

Peer Ministry 101!

Peer Ministry is for teens...

- seeking greater involvement in their church
- wanting to share their gifts and talents
- desiring a deeper relationship with God
- willing to participate in Christian service, faith witness, and leadership



Peer Ministry is the youth leadership of All Saints...

...and YOU are invited to apply! Applications (available online) to be in Peer Ministry are taken April 1st through June 1st.

What is Peer Ministry?

It is an opportunity for high school youth to respond to their baptismal call to be a priest (servant), prophet (faith witness) and king (leader) among their peers in youth related events and activities in All Saints and in the community.

Peer ministers serve as leaders for youth groups (middle school and high school), music, retreats, service pieces, and more! Teens in Peer Ministry choose his or her commitment level and specific responsibilities. Fall retreat and some training are required for those interested.

Why should I get involved?

You should be a peer minister if you possess the passion and courage to preserve and grow in your relationship with God, serve others, witness your faith (share and spread the Good News), and to build skills to be a leader.

It is a good way to invest yourself in your church and community, as well as develop long-lasting friendships in both areas, thereby building skills and resources that will be useful for the rest of your life. Involvement in this is good for college applications, employment applications, resumes and other things too.

Who can be in Peer Ministry?

Peer Leader: Any mature teen (grades 8-12). For younger teens, teens that are interested but unsure, and teens that cannot commit to ongoing involvement or the regular planning/formation sessions expected of *Peer Ministers*.

Peer Minister: Any mature teen (grades 9-12) that is interested in serving other teens, and has at least one year's experience as a *Peer Leader*.

Both require two adult character references.

What Is Expected of Me?

A willingness to serve, care for others, ability to interact with peers, clergy, adult ministry members and/or leaders, model Catholic values, and a desire to grow in faith.

What is PEER MINISTRY at All Saints?????

Peer Ministry: Rooted in Baptism

Peer Ministry is difficult to define. “Peer” refers to someone of similar age or status. Just how similar, is subject to interpretation. “Ministry” can be used to refer to many different types of actions and jobs. It is more than what happens inside the Church, although this can be more difficult to see, manage, and measure than other actions or ministries within the Church. Using the term “ministry” can also be difficult for us because the Catholic Church has typically used the term “ministry” in a more specific sense to refer to the liturgical roles and actions associated with ordained ministers (priests or deacons). These liturgical roles/actions make present, Christ’s work of redemption and salvation, through God’s power and grace in the sacraments. It is Christ’s presence in the sacraments in a unique role through the ordained minister that helps and sustains the Faithful. The work of Christ is simply the bringing others to God the Father. Ministry simply put is anything we do that continues the work of Christ.

Peer Ministry is more than some leadership group or training program for teens. It is about teens and adults committed to continuing the work of Christ. It is about helping others grow closer to God and his Church.

Vatican II helped reaffirm and sharpen the call to ministry in all the baptized; the call of bringing all into relationship with the Father through Christ. Each of us by virtue of our baptism has become a new creation. We have become co-heirs with Christ to the Kingdom, not simply creatures or slaves to God, but children to the Father. We are able to participate in the very divine life of God and become living temples of the Holy Spirit. We are other Christs in the world. In us, Christ the High Priest, Christ the Prophet, and Christ the King lives and dwells through the Holy Spirit in a very real and permanent way. His priestly, prophetic, and kingly missions continue through us. These missions can help inform our understanding of peer ministry.

The sacrament of baptism bestows various gifts upon us not for our own selfish end, but to become more and more like Christ the High Priest, Christ the Prophet, and Christ the King. Every Christian is baptized priest, prophet, and king. The Old Testament (Hebrew Scriptures) identifies priests, prophets, and kings as the key figures God used to help bring His people to Him. God gave his people these individuals to help bring them into closer relationship. Christ is the fulfillment of each of these groups. Christ as priest offers the perfect sacrifice, himself on the cross. Christ as prophet lives perfect relationship and faithfulness to God, calling others into right relationship. Christ as King has conquered the enemy and given direction and purpose in our lives. As another Christ in the world we share in these three roles of Christ; priest, prophet, and king. Teens in peer ministry seek to intentionally live out and exercise these roles within their parish community.

Priest

Priesthood is most associated with sacrifice, offering something to make better the relationship between God and his people. Christ’s sacrifice of himself is the perfect sacrifice as both priest and victim. Today, priests in persona Christi, in the person of Christ, make present again that very sacrifice of Christ. A priest is not ordained for himself, but for service to the People of God. Through the priesthood, the sacraments are made accessible to others so that the Faithful might grow in relationship with God. A priest, as a unique presence of Christ, makes present an experience where others can be transformed. Practically speaking, priests help others get closer to God through opportunities to encounter God. A priest can not make someone have a God encounter; that is between the person and God. However when a person is open to encountering God they are transformed through the experience! The main role of a priest is service; service that leads to holiness or closeness to God for the Faithful and himself. When the priest serves in love the ministry becomes an opportunity for him to grow closer to God.

We are baptized into the priesthood of Jesus Christ. Peer Ministry provides opportunities for teens to live out their baptismal priesthood. Peer Ministry teens create and direct experiences to the parish and community so that those who participate might be transformed through the experience. Peer ministry teens too are transformed through their gifts of service. A person in peer ministry needs both the desire for service and correct motivation. Individuals that are primarily concerned with how peer ministry serves their needs and purposes are missing the point and will probably be disappointed if they never move beyond this perspective. Peer Ministry is not meant to be about “me” because service is about the needs of others. Service is looking out for the needs of others and helping them grow in their relationship to Christ and others. Service is an intentional expression of our desire to help others grow closer to Christ.

Service for a teen in peer ministry can look like many things, but the primary question each teen is asked to start with in any situation is, “How can I help?” It is important to start with basic needs when helping others. It would be futile trying to get a room of starving people to help at a Walk for Life just as it would be difficult assigning a task to a group of strangers and expecting them to accomplish it as easily as a group of friends. Service starts simply with basic needs of others and then moves towards spiritual needs. It begins with hospitality. Hospitality meets the basic physical and mental needs of people. Once the basic needs are met the peer minister then asks “How can I help this person/event/experience become an opportunity to experience God?” How can I help others experience God and thus grow in faith? Do I need to help people reflect on what they have done? Do I need to point out explicitly how the experience connects to Christ’s teachings or actions?

Prophet

Prophets in the Hebrew Scriptures reminded people that God is God and we are not. We need to listen to God by following his commandments and trust in him when times are difficult. A prophet speaks up against injustice or behaviors that separate us from God or others. Prophets witness to what correct relationship with God looks like. A prophet calls people to live justly and correctly by their witness and words. Jesus’ life, teachings and example is the fulfillment of the prophet role. Jesus’ witness of love, trust, faithfulness, and justice reveal to all of us what our relationship should look like with God and others.

Each of us was baptized prophet. A prophet is not a psychic that foresees the future so much as a person with common sense that recognizes poor choices in their own lives and others. They speak out against injustice. Injustice is the opposite of justice. Justice is giving and receiving what is right to others. It is being in right relationship with others, treating others as Jesus would and holding people accountable when they fail to treat others correctly. Now more than ever being a prophet is a challenge for our culture. In an individualized private culture where everyone’s choices and behaviors are “o.k”, as long as they don’t impact me, it is difficult to witness explicitly to others. Living our lives quietly is no problem and comfortable for us. A prophet may live by example. As St. Francis said, “Preach the gospel and when necessary use words”. To be a prophet that speaks out against injustice or poor choices takes a lot of courage and risks being made fun of or excluded from the group. Prophets have often been persecuted and even killed when they spoke up against strong forces of injustice. Nor are prophets well received by others who know them before they became active prophets. As Jesus said, “A prophet is not accepted in his own town”.

Peer Ministry teens are expected to be prophetic in their lives through their example of treating others rightly and witnessing to right relationship with God and his Church. When a peer minister shares a message of faith with others they are really witnessing and encouraging others in their relationship with God. Sharing our faith with others and how we should live it out is prophetic. Even more simply, when a peer ministry teen treats others with care and attention they are being prophetic. We do not expect a peer ministry teen to run in the streets like prophets of old shouting “repent”. We do expect them to witness by their choices and words Christ to others. The witness of a teen to other teens is far more powerful and

meaningful than an adult witness. Young people are highly idealistic and motivated by a strong desire to make a difference in the lives of others. Like prophets they are idealistic about things working out for the best. They are generally hopeful about the future. They are sensitive to hypocrites and respect integrity. Developmentally, they are ideal prophets because of their hopefulness that God will help make things right, yet they may lack understanding of what right relationship with God and others looks like.

King

A hope throughout the Hebrew Scriptures starting with King Saul was that God would take a more active role in leading his people. Some hoped that God himself would come down and lead his people to freedom. Kings were practical law givers and enforcers blessed by God to help bring order and harmony to the people of Israel. God's people hoped for a great leader or Messiah sent from God to help them during times of trouble or persecution. Jesus was understood by many to be just such a person. The Jewish people were being oppressed by the Romans and people thought Jesus would lead them as King to freedom as a nation. Jesus' kingly leadership though was meant not for this world simply but for all of creation, all of time. He is King over hearts and minds, not just geographical regions. His leadership was one of love and service, not domination and control. As King he frees us from sin and eternal death. His rule over our lives frees his subjects. As a King Jesus is responsible for his people and continues to care for us. As Shepherd, he sought out the one lost sheep. In turn, we have responsibilities and obligations also to Jesus. Jesus' teachings guide us into true freedom. His teachings and responsibilities of leadership he entrusted specifically to his apostles who continue today, through the office of bishop to oversee and direct God's people. Jesus does not abandon us and seeks to guide us through changing times through the church.

Each of us was baptized into the kingly role of Christ. In a special way ordained people bring leadership and direction to Faithful. Priests help make people holy through the offering of holy things (sacraments) and in turn the people of God go out into the world working towards building justice and peace. It is our "kingly" responsibility to provide leadership in the world creating a society and culture that is good and just. Exercising our baptismal kingly role is one of guidance and direction to those around us.

Peer Ministry seeks to give teens the opportunity to learn and apply the skills of leadership to activities at All Saints. Leadership can range from outspoken and direct instruction or guidance to the quiet modeling of right behavior. A leader need not be an extrovert, outgoing and able to work with large groups. A leader may be a quiet person that provides positive direction and focus to smaller groups or even individuals around them. Jesus' example was not one of show or power, but one of gentle encouragement and deep love for those entrusted to him. Peer Ministry teens are expected to care for those they lead and work towards providing clear leadership to others. A leader shares power and responsibility with others and seeks to use the gifts of others to accomplish tasks. For example, when working with soft spoken teens and large noisy groups, the soft spoken teen need not quiet the room by themselves, but seek the help of louder more outspoken individuals. It is not the responsibility of a teen to do everything, but rather the mark of a good leader to find and use the gifts of others around them.

The priestly, prophetic, and kingly missions of Christ are human expressions of one simple divine goal; gather all things to God the Father. This gathering is not one of possession or ownership, but of mutual love and belonging. These biblical and sacramental terms are rich with meaning especially in relationship to Jesus' fulfillment of these roles. They provide direction for peer ministry and also allow for a diversity of gifts and types of teens. Every teen that embraces their baptismal call walks not alone, but with the Holy Spirit. No teen or adult is the perfect servant, witness, or leader. God is God and we are not. Yet, the divine life has been opened to all the baptized and through them Christ's mission continues in mysterious and powerful ways. Scripture is filled with examples of faithful people (priests, prophets, kings) sometimes flawed that brought God's people into closer relationship through their imperfect service, witness, and leadership. God works with our limitations and weaknesses just as much as with our strengths. And this is Good News.

3. List your other youth service or activity experience (Church / Home / Community / School, etc.):

4. What kind of time commitment could you give to peer ministry? (minimum of 1-2 hour per week on average for peer “ministers”, a peer “leader” has no minimum)

5. Describe your relationship with Christ or a time you felt close to God. (attach additional pages if necessary)

6. When would you be available for an interview? (please write in top 3 days and exact times)

Interviews will last approximately 30 minutes.

Dates available:	Time range:	Your Preferences:
Tuesday, June 21	11:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.	1.
Wednesday, June 22	11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	2.
Thursday, June 23	11:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.	3.
Friday, June 24	11:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.	
Saturday, June 25	9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	
Sunday, June 26	1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	

I have verified that the information on this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and that I will bring two Youth Character Reference forms to my interview.

APPLICANT SIGNATURE

DATE

All Saints Church Youth Character Reference

All Saints Catholic Church
Attention: Youth Ministry
19795 Holyoke Ave
Lakeville, MN 55044

Program/Service/Ministry Youth Volunteering for: _____

A character reference is a tool used to help evaluate youth and their ability to minister in particular situations. All Saints Church is committed to empowering and developing the skills of youth in various programs in the parish. This character reference will be used to identify strengths and weaknesses of youth providing specific services to others in the parish and larger community. It will also be used to help evaluate youth as volunteers in specific parish situations and their suitability for various responsibilities.

A character reference may be submitted by the following; parent/legal guardian, principal, coach, teacher, pastor, trusted adult in the parish. Two character reference checks are needed. **One must come from a parent/legal guardian and the second from a non-relative.**

The information in this character check will be treated confidentially and may be returned to the youth being evaluated or directly to All Saints Church (see above).

Character Check For: _____ Date: _____
First Name Last Name

How long have you know him/her? _____ And how do you know them?

Please indicate by circling below, in your opinion, how well this youth meets the following characteristics. **If you circle 1 or 2 please explain briefly why in the space provided below each characteristic.**

- 1-unsatisfactory
- 2-poor
- 3-Fair
- 4- Good
- 5- Excellent

Don't know (circle if you don't know and are unable to give an informed opinion)

Safe to work with younger youth 1 2 3 4 5 Don't know....

Good judgment..... 1 2 3 4 5 Don't know....

Reliable..... 1 2 3 4 5 Don't know....

Trustworthy..... 1 2 3 4 5 Don't know....

Leadership..... 1 2 3 4 5 Don't know....

Positive attitude..... 1 2 3 4 5 Don't know...

1-very poor 2-poor 3-Fair 4- Good 5- Excellent
Don't know (circle if you don't know and are unable to give an informed opinion)

Helpful.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5..... Don't know....

Works well with peers.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5..... Don't know...

Respectful.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5..... Don't know....

Follows instructions.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5..... Don't know.....

Appropriate boundaries.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5..... Don't know.....

Model for others.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5..... Don't know.....

Additional Comments:

By signing below, I recommend the youth indicated above for volunteering at All Saints Church. In my opinion this youth demonstrates well the characteristics listed above, with the possible exceptions of any comments I have made.

I am also willing to be contacted by staff from All Saints regarding any information I provided on this youth character reference.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____ (optional)

Address: _____

(Return to youth or All Saints Church, Attention: Youth Ministry, 19795 Holyoke Ave, MN, 55044 Phnoe:952-469-6466)

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Attention: Youth Ministry
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