



Fearless Ministries

Volunteer Guide

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INTRODUCTION

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Thank you for responding “yes” to the call to serve at a Fearless Ministries Retreat. You may not realize it yet, but this is the toughest job you’ll ever love. Why? Because the work of bringing souls to Christ is serious business: *the only thing you and I will take from this world is our relationship with God!* However, the work of bringing souls to Christ is also a joy-filled effort! As you participate in “Kingdom Work,” you will find that there is nothing more satisfying than seeing another person come to know that he or she is *personally* loved by our Lord, Jesus Christ.

At Fearless Retreats, we bring students to the foot of the Cross of Christ in the Eucharist. He does the rest! Let Him work through YOU to accomplish His mighty works!

The Fearless Ministries Team

OVERVIEW

Our Mission is:

- **To nurture students’ personal relationship with Jesus Christ!**
- **To help form them into disciples!**
- **To help everyone feel *welcome and stay safe!***

Overview

Most of our volunteers serve in one of three capacities: Chaperones, General Supervision, or Clergy/Religious.

Safe Environment

All volunteers are expected to adhere to Safe Environment Guidelines and should have submitted an Authorization for **Background Check Form** and completed **Safer Spaces Training** or equivalent (such as VIRTUS). Those who have NOT yet done so must complete these requirements before being able to accompany a group of students. Visit the volunteer page of our website, at www.fearlessministries.com for info.

Chaperones:

- Are directly responsible for providing supervision for his/her assigned group of students. You are like “moms” and “dads” for the weekend!
- Work in collaboration with at least one other chaperone assigned to the group.
- Exhibit leadership and positive mentoring to help form students’ faith and character. (Encourage students to follow rules, show respect for others, reverence in the sanctuary, good sportsmanship, and to clean up after themselves.)
- Stay with their group at all times to make sure each student feels welcome, participates, and stays safe.
- Notify leadership of any concerns regarding behavior or special needs.
- Make sure the sleeping and eating quarters and worship space remain orderly and clean. (Remind students not to touch schools’ belongings/be respectful of teacher/student’s property.)

General Supervision Staff:

- Provide general oversight of all students, especially in large-group settings.
- Encourage respectful behavior, sportsmanship, and proper reverence during talks, testimonies and worship.
- May be called upon to relieve group counselors when needed.
- Help control traffic flow especially around meal time.
- Perform walk-throughs and “night guard” duties on his/her respective wing, separated by gender.

General Supervision continued...

- Keep an eye out for kids who wander from the fold, who seem disconnected, draw them in, etc. Everyone should be made to feel welcome and respected.
- Help with general maintenance/organizational tasks, set up, free time activities, clean up, etc.

Clergy and Religious:

- As an integral part of the spiritual instruction of Fearless Retreats, the Priests and Religious who give of their time and talents to provide spiritual guidance and Sacraments to the youth are an invaluable part of our team.
- Fearless Retreats provide an environment where teens get to know those who have given their lives in the service of the Catholic Church. This exposure to religious life has already caused many of the same teens to consider religious life for themselves, many for the first time.
- Clergy and Religious may be called upon to give talks, offer instructional rosaries, perform sacristan duties, assist with sacraments and liturgy, answer Q & A, mentor students during activity periods, and provide emotional support and/or spiritual guidance.

Guardians:

One of the most important elements of *Fearless Retreats* is Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. When staffing supply allows, we offer Perpetual Adoration. Volunteers may be asked to sign up for an hour time slot to serve as guardians. If you volunteer for a time slot, please *be sure* to set your alarm and show up at your post on time to relieve the other volunteers. What better way to grow closer to Christ than to spend an hour face to face with Him!

Training:

You do not have to be fully trained before arriving at a Fearless Retreat. You will be sent details by email about arrival times, packing lists, and other information prior to the retreat. You will arrive at the retreat a few hours before the students arrive to meet the team, have Volunteer Orientation, training, a tour, and an overview of the schedule and registration process before the retreat opens. If you have not yet completed Safer Spaces prior to arriving, you will have the opportunity of completing it there.

General Rules & Regulations:

- Students must be under adult supervision at all times. Outside grounds are off limits unless accompanied by one's group or adult supervisors. Staff areas, including staff restrooms, are off limits to students.
- Girls and Boys separated by wings/ not allowed on one another's wings.
- Romance between retreatants is prohibited.
- Dress code: Modest dress is expected. No halter-tops, spaghetti straps, belly-shirts, or clothing with inappropriate language/logos. Shorts and skirts must reach mid-thigh AND past the fingertips or longer. Also, if it looks like it is painted on, it is not appropriate for the retreat. Gentlemen, a reminder that outside of the restroom, shirts must be worn at all times, and no hats on in the sanctuary space.
- Inappropriate behavior/language will not be tolerated.
- Cigarettes, alcohol and illegal drugs are not permitted.
- Although many teens desire romance, the primary objective of Fearless Retreats is to develop a relationship with God. Physical signs of affection at retreats are limited to hands on backs of shoulders only, if needed.
- Sleeping quarters: students on one side, adults on the other, closest to door.
- Cell phone use: student use is limited. There's no Wifi and very little time. We can't guarantee the security of people's devices. Cells phones to be removed from the students if out during restricted times. They may use them during specially-designated free time.
- NO PHOTOGRAPHY OR VIDEO PERMITTED (except by authorized administrative personnel).

Do's:

- Get to know your kids. Memorize their names, show you care by asking about their interests, etc.
- Enforce the rules of Fearless Retreats. This is in your own best interest; rules are in place for a reason.
- Attend ALL scheduled events ON TIME with your kids. Chaperones must attend all talks, etc.
- Maintain a positive attitude. Attitude is contagious! If you are optimistic, your group will be optimistic. If you're negative, guess what...?
- Some students have no idea what being reverent in church is, what life is like without a cell phone, or that it's a sign of good character to clean up after yourself. You are their examples on HOW to do these things.
- Follow Safe Environment Guidelines.
- Have a good time and pray!

Dont's:

- Don't be tricked into thinking that you need to be friends with your group. You play a supervisory role.
- Don't share your personal testimony before having it cleared by the core team. Students are of varying developmental levels and we want to be mindful of that.
- NEVER be alone with a retreatant in an enclosed space. Bring another member of staff with you, or stay outside the doorway to the enclosed space.
- Don't abandon your group. Don't leave the room after lights out, except to use the bathroom.
- Don't engage in "romance" on the retreat. Romance with retreatants is prohibited under ALL circumstances.

FAQ

What if there is a member of my group who refuses to participate or who has a negative attitude? Stay positive and be open to participating in the various activities *yourself*. This will go a long way in shutting down the drama. Encourage him/her to interact as much as possible. If the behavior continues to be an issue, notify a member of the leadership.

What if someone is really homesick? Again, try to stay positive and encourage the individual to interact with your group and participate in activities. However, if the person's homesickness continues or if he/she is crying or pulling down other members in the group, notify a member of the leadership team BEFORE calling home to the parents/guardians.

Can students use the phone to call home? Students may use their cell phones briefly during the designated free time periods.

What if someone asks a question about the faith I don't know the answer to? On Fearless Retreats, it is natural for conversations and questions to arise after talks or powerful spiritual experiences. If a tough issue or question comes up, simply reach out to a member of the Clergy/Religious for assistance. They would be happy to help!

What if I don't agree with one of the Catholic Church's teachings? Fearless Ministries is an outreach that adheres to the tradition of the Catholic Church. As a volunteer representing Fearless Ministries, you are expected to uphold our mission. If you struggle with Church teachings, it's okay to *personally* process that question by learning more about why the Church believes what it does *on your own time*. However, in conversation with students on retreat, you are expected to articulate the Church's teaching responsibly. If you are unable to do so, defer to a member of the Clergy/Religious or retreat director to help you do so.

What if someone brings up something serious, such as abuse, self harm, or suicidal thoughts? Notify a member of the leadership team immediately.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

Please indicate that you have read the Volunteer Guide by signing and dating the form below and return it to a member of the registration/leadership team.

I, _____ (*print name*), acknowledge that I have received a copy of the *Fearless Ministries Volunteer Guide*, and that I will read it and adhere to the guidelines.

Signature: _____ Date: _____