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##### **Abbey Youth Festival is an apostolic outreach of the Benedictine monks of Saint Joseph Abbey + Seminary College. Thousands of teens are welcomed each year to the beautiful Abbey grounds for a day filled with fun, catechesis, formation, music, & fellowship in Christ. AYF seeks to preach, teach, and pray in a way that is relevant to today’s youth. AYF’s leaders, parents, volunteers, presenters, exhibitors, and vendors play an integral role in its mission. Throughout the day teens encounter Christ in the active ministry of presenters from the AYF stage, as well as in vendors and exhibitors who bring their materials to the event. The technological and logistical skills of AYF vendors are likewise a foundational part of the festival’s success. This event would not be possible without the collaborative efforts of many individuals working together amicably for the benefit of the young people who attend. *Thank you for being a part of the Abbey Youth Festival!***

**AYF 2017: Registration POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**IMPORTANT**

* Please download a copy of the **POLICIES & PROCEDURES** and **LIABILITY & PHOTO RELEASE** forms.
* Every PARTICIPANT (adult & youth) must bring a completed **LIABILITY & PHOTO RELEASE FORM**.
* Every ADULT participant must download and sign and initial a copy of the **POLICIES & PROCEDURES** to be handed in during check-in.

Adult’s Initials \_\_\_\_

**PARTICIPANT POLICIES**

* The Abbey Youth Festival is for teens and young adults **ages 13 (8th grade) and up** (12 year old 8th graders are permitted to attend at the discretion of their parents or youth minister.
* 2 chaperones are required for the first 10 high school age youth attending AYF with a non-family group. 1 chaperone (21 years or older) is required for every additional 10 teen participants.
* All chaperones, parents, and young adult participants must be properly safe environment trained by their diocese.

Adult’s Initials \_\_\_\_

**PAYMENT**

* **PAYMENT IS DUE IN FULL BEFORE YOUR GROUP ENTERS THE FIELD ON MARCH 25, 2017**
* A $10 **non-refundable** deposit per paid participant is due immediately during online, pre-event registration. **(The first 1200 registrants who have paid IN FULL during online pre-registration will receive a water bottle.)**
* Registration costs may be paid by credit card, PayPal or check before March 15, 2017.
* If accounts are not paid beforehand fees must be paid **in full** during check-in on the morning of the festival. Checks, cash, and credit card payments will be accepted at the **CHECK-IN/REGISTRATION BARN** at the entrance of the field.
* Group accounts will close out when payments are received
* Special instructions will be given within your account page for what to do if you must reopen your account to add on to your “PAID OUT” account.

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**CANCELLATION POLICY**

* Because the Abbey Youth Festival is an outdoor event, severe weather and/or prolonged inclement conditions may necessitate complete cancellation, changes of schedule, or early completion of Festival events. All efforts will be made to ensure that the Abbey Youth Festival is not canceled insofar as this is possible and safe for all participants (But “acts of God,” are indeed in His hands, not ours.) In the event that AYF must be cancelled by SJASC registration fees, minus the $10 per person non-refundable deposit, will be refunded to participants.
* If an entire group decides not to attend AYF, a refund *may* be available if cancellations are made at least 30 days from the day of the event. However, if individuals within a group decide not to attend AYF within 30 days of the event it will be up to the group leader to fill those vacant spots.No whole-group refunds will be provided after March 15, 2017 unless specifically authorized by the Rector and Event Coordinator. Requests for such refunds must be made in writing and will not be considered until after the festival has taken place.

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**PARKING**

* Parking for the Festival will be within the Abbey grounds. Attendants will direct vehicles to the parking area, and then participants will disembark.

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**ON SITE CHECK-IN**

* Group check-in will begin at 8 AM on Saturday, March 25, 2017 in the **CHECK-IN/REGISTRATION BARN** at the entrance to the AYF field.
* Group leaders should be prepared to present a **LIABILITY & PHOTO RELEASE** form for EVERY participant (adults and teens), and signed/completed **POLICIES & PROCEDURES** forms for EVERY ADULT participant in their group.
* **Only one group leader is needed to check in their group.**
* Group leaders MUST be prepared to settle any outstanding balances during the morning check-in.
* The Check-In procedure will take place ***alphabetically*** according to the name of your group. Stations will be set up in groups ***alphabetically***. Due to the significant number of groups with the word “Saint” in their name, please consider the saint’s first name as your alphabetical order. Example: If you register your group as ***St. Margaret Clitherow Parish Fire Youth Group*** you should line up in the station assigned to the letter “M” for Margaret . If you elect to register as ***Fire Youth Group*** then you would line up in the station assigned to the letter “F” for Fire. We will have master lists at each station in the event of difficulty.
* Payments will be collected in **ONE** **PAYMENT/CHECK-OUT AREA** at the end of the **CHECK-IN/REGISTRATION BARN**. All monies for registrations, meal tickets, t-shirts, etc. (before the field opens) will be accepted there. No monies will be collected at the actual check-in stations. Several staff members from Saint Joseph Abbey + Seminary College will be manning the **PAYMENT/CHECK-OUT AREA** area so that the payment process will be as quick and efficient as possible.

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**\*TENTS/SHADE (LIMIT - ONE space per group)**

* Groups may bring their own tents to AYF. There is a **$10** **TENT-SPACE RENTAL** fee for each 10’ x 10’ space. Spaces are limited so pre-registration for tent-space rental is required via the AYF website and is limited to one space per group.
* Please measure your tent while opened and set-up before renting space to ensure that you have an accurate estimation of how much space you will need to rent.
* Groups bringing their own tents must check them in at the **TENT-SPACE RENTAL** area outside of the field (near **CHECK-IN/REGISTRATION BARN**) between 2:00 and 4:00 PM on Friday, March 24, 2017 or 8:00 AM and 8:45 AM on Saturday, March 25, 2017. No tents will be accepted after 9:00 AM on Saturday the 12th.
* Seminarians and volunteers will set up your tent for you **BEFORE** the field opens. Please make sure that all parts/pieces to your tent are checked in together so that this process may be conducted as efficiently as possible. No tents will be set up after the field opens.
* Signs will be posted on your tent, courtesy of AYF, so that you will be able to locate your tent on the field.
* If your group does not own a tent, you may wish to invest in **Shade Rental** for the day. Large tents will be set up around the perimeter of the field that will be designated just for shade. Each 10’ x 10’ space will rent for **$40**. Spaces are limited so pre-registration for **Shade Rental** is required via the AYF website and is also limited to one space per group.
* Each 10’ x 10’ Shade Rental space can accommodate approximately 8 to 10 people.
* Signs will be posted on the outside of each shade tent designating your group’s rental area. Seminarians and volunteers will be on hand the morning of AYF to assist you in finding your space.

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**BACKSTAGE AREA**

* Participants and chaperones are not allowed in the backstage area at any time.
* Only individuals with pre-assigned credentials are allowed in the backstage area.

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**WRISTBAND POLICY**

* Upon arrival at the Abbey Youth Festival, each participant will receive a wristband and Festival program with a schedule and other pertinent information. All pre-purchased meal tickets and T-shirts will also be given to the Group Leader for distribution. Groups entitled to water bottles will receive them at this time. (The first 1200 registrants who have paid IN FULL during online pre-registration will receive a water bottle.)
* **Wristbands must be worn at all times!**
* Chaperones will be given a lanyard and name badge in order to more easily distinguish you from the teens and facilitate easier interaction between yourselves. Please wear your lanyard and name badge at all times during AYF.

Adult’s Initials \_\_\_\_

**WHAT TO BRING, WEAR, AND THE LIKE**

* The Abbey Youth Festival is an outdoor event. All of the day’s activities will occur in the open air. Everyone should bring:
* Rain Gear
* Hats, umbrellas, hand water sprayers for cooling – (The day’s sun is hot; a hat is important.)
* Clothing appropriate to the day’s weather - No tank tops, midriff tops, strapless tops, or short-shorts are permitted on the field. Likewise saggy pants that expose one’s undergarments are not allowed. Undergarments must be concealed *under* garments.
* Backpacks - Teens should not leave their items unattended or scattered around the field – backpacks will ensure their safekeeping.
* Comfortable shoes
* Sunscreen, chap stick, hand sanitizer, wipes
* Empty water bottles for every participant – Water stations will be scattered around the field for refilling
* Picnic blankets or tarps for ground sitting
* \*\*Spending money
* **NOTE**: Folding chairs are only allowed around the perimeter of the field and may only be used by adults and those with special needs. *Very* small beach umbrellas, shade chairs, and any other shading devices that may obscure vision to the stage must also be kept on the perimeter of the field. \*Please see the above tent space and shade rental policy above for more details.

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**WHAT NOT TO BRING/ WHAT NOT TO DO**

* **No Alcohol, cigarettes, illegal drugs, firearms, pocket-knives**
* **No Laser pointers, fireworks, noisemakers, gag items**
* **No Candles, lighters, and matches**
* No “**Free Hugs**” signs (While most teens mean well, these signs have at times, been used to coerce members of the opposite sex to hug people whom they would rather not touch at all.)
* **Headphones, personal stereo and CD players, video games** and other entertainment devices (Cell phones should be turned off during the event – Leaders, please help in encouraging this.)
* **Footballs, frisbees, baseballs and any other throwing games** are not allowed on the site. Participants will be required to return these items to the vehicle in which they came to the Festival. The Festival Site has no room for ball games. Youth Ministers must be proactive in deterring teens from such games, **especially** during talks.
* **No rough-housing, shoulder rides, or piggy-back rides**
* **No Rolling or Large Ice Chests** – Participants may bring in their own food, beverages, and snacks. However, these items must be *carried* in picnic-size coolers and bags.

Adult’s Initials \_\_\_\_

**TOBACCO/NICOTINE POLICY**

* No smoking will be allowed during the festival events, nor will smoking be allowed in the main gathering area. Tobacco products of any kind are not allowed. This included dip and snuff. Likewise, cigarette alternatives such as “vaping” will not be allowed on the field.
* Louisiana State Law prohibits the use of tobacco products by anyone under 18 years of age.

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**TIMES AT A GLANCE: (see website for full schedule)**

* Arrival & Check In = Saturday, March 25, 2017 - 8:00 – 9:30 AM
* Participant Tent Drop Off = 2:00 to 4:00 PM on Friday, March 24, 2017 and 8:00 to 8:45 AM on Saturday, March 25, 2017 (No group tents will be accepted after 9 AM.)
* Gates Open = 9:30 AM
* Opening Session = 10:30 AM
* Closing & Departure = Approximately 9:00 PM

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**MEALS AND \*\*SPENDING MONEY**

* **FOOD POLICY:** **AYF 2017 lunch and dinner meals will be pre-ordered as part of the registration process via meal “tickets.”**
* Menu choices are available on the registration page. No cash will be accepted at food and beverage booths during the initial distribution of meals - **ONLY** colored meal tickets will be accepted. *(We will be recycling the unused meal tickets from AYF 2016 so don’t fret when you see the wrong date!)* Seconds may be available at the food tent following the initial distribution.
* An AYF Snack Tent will be set up for on-site purchases of items such as granola bars, fruit, chips, candy, and such. **Plum Street Snowballs** and **PJ’s Coffee** will be on site this year. Additionally, **Old School Eats** will be on site with a limited number of gluten free meal options that can be purchased the day of the festival. All snack/beverage/meal purchases may be made with cash. (Tokens will no longer be used.)
* Prices have been streamlined to allow participants to purchase full meals, via pre-orders, for $6 per meal. The exception to this price is the meal offered by ***Chick-fil-A*** at $7 per meal. Meal tickets may be purchased the day of the event but groups are STRONGLY advised to pre-order as quantities are likely to run out without a reliable pre-event count.
* \*\*Also available are many religious articles, T-shirts, books, and Catholic/Christian music CD’s, including the CD’s and productions of our presenters. These items help to keep the spirit of the day alive. Most of these items will need to be purchased with cash. Tokens and tickets are not accepted at vendor tents.
* **IMPORTANT NOTE:** All vendor and exhibitor booths will be **CLOSED** during the keynote talks and prayer sessions of the day. **Any vendors or teens that dishonor this policy will be warned, and then, if persisting in their disregard and discourtesy, will be asked to leave AYF at their own expense and inconvenience.** This is VERY important in order for the good of all involved in the day. Youth ministers, please be clear about this with your teens BEFORE you arrive on site. Your assistance in this matter ensures that we are united in our efforts to create the best possible environment within which the Lord may work.

Adult’s Initials \_\_\_\_

**CODE OF CONDUCT**

* **In order to safeguard the integrity of the Abbey Youth Festival experience, all adult volunteers, presenters, exhibitors, and vendors are asked to read and initial this Code of Conduct. Failure to comply with its directives may result in the removal of individuals from the Abbey grounds and/or jeopardize future participation in AYF.**

##### **Leaders, Chaperones, Parents, Volunteers, Presenters, Exhibitors, and Vendors will conduct themselves at all times while on the Abbey grounds in a professional, courteous manner. This means that all interaction with Seminarians, Staff, and Youth will be respectful. Seminarians comprise the work committees for AYF. This event forms an important part of their training and collaborating professionals/adults will be mindful of this goal when interacting with the young men.**

##### **Behavior that is considered unacceptable at the Abbey (before, during, and after AYF) includes, but is not limited to the following: profanity, smoking or dipping within view of youth, lewd or suggestive remarks, yelling at or berating any individual; unwillingness to cooperate/collaborate with committee heads (Seminarians), monks, or event coordinator. Furthermore, all Leaders, Chaperones, Parents, Volunteers, Presenters, Exhibitors, and Vendors are expected to dress appropriately. Muscle shirts, short-shorts, shirts that show cleavage or the midriff and/or have lewd images or wording, saggy pants (undergarments showing), too-tight pants, etc. are considered inappropriate for AYF. It goes without saying that inappropriate contact between minors, or between adults and minors, will not be tolerated on the AYF field. In short, a Christian model of virtue, respectfulness, and charity is expected at all times.**

Adult’s Initials \_\_\_\_

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**DIRECTIONS TO THE ABBEY YOUTH FESTIVAL:**

**FROM NEW ORLEANS:**

• **Take the Causeway North.** Travel on US 190 past I-12, past LA-21 (go over the small bridge), and continue on US 190 past LA 437. Stay on US 190 until the junction of US 190 and LA 25 (Traffic light at junction; Shell Service Station on your left at the corner).

• US 190 turns off to the left toward Hammond. **DO NOT** go left. Instead, continue North on LA-25 for only about 300 yards. Turn right on **Airport Road** (where you see the Oak Tree Golf Course and Driving Range). Stay on **Airport Road** until you reach a stop sign at the end of the road. Turn left onto **River Road**. Travel about 400 yards until you see a **sign for Saint Joseph Abbey.**. Turn right on the bridge. Welcome!

**FROM BATON ROUGE:**

• **Take I-12 East, and exit at EXIT 63-B (Covington).**

• Once you exit, you will head north on US 190, past LA-21 (go over the small bridge), and continue on US 190 past LA 437. Stay on US 190 until the junction of US 190 and LA 25 (Traffic light at junction; Shell Service Station on your left at the corner).

• US 190 turns off to the left toward Hammond. **DO NOT** go left. Instead, continue North on LA-25 for only about 300 yards. Turn right on **Airport Road** (where you see the Oak Tree Golf Course and Driving Range). Stay on **Airport Road** until you reach a stop sign at the end of the road. Turn left onto **River Road**. Travel about 400 yards until you see a **sign for Saint Joseph Abbey.**. Turn right on the bridge. Welcome!

**FROM SLIDELL:**

• **Take I-12 West, and exit at EXIT 63-B (Covington).**

• Once you exit, you will head north on US 190, past LA-21 (go over the small bridge), and continue on US 190 past LA 437. Stay on US 190 until the junction of US 190 and LA 25 (Traffic light at junction; Shell Service Station on your left at the corner).

• US 190 turns off to the left toward Hammond. **DO NOT** go left. Instead, continue North on LA-25 for only about 300 yards. Turn right on **Airport Road** (where you see the Oak Tree Golf Course and Driving Range). Stay on **Airport Road** until you reach a stop sign at the end of the road. Turn left onto **River Road**. Travel about 400 yards until you see a **sign for Saint Joseph Abbey.**. Turn right on the bridge. Welcome!