUIRED to complete a Permission/Release Form for their child to be kept on file with the SMILE Youth Office to participate in the on-going programs. A new On-Site On-Going Activity Release form MUST be completed each year.

SEARCH & SEIZURE

If a participant is suspected of having weapons, drugs, drug paraphernalia, alcoholic beverages or illegal articles in his/her possession, including but not limited to bags, purses, wallets, cell phones, and vehicles on Parish property or at a SMILE sponsored event off-site, the Director of Youth Ministry or the program director reserves the right to search and/or contact the appropriate legal authorities. When the Director of Youth Ministry or program director believes the participant is concealing evidence of a crime, the police may be asked to conduct the search. An adult volunteer or staff member will witness the search in the presence of the youth. The decision to search will involve reasonable suspicion of wrongdoing on the participant's part. Refusal to be searched or impeding a search may result in calling the parent and/or police to assist in the search.

LOST & STOLEN ITEMS

SMILE is not responsible for lost and stolen items at youth ministry or parish related functions. Youth are advised not to bring valuable items to youth ministry or parish related events, and to label any non-clothing items that they might bring.

FEES

Various events have a nominal participation or registration fee. Youth are encouraged to pay for these events themselves with family support as necessary. However, all youth are welcome, regardless of their ability to pay. Scholarship funds are always available to those in need of assistance.

Safety Protocols and Covid-19

After consulting with the CDC, the Archdiocese of Cincinnati released guidelines for parishes to follow while resuming activities (see <http://www.catholiccincinnati.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Guidelines-for-theResumption-of-Youth-Evangelization.pdf>), you can expect:

- Hand sanitizer to be readily available and hand washing to be encouraged
- Social distancing to be maintained. If an event is set to take place inside, masks/face coverings are required. If an event is able to take place outside, we will take that opportunity to decrease exposure. Participants are still asked to wear a mask/face covering.
- IF food and/or drinks are served, it will be prepackaged
- Attendance to be recorded for all activities in order to keep track of who we have been in contact with. In the event that someone tests positive, parents whose children may have come in direct contact with the student or adult will be notified of the presence of a positive case.
- To be sent home if you are showing symptoms of covid-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath, headache, loss of taste/smell, sore throat, congestion, etc) or are not feeling well.

Teens and adults are asked to do a self assessment for covid before coming to SMILE. If you have a temperature of 100.4 or higher OR any symptoms of covid, please stay home and join us again when you are well.

We will do everything in our power to keep our students safe. We hope to be able to hold all of our events in person, but if our situation changes and we need to adapt, we certainly will. We will switch to a hybrid of fully virtual program in order to keep everyone safe and healthy.