



OFFICE OF EVANGELIZATION & DISCIPLESHIP

ROMAN CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF ATLANTA

Youth Ministry Quick-Start Guide

On behalf of the Office of Evangelization and Discipleship (OED), welcome to Youth Ministry in the Archdiocese of Atlanta!

This quick start guide will help you get started in youth ministry at your parish. There are some guidelines that need to be followed to make sure you are in compliance with Safe Environment, and some best practices for youth ministry.

There is more information on all of these subjects on the www.atlyouth.org website. That is the official website for Youth Ministry in the Archdiocese of Atlanta.

Getting Connected

There are a few ways for you to get connected to other youth ministers in Atlanta and beyond. Your fellow youth ministers can be a wealth of information, and may even be able to share resources and coordinate events with you. Here's how to get started:

- Atlanta Youth Ministers Facebook Group- a place for local YMs in the Archdiocese of Atlanta to share ideas and questions (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/atlantaym>)
- Catholic Youth Ministers Facebook Group- a national group of Catholic YMs sharing ideas (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/CatholicYM>)
- Catholic Youth Ministry Discussion (from ProjectYM) (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/cymdiscussion>)
- Subscribe to monthly OED Newsletter (and any other Archdiocesan newsletters you may be interested in) <https://archatl.com/offices/evangelization-and-discipleship/oed-newsletter/>
- Quarterly PCL Check-in Call— see the calendar on [OED News & Events](#) for more information.
- [Archdiocesan Communiqué](#) – Comes out every Monday to all in the Archdiocese with news, memos and happenings. Email clergymailing@archatl.com and ask to be added to the mailing list.

Important Resource Websites:

- www.atlyouth.org All things Youth Ministry in the Archdiocese of Atlanta, including resources, forms, Confirmation information, YM Directory, etc.
- www.nfcym.org (**National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry**) This is the national organization that provides webinars and other resources to assist youth ministers. Join as an Associate Member (\$75/year) to gain access to all resources. It is also the organization that puts on **NCYC** (National Catholic Youth Conference) for teens and **Holy Fire** for middle schoolers. NCYC happens every other year right before Thanksgiving; Holy Fire happens in various cities across the U.S.
- <https://nfcym.org/first-things/> **New Youth Ministers Training** from NFCYM. This is great, inexpensive training! It's an online cohort and takes about 3 months to complete.
- www.usccb.org (**United States Conference of Catholic Bishops**) See the Youth and Young Adult Ministries webpage for resources specific to youth ministry, young adult ministry, and pastoral juvenil hispana.
- <https://www.catholic.com/> Catholic Answers will answer all your questions about the Catholic Faith

Rules to Know

1. You and your adult volunteers/chaperones must be Safe Environment cleared **before** interacting with any middle or high schoolers. This is a two-step procedure:
 - **Background screening** through Sterling and a **Motor Vehicle Report (MVR)** so you can be driver cleared (in case you or your chaperones will ever be driving teens)
Background checks are good for 5 years; MVR is good for 3 years.
 - In-person 3-hour **Virtus** training (the first time); online renewal every 5 years. See more about Safe Environment Compliance here: <https://archatl.com/ministries-services/safe-environment/safe-environment-compliance/>
2. You need to conduct the Virtus Children's Training (Empowering God's Children) **every year**. Contact your parish Safe Environment Coordinator for more information.
3. You must have written consent to communicate with a child by any means (email, text, social media), and parents must be copied on all communication, or the information must be made available to parents. Click [here](#) for the form.
4. You need permission and waiver forms for any trip taken outside the parish property. These forms can be found on the atlyouth.org website: <https://www.atlyouth.org/waivers-forms>
5. Ratios that need to be maintained:
 - Middle School – 2:16 (1 adult for 8 students, but there always needs to be at least 2 adults present)
 - High School – 2:20 (1 adult for 10 students, but there always needs to be at least 2 adults present)
 - **ONE ADULT SHOULD NEVER BE ALONE WITH A YOUTH OR A GROUP.**
6. The responsibility of the Youth Minister is not complete until all youth are in the care of the parent, guardian, or parent-designee.
7. Adult chaperones must be at least 21 yrs. old. There should be at least 5 years difference in age between your chaperone and the oldest teen in your group. For example, you should not have a 21 yr. old chaperoning a group of juniors or seniors in high school because there is not 5 years difference in age between the kids and the chaperone.
8. You should be familiar with the two latest documents concerning youth ministry:
 - a. [Listen, Teach, Send](#) and [Renewing the Vision](#)- the latest document and framework for Catholic Youth Ministry published by the USCCB.
 - b. [Christus Vivit](#)- Pope Francis' latest exhortation on young people and the church.

Office of Evangelization & Discipleship (OED) Directory

Main Number: 404-920-7620/Fax: 404-920-7621 Email: oled@archatl.com

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Quick Guide to the Archdiocese of Atlanta Offices

Archives and Records Office

<https://archatl.com/offices/archives/>

This office helps parishes organize and maintain records. They are available to consult about and help with parish records storage and retention.

Communications Office

<https://archatl.com/offices/communications/>

Main Number: 404-920-7340 Email: communications@archatl.com

The Communications Office is responsible for all external communications on behalf of the Archdiocese of Atlanta. The following documents are found on their webpage:

- Media Release Form & Social Media Policy PDFs - <https://archatl.com/offices/communications/>
- [Movie License Information](#)
- [Weekly Communique](#)

To be added to the weekly Communique, email clergymailing@archatl.com and ask to be included in the weekly email.

Human Resources

<https://archatl.com/offices/human-resources/>

Main Number: 404-920-7480 Email: chanceryhr@archatl.com

- Benefits information and forms
- Employee Policy Manual <https://archatl.com/offices/human-resources/employee-resources/>

Office of Child and Youth Protection (OCYP)

<https://archatl.com/offices/child-and-youth-protection/>

Main Number: 404-920-7550 Email: ocyp@archatl.com

The Office of Child and Youth Protection helps parishes establish and maintain a safe environment for children and youth. They manage volunteer screening and training.

Office of Evangelization and Discipleship (OED)

<https://archatl.com/offices/evangelization-and-discipleship/>

Main Number: 404-920-7620 Email: oed@archatl.com

OED Supports parish catechetical ministries including faith formation, youth ministry, campus and young adult ministries, RCIA, evangelization, senior ministry, and family and marriage ministries.

Office of Life, Dignity and Justice

<https://archatl.com/offices/office-of-life-dignity-and-justice/>

Main Number: 404-920-7350 Email: irichard@archatl.com

The Office of Life, Dignity and Justice provides support in the following areas:

- Disabilities Ministry
- Respect Life Ministry
- Justice and Peace Ministry

Metropolitan Tribunal

Main Number: 404-920-7500 Email: Tribunal@archatl.com

The Office of the Metropolitan Tribunal deals with marriage issues (annulments).

Parish Directory

<https://archatl.com/parishes/find-a-parish/>

This link provides a list of all parishes in the Archdiocese of Atlanta with links to their websites.

Whom to Call at the Archdiocese

Catholic Mutual

Jordan Harper 404-920-7375 jharper@catholicmutual.org
• *Driver requirements/Trip Insurance*

Divine Worship

Renee Ponce 404-920-7339 rponce1@archatl.com
• *RCIA/Rite of Election*

Finance

Sue Stanton 404-920-7408 sstanton@archatl.com
• *ParishSoft*

Human Resources

Rosa Montano-Parker 404-920-7486 rmontano-parker@archatl.com
• *Health Insurance*

Metropolitan Tribunal

Christine Martineck 404-920-7509 cmartineck@archatl.com
• *Business Manager*

Office of Child and Youth Protection

Jenni Weldin, Director 404-920-7553 jweldin@archatl.com

Gina Garcia 404-920-7552 ggarcia@archatl.com
• *Volunteer Screening*

Sue Stubbs 404-920-7554 sstubbs@archatl.com
• *Victim Assistance* 24 Hour Reporting Hotline 888-437-0764

Office of Life, Dignity and Justice

Kat Doyle, Director 404-920-7897 kdoyle@archatl.com
• *Rice Bowl, Food Fast, Ethical Trade Sales, Helping Hands, Social Justice Issues*

Jayna Hoffacker 404-920-7898 jhoffacker@archatl.com
• *Restorative Justice Ministry*

Joey Martineck 404-920-7362 jmartineck@archatl.com
• *Pro-Life, Theology of the Body Training*

Maggie Rousseau 404-920-7682 mrousseau@archatl.com
• *Disabilities Ministry*

Current job openings <https://archatl.com/offices/human-resources/job-openings/>

YOUTH MINISTRY RECORDS RETENTION

Retention for Non-Permanent Records

Field Trip Permission Slips/Forms:

- No Incident: Current Year
- With Incident: 6 Years After Settlement

Permission to Contact Youth:

- Current Year; Supplant annually until child is 18

Sign-in Sheets:

- Sign-in sheets for VIRTUS training: 3 years in digital or paper form
- Sign-in sheets for other administrative uses: keep as long as useful

Annual Medical Release:

- Supplant Annually, retain most recent until child is 20

Annual Media Release:

- Supplant Annually, retain most recent until child is 20

Permanent Records for Archives

Newsletters

Publications

Event Programs

Photos

- Ideally a representative sample, meaning a selection of the best photos (in focus, not a bunch of the backs of people's heads, etc.).
- Context is key, so clearly labeled with event name, date, and people's names.

Audio/Video Materials

- Podcasts, event videos, etc.
- Context is key, so labeled with event name, date, and people's names is helpful.

** For the full records retention schedule, see

<https://archatl.com/offices/archives/records-management/>