

St Brendan's Youth Apostolate
Bellingham, MA

Dear Parents,

This newsletter is for you...to let you know what's going on at Life Teen...to provide you with articles on teen culture that we come across... to keep you up to date with St. Brendan's Youth Apostolate.

In the DECLARATION ON CHRISTIAN EDUCATION Pope Paul VI teaches that "Parents...have the primary and inalienable right and duty to educate their children". He also says that "in a special way, the duty of educating belongs to the Church, not merely because she must be recognized as a human society capable of educating, but especially because she has the responsibility of announcing the way of salvation to all men, of communicating the life of Christ to those who believe..."

You can read the whole document here:

http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decl_19651028_gravissimum-educationis_en.html

We are here to work with you as you guide your teens through these sometimes difficult years toward adulthood.

Life Teen is an international model of youth ministry which seeks to lead teens into a deeper relationship with Christ and His Church. For more information on Life Teen visit <http://www.lifeteen.com/>

Please feel free to join us for any event or Life Night!

Parents' Prayer for their Children

O God the Father of mankind, who hast given unto me these my children, and committed them to my charge to bring them up for Thee, and to prepare them for eternal life: help me with Thy heavenly grace, that I may be able to fulfill this most sacred duty and stewardship. Teach me both what to give and what to withhold; when to reprove and when to forbear; make me to be gentle, yet firm; considerate and watchful; and deliver me equally from the weakness of indulgence, and the excess of severity; and grant that, both by word and example, I may be careful to lead them in the ways of wisdom and true piety, so that at last I may, with them, be admitted to the unspeakable joys of our true home in heaven, in the company of the blessed Angels and Saints. Amen.

Events and Activities for December

Thu, Dec 2

LIFT - God of this City Tour
St. Mary's, Franklin
7:00-9:00
[http://www.godofthiscitytour.com/download_permission_slip_here:](http://www.godofthiscitytour.com/download_permission_slip_here)
<http://stbrendanteenpage.org/home.html>

Fri, Dec 3

LaSalette eXtreme – LaSalette Shrine, Attleboro
5:30-11:00
<http://oymboston.org/pdf/pdf2010/sept/La%20Salette%20eXtreme.pdf>
[download permission slip here:](http://stbrendanteenpage.org/home.html)
<http://stbrendanteenpage.org/home.html>

Sun, Dec 5

Starfield Concert in Boston
Leave @ 5/home @ 10
Cost - \$11.00
<https://starfield.webconnex.com/boston>
[download permission slip here:](http://stbrendanteenpage.org/home.html)
<http://stbrendanteenpage.org/home.html>

Fri, Dec 7

The "R" Father Book prayer meeting
7:00-9:00 @ St. B's (chp 7)

Sat, Dec 11

Adopt a Family
4:00-9:00 @ St. B's and Wal-Mart
http://stbrendanteenpage.org/uploads/Adopt_a_Family.pdf
Don't forget permission slip ☺

Sun, Dec 12

Latin Mass
Mary Immaculate of Lourdes in Newton-
9:30 - 1:00

Sat, Dec 18

Pro Life Mass
St. Stephen's
Framingham - 7:00am
[download permission slip here:](http://stbrendanteenpage.org/home.html)
<http://stbrendanteenpage.org/home.html>

Sun, Dec 19

Christmas Caroling @ Medway Manor-
1:00 pm

Sat, Dec 25

Christ our Savior is Born!
Blessed Christmas!

Sun, Dec 26

Life Teen Christmas party-6:30-9:00

Why do we keep so busy at St. B's Life Teen?

We have been doing ministry to teens for many years, and have raised one ourselves...most of our core team have been involved themselves when they were teens...we keep busy because we know the culture young people grow up in is filled with things that are unhealthy and not focused on God...we have had many conversations with teens...most want healthy alternatives to what the culture offers to them. They want to hang out with friends that will affirm their faith and pray with them. We offer activities that are focused on the Sacraments, service, and social development. This also provides teens with lots of opportunities to experience and live their faith. Please contact Cheryl, Jim, or Father Mullen anytime with questions or concerns.

Upcoming Life Nights

Sunday, December 5

Starfield Concert in Boston tonight ☺
Life Teen Social Night @ St. B's for those not attending Starfield Concert

Sunday, December 12

"Home Front"
Promoting a Culture of Life at home

Sunday, December 19

Life Teen Bible Study

Sunday, December 26

Life Teen Christmas Party
Food! Fun! Yankee Swap!

Upcoming Events

Coat Drive after Christmas (this is our corporal work of mercy to "cloth the naked")

March for Life in Washington DC
Fri, Jan 21 – Tue, Jan 25

Total cost - \$225.00 (\$100.00 for transportation and lodging, \$125.00 for food and Metro Pass in DC)

** We are able to keep the cost low because we get scholarship money from pro lifers who want our teens to have the opportunity to experience this amazing event!

Deposit - \$50.00 – due ASAP! (we have hotel, van, Students for Life of America Conference tickets, and Youth Rally & Mass for Life tickets for 25 people...space is filling up quickly!)

click on the link below for details ☺

http://stbrendanteenpage.org/uploads/Social_Justice_begins_in_the_Womb.pdf

St. Brendan's Youth Apostolate exists by the Grace of God to lead teens closer to Christ through catechesis, service, and the sharing of our lives. Prayer and the Sacraments are at the heart of this ministry.

All teens in grades 8 through 12 are welcome.

Youth Mass – Sundays @ 5:30

Life Night – Sundays 6:30-8:45

Social and Service activities as announced. Please check our website regularly for posting of events.
<http://stbrendanteenpage.org/>

For more info call:

Cheryl Duran 508-954-9109-cell
Jim Duran 508-954-9134-cell

We also have a dedicated group of young adults on our core team who work with us to share the love of God with teens.

Unstructured Time and Choosing Battles: Keeping teens relatively busy and avoiding conflicts over "nonessentials" are an important part of raising adolescents.

Tips for Parenting Teens
by Dr. James Dobson, Ph. D.

(Over the past couple of months we have been looking at ways to help parents cope with the special stresses of the adolescent years that have been beneficial to many families. For the first and second article in this series please see the October & November Parent Newsletters at <http://stbrendanteenpage.org/home.html>)

Keep your teenager moving.

The strong-willed adolescent simply must not be given large quantities of unstructured time. He will find destructive ways to use such moments. My advice is to get them involved in the very best church youth program you can find. If your local congregation has only four bored members in its junior high department and seven sleepy high schoolers, I would consider changing churches. I know that advice could be disruptive to the entire family, and I'm sure most pastors would disagree, but you must save that volatile kid.

Obviously, such radical action is not as necessary for the more compliant individual or for one who has other wholesome outlets for his energy. But if you're sitting on a keg of dynamite, you have to find ways to keep the powder dry! Not only can this be done through church activities, but also by involvement with athletics, music, horses or other animals, and part-time jobs. You must keep that strong-willed kid's scrawny legs churning!

Don't rock the boat.

In my second film series, titled *Turn Your Heart Toward Home*, I offered this advice to parents of teenagers: "Get 'em through it." That may not sound like such a stunning idea, but I believe it has merit for most families — especially those with one or more tough-minded kids. The concept is a bit obscure, so I will resort to a couple of word pictures to illustrate my point.

When parents of strong-willed children look ahead to the adolescent years, they often imagine it to be like a flowing river with rapids that will soon give way to swirling currents and life-threatening turbulence. If that doesn't turn over their teenagers' boats, they seem destined to drown farther downstream when they plunge over the falls.

Fortunately, the typical journey is much safer than anticipated. Most often, the river descends not into the falls but into smooth water once more. Even though your teenager maybe splashing and thrashing and gasping for air, it is not likely that his boat will capsize. It is more buoyant than you might think.

Yes, a few individuals do go over the falls, usually because of drug abuse. Some of them even climb back in the canoe and paddle on down the river. But the greatest danger of sinking the boat could come from *you!*

This warning is addressed particularly to idealistic and perfectionist parents who are determined to make their adolescents — *all* of them — perform and achieve and measure up to the highest standards. A perfectionist, by the way, is a person who takes great pains with what he does and then gives them to everyone else. In so doing, he rocks a boat that is already taking on water.

Perhaps another child could handle the additional turbulence, but our concern is for the unsteady kid — the one who lacks common sense for a while and may even lean toward irrational behavior. Don't unsettle his boat any more than you must!

I have seen parents fight battles over such nonessentials as the purchase of a first bra for a flat-chested premenstrual-adolescent girl. For goodness' sake! If she wants it that badly, she probably needs it for social reasons. Run, don't walk, to the nearest department store and buy her a bra.

The objective, as Charles and Andy Stanley wrote, is to *keep your kids on your team*. Don't throw away your friendship over behavior that has no great moral significance. There will be plenty of real issues that require you to stand like a rock. Save your big guns for those crucial confrontations.

Let me make it very clear, again, that this advice is not relevant to every teenager. The compliant kid who is doing wonderfully in school, has great friends, is disciplined in his conduct and loves his parents is not nearly so delicate. Perhaps his parents can urge him to reach even higher standards in his achievements and lifestyle.

My concern, however, is for that youngster who *could* go over the falls. He is intensely angry at home and is being influenced by a carload of crummy friends. Be very careful with him. Pick and choose what is worth fighting for, and settle for something less than perfection on issues that don't really matter. *Just get him through it!*

What does this mean in practical terms? It may indicate a willingness to let his room look like a junkyard for a while. Does that surprise you? I don't like lazy, sloppy, undisciplined kids any more than you do, but given the possibilities for chaos that this angry boy or girl might precipitate, spit-shined rooms may not be all that important.

You might also compromise somewhat regarding the music you let him hear. I'm *not* condoning music that is saturated with explicit and illicit sex or violence. But neither can you ask this teenager to listen to your "elevator music." Perhaps a compromise can be reached.

Unfortunately, the popular music of the day is the rallying cry for rebellious teenagers. If you try to deny it altogether to a strong-willed kid, you just might flip his canoe upside down. You have to ask yourself this question, "Is it worth risking everything of value to enforce a particular standard upon this son or daughter?" If the issue is important enough to defend at all costs, then brace yourself and make your stand. But think through your defense of them thoroughly.

The philosophy we applied with our teenagers (and you might try with yours) can be called "loosen and tighten." By this I mean we tried to loosen our grip on everything that had no lasting significance, and tighten down on everything that did. We said yes whenever we possibly could, to give support to the occasional no. And most important, we tried never to get too far away from our kids emotionally. It is simply not prudent to write off a son or daughter, no matter how foolish, irritating, selfish or insane a child may seem to be. You need to be there, not only while his canoe is bouncing precariously, but after the river runs smooth again.

You have the remainder of your life to reconstruct the relationship that is now in jeopardy. Don't let anger fester for too long. Make the first move toward reconciliation. And try hard not to hassle your kids. They *hate* to be nagged. If you follow them around with one complaint after another, they're almost forced to protect themselves by appearing deaf. And finally, continue to treat them with respect, even when punishment or restrictions are necessary. Occasionally, you may even need to say, "I'm sorry!"