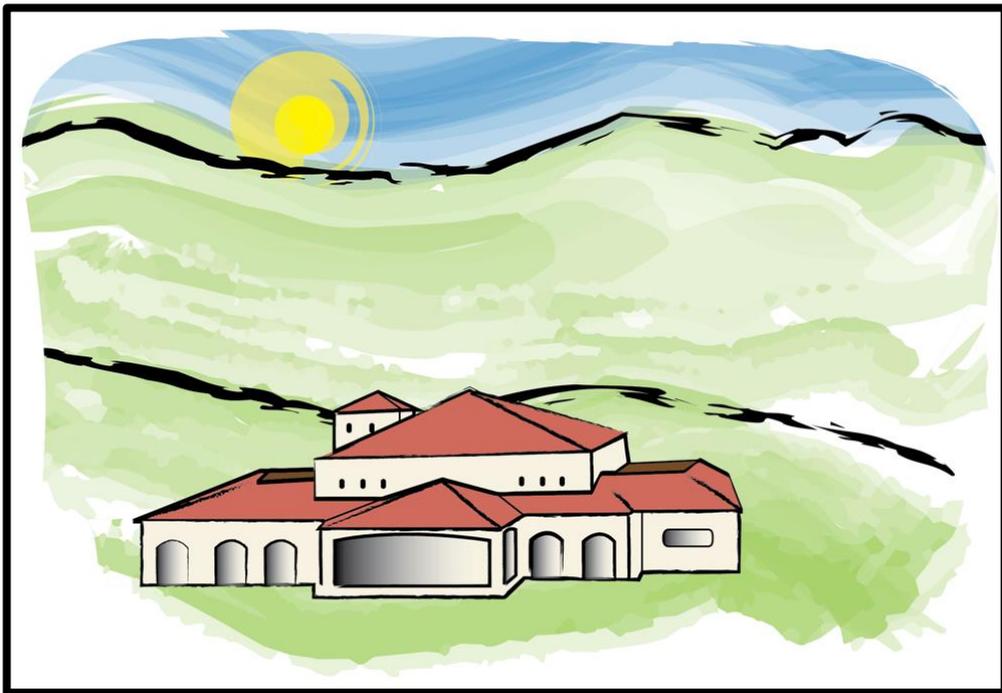





Santa Teresita
Youth Conference Center

Handbook for Confirmation Retreat Guests



Visit us at: www.StTeresitaYCC.org

Santa Teresita Youth Conference Center
CONFIRMATION HANDBOOK
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Welcome all Young Retreatants!

We are excited to have you with us at Santa Teresita Youth Conference Center (STYCC), a Catholic Diocese of Fresno retreat facility. We believe that all young people are on a spiritual journey to experience oneness with God, each other, and the faith community. Our mission at STYCC, therefore, is to tend to this spiritual life by providing retreats, programs, and events that accompany young people on their journey.

Located on twenty-five acres at the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains near Sequoia National Park, our facilities at STYCC include a large assembly and dining room, two large gathering rooms, two large dorms with beds for 120 youth, four chaperone rooms with beds for 20 adults, a craft room, a pool, a recreation room, many trails, and an amazing natural environment.

We value your time with us and want you to have the best possible experience. Our website will provide you with a view of our beautiful location and facilities, and inform you of upcoming retreats. Our website will also provide you with our rules, guidelines and necessary forms. Please feel free to contact us at any time to discuss how STYCC can serve your youth community.

Visit us at: www.StTeresitaYCC.org

Please read over the information in this handbook, as we feel it will help us work together in making your retreat faith-filled and meaningful. We eagerly look forward to your time at STYCC.

Sincerely in Christ,

Cristal Juarez

Ministry Director

Pre-Arrival CHECKLIST

FOR LEADER OF VISITING ORGANIZATION

Organizing a retreat requires our utmost attention to details, for you as the attending group and for us as the host site. Please look over this pre-arrival checklist to make sure you are ready for your amazing retreat experience.

- Reservation Agreement (*contract*) is signed and deposit is received by STYCC.
- Certificate of insurance is received by STYCC. (*For non-Diocese of Fresno groups*)
- Request Form for Trips* completed and sent to Diocese of Fresno Risk Management Office. (*This form only applies to Diocese of Fresno Catholic organizations*)
- All needed personnel (*adult chaperones, etc.*) are enlisted.
- Youth permission slips and Release of Photo/Video Production form including insurance and medication information are completely filled out and signed by a parent or legal guardian. STYCC Youth permission slips are available on the STYCC website.
- Adult medical release and Release of Photo/Video Production forms including insurance and medication are completely fill out and signed. Forms are available on the STYCC website at www.StTeresitaYCC.org.
- All YOUTH have been handed, read and understand the STYCC *What To Bring / What Not To Bring* and *STYCC Rules for Retreatants, Students, and Guests*.
- All ADULTS have been handed, read and understand the STYCC *What to Bring / What Not To Bring*, *STYCC Rules for Retreatants, Students, and Guests* and *STYCC Rules for Adult Chaperones, Leaders and Volunteers*.
- Special dietary any other special requests are communicated to STYCC at least 30 days prior to event.
- A complete list of all youth and adults, to be given to STYCC 30 days prior and updated list upon arrival.
- A Letter of Encouragement from parents to students with encouraging words, loving words and the letter can have faith elements but not necessary. The letters are to be kept a secret from the youth. They will be a surprise from the parents to the youth during the retreat. The letters will be collected at the time of arrival.



What to BRING List / What NOT to Bring List

For Overnight Retreatants, You Must Bring: *STYCC does not provide bedding for guests, so please bring...*



- Sleeping Bag or Sheets and Blankets (*twin size*)
- Pillow and Pillow Case
- Towel
- Toiletries (*shampoo, soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, etc.*)
- Warm clothes/jackets or sweaters for cool night activities
- Athletic/hiking shoes or walking shoes
- Rain Jacket, Poncho or Umbrellas
- Refillable Water Bottle
- Flashlight
- Open Spirit



Reminder... Santa Teresita YCC does not cancel outdoor activities due to weather. Please bring warm clothes for night activities and dress appropriately.

Do NOT Bring:



- Weapons
- Illegal Drugs
- Alcohol
- Fireworks
- Inappropriate clothing, books or magazines
- Lighters
- Knives
- Gum
- Closed attitude



Since each retreat and activity at STYCC is a unique event designed for a particular purpose, **other restrictions may apply, including the use of cell phones, computers and electronic devices.** Please see the “What to Bring / What Not to Bring” list for the retreat/event you will be attending, or consult your parish, school or organization representative.

Rules for Retreatants, STUDENTS, and GUESTS

In order to ensure that everyone has a safe and positive experience, everyone must adhere to the following rules. Any infraction of these rules may result in dismissal from STYCC.

1. All adults must follow the *Diocese of Fresno Safe Environment* policy. (Read: *Rules for Adult Chaperones* and *Safe Environment* policy)
2. Treat each person with kindness and respect.
3. No inappropriate behavior is allowed such as fighting, activities that may cause injury, hazing, pranks, foul language, inappropriate intimacy, theft, or bullying.
4. Alcohol, weapons, firearms, knives, smoking, and illegal drugs are prohibited.
5. Treat the facilities as a home. Do not misuse or damage anything related to the buildings, equipment, dining facilities, and grounds. You are responsible for any damages.
6. Care for the natural environment by properly disposing of all trash and treating the living surroundings with respect.
7. All exits and passageways must be kept clear of any obstructions such as chairs and tables.
8. Dress modestly and appropriately at all times, we recommend you dress for comfort. Any symbols or writing on clothing must be wholesome and clean. No provocative attire is allowed. Shorts must have an appropriate length and tops must have appropriate coverage.
9. Swimming pool attire: Boys must wear appropriate length trunks and girls must wear a one-piece bathing suit. You must follow all rules and regulations related to the pool. (Read: *STYCC Pool Policy*)
10. Boys are not allowed in the girls' dorm, and girls are not allowed in the boys' dorm.
11. No food or drink other than water is allowed in the dorms for health and safety reasons.
12. Minors are not allowed off the premises unless accompanied by a chaperone or parent.
13. No unauthorized person is allowed in the kitchen at any time. Only certified STYCC personnel are allowed to prepare and serve food.
14. No minor is allowed to hike alone or without an adult. (Read: *Trail Rules*) Please wear appropriate shoes and stay on the designated trail.
15. Do not handle any wildlife and stay clear of any creature that may be considered dangerous. Please notify STYCC staff if you see any dangerous creatures.
16. Upon departure all retreatants are required to clean the facilities to an acceptable level.

Confirmation Retreats Roles and Expectations For ADULT Chaperones, Leaders and Volunteers

Confirmation retreats are offered as an experiential encounter with Christ, during confirmation retreats, we focus on presenting and preparing experiences of teachings they have learned in confirmation classes.

Confirmation retreats are made up of several components some of these are; large group presentations, small group presentation, night activities, outdoor trail activities, adoration, mass, reconciliation service (if time permits).

Active participation of chaperones is required at all times; instructions will be given during orientation with facilitators.

One Day Confirmation retreats do not have a reconciliation service. Please have students attend prior to retreat.

Each parish attending a STYCC sponsored retreat must provide the required number of adult chaperones to accompany their youth. A minimum of one adult chaperone per every 10 minors is required. Diocese of Fresno policy states that adult chaperones should be over 25 years of age. No one under the age of 21 can be an adult chaperone. More adult chaperones are sometimes needed so that each gender has adequate adult chaperone supervision. All adult chaperones must be **Safe Environment** certified, as per our Safe Environment policy in the STYCC Handbook.

We ask each parish to designate a **health services representative**. This person will be responsible for dispensing necessary medication to the parish youth.

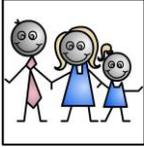
STYCC trusts that each parish will choose adult chaperones that will be positive and fully able to follow and promote the rules and safety procedures stipulated in the STYCC Handbook. Adult chaperones may also serve as **team leaders**, primarily serving as small group leaders.

The primary duties of an adult chaperones, leader and volunteers:

1. To ensure the safety and wellbeing of young people. Always treat young people with respect and value. Be supportive, assuring, and positive.
2. Immediately report any suspicion of child abuse or inappropriate behavior by an adult to STYCC management and your group representative. (Read: *Safe Environment Policy*)
3. To encourage positive behavior and participation, especially during talks, presentations, and purposeful activities. If distracting, unkind, or unsafe behavior is exhibited, the adult chaperon will work with the young person(s) to redirect his/her behavior or problem-solve. Chaperones must **not** independently discipline the youth. Chaperons may not discipline other parish's students. Please refer to *Catholic Diocese of Fresno Safe Environment* policy and *STYCC Rules for Retreatants, Students and Guests*. Please make STYCC staff aware of disciplinary problems.

(Continue)

4. To help guide and participate, in order to supervise youth. This includes supervision during large and small group presentations, outdoor trail activities, night activities, adoration, mass, reconciliation service, free-time, meal times, and night time.
5. To guide dorm clean up, outdoor clean up, dining table clean up, and meeting space clean up.
6. To monitor the night making sure no young people leave the dorm building, unless medical or emergency attention is needed.
7. Immediately report anything dangerous or hazardous related to the facilities, wildlife, food, etc. to STYCC management and your group representative.
8. As issues arise, especially in case of emergency, **communication is extremely important**. Make sure to quickly share information that requires immediate attention by seeking out STYCC staff.
9. In case of an emergency, dial 9-1-1 and notify STYCC management and your group representative. Phones are located in the dorms, pool area, break room, and administration offices. In the event of a fire or emergency, ALL PERSONS will evacuate to the cement courtyard and wait for further evacuation instructions. You are responsible for making sure all persons are accounted for.
10. All adults must follow the *STYCC Rules for Retreatants, Students and Guests*, which involves proper dress attire, appropriate behavior, and prohibitions.
11. No unauthorized adult is permitted on STYCC property.



Safe Environment Policy

STYCC maintains compliance with the CA Penal Code Article 2.5 –the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act (Section 11164-11174.3). STYCC Management and staff are mandated reporters, as outlined by Section 11165.7a-6, and reserve the right to report suspected abuse to the proper authorities.

STYCC fully supports and is in full compliance with the *Catholic Diocese of Fresno Safe Environment* policy. The goal of Safe Environment is to protect and ensure the safety of young people by training and screening (background checks) adults who interact with minors. STYCC policies and rules related to Safe Environment are as follows:

- 1) All adults representing STYCC, including staff and volunteers, are required to complete the *Diocesan Safe Environment* training and successfully pass a background check.
- 2) All adults accompanying Catholic organizations must be in compliance with the *Catholic Diocese of Fresno Safe Environment* policy, including training and screening. The pastor, principal or chief executive of the renting Catholic organization must sign Section 12 of the renter's agreement verifying that all accompanying adults have completed either the *Catholic Diocese of Fresno Safe Environment* requirements or a similar process provided by other Catholic dioceses. Non-Diocese of Fresno Catholic organizations must sign the form: *Safe Environment Child Protection Verification*.
- 3) In addition to adherence to *Diocesan Safe Environment* regulations, all Non-Catholic renting organizations must provide a certificate of insurance naming the Catholic Diocese of Fresno as additionally insured. The official representative must complete and sign the form: *Child and Youth Protection Verification for Non-Catholic Groups*.
- 4) Diocese of Fresno policy states that chaperones should be over 25 years of age. No one under the age of 21 can be a chaperone. Generally, one chaperone should be provided for every 5-7 minors depending upon the activity and age of the participants. A minimum of one chaperone per every 10 minors is required. More chaperones are often needed so that each gender has adequate chaperone supervision. STYCC requires that groups provide a minimum of two chaperones (per gender if spending the night), even if there are fewer than 10 youth.
- 5) All adults accompanying Catholic and Non-Catholic organizations must read and understand the *STYCC Rules for Adult Chaperones and Leaders*. The official representative of the renting organization must require all attending adults to have read and understand this document by the time of arrival.
- 6) When minors occupy STYCC facilities, no unauthorized adults are allowed on the premises.

Trail Use and Rules



The clearly marked trails surrounding STYCC are for the use and enjoyment of our retreatants. We ask you to stay on the trails in order to avoid rattlesnakes, poison oak, and hazardous terrain.

- 1) No youth can use the trails without adult supervision.
- 2) We encourage the use of trails in groups consisting of at least two youth and two adults, with a ratio of no more than seven youth to one adult.
- 3) All groups will receive a brief orientation regarding trail rules and safety precautions at the start of each retreat, program and event.
- 4) An adult must take a head count of youth and take all necessary measures to keep track of all youth during the hike.
- 5) STYCC observes the **leave no trace** rule: Respecting nature by not taking anything or leaving anything behind.
- 6) For safety reasons, leaders for night hikes must provide adequate lighting.



Trail Safety Procedure for Adults

All adults accompanying youth on trails must adhere to these guidelines in order to prevent injuries and accidents.

- 1) Watch for and avoid hazards (*i.e. broken overhanging limbs, flooded creeks, lightning, poor footing, poison oak, snakes, etc.*)
- 2) Stay on the designated trail at all times.
- 3) Stay out from under trees during times of high wind.

In case of severe injury or health-related injury, the trail guide should:

- 1) Take necessary first-aid action in order to prevent loss of life (*i.e. CPR, direct pressure to stop severe bleeding, etc.*)
- 2) Dial 9-1-1 in case of emergency.
- 3) Take firm charge of the situation. Reassure the injured person and the trail group.
- 4) Keep the injured person and trail group calm while awaiting assistance.
- 5) In case of fire on the trail, stay away from the fire's path, alert the supervisor and take the safest route back to the retreat site.

Basic Safety Information



First Aid and Fire Safety measures are required to ensure the safety and well-being of each person and the environment.

- 1) In case of an emergency, DIAL 9-1-1 and notify STYCC management and the leader of the renting organization.
- 2) If you see a fire immediately report it to STYCC management and DIAL 9-1-1.
- 3) We require that each renting organization provide a First Aid certified person.
- 4) FIRST-AID KITS are located in the Dorm meetings rooms, Dining Hall break room, Pool Office, Recreation room, and Administrative Office in dining hall.
- 5) No campfires are permitted at STYCC unless approved by the STYCC manager.
- 6) All exits and passageways must be kept clear of chairs, tables, etc.

Warming Fire Rules



Warming Fires are only permitted in designated area. Warming Fires are only permitted if the temperature falls below 51 degrees and only between the dates of December 1st to April 30th. Fires cannot be any larger than 2 feet by 2 feet.

- 1) Only adults are allowed to start and tend to the fire.
- 2) Chaperones must be in the Warming Fire area when minors are present.
- 3) Only use non-treated wood. You may bring newspaper and matches to start fire.
- 4) You cannot use: combustible lighter fluid, charcoal, or any other flammable material.
- 5) The Warming Fire cannot be used to cook food. Only adults are allowed to warm simple dessert items, like Smores.
- 6) No Warming Fires are allowed on windy days or windy nights.
- 7) Warming Fires must be completely extinguished with water by an adult before leaving area and the area must be clean of all food debris.
- 8) STYCC reserves the right to cancel a Warming Fire event at any time.
- 9) Renter is responsible for all damages to buildings, grounds, and equipment caused by Warming Fire.



Proper Use of Facilities and Damage Responsibilities

Providing quality facilities is a high priority for STYCC. In order to maintain a quality, clean atmosphere the following rules apply:

- 1) Groups are not allowed to use any tape that leaves a sticky residue, or use tacks, nails, screws, etc. in any part of the buildings.
- 2) Open-flame candles are NOT PERMITTED at STYCC. Please use flame-less candles, battery operated candles, or LED candles.
- 3) Incense is not allowed in any of the buildings.
- 4) Groups are responsible for all damages to buildings, grounds, and equipment caused by the groups, other than ordinary wear and tear. The cost for repair or replacement may include labor costs.



Cleaning Policy

STYCC requires groups to clean all used facilities to an acceptable level by time of checkout. A site check by STYCC management and the group leader will be conducted prior to group's departure. If not cleaned to a satisfactory level, there may be an added charge for cleaning. Satisfactory level means the following:

- 1) All property of the group must be removed.
- 2) All trash inside the facilities and outside on the premises must be placed in the garbage dumpster.
- 3) All floors swept broom clean.
- 4) All sinks cleaned of debris.
- 5) Furniture returned to its original location.
- 6) All signs and residue must be removed and cleaned off surfaces.
- 7) Damage must be brought to the attention of STYCC management. Costs for damages may apply.