



2021 – 2022 Life Teen Explanation

What is Life Teen?

St. Thomas the Apostle's Life Teen is designed with the intent to lead teens closer to Christ. Our Sunday evenings kick off with the Eucharistic Liturgy Service. This is followed by Life Nights – a 1 1/2 hour experience focused on faith development. St Thomas the Apostle has a Core Team of about fifteen adults. They work very hard at supporting you in moral character-building and faith formation of your teenager. The Core is focused on helping to inspire the teens to grow up and be confident leaders, while they grow in faith. It is a given to us that you want your teen to grow in the faith, to be courageous in it, to become humble leaders who encourage, embrace and live a Christian-filled life. We know the nucleus of the family is where this all begins. We will work very hard to support your family.

What do we need to do?

Make the message of Jesus relevant! We strive to help your teen hear the fuller truth of the gospel and let the Truth impact their life. Explore the faith in ways that connect! We hope to lead your teen to where they personally experience God's love in their life,

because this is how they will ultimately own their faith. Life Night is not a program! Make Sunday evenings eventful! It is our commitment not to ignore any teen and seek to recognize their needs.

How do we try and bring faith formation to life?

We provide a means to draw teens into an interactive learning experience, where teens can grow in their understanding of God's relevance in their life. God's love that transforms the teens' lives and it is God's love that impacts their decisions. God's love is increasingly necessary as they begin to make the real choices of life. God's love helps them in their relationships. God's love will help them in their future marriages and in the families they will raise some day.

What to expect at a typical Life Night?

Two of the four Sunday evenings in a month are catechetical. We break open a particular teaching of the Church. One of the evenings deals with specific "real world issues" that teens deal with (i.e. stress, body image, drinking, gossip, chastity, bullying, clicks, suicide, healthy friendships, depression, social networking, etc.). These nights help teens see how their Christian faith is relevant to every aspect of their lives. And one Life Night per month is a social night, where we build Christian community and friendships (a party with purpose – controlled chaos if you will). In the midst of these social nights a message of God's love is shared and realized. No one night is repeated in their four years of high school.

What is the newest direction to be added for 2021/2022?

We are borrowing and developing new digital strategies that will extend our reach to families and youth. We completely committed to offering revolutionary ways for families to not just get by, but thrive and grow in relationship with Christ during this challenging time in the Church and in the world.

What else is offered for youth at St. Thomas the Apostle?

- Confirmation - A special nine-month period of time of spiritual formation and discernment, culminating with the Sacrament of Confirmation in spring. Starts in September and ends in May.
- DNA Life Teen Leadership – A weekly commitment to training a group of teens to grow in leadership and to serve their families, parish, and community better.
- More Than Words - A social justice and community service group made up of teens and some parents. They grow together, as women and men for others through a process of action and reflection. A different social justice issue is explored every month, leading up to a service day relating to that social justice issue.
- Additional Teen Service Opportunities - March for Life – March alongside thousands in prayerful witness to the sanctity of life. - Tree of Life --- Support the efforts of Reachout (assist in supporting the needs of pregnant woman and babies in crisis).
- Fall Retreat –October 15 - 17, 2021 @ St. David Monastery
- Spring Retreat – A Life Changing Spiritual Retreat for Teens – will take place at Triangle Y Camp for 3 days. Dates TBD

- Steubenville West – A powerful Christian Summer Youth Conference – Thousands of teens come from around the southwestern United States to the U of A for a weekend – July 15 – 17, 2021
- LEAD – This is a dynamic Catholic leadership opportunity for teens that are ready to step up to the next level in leadership and evangelization. Four teens are sent with partial scholarships. Dates TBD
- Life Teen Leadership Conference – LTLC is a unique opportunity in leadership training. Four to six teens and two CORE members will be sent for six days, to Benedictine College, in Atchison, Kansas – DATES TBD
- NCYC – National Conference of Youth Ministry – June 7 – 9, 2021
- CYM Training Convention – St Thomas the Apostle sends Core Team Members out of town for three days to receive practical and comprehensive training in spiritual renewal. Dates TBD
- CORE Team Retreat – At the beginning of the fall semester the CORE team attends a 3-day spiritual retreat at Picture Rocks led by recognized spiritual leaders in the Church. One can't give what you don't have. Dates TBD
- Funding and Scholarships– St Thomas the Apostle Life Teen has a policy that no teen should miss an opportunity to encounter God and grow in relation with Him. The bulk of the costs for what we offer are covered by the parish and what we are able to

raise. We ask for your personal support of Starry Night – April ??, 2022!

What can you do?

The reality is this – the only way we will really help make a difference in the life of your teen is if we support one another. If our Life Teen experience is to become more and more meaningful to your teen and family, it won't be because of any one of us. It will take all of our conscious prayers, efforts and resources. From the time of Christ himself, the reality is faith always comes alive through experiences and is then revealed in actions. The price for this is not just covered by the gift of time and talent! To this point, I think you already know that St. Thomas the Apostle is extremely supportive and generous to faith formation of your teen. We need to be able to continue to extend the invitation for all to come without any sense of burden.

Here is where your support is needed to make Life Teen work even better. In whatever way you can step up and assist, please do so. If you feel you can contribute in any way, please do so (there is much more we can add to their Life Teen Experience with additional resources).

If you can commit yourself to prayers on behalf of the Life Teen Experience – thank you. Please, please, please; never stop praying for your family, all families at St Thomas the Apostle, and Catholic family life in the world. Please know that our Core Team includes your teens and you in our weekly meeting!

You can access a great deal more at the parish website: statucson.org – click on Parish Life, then click on Ministries. There are a host of youth ministry resources to click on there.

St. Thomas the Apostle Life Teen 2021/2022 Vision

Core Values

- 1) Remain faithful to God
- 2) Respond to God
- 3) Reveal God's love

Core Purpose

St Thomas the Apostle's youth ministry exists to make Jesus more available, in order that teens, families, and the entire parish community can be drawn more into relationship with him and become his disciple.

Big 2021 - 2022 Goal

Helping families to become disciples of Jesus Christ, which is to fall in love with Him and His message.

Thank you for your prayers and generous support. Yours in Christ!

Deacon Ed Sheffer

Pastoral Associate - Director of Youth Ministries