



G. S. Youth United

Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity. 1 Timothy 4:12

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Are You Ready? by Cheyenne Paiva



Hello everyone! Welcome to the newest year of youth ministry at Good Shepherd Parish. We all start fresh as we celebrate the opportunities given to us by God, our parents, and our peers, but at the same time we continue our search to find ourselves in the midst of the hustle and bustle of school and everyday life. We all have questions and concerns, hopes and expectations, whether you are an incoming freshman not knowing what to expect of Pre-Confirmation classes, a youth returning for the final step in Confirmation class, or even a parent that grabbed a great opportunity to give God's love to your child. What will happen to you? What will you discover about God and what will you discover about yourself? Are you ready to have these questions answered?

Looking back, I never would have guessed that I would end up where I am right now. A year in Pre-Con, a year in Confirmation, two years of facilitating these classes, and three years in Core Team. These are experiences that I use to describe how I feel about myself, about my friends, my family, and my Creator. I did not have my questions answered because my questions simply changed. I stopped asking for reasons and started asking for purpose. When I failed to dis-

cover, I learned to accept that God's plan for me is better than anything I could ever plan for myself. You will soon find that although Pre-Con and Confirmation classes have lessons and agendas designed to expand your understanding of your faith, the most important piece of knowledge you must teach yourself. We can show you the doors but you have to walk through them.



Core Team 2009-2010

Where do you think you will be at the end of a year's worth of class? Can you clearly see yourself or is it a fuzzy future? I ask this because I know that if you open up in this community, you will realize that you feel best here. This is the secret that everyone knows but is too afraid to say. The best version of yourself WILL come out here, and you WILL feel the best you have ever felt. If you do not believe it, use me as proof. I came into Pre-Con with a strong reluctance to believe, and even though, as I said before, my questions simply

turned into more questions, I feel no doubt in asking them. I grow closer to my friends everyday as I grow closer to my faith, and I appreciate my family with the intensity of the sun and I feel good about myself. The day I walked through the door into this arena of hope was the day I looked at God in awe and wonder.

Right before I typed this sentence I made the sign of the cross, and starting now what I type is a prayer just for you. I have walked in your shoes. In fact, all of the adult facilitators, junior facilitators, youth ministry workers, and priests at this parish have walked in your shoes. We want you to find what we found and even what we did not. We found our purposes to help you find yours. We want to show you the life you can live and the happiness only God's children can feel. No one can predict the future, but as a youth, you are extremely lucky. You have a church built around you to guide and protect you. Jesus saved you from death when he died on the cross. He gives you countless opportunities to know His love, so grab them as you can. Share in his love with me and all those who know it. As I end this with a sign of the cross, once again I say welcome to the newest year of youth ministry at Good Shepherd!

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It's an Everyday Thing, by Evan Menta

In life, there's only a time of change. Dramatic, or long periods of time changes. These experiences faced by the youth of a catholic lifestyle had the choice of change in their lives. From August 2nd through the 6th, the Good Shepherd Youth Core Team departed from reality to face a world of speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity in the highly elevated mountains, located at a campsite named Whispering Winds. Like no other camp,

Camp Emmaus Leadership Camp was and has been the greatest camps the Youth have been on according to some youth there. Many of these people dealt with hard times, strengthening out their faith with God, and most of all meeting new people. The comfort and love all around the camp gave it one of the greatest expectations there. As for the theme of Camp Emmaus, "It's an Everyday Thing," had a total impact of praise towards God

through the Youth. Many of the kids there grew so close to God and one another. Through prayer and praise, this Camp was the most life changing event that these youth had ever experienced. Like what the adults said, "Bring home what you learned from here and keep it, exert it, and live it. It's an Everyday Thing.



Attempted Movie Night, by Paula Hoang

After a little more than a week after the ending of Camp Emmaus, Core Team decided to meet up again, considering we were all still on withdrawal from camp and needed to see everyone again. Djoannah Miguel, a team member, sent out an email a few days before with details of having a movie night at Edwards on Friday, the 14th of August, so we could bond with the team some more. We were to meet at the theaters at around 4, but a few people came late. Waiting with other members of the team was far from boring. Of course intense games of ninja came up and with that, came plenty of stares from random people passing by. The topic of camp came

up more than once with feelings of nostalgia, but everyone was still happy to be able to see others from the team. After waiting and attempting to decide what to do for about an hour for everyone to come, we decided to enter the theater and pick out a movie to watch. Instead of watching a movie, we decided to go to Yogurt World and get some frozen yogurt instead. While eating our yummy dessert, we played and connected with the provided games that the store put out such as Uno, Jenga, and Connect Four.

Although things didn't turn out as planned, everyone had a good time. We still were

able to bond and have an enjoyable night. There was constant laughter and smiles throughout the afternoon and everyone was just happy to see each other again. We all realized how much we enjoyed each other's company because each and every one of us felt comfortable with each other. Even though a few of us had hardly known each other before, everyone became best friends throughout the days. Our faith had brought all of us together and created new and lasting friendships.



Bunko Night for NCCY, by Cheyenne Paiva

This past August 15, the parish's own Women's Club sponsored 19 games of Bunko, all for only five dollars. The donations went to the handful of Good Shepherd Youth traveling to the National Catholic Youth Conference later this year. The requirements for the evening? There were barely any! Bunko is a dice game that most of the attendees learned just that night. If you went, you might have won gift cards from Starbucks, Jamba Juice, McDonalds, Subway, and iTunes. If that sounds like a lot of prizes, the list goes on. If you

played Bunko well that night, you could have won movie passes and Barnes and Noble gift cards, and if you played badly you qualified for a Target gift card.

It certainly was a fun night. I met new people and bonded with my teammates, even when we lost. Surprisingly, the best part of the night was not the huge amount of prizes. I suppose it takes a night of Bunko to experience the best of both worlds. In other words, we took two parish groups and oddly

combined them into a collage of personalities, and this mixture made the night as fun as it was.

High fives and screams later, games emerged and the fun swelled to a massive peak. One day when we do it again, make sure you are there. Bring your luck with you and prepare to have ringing ears, sore throats, and all around excitement!

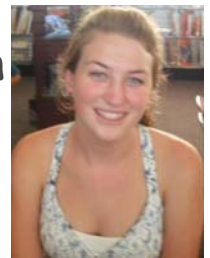


Doing Small Things With Great Love, by Nicole Larsen

Have you visited the Faith Formation office recently? If not, you should definitely stop by and meet the brand new addition to the staff, Rebecca Krawczak. The Good Shepherd Core Team had the pleasure of meeting this enthusiastic young lady at Camp Emmaus in early August, and all of us are thrilled to have her at Good Shepherd. Becca grew up in La Mesa and attended West Hills High School in Santee. After graduating from high school, she went to Grossmont Community College for two years then transferred to San Diego State University, where she received a Bachelor's degree in Child and Family Development. She married her wonderful husband three years ago. She has been actively involved in youth ministry programs since she was confirmed in her senior year of high school. "I immediately

fell in love with the ministry and worked in the youth office for my four years," Becca said. For some people, working for the Church is something they know they want to do the minute they are born. Or, in the case of St. Paul, they are suddenly blinded by a bright light and hear God's voice calling to them from the heavens. Although Becca was not blinded by a bright light, she began to consider working with the Church during her first four years working as a Youth Minister assistant. "I wanted to make sure that whatever career I chose, that it would be work I was passionate about and fulfilled me, and that it would be a profession that served others," Becca said. Working with the Church, particularly in Youth Ministry, has allowed her to serve others and work with youth to help them develop their faith. The amount of time she

dedicates to the youth she has worked with in the past, along with the selfless attitude and immense faith she displayed at Camp Emmaus makes it easy for others to see how much Becca loves what she does. She says that through her job she has been able to meet many inspiring people that have helped her grow in faith and her understanding of God. So, when you get the chance, stop by the Faith Formation office and say hello to Becca. She is very excited to be at Good Shepherd and looks forward to meeting everyone. "The needs are great, and none of us, including me, ever do great things. But we can all do small things, with great love, and together we can do something wonderful." – Blessed Mother Teresa



Shout to the Lord, All the Earth. Let Us Sing, by Alyssa Celones

Music melts all the separate parts of our bodies together – Anais Nin

It's a Friday night and anyone passing by the Epicentre, a local music venue and teen center located in Mira Mesa, would be able to hear the usual hum of music emanating from its interior. But tonight it's different. This is not your normal gathering of hardcore, ska, metal infusion playing for the masses. On August 28th, 2009 from 6:30-11pm, local musicians and bands donated their talent and time freely towards a greater cause. Like the quote above by Anais Nin, many came together to be apart of a higher purpose through music. The St. Kizito Children Foundation of Uganda sponsors the local impoverished and orphaned youth in their educational journey throughout elementary and college. The organization was founded by Father Kizito Kirenga in 1997 and is located just outside Kampala, the nation's capital. The foundation not only strives for the children to meet academic goals but also teaches vocational skills as well.

Like many of the children in Uganda, Father Kizito also met obstacles while trying to pursue his education. The youngest of 4 brothers and 3 sisters, he put himself through the last 6 years of schooling after the initial 7 his father could afford while caring for his bedridden mother who was afflicted with skin cancer. Young Kizito worked odd jobs and grew tomatoes and onions to sell in the local market place to earn money for school. When others saw him struggling they

strove to help him along on his endeavor. After high school, the diocese paid for his college, enabling him to get his degree in philosophy and at the end of that, his family surprised him with a scholarship to study in the United States. While studying abroad he hatched the idea for the foundation in order to help the youth back in Uganda who were in similar, if not worse cir-



cumstances. The sad reality is that many of the children will not be able to pursue a college degree, but with the vocational training this foundation provides they will be able to make a living and survive without one. From washing dishes to hosting benefit concerts, the foundation has certainly come a long way. When asked why he started the foundation Father Kizito replied, "Some people [have] helped me and the best way to thank those people that helped me is to give to others what they gave me. I have all that I need, God has

taken care of that. So the best I can do is take care of someone else."



The idea of a benefit concert was hatched more than a year ago, not by Father Kizito but by the youth of the Good Shepherd Catholic Church, namely a few members of the high school Core Team: Annie Le, Stephanie Espinoza, and Zachary Hight. They, with the help of Pat Clasby, Justice and Service, and Community Life, went on to make this night possible. The aforementioned three key members worked nonstop up until literally the last moment to see this project through. From planning the event, proposing it to the administration, booking the venue, contacting bands, organizing sales, advertising and countless other things, they did it all. They managed to set up a wonderful night filled with music and love in order to help better the situations of others. Needless to say, their selflessness and hard work paid off.

The night's lineup of local bands included a mix of mellow bluesy folk rock along with energetic indie pop sprinkled with touches of that included touches of harmonica, tambourines, violins and shakers. First up were Ivan Cheong and Katy Wong, a duo of harmonizing songbirds who started off the night just right with catchy feel good music drawing references from musicians like Andrew Bird as well as the Canadian twins, Tegan and Sara. Animal Sprit was a melodic



pair of friends with a knack for combining mellow vocals with head-bobbing, finger-wagging, toe-tapping, and all-out grooving music. They also managed to crank out a cover of Barry Louis Polisar's All I Want Is You from the Juno soundtrack during their set, which fit snugly with their own jams. Prior to the next act, Father Kizito and Mike White (of the SOS organization that adopted Father Kizito's cause) spoke a few words on behalf of the foundation and the children of Uganda. They sent out their heart warming thanks and love to all those in attendance. The third band up was The Howls, an energetic contrast to the last two acts. They brought on a set brimming with the influences of Bob Dylan and the Rolling Stones while still leaving room to move and groove. Next up was Gregory Page, a solo act whose reminiscent bluesy folk rock ballads calmed the atmosphere and settled the crowd. Last but not least was Gray Ghosts, an indie pop band that draws from blues, folk,

doo wop, and bubblegum pop. Their upbeat attitude was the perfect way to close the night. In between sets, attendees could peruse the assortment of hand-woven hemp and banana leaf bracelets, hand-crafted mixed media posters, beaded earrings, and rosaries for sale in the back. There were also refreshments and assorted band merchandise available.

Many of you are probably hoping to attend an event like this in the future or be able to donate to this noble cause. As of right now, it is unclear whether or not there will be another benefit concert but don't lose hope. There are many ways in which you can support the St. Kizito Children Foundation of Uganda. Currently, the organization is focusing on money donations in order to provide a stable foundation and fulfill the many goals it has set. Specifically, there are plans to build a local school and a grain mill as well as to buy a tractor for the local

farmers in order to help sustain a steady supply of marketable surplus to help accumulate funds. Mike White's organization, Seminars Open Schools (SOS), adopted Father Kizito's cause and donations can be made through them as well. Plans for the future include an up and coming book by Father Kizito, as well as a musical album featuring the children supported by the foundation. For more information about this cause please visit: www.stkizitochildrenfoundation.org.

Please be sure to keep Father Kizito and the children of the St. Kizito Children Foundation of Uganda in your prayers during these hard and trying times. Many thanks and love to those who have supported the foundation's pursuits. In the words of Father Kizito Kirenga, "There are no extraordinary actions, only ordinary things done with extraordinary love."



Reflections from the Teenage Mind: Year of the Priest, by Andrew Bacong

In a recent address, Pope Benedict XVI named this the "Year of the Priest," in hopes of encouraging priests to achieve "spiritual perfection" through prayer and reflection. While this was mainly done to meet this aim, we all may also look to the example of a "priestly character."

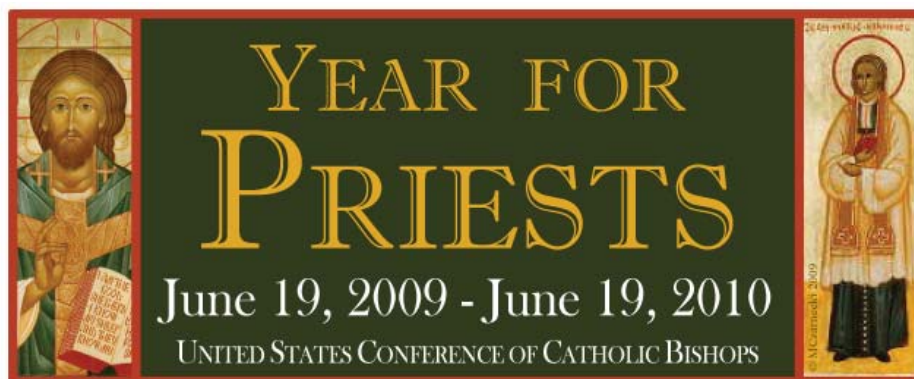
Now, when I think of a priest, I think of the hour we spend at Church every Sunday. I think of masses, homilies and handshakes after mass. However, the role of the priest is extended much farther than the confines of Sunday. Not only is the priest head of the congregation, but he must also set an example of how we all should act; a sort of "priestly character." We must be humble, helpful, honest, trustworthy, and actively seek to do good for others. In other words, we have to strive to be model Catholics and model citizens. Most of the time, we forget about this standard. I can say I've never lived up to this stan-

dard like I should. Most of us haven't. But we can look to the example of our priests to see the way we should conduct ourselves.

Growing up, I always thought priests' jobs were to stay at church, pray and celebrate mass on Sundays. However, that is far from the case. Priests are just like you and me; they go out shopping, to the movies, and are constantly seen around Mira Mesa. I'm sure at some point or another, we've seen one of our priests outside of church. Another misconception I had growing up was that because priests are our closest connection to God, they had to be perfect. They, like us, experience all the same feelings and events outside the church. They feel the same temptations as us; it's all part of being human. However, even under all that, they still maintain their ethics and morals. They continue to be an example of priestly character and to be an

example for us to look for. So, if they can do all that even outside of those Sunday masses, why can't we?

As I close this reflection, I challenge everyone, including myself to continue to live as model Catholics and model citizens even after the mass has ended. There are so many people we can be Jesus for; people less fortunate than ourselves that need help, whether it be physical needs like food and shelter, or spiritual needs like a person to lean on or a shoulder to cry on. There are many out there are in need of good, priestly people. And being a priestly person doesn't mean you have to be a priest or a member of the clergy. As long as you continue to live by your virtues and be an example of "priestly character," you can be an example for everyone to follow.





Bonfire Bonanza 2009, by Angela Polanos

As the summer of 2009 comes to a close, one thing that will never leave the memories of Good Shepherd Parish's High School Core Team's is: the Camp Emmaus Bonfire Reunion. Just seeing everyone from camp together again reminds of us of the love and acceptance we found at Whispering Winds. As we all met together at Crown Point in Mission Bay, it was obvious that even though we had been home for three weeks, we still were on "Camp Emmaus Highs" and ready to relive over again.

The adventure started with a quick prayer at the Parish and then a short, but fun filled ride to Mission Bay. As soon as we arrived, it was entertaining to locate our spot and set up for a crazy afternoon. Immediately, people began to arrive and screaming and hugging ensued. Old friends and small groups were reunited, and we exchanged stories of what had hap-

pened since we left camp. Soon enough, everyone was getting into the swing of things with Ultimate Frisbee, volleyball, and of course, ninja! All of the parishes intermingled and spoke about funny camp memories; and friends took long walks upon the sandy shore. Hotdogs were passed around, and everyone relaxed on blankets, taking silly photos of them.

Looking back on the awesome afternoon, I smile. It is obvious that even though we will not be seeing each other for long bouts of time, we all held on to the flame of faith that we will soon see each other again. Our faith had brought us all together, and it would do so again.

As the afternoon turned to an absolutely stunning sunset, we held a mass. As we sat with everyone on the shore, it brought on a bout of nostalgia. "Just like camp," I'm sure every-

one was thinking. We sang all of our favorite songs, lifting our voices to the sky, and people walking by stopped and listened. As the mass came to an end, the sunset had finally descended, and the bonfire was lit. Everyone stood around it, roasting hot dogs and making s'mores. Music filled the air as ukuleles, guitars, and everyone sang along to our camp jams.

One by one as everyone began to leave, we all knew in our hearts that we would see each other again. Be it tomorrow, next week, next year, who knew? After all, there are no such thing as goodbye, only see you later.





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Events

For information regarding upcoming events, you can go to
<http://www.goodshepherd youth.net/events.htm>

Please note that all off-site activities need a signed permission slip.



So Long, Farewell, by Paula Hoang

By the time this issue gets out, everyone will be back in school, working hard to get good grades and what not. The new and busy season makes us hold onto reminiscences of summer vacation, hoping that next year's summer would come quicker even though the school year has just begun. Maybe it's the idea of having homework to do again, or just the idea of not being able to hang out with friends as much as before, that makes us reluctant in going back to school.

Even though the bliss of summers is gone, the school year awaits with many new exciting events in which we can all share our love for God. Core Team has planned myriad events in which all youths can come and enjoy their time with others in not only from our parish, but others as well. One of our upcoming events is the Talent Showcase on Friday October 23rd. Core Team is still in search for people and acts who want to display some of their talents in the Showcase. Feel free to contact anyone from Core Team if interested. All ideas are welcomed.

As the days of summer are ending and the new school year starting, we must remember that God is always there for us during our hardships. The obstacles that he puts in front of us are only meant to make us stronger as we surpass them by. Let us continue to grow in God's grace as we begin school and remember to keep in mind that God's always by our side. On behalf of Core Team, I would like to wish everyone a great new year. Each day that passes by means that summer's getting closer!

