

## **Parish Council - Youth Ministry Report**

May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2007

1. Confirmation – Two weeks ago Tuesday 45 youth were confirmed from TOOL into our Catholic faith. The ceremony was beautiful thanks to David Z, Father Herb, and the A&E committee, I was very pleased with how things went. The Archbishop presided and read some of the letters he received from the youth in their preparation. Deacon Ken Ward who attended with the Archbishop was very complementary of our youth as well.

The entire process was bittersweet for me (as you know) with many ups and downs. It always seems as though you hear the negative so much louder than the positive... and the process couldn't close with an upset parent, over requirements I assume. However I believe that the vast majority of families were very pleased with the complexity of the process and the depth of the program. For the youth who chose to participate, I truly believe they learned and affected. We may have even changed their lives? Who knows.

2. Confirmation – Next Year or beyond – Things are changing for TOOL (as you well know), for youth ministry there is a very interesting and exciting trend. The past 8 years we have seen a steady increase of youth that desire confirmation from our church, and the traditional model which is every other year in HS only, has proven to be no longer adequate to handle the demand. The appropriate number for a confirmation program is 10-20 youth (25 max) and with 45-50 going through the program, it is almost impossible to reach and teach each youth with the attention they deserve.

As I see it the decision is simple, have confirmation next year, or in two years with 2 separate programs (Confirmation A and B on 2 separate nights). I am sure the decision will be influenced by our church future and by Fr. Bill who will have the final say, but the decision must be made very soon and I would love to have your opinion to present to him.

Regardless of the decision, the predictable toss up is between the quality and depth of confirmation preparation, and a full scale and engaging youth program. I am sorry to say that the two do not peacefully coexist with the sanity of even a full time youth minister; it may behoove us to consider hiring a confirmation coordinator to receive a stipend. Perhaps in the near future I could have a space on the docket dialogue with you about these issues.

3. MSYG to Gattiland – the Middleschoolers went to Gattiland this past Friday, 12 total youth and many were friends. The event was fun and we stayed in the YC till 1:00am

4. Youth group – attendance is very low for both groups. Confirmation has taken a toll in numbers as well as the time I have to create and advertise new programs. Many HS youth seem to have been “churched out” with confirmation as well. This summer I hope to be able to build numbers as well as both programs up to a spiritual level again.

### **On the horizon**

1. High School
  - a. NCYC interest and planning (Late 2007)
  - b. Amusement park / service trip in cedar point OH (June)
  - c. Summer River adventure (July)
  - d. Service – apple patch
2. Middle School
  - a. Lock-in (Frasier Arms Museum)