



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](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!***

### Events and Activities for January

#### Sat, Jan 1 thru Sun, Jan 9

Coat, hat, mitten, sock, boot collection  
Please bring your clean items to St. B's...there will be collection boxes in the Church

#### Fri, Jan 7

LaSalette eXtreme  
LaSalette Shrine, Attleborough, MA  
Meet @ St. B's 5:30 / return around 11:00 pm  
**download permission slip here:**  
<http://stbrendanteenpage.org/home.html>

#### Sat, Jan 8

Lessons & Carols AND Father Mullen's Christmas Reception @ St. B's  
7:00 – 10:00 pm

#### Fri, Jan 14

Separate items from coat, hat, mitten, sock, boot collection  
6:30 – 9:00 @ St. B's

#### Sat, Jan 15

Deliver coats, hats, mittens, socks, and boots to various shelters  
Meet @ St. B's at 8:45 am  
**download permission slip here:**  
<http://stbrendanteenpage.org/home.html>

#### Fri, Jan 21 – Tue, Jan 25

Pilgrimage for Life, Washington DC  
**Details are on the website**  
<http://stbrendanteenpage.org/home.html>

#### Fri, Jan 28

"R" Father Sharing / Prayer Group  
7:00 - 9:00 pm in the choir loft

Parents are always welcome to join us ☺

### 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.

### Prayer for the New Year

Every good gift comes from the Father of light. May He grant us His grace and every blessing, and keep us safe throughout the coming year.

May He grant us unwavering faith, constant hope, and love that endures to the end.

May He order our days and work in His peace, hear our every prayer, and lead us to everlasting life and joy.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. AMEN.

### Upcoming Life Nights

#### **Sunday, January 2**

"The Last Crusade"

#### **Sunday, January 9**

"Poor Me"

*Preferential Option for the Poor*

#### **Sunday, January 16**

"On Loan"

*Stewards of Creation*

#### **Sunday, January 23**

*NO LIFE TEEN...we will be in DC for the March for Life ☺*

#### **Sunday, January 23**

"Big Feet"

*Charity & Justice*

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.

## **Understanding Youth Culture (Part I of IV) by Everett Fritz\***

There is a tendency among Catholics who are frustrated with the poor quality of catechesis in the last few decades to look back on “better times in the Church” and say that we need to go back to methods that we used and the traditions that were emphasized back in the days when seminaries were full, youth were disciplined and children knew their catechism. The problem with this logic is that there has been an enormous cultural revolution since these days in the Church. In particular, “youth culture” has exploded in Western Civilization. Youth culture is a world that is entirely different from the world that the rest of us live in and it requires an entirely different approach to evangelization.

Picture yourself stranded on an island and you encounter a tribe of savage people that have never heard the Gospel before. You call your parish priest (somehow you get cell phone reception on the deserted island) and ask him to give you some advice on how to evangelize the tribe. He tells you to teach them the Baltimore Catechism and to pray some prayers with them in Latin. What is going to happen when you try to evangelize the tribe? You will likely end up with a spear in your butt. Why? If you don't know a thing about the tribal culture, how can you expect to teach them to follow Catholic culture?

Rather than adapting their culture into our Catholic culture, we try to force our culture into theirs. Now, replace “savage tribal people” with “teenagers” and you see the challenges we face in youth ministry. If you want to be effective when evangelizing teens, it is essential that you don't force Catholicism into their culture. You must learn and *inculturize* their culture into Catholicism. We must learn the ways of youth culture and adapt our methods in order to effectively evangelize it. A few things about youth culture to consider:

### **1. Youth culture is a creation of the modern world.**

Teenagers have not always existed as we know them today. Prior to the modern world, there was not a separate developmental period known as “adolescence.” Children entered the workforce at a young age and therefore, became “adults” at a quicker pace. As the world became more complex, youth required more and more education. Children began waiting longer and longer to enter the workforce and a new stage of development arose to describe this time period in between childhood and adulthood. As the 1950s and 60s rolled around, a culture evolved out of adolescent development and “youth culture” was born. This new culture is only 50-60 years old. Therefore, youth culture is missionary territory – it is a culture that has never heard the Gospel.

### **2. Youth culture is constantly changing.**

The adolescent stage of development is a short period of life (5-10 years) and it is one in which a person declares their independence from their childhood. Because of this, each new generation of adolescents seeks not only to declare its independence from its parents, but also to seek independence from the previous generation of teenagers. Open up a yearbook from 1999 and you will laugh at the hairstyles, clothes and pop culture of that generation. There is a new generation of youth every 5 years, and that generation is always looking to be independent from the previous generation. Because of this, youth culture is constantly changing.

### **3. Youth culture exports itself.**

Youth culture is America's #1 export business. Around the world, the American cultural aspects that other countries have adapted into their culture are all youth driven – jeans and clothing, pop music, burgers, style of hair, etc. Furthermore, the larger culture values adolescence as the peak of human existence. Children strive to be more like teenagers in the way they dress and interact. We see this everyday when we see an 8-year-old girl in makeup and a mini-skirt, or a pair of 12-year-olds that have been dating for two years. Adults are also trying to reclaim their adolescence. We see this in uncommitted relationships, 45-year-old women in mini-skirts and the obsession in our culture with trying to look more youthful. Youth culture is changing our world to make it more like itself.

### **What does this mean?**

Pope John Paul II has called for a New Evangelization of the modern world. There is enormous potential to bring about a new evangelization if we can learn to effectively evangelize our youth. If the youth culture would become more Christ centered, the potential to export the Gospel is enormous. We must start by studying and learning the ways of this culture. Only then will we have hope of converting this savage tribe... er... I mean...teenagers.

\* Everett Fritz is the Director of Youth Ministry at St. Martin de Porres Catholic Church in Jensen Beach, FL. He's been working in ministry for four years after graduating with a B.A. in Theology from Franciscan University of Steubenville. He is currently working on his Master's in Theological Studies from the Augustine Institute in Denver, CO. He enjoys both Notre Dame Football and the Chicago Cubs. "I discovered a relationship with Jesus Christ as a teenager and I gave my life to Jesus Christ to mold as He wishes. God has led me to youth ministry in the Church and a vocation as a husband and a father."