



Encourage Green Teens for Stewardship & Justice



"Going green" has become the rallying cry for many of today's young people, as they take the initiative to preserve the planet. Schools, celebrities, and media encourage teenagers to be eco-friendly and reduce their "footprint."

Living in an environmentally conscious way is healthy and admirable, as long as teenagers have the proper motives and perspective. The reason we all should take good care of the earth is because God made it and put us in charge of its upkeep. When the "green" way of life is centered on a practice of faith, our relationship with God is enriched and we grow spiritually.

Environmentalism is rooted in Scripture & Tradition. The Scriptures encourage respect for creation from not wasting what God has given us (including our talents) to loving our neighbors, who are fellow creations of God. Catholic Social Teaching includes the practice of Caring for God's Creation as an essential element to living justly.

By caring for creation, both the environment and our own bodies, we honor the gifts God lovingly entrusted to us. If teenagers can commit to taking shorter showers, reducing waste by using less plastic or joining an environmental club, they also can commit to making time for daily prayer or joining a church youth group.

Researchers say that "green teens" tend to be influential leaders among their peers. They live out their beliefs, and other people tend to follow their actions. When caring and concerned teenagers honor God with their eco-friendly lifestyles, they'll be spreading the good news that our Creator loves us and that our faith calls us to be good stewards of creation.

In *Earth-Wise: A Biblical Response to Environmental Issues*, Calvin DeWitt offers these principles for honoring God by taking care of his creation:

1. Protect and nourish everything that God created, just as he daily protects and nourishes each of his children.
2. Honor and worship Jesus, through whom God created all things (see John 1:3).
3. Enjoy and appreciate all natural resources without destroying them.
4. During your earthly life, serve God in everything you do and seek his kingdom above all else (see Matthew 6:33).
5. Be content with what you have and work to preserve resources for other people.
6. Don't overwork God's creation, including your bodies. Even God rested on the seventh day.
7. Put your concerns for the environment into practice, and spread the message to other people.

Pulse

Research shows that green living has definitely taken root among today's teenagers.

- 71% of preteens say "going green" is hot.
(Youth Trends)
- 53% of online teenagers say they are "concerned" or "very concerned" about the environment.
- 15% of those kids call themselves "hard-core" environmentalists who are serious about green living.
(Jupiter Research)
- In a United Kingdom study, parents say their teenagers influence their green choices as much as the media do.
- 76% of kids in the UK study say they will make a real impact on future social and environmental concerns.
(The Future Foundation)



MUSIC SPOTLIGHT



Mainstream Artist

Background: This Grammy-nominated band formed in Virginia in 1990 as Burn the Priest. They changed their name but continue playing a combination of heavy metal, death metal, and progressive metal—keyword metal. *Wrath*, their new album, hit number two on the Billboard chart. Lamb of God has headlined the popular OzzFest tour.

Albums: *Wrath* (2009), *Sacrament* (2006), *New American Gospel* (2000)

What Parents Should Know: Despite the band's name and album titles, don't mistake it for a Christian band. Dark lyrics and imagery often mock the church and authority figures.

What Lamb of God Says: Drummer Chris Adler says the band's name "was never a religious thing.... What we're really trying to get across is: Don't always take things at surface level." Guitarist Willie Adler says kids can relate to their music, especially with "the whole feeling of angst and rebellion."

Discussion Questions: Read Romans 13:1-7. Do we have to respect people who abuse authority? What should Christians do when leaders abuse power? Read John 7:24. Why is it dangerous to accept things at surface level? How can you avoid making dangerous assumptions?



Christian Artist

Background: This nu-metal band formed in Tennessee in 2004, and, after only two albums, has become one of the biggest players in Christian rock. Red's music has been nominated for a Grammy and has won a Dove award. *Innocence & Instinct* reached number one on Billboard's indie chart.

Albums: *Innocence & Instinct* (2009), *The End of Silence* (2006)

What Parents Should Know: Red isn't just a "safe" alternative band; these guys are genuinely talented and have had mainstream success as a result. Many of their lyrics deal with overcoming baser instincts and turning toward God.

What Red Says: Singer Michael Barnes calls the song "Never Be the Same" an anthem of redemption. Although we've all gone through difficult situations, he says, "when we look to God and see how he's put us back together again and made us whole, we realize we'll never be the same."

Discussion Questions: Read Psalm 51:1-10. Have you ever cried out to God in a similar way? If so, explain. Why do we continue making mistakes that make such confessions necessary? What does it mean to have a "clean heart"? Does it mean we're perfect? Explain.

FILMWATCH

Movie: *Watchmen*

Genre: Action, Drama

Rating: R (for strong graphic violence, sexuality, nudity, and language)

Synopsis: This is a faithful adaptation of an influential graphic novel. The characters are deeply flawed people who don costumes and try to make the world a better place (at least, as they see it). But this isn't just another superhero movie—or even another "dark" one, such as the recent *Batman* films. There's *nothing* heroic about these superheroes. Because of this film's content, parents should take its R rating *very* seriously.

Discussion Questions: If you could have one superpower, what would it be, and why? Is vigilantism ever justified? Explain. Why do people often find comfort in wearing masks? What types of masks have you worn, and why? Would you act more bravely if your identity were hidden? Why or why not?



Lent

Focus on Prayer

Easter

Forty Hours devotion is a form of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. 40 hours of Exposition and Adoration this Lenters' prayer and *participate in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament by*



St. Patrick's is offering Exposition and Eucharistic Adoration to nourish parishioners' sacramental life. *Participate in the Blessed Sacrament by yourself or with your family as part of your Lenten journey!*

Sunday, March 29:

Exposition & Adoration, 1:30pm to 7:00pm.
6:00-7:00 pm Adoration w/ praise music, psalms, and silence.

Benediction & talk on Baptism, 7:00-7:30pm.

SPY and families invited to participate from 6:00-7:30.

Monday, March 30:

Exposition & Adoration, 9:00am-7:00pm.

Parish Penance Service, 7:00 - 8:30pm.

Tuesday, March 31:

Exposition & Adoration, 9:15am-7:00pm.

Benediction & talk on Confirmation, 7:00-7:30pm.

Wednesday, April 1:

Exposition & Adoration, 6:30am-6:15pm.

Closing and talk on Eucharist from 6:15-7:00

Triduum

The celebration at the close of Holy Week including Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Vigil. These three days form a single liturgy beginning with Mass on Holy Thursday and ending with the Easter Vigil.

Holy Thursday, April 9

6:30 pm Mass of the Lord's Supper leading into Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament following until 10 pm.

Good Friday, April 10

3:00 pm Stations of the Cross

6:30 pm Liturgy of the Passion and Death of Jesus

Holy Saturday, April 11

9:00 pm Liturgy of the Easter Vigil and Sacraments of Initiation

Easter Sunday, April 12

Liturgies of the Resurrection

Masses at 8:00 am, 9:30 am, 11:00 am and 12:30 pm

What's Up With Kids

In the chaos of daily responsibilities, stresses, and activities, do your teenagers "remember to remember" Jesus? Try this life-changing idea from Rick Lawrence, editor of *Group Magazine*:



Every aspect of nature, no matter how mundane, has a message about God's character and goodness locked up in it. Paul's declaration in Romans 1:20 about God's "invisible qualities" proves it. We can wake kids up to those qualities by helping them develop a habit of paying much closer attention to what God has made. This can be a simple daily challenge. At least once a day, wherever you are, pluck a blade of grass, a dandelion, a leaf, a flower—anything from creation—and closely study it. Then ask God to reveal to you his eternal power and divine nature through it.

This sounds far-fetched until you actually do it. God's Word is true, not rhetorical. Your kids (and you) will be amazed at how eager God is to describe himself through even the most forgettable aspects of his creation. For example, I just plucked a sunflower to study. I asked God to show me something about him through it. The middle of the flower looks like a head of hair, with so many little black "hairs" that it's impossible to count them. Then God reminded me that "the very hairs on [my] head are all numbered" (Matthew 10:30). That has nothing to do with some kind of heavenly inventory. God is trying to tell me he knows me intimately, and he's paying rapt attention to the details of who I am. He sees me. He loves me.

Ask your kids to develop a daily habit of worshipping God by paying passionate attention to how he reveals himself through nature. Model this yourself, and talk often of how this practice has led you into worship.



SPY April 2009

Date/Day/ Grades	Time	Event	Description / Information
Apr. 1 st Wednesday Gr. 6-8		Graduates Mass invites mailed	Parents of high school seniors, watch for the invitation to the High School Graduates Mass & Lunch in the mail. Contact Jenni if you don't receive one!
Apr. 3 rd Friday Gr. 6-12	5:00-8:00 pm	Face Painting/ Tattooing Fundraiser	Any youth can help paint faces during the Fish Frys to help fundraise for SPY trips and events. This year we adding temporary tattoos, too! Contact Jenni to sign up!
Apr. 5 th Sunday Gr. 6-8	6:00-8:00 pm	MS SPY Night	Stations, Fire, and Fun at Pro-Sanctity! Pray the stations around the property, enjoy a bonfire or volleyball afterward! Meet directly at Pro-Sanctity! Permission form on the web.
Apr. 5 th Sunday Gr. 9-12	6:30-8:00 pm	Kairos	Regular meeting in leaders' homes.
Apr. 12 th Sunday		Easter	Blessings to you and your family on this holiest of days!
Apr. 16 th Thursday	3:30-4:30 pm	APLS	Meeting for select middle school teens involved in planning and implementing the MS SPY nights and youth group.
Apr. 19 th Sunday Gr. 6-8	X	MS SPY Night	NO Middle school youth group meets.
Apr. 19 th Sunday Gr. 9-12	6:00-8:00 pm	Kairos/ TNZ Connect	All Kairos groups and high school teens meet for PIZZA & PRAISE. Gather with peers in Boland Hall for a meal, prayer, and discussion about real life.
Apr. 20 th Monday	7:00-8:30 pm	YM Advisory Team Meeting	Adult and teen leaders meet to plan for SPY happenings and to advise on the needs of SPY families.
Apr. 22 nd Wednesday Gr. 12	!	Graduates Mass RSVP Due	RSVP due for the High School Graduates Mass & Lunch on Sunday, May 3rd. Senior Pictures also due for the display.
Apr. 26 th Sunday Gr. 8 & up	11:30 am - 1:30 pm	Teen Choir	Teen vocalists and instrumentalists participate in music ministry at the 12:30 Mass on the fourth Sunday of each month. Practice at 11:30 am in the Family Room directly before Mass.

Summer Camps



YouthServe 2009

A 3-day Adventure in Service & Community

When: June 28-30 or July 12-14 or July 26-28

Where: St. Columban Retreat Center, Bellevue
(Service Sites around the Omaha area)

Who: Current 7th & 8th grade youth

Cost: \$110 per person

To Register: Permission form & a \$50 non-refundable deposit to the youth ministry or RF office.

Registration Deadline: **Thursday, May 14th**

Catholic Leadership Institute

June 7-12, 2009

Wayne State College, Wayne, NE

realize your ability as leaders of the Church, not for the future Church, but for the Church of today

- focuses on five basic skills and support group activities: Leadership and Leadership styles; Communication; Program Planning; Group Dynamics and Consensus Seeking
- For current 9th, 10th, & 11th graders
- **Cost is \$200** (\$50 deposit w/ registration)
- **Register by May 7th**
- Registration form on the web

