



# DIOCESE OF GARY YOUTH COUNCIL

## Diocese of Gary Diocesan Youth Council FAQ

**What is the Diocesan Youth Council?** The DYC is an advisory body to the Diocesan Office for Youth & Young Adults (OYYA). It is a group of High School teens who represent the parishes and Catholic high schools in the Catholic Diocese of Gary. The members of this body will advise the Office in two ways. First, they act as a spokesperson for the needs of youth in their parishes and schools. Second, they are an integral part of the planning and implementation of youth activities that encourage and support total youth ministry in the diocese.

**How often does the DYC meet?** Roughly once a month. Most often the 3rd Sunday of the month, but not always. For a list of dates, visit [garyoyya.org/dyc](http://garyoyya.org/dyc).



**Where will you meet?** The Diocese of Gary Pastoral Center, 9292 Broadway, Merrillville (along the Crown Point border) is the "home base" for DYC. We may hold meetings at other locations throughout the year, but this location will be utilized most often. Transportation is an integral part of the requirements for serving on DYC! Depending on Covid, we might also meet online via Zoom.

**What happens at the DYC meetings?** Each month is a little different, but generally each meeting includes: prayer, introductions and ministry updates, updates on diocesan & other programs open to anyone, leadership skills development/exercises, etc. Guest speakers present various approaches to Catholic leadership development. Teens will also be empowered to use their leadership & ministry skills at various youth ministry activities.

**How should parish leaders select DYC reps?** I leave that up to the parishes! I encourage you to read the DYC bylaws to get a feel for the expectations of DYC reps. OYYA does not select your two reps- parish/local youth leaders do. I encourage prospective reps to submit an Information Sheet to OYYA when reps have been selected. These Information Sheets are not "applications," per se, but may be used as a tool for parish youth leaders if you have more than two youth interested in "applying" to serve on DYC. Bylaws and Information Sheets can be found at [garyoyya.com/dyc](http://garyoyya.com/dyc).

**How many reps can we send?** Each parish can select up to two reps. It's important to remember that the representative represents the entire parish/school, not just the youth/campus ministry, so if your youth program draws from multiple parishes, the rep should focus first on the one (s)he represents. The representative should be registered to that parish as well.

**How long is the DYC term?** We will accept newcomers at anytime, and we will honor our outgoing seniors in May of any given year. However, *it is up to parish leaders to determine how long their reps serve*. My recommendation is that parishes select reps to serve one or two year terms, starting in September. You may also wish to "stagger" your terms somehow, to make new reps feel more comfortable in the future.

**To whom is the rep accountable?** During DYC gatherings, reps are accountable to the Coordinator of the OYYA, Vicky Hathaway, who will facilitate the meetings. Another youth ministry leader is also present during meetings. Reps will receive monthly mailings that include permission forms for the next gathering that they are required to submit to OYYA. Reps' YMC is also cc'd a copy of this mailing. Each rep is required to meet with their primary youth ministry adult leader at least once a month to process the monthly meetings, events, etc. Adult youth leaders are always welcome to attend DYC meetings, although never required.

**What do I do now?** Youth leaders, start by discerning parish reps, or develop a system for them to apply if you think you'll have more than two interested leaders. Print out the bylaws to give to anyone interested, and print out Information Sheets to submit to OYYA. You can email scanned PDFs to [vhathaway@dgary.org](mailto:vhathaway@dgary.org), fax those sheets to 219-738-9034, or mail to Diocese of Gary OYYA, 9292 Broadway, Merrillville IN 46410. Remember there is no "start" to DYC, so if you do not have reps yet, we will welcome them in at any time! Teens, if your parish/ministry is not represented on the DYC, ask your youth leader if you can serve!





# DIOCESE OF GARY YOUTH COUNCIL

## *Diocese of Gary Diocesan Youth Council Bylaws*

### **General Description**

The Diocesan Youth Council is an advisory body to the Diocesan Office for Youth & Young Adults (OYYA). It is a group of high school-aged youth who represent the parishes and Catholic high schools in the Catholic Diocese of Gary. The members of this body will advise the Office in two ways. First, they act as a spokesperson for the needs of youth in their parishes and schools. Second, they are an integral part of the planning and implementation of youth activities that encourage and support total youth ministry in the diocese.

The Youth Council will consist of two representatives from parishes and Catholic high schools throughout the Diocese.

### **Selection Process**

The Pastors, Principals and Youth Ministers of each of the respective parishes and schools are asked to collaboratively select two young people to represent them on the Youth Council.

The following characteristics and qualifications will be expected from those chosen to serve on the Diocesan Youth Council.

The Members of the Diocesan Youth Council are Catholic youth of high school age who:

- are active in the parishes/schools/ministries they represent
- are pursuing a growing relationship with Jesus Christ
- are committed to their beliefs
- are willing to speak on behalf of their peers
- are dedicated to leadership and Christian service
- understand and promote youth ministry
- comply with diocesan policies and the teachings of the Holy Roman Catholic Church

### **Responsibilities**

- Attend all Youth Council gatherings. Each member is expected to notify OYYA at least one week before the meeting if he/she cannot be present and why. If a member has more than one unexcused absence she/he may be removed from the council.
- Participate in and promote diocesan activities and events sponsored by OYYA.
- Assist in the planning and implementation of Diocesan Youth Ministry activities, including assuming leadership roles at diocesan middle school events.
- Serve as a communicator for OYYA in spreading information about various programs throughout the year.
- Coordinate and encourage youth ministry efforts in parishes and schools.
- Meet with adult youth leaders at least once a month to discuss DYC agenda items.

### **Accountability**

Each member of the Diocesan Youth Council is accountable to the Coordinator of the OYYA.

### **Benefits**

- Continued leadership training
- Christian fellowship, prayer and fun
- Opportunity to minister in the Church
- Valuable faith-based extracurricular leadership for college applications
- A voice in Youth Ministry in the Diocese of Gary