



# DIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA AND EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

*The Most Rev. Mark, Archbishop of Philadelphia • Orthodox Church in America*

December 01, 2025

## YOUTH MINISTRY CELL PHONE POLICY

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever! We live in a world constantly surrounded by noise, distractions and our senses often overwhelmed and over stimulated. Our youth gatherings are intended to provide an opportunity to clear our minds of worldly distractions so that we may learn and grow in our Faith and build lasting relationships based upon Christ and the Gospel. Additionally, parents are responsible for monitoring internet browsing, social media, emails, etc., when their children are at home. As a Diocese, we cannot accept responsibility for numerous children using this kind of technology unsupervised. Neither do we want other youth exposed to use of this technology inappropriately, as it would betray the trust of parents entrusting their children to our care and oversight.

Moving forward, cell phone use will be completely prohibited (except as a medically necessary monitoring device). Your teens should leave his or her cell phone at home. Otherwise, they are to surrender their phones to the coordinators upon arrival. In our application process an emergency contact number is listed to contact our youth coordinator in case of a family emergency. If an emergency arises at our youth event, we have your contact information available from your application.

If this policy causes anxiety (with the child or the parent), perhaps they are not ready for events providing them with being away from home at this point. If campers want to take pictures or exchange numbers with their friends, we recommend bringing a digital camera and a notebook. After prayerful meetings regarding technology at camps, we are all agreed the distraction is far too great.

By agreeing to this policy you give consent to the retreat/camp directors permission to confiscate phones when discovered out of compliance with this policy. The phones will be returned upon departure. Your cooperation will assist us in providing the most fruitful opportunity for our youth to disengage from worldly distractions and be fully present at Diocesan Youth Ministry events

In Christ,

The Staff and Administration of the Youth Workers of the Diocese of Eastern PA