66th Archdiocesan Youth Conference
General Information Packet
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Welcome

February 17, 2022

Dear Youth Ministry and High School Campus Ministry Leaders:

Greetings from the Office of Adolescent Catechesis and Evangelization! This is the official registration packet and formal invitation for you to bring youth to the 66th Archdiocesan Youth Conference (AYC). This year the conference will be held on July 29-31, 2022 at the Hilton Americas Hotel in downtown, Houston.

For those of you who are new to the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, AYC is a wonderful experience of faith and fellowship it is my hope that your parish is part of this event. This year’s annual summer outreach to high school aged youth will take place under the theme “Everlasting Mercy.” This year’s theme is based on the scripture Luke 1:49-50 - “for the Almighty has done great things for me. Holy is his name, and his faithful love extends age after age to those who fear him.” This theme was recommended by the Archdiocesan Youth Council and approved by His Eminence Daniel Cardinal DiNardo. With this scripture in mind, AYC will focus on receiving God’s mercy as well as sharing God’s mercy with those we encounter.

AYC offers our local youth the opportunity to be challenged by some of the best speakers in the country. All who participate will be blessed with powerful witness and messages from our major presenters: Danny Ray, Fr. David Michael Moses, and Sr. Josephine Garred, CSFN. Josh Blakesley and his band will provide music ministry throughout the conference, and we welcome our new Emcee Alex Gotay.

This registration packet has all the information needed to get your registration process started. All registrations will be done online through Cvent. At the time when registration opens all youth ministry and campus ministry leaders will receive their parish/school code to share with parents.

Finally, the priests of the archdiocese will be sent a letter from Cardinal DiNardo encouraging their support and attendance at different segments of AYC including the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Penance.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or any of the OACE staff.

In Christ,

Tim Colbert
2022 Archdiocesan Youth Conference

Mission Statement

The Archdiocesan Youth Conference is His Eminence Daniel Cardinal DiNardo’s official gathering of the young Church of Galveston-Houston. It is designed to give them an opportunity to celebrate their faith, learn about their role in the local Church, lead them into a deeper relationship with Christ and challenge them to live out their faith as Disciples of Christ when they return home. Participants will encounter Jesus Christ through their peers, youth ministry leaders, priests and especially in the Eucharist and the Sacraments of the Church.

This 3-day conference for high school youth will include:

- Dynamic presentation of the Gospel message and authentic Catholic Church teaching
- Celebration of the gifts and talents of our Church’s young people
- Experience of diverse cultures and faith expressions
- The very best presenters in the evangelization of young people the country has to offer
- Sacramental celebrations that feed the mind, body, and soul
- Phenomenal praise and worship music led by local and national music ministry leaders
- Opportunities to sing, pray, dance, contemplate, worship and celebrate with their peers
- Mass with His Eminence Cardinal DiNardo
Danny Ray, M. Div.

Danny Ray, M. Div. is a world-renowned magician, keynote speaker, and author. He believes that when people are in a state of awe and wonder, they are more open to hearing deep spiritual truth. After experiencing a show packed with humor, inspiration, and expert magic, as a vehicle for proclaiming the gospel message, you will be so excited to unpack the show with your young people. An event with Danny Ray Magic guarantees to have a long-lasting impact on everyone who sees it!

“Forget cheap tricks, Danny Ray’s magic will blow your mind – and open your heart.”

Fr. David Michael Moses

Fr. David Michael Moses grew up in Nassau Bay, Texas. Having started college when he was 14, he graduated from the University of Houston-Clear Lake with a Pre-Law Degree. He was then accepted to the University of Houston Law School, but ultimately felt called to the priesthood and entered seminary for the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. In addition to his seminary studies and spiritual formation, Fr. David Michael has performed a series of “Concerts for Life.” At 25 years of age, he was ordained to the priesthood on June 1, 2019, and is currently the parochial vicar at St. Faustina.

Sr. Josephine Garrett, CSFN

Sr. Josephine is a native Texan born and raised in Houston, TX. She moved to Dallas in 1999 to begin studies at the University of Dallas and then worked in the banking industry for 10 years. In 2005 she entered the Catholic Church and in 2011 she began formation as a religious sister and professed her vows with the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth in 2015.
Alex Gotay, Emcee

Alex Gotay is a dynamic, national teen and young adult speaker who uses his unique perspective and combines it with his passion, humor, creativity, and stories to communicate the good news in a way that connects with teens, young adults and adults! He is an author who has keynoted at several diocesan youth conferences, made a guest appearance on EWTN, spoken at the National Catholic Youth Conference and Life Teen Conference. Alex continues to travel across the nation to speak at parishes, schools, retreats and youth events.

Josh Blakesley, AYC Band Leader

Josh Blakesley has acknowledged a simple calling: To make music that moves people into prayer and action.

As a songwriter, specifically for liturgy in today’s era, the question that provokes Josh is, ‘how do I create a song that will honor traditions yet speak to the modern Church and lead them to worship?’ So, he collaborated with his guitar player, Grace McCullough, to write a new mass setting, paying homage to the hymns of the past and the current culture of modern worship. “Every week we lead music for school and parish masses, so we knew we needed something that would resonate with all ages. We also wanted it to be joyful, approachable and easy to sing but still fresh, dynamic and expressive,” says Josh.

In spring of 2017, he released the long-awaited project through OCP called Mass of Restoration: Acoustic Sessions. You can find more information by visiting visit ocp.org and searching ‘Mass of Restoration’.

Josh continues to tour heavily with his band, playing at churches, youth and adult conferences, camps, and more. Currently he is the Music Ministry Coordinator for St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church and resides in Houston, TX with his wife Heather and their two children, Sophie and Sutton.
Each Parish/School **MUST** have the following Registration Materials submitted by deadlines in order for them to be considered complete by all participants (youth and adults)

- On-line Registration is done through Cvent. A link will be provided for all key leaders to forward to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of youth and chaperones to register. Payment is made through the parish/school. Parent(s)/Guardian must be the one to register their youth in the online platform.

- **Parental/Guardian Consent, Liability Waiver, and Medical Consent Form, and COVID-19 Release Form** for each youth participant which is completed through Cvent. If there are two parents/guardians both must sign a COVID-19 Waiver for their child.
  - Parents grant permission during the registration process through Cvent by clicking the appropriate boxes.
  - The online registration is a legal document. Only the parents can register their young people.

- Adult Medical Information Form for Key Leader, all Chaperones is completed through Cvent and COVID-19 Release Form

- **Accounting Sheet with Full Payment**

- **Housing Reservation Form** - All housing requests must be paid in full by **July 1, 2022**.
  - **After July 1, 2022** you may not cancel rooms but you may add rooms up until **July 6, 2022**.
  - **After July 1, 2022**, registration fees are non-refundable and non-transferable to other programs or fiscal years due to hotel contractual agreements.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**: Payments must be accompanied by all accounting sheets and housing reservations. Conference Registration and Housing Payments are made payable to the Office of Adolescent Catechesis and Evangelization and can only be made by way of one of the following:

- Parish Check
- Cashier’s Check
- Money Order
- Cash

NO PERSONAL CHECKS
All Deadline Dates are Absolute

☐ Scholarship Application Requests and Essays must be submitted electronically, or hand delivered by June 21, 2022.

☐ Regular On-line Conference Registration ($132.00 per person) closes at 8:00 p.m., July 1, 2022.

☐ July 1, 2022 last day to turn in Hotel Housing Form and payment is due. After this date rooms may not be dropped, and your parish will be responsible for any unused rooms. Hotel rooms may still be added per availability up until July 6, 2022. If rooms are not available and we must ask for additional rooms outside of our block, parishes will be responsible for any possible hotel increase.

☐ Late On-line Conference Registration ($142 per person) closes at 8:00 p.m., July 9, 2022

☐ No New Conference Registrations will be accepted after 8:00 p.m., July 9, 2022.

☐ All conference registration payments must be submitted by July 20, 2022.

☐ Substitutions - The Office of Adolescent Catechesis and Evangelization will not be able to take any substitutions in the office after July 23, 2022. All AYC substitutions after that date will have to occur on Friday, July 29, 2022, beginning at 3:00 pm at the Hilton Americas Hotel with the appropriate paperwork (paper permission forms, COVID Release form and substitution fee).

☐ No payment will be accepted to hold spots without complete conference registrations

☐ No On-Site Registrations will be accepted / Only Substitutions of youth. Due to safe environment policies and procedures, adult substitutions are not allowed.
We have had many requests from "newcomers" to the AYC to provide some additional information to make the AYC experience even better. So ... for newcomers (and veterans that need some brushing up!) here is that information you requested!

Who may attend the 2022 Archdiocesan Youth Conference?
- Incoming freshmen through outgoing seniors are invited to attend the conference!
- AYC is structured to be developmentally appropriate for high school students. Please give younger adolescents something to look forward to.
- Participants younger than high school WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO ATTEND THE ARCHDIOCESAN YOUTH CONFERENCE.
- Only those registered are allowed at the Conference activities and events. All others will be asked to leave the hotel.
- Daycare is not provided at AYC; therefore, we humbly ask adult chaperones to make other arrangements for the care of their toddlers and children. Exceptions are made for those chaperones who are currently nursing newborns.

What are the COVID-19 protocols for AYC 2022?
- Protocols will be determined in July dependent upon:
  - State of pandemic
  - National, State, and Harris County recommendations
  - Archdiocesan Risk Management

How do we register for the hotel?
- All Hotel Reservations are made through the Office of Adolescent Catechesis and Evangelization.
- Reservation Forms with full payment per room must be hand delivered by July 1, 2022.
- Due to our hotel contracts, parishes/schools cannot release hotel rooms after July 1, 2022. The department will work hard to see if another parish/school is able to use extra rooms.
- Parishes may continue to add rooms if available up until July 7, 2022.
- All payments must be made by parish/school check, cashier’s check, or money order, and made payable to the Office of Adolescent Catechesis and Evangelization.
  (See hotel packet for further details)

Conference Credentials
- All credentials must be picked up at the Hilton Americas Hotel on July 29, 2022.
- Only the Group Leaders may pick up packets.
- T-Shirts will only be distributed on July 29, 2022, during registration time. After that time any additional T-shirts will be sold on Saturday.
- The Office of Adolescent Catechesis and Evangelization will not be able to take any substitutions in the office after July 23, 2022. All AYC substitutions after that date will
have to occur on Friday, July 29, 2022, beginning at 3 pm at the Hilton Americas Hotel with the appropriate paperwork (paper permission forms, COVID Release form and substitution fee).

**How much is the 2022 Archdiocesan Youth Conference?**
- Conference registration for the 2022 Archdiocesan Youth Conference is $132 per person. Late Registration is $142 per person.
- The hotel room costs is as follows:
  - **Hilton Americas Double Queen or King** per room/for 2 nights (Including tax) – $308.00
- The **average cost per young person for weekend** (hotel when 4 to a room/and registration fee) is $209.00 for regular registration.

**What is included in the Registration Fee minus housing?**
- Saturday lunch, Saturday dinner, conference sessions, and activities

**What is NOT included in the Registration Fee?**
- The cost does not cover transportation to and from the Archdiocesan Youth Conference, Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast, Sunday breakfast, parking or a t-shirt.

**Do Chaperones have to pay?**
- Yes! Chaperones are also considered participants of the conference.

**Will the AYC accommodate special diets?**
- Unfortunately, we do not have the ability to meet a variety of dietary needs. We will provide a vegetarian or gluten free meal in replacement of the typical beef and chicken plates. Vegetarian or gluten free plate requests must be made during the registration process through Cvent.

**Is scholarship assistance available?**
- If financial assistance is needed, a Scholarship Request Form must be completed for each teen requesting assistance.
- All requests must be submitted electronically, or hand delivered to the OACE office by **June 23, 2022** and must be accompanied by all required paperwork and signatures.
- Scholarships do not cover housing or transportation costs.
- The form is in AYC Packet #2.

**Will participants need additional money?**
- Additional money is needed for meals not covered in the registration cost and for t-shirts if they weren’t pre-ordered.
- For those who wish to purchase religious goods and t-shirts, various vendors will also be available.
What is the cancellation policy?
- After July 1, 2022, registration fees are non-refundable and non-transferable to other programs or future AYC events due to hotel contractual agreements.

How do I make substitutions for the Archdiocesan Youth Conference?
- Substitutions must be received IN WRITING utilizing the Substitution Form. All paperwork must be fully complete, or the substitution will not be accepted. See AYC Packet #2 for details
- To ease the confusion with reworking rooming assignments, it is ideal that adults be substituted for adults, female for female and male for male, etc. If your rooming situation allows, youth may be substituted for adults.
- The Office of Adolescent Catechesis and Evangelization will not be able to take any substitutions in the office after July 23, 2022. All AYC substitutions after that date will have to occur on Friday, July 30, 2022 beginning at 3:00 p.m. at the Hilton Americas Hotel with the appropriate paperwork. (paper permission forms, COVID Release form and substitution fee).

Who may chaperone the 2022 Archdiocesan Youth Conference?
- Adults must be at least 21 years or older to be considered a chaperone for the Archdiocesan Youth Conference.
- There MUST be at least 1 adult for every 10 youth in attendance. Ratios larger than what has been required will not be accepted.
- Young adults (older than graduating seniors) cannot register for the conference. Please contact the OACE if you have specific questions about the age of chaperones.
- Additionally, all key leaders and chaperones must have completed all safe environment protocols (CMG Connect Safe Haven and criminal background checks). Those not in compliance one month prior to the conference, will not be cleared to participate. If you have completed your training under the VIRTUS program, you now must log into the CMG Connect Safe Haven to view your current status.

How about AYC Registration & Hotel Check-in?
- Conference registration will begin at 3:00 p.m. on the fourth floor of the Hilton Americas Hotel. If you arrive before that time, know that you will have to wait to get your conference materials.
- Hotel Check-In will also begin at 3:00 p.m. We will work as hard as possible to make sure your wait in line is as short and painless as possible. Your patience is needed with the hotel to allow time for the proper clean-up and turn-around for our gathering. All rooms may not be available. Also, every effort will be made to keep rooms for parishes together, but this may not be possible. Please plan ahead. Thank you for your patience!
Who should you bring to the AYC?

- We welcome anyone you bring to this event. It is an opportunity for youth to gather to celebrate and deepen their faith with other Catholic youth. Many youth have talked about this (or similar experiences) as the experience that helped get them excited about God. So, consider bringing youth that are searching for something and might benefit from this experience as well as those who want to deepen their faith experience. These could be Confirmation youth, fringe youth, friends of youth group members, etc. The main thing is to consider the experience and balance it with their maturity level!
- Please note that in the case of bringing the Confirmation class, AYC is not a retreat and does not meet all requirements for Confirmation preparation.
- In making your decision, consider the following:
  The maturity level of the youth - emotionally, spiritually, and socially.
  The evangelistic nature of this event.
  How will this benefit the young person and the group after the AYC?
- You are encouraged to bring youth who have the maturity for an overnight experience in a hotel atmosphere. Remind your young people that this is not an escape for a party. God expects the best from us all and we want that portrayed at AYC as well.

Who may drive to the Archdiocesan Youth Conference?

- Only adults 21 and over are permitted to drive minors to the Archdiocesan Youth Conference and are in compliance with the Archdiocesan Transportation Policy. For safety and liability reasons, no current high school students or 2022 graduates will be permitted to drive to the conference!

What about Youth who are 18 but still in high school or a graduating senior?

- Youth who are 18 but still in high school or graduating senior must have completed all Safe Environment/CMG Safe Haven protocol and background check.
- They may not be housed with anyone under the age of 18.

May our group leave at night and return in the morning?

- To preserve the conference experience, all participants are to remain at the hotel for the duration of the conference. Due to the large number of participants and the potential for injury, it is not possible to allow groups to leave the hotel for any reason outside of the mealtimes.
- Please contact the OACE in advance of the Archdiocesan Youth Conference should it be necessary for a minor to leave to attend another function. A teen may leave only if accompanied by a parent.
How do I feed my group for the meals not provided by AYC? Here are some tricks of the trade when it comes to feeding the youth for this weekend.

- To avoid long lines at a few downtown eating establishments, you may need to make sure the youth are fed BEFORE they arrive on Friday night. Plan to stop somewhere to make sure they are fed and happy.
- A dining guide will be available for those groups who wish to dine downtown for meals not provided by AYC.
- Breakfast on Saturday and Sunday are also times we will not offer meals. Some parishes bring coolers for soda/juice/water, handheld breakfast items and snacks that are kept in the adults’ rooms throughout the weekend. This is a good idea for when they get hungry and for breakfast items.
- Whatever method you decide on, please make sure you are following all COVID-19 recommended safety protocols.

Parish/School Prayer Rooms or Spaces

- Depending on the number of participants from each parish/school, prayer spaces are available on a first-come first-served basis and may be used at the end of each evening to discuss the day’s events and to have closing prayer together. Outside food cannot be brought to these areas.

What are the Codes of Conduct for Youth, Young Adults and Chaperones?

- The Group Leader for each registered parish/school must make sure all participants, youth and chaperones have read the Codes of Conduct.
- Acknowledgement of the “Codes” occurs during the registration process in Cvent.
Youth Code of Conduct

- I am responsible for my own actions. I am asked to assume the natural consequences for any negative behavior or disturbance. I will take full responsibility for any damage or theft as a result of my actions. I understand that youth/adult leaders are acting in my best interest and for the benefit of this event and will be enforcing this code of behavior. I understand that I need to listen when asked or instructed to act.

- I am expected to attend all aspects of the event mentioned above. I will report to all check-in times as a result of my participation in AYC. I understand that if I fail to appear at any AYC events or check-in times, my parent(s) will immediately be notified.

- As a representative of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, a guest of the Hilton Americas Hotel, Discovery Green I understand that I am to be respectful and courteous to ALL hotel guests and staff. I agree to abide by the curfew set by AYC and hotel staff. I also understand that if I am found to exceed the noise level deemed acceptable by the hotel, I will be asked to leave the hotel and will be excused from attending the remainder of the 2022 AYC.

- For my safety, I realize that I am not allowed to leave the event site for ANY reason without written consent of my parent/legal guardian or for meals with my parish chaperones unless the program schedule calls for it. I understand if I need to leave the event site for any reason, I must be accompanied by my parent/guardian.

- **ALCOHOL, CIGARETTES, E-CIGARETTES/VAPE DEVICES, WEAPONS OR ILLEGAL DRUGS ARE STRICTLY PROHIBITED.** Possession of these items is grounds for immediate dismissal. (Weapons are defined as: knives, switchblades, guns, chains, or items intended to cause harm.)

- I agree to have the best possible time at the AYC and to share the spirit of Christian joy and friendship with other participants. In order for this to happen I agree to be prompt, to attend all Conference sessions, and to participate in all AYC activities. I agree to wear my Conference badge around my neck during all AYC activities.

- Regarding the accommodations, I understand that all hotel guests are required to stay in their assigned rooms and I agree not to change rooms. I also agree not to visit rooms with members of the opposite sex.

- If I swim in the pool, I understand that there is no lifeguard. I swim at my own risk.

- Christ-like behavior is expected from me at all times. Inappropriate contact, touch, gesture, language or activity of an offensive nature is NOT ACCEPTABLE.

- I agree to abide by this "Code of Behavior." As a representative of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, I am asked to project an image of Christian consideration, sensitivity and respect to others and to the property around me. Infractions of these rules will result in Event Staff/or Supervising Adult discussing the infraction with me. In the unlikely event that a behavior problem requires action, my parent(s) or guardian will be notified, and I will be dismissed from this event. My parent(s)/legal guardian(s) will be expected to pick me up.
All group leaders and adult chaperones must have completed and be up to date with the Safe Environment Program (CMG Connect Safe Haven) and Criminal Background Check at least one month prior to attendance at AYC. If you have not done this, please contact your parish leadership immediately for the next available class. If you have completed your training under the VIRTUS program, you must log into the CMG Connect Safe Haven to view your current status.

Please know where your young people are at all times. It is suggested that adults have young people in their group check in throughout the day as necessary.

Nametags must be worn around the neck and visible at all times. Ask to see nametags if they are not visible. Persons without nametags should be escorted to the Registration Table. If you suspect someone is not a participant of AYC, please escort him or her to the Registration Table immediately.

Think SAFETY FIRST! If your gut tells you something is not safe, it probably isn’t. Better to err on the side of safety, than deal with the disastrous consequences.

In the case of a 911 medical emergency, have the front desk call 911 IMMEDIATELY. Contact the First Aid Station and Tim Colbert SECOND. In cases of minor medical emergencies, go to the First Aid Station.

Sleeping rooms are gender specific. Groups wishing to meet should do so in a lounge area.

Please be mindful of all of the facilities. Do not tape, tack or staple anything to the walls or furniture. Damage to rooms or hotel facilities will be charged to the responsible person or individual. If the person responsible cannot be determined, the total amount will be divided equally and billed to ALL parishes participating at AYC 2022.

Adults should monitor the hallways during transition times (to and from workshops, after evening prayer, at curfew, etc.). Kindly encourage youth to move to where they need to be or to move to their rooms.

The pool is off limits for AYC participants during scheduled programmatic times of the conference (e.g. General Sessions, Concurrent Sessions, Prayer Experiences, etc.) It can only be used during designated free time and it is at the risk of the users. Life guards are not on duty.

Youth are NOT ALLOWED in sleeping room areas without being escorted by chaperones during scheduled programmatic times of the conference (e.g. General Sessions, Concurrent Sessions, Prayer Experiences, etc.). All young people should either be in the Hilton Americas Lanier Ballroom or designated breakout room at these times. They are not to be outside of the hotel for any reason unless the program schedule calls for it.

Do not allow public displays of affection. Explain that it is uncomfortable for others to watch and not appropriate for a Catholic youth event.

Room service is cash only.
• Any calls charged to a room will be billed to the parish/school responsible for that room.

• Please confiscate all laser penlights, squirt guns, silly string, and other unnecessary toys. Items should be brought to the registration table with the owner's name. All items may be picked up at the conclusion of AYC.

• Don't be afraid to say "no."

ALCOHOL, WEAPONS OR ILLEGAL DRUGS ARE STRICTLY PROHIBITED. For youth and adults. Possession of these items is grounds for immediate dismissal. As adult leaders, we are asked to model Christian behavior in all our actions.

ALL TOBACCO PRODUCTS AND VAPING are not permitted at youth events. Adults who smoke or vape must use a smoking area that is away from the activity and in compliance with local ordinances. Be discreet.

Your acknowledgement on the Cvent form means you agree to abide by all General Chaperone Instructions and that failure to do so may result in dismissal from the event.