

Hello St Joseph Middle School EDGE Parents,

There several upcoming Middle School specific events I would like draw you attention to in the month of March. We started Lent this past Wednesday and Lent is a great time for us both to give something up, but it is also a great way to grow in your spiritual life through increased prayer and increased attendance at Mass. Pray as a family and go to Mass together. If you do not go to Mass every Sunday make that a priority at one of the 22 masses offered in the Tri-Cities, if you do go to Mass every Sunday consider adding a weekday Mass, perhaps the 5:15pm Mass and Soup night on Thursday nights during Lent, with the exception of March 16. Lent is also of almsgiving, in words giving generously to those who have less than you. Be creative and perhaps you could incorporate some of these into your, Lent and help you family to understand that Lent is not just about giving up, but it is about developing a deeper relationship with the living God and developing habits that last long beyond Lent, leading us to a better self, and to eternity.

Calling ALL Middle School Students! **You Are Invited:** to Building Bridges Middle School Rally 2017! Building Bridges to: New Friends, Taking the Next Step, Our Faith, and GOD through fun games, engaging and entertaining speakers, and an incredible band!!! The event will be headlined by The Alex Street Band, and key notes by Jonny Doiron. Building Bridges is a 2 day event starting Friday evening, March 24th and ending Saturday, March 25th. The event will be hosted by Christ the King in Richland. Note the event is NOT AN OVERNIGHT EVENT! Cost is \$10. Please see the flyer in the back of the Church, stop by the office for more info and registration forms. Please return registrations by March 13 so we can make sure we have enough food.

Mon., March 6

The topic for the night is going to focus on *Social Pressure*. In a particular way we will be focusing on eating disorders, drugs, and alcohol. During the night's edge Session, we will be discussing who we are as beloved children of God. Being created in God's image, we are called to live for God. One way to do that is to treat our bodies as the temples that they are. Unfortunately, the world tells us a different message. These messages strongly affect adolescents who are changing and developing and can cause fear, anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem. As part of the fear and stress many teens and adolescents may turn to harmful behaviors such as extreme dieting, purging, drinking or drugs to "fit in" or "chill out". It is very likely that your students know or will know someone, or they themselves will deal with fear and stress in unhealthy ways. We want to remind them of their goodness that comes from being sons and daughters of God. Some things to discuss with them are: How does knowing that you are a child of God change how you look at yourself? Is the topic of eating disorder something you have heard about before? Where have you heard of this, friends or people in school? Take the time to affirm you middle school youth. Let them know how much you love and support them.

Encourage them to talk to you when things are not easy or they need something.

Monday March 13 The topic for the night will be *For What It's Worth*, from Life Teen and will be our "Safe Environment" night to fulfill the church's requirement to help keep youth safe: physically, emotionally, and spiritually healthy. We will be focusing on promoting a safe environment and helping ensure teens are not putting themselves in a situation where they can hurt or be hurt. The purpose of this night is to help teens become aware of the dignity that is found in ourselves and others and how we are called to protect that dignity in our relationships. We encourage you to discuss the content of this night with your teens. Some questions to use are what does Sacred Scripture say about the way that we reflect God's dignity? What would you do if you heard about a boundary being crossed and possible abuse of a friend? Use the scenarios and discuss what the teens would do in those situations.

If you have questions, please let me know,

In Christ,
Aaron Pohlen
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