

Encounter the Gospel of Life

Service Camp Trip 2017

St Paul Parent Information Packet

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REGISTRATION

To officially register with the camp you must do so through the [EGL website](#). Completing the online registration will generate your own personal permission slip for your teen.

TURN IN FORMS

Please print the permission slip generated by your online registration. There should be three forms, the main permission slip, your finger printing form, and a medical form. All three must be signed and turned in to me as soon as possible. **I am setting the deadline of May 26th for receiving ALL forms. If you do not turn in the form by the 26th we are charged a \$50 late fee** for your teen which you will be asked to cover. A couple notes about the medical form...

MEDICAL FORM

The Medical form requires some extra work. It must be signed by a doctor and **you have to have a TB test within the past two years**. If your teen got a TB test before last year's Encounter you are still covered, just note the date and have your doctor sign. If not, you need to take your teen to get a TB test. Most likely, your primary care doctor will not do this test. I know the CVS Minute Clinic in Gaithersburg by the fairgrounds does them and takes walk-ins.

PAYMENT & FUNDRAISING

The total cost of our trip this year is \$500 a person. We will be doing an envelope fundraiser to earn money for our trip. The fundraiser will be after all the masses on **June 10th and 11th**. **I ask that all teens participating help out after at least 2 masses that weekend**. Please sign up for your mass using the link in the email sent with this packet. We do expect to cover a great deal of our costs with this fundraiser. After that weekend we will divide the funds and parents will receive a final dollar amount for their teen's trip cost. That **payment is expected in full by July 1st**.

Parents of StPYG teens attending EGL 2017,

Thanks so much for signing up your son or daughter for our Encounter the Gospel of Life service camp trip. This is our 5th year attending the Encounter and I am thrilled to be taking such a wonderful group of kids once again this year. Whether it is your teen's first year coming or they've been coming for many years, please read all this information in full and get back to me with any questions. This packet begins with information specific to St Paul's trip to EGL, then includes the official EGL packing list and rules.

Our Parish Group Leaders this year will be Mary Moss and Brandyn Miller. I will not be in attendance this year, but I am sending the teens in very capable, veteran hands. Mary Moss has been an adult leader on this trip in prior years. Both Brandyn and Mary are regular members of our Adult Leadership team for St Paul Youth Group. I have faith that all our teens will come home from this retreat with a deeper desire to seek relationship with God and a greater zeal for serving the poor and vulnerable in the world around them.

What you need to know:

- **We will meet in the Norris Hall SUNDAY, July 9th, at 10:00am!** (no need to go to mass before, we will have mass at UMD in the afternoon) Please bring a bagged lunch on Sunday for us to eat after we check in.
- We will be traveling by carpool to University of Maryland, College Park, where we will be housed and spend our time when students are not on their service sites. You can find the emergency contact info at the end of this letter.
- The packing list for our trip can be found at the end of this packet, and includes what to bring as well as what not to bring! Please have all belongings labeled with your teen's name and "St Paul"
- We plan to leave UMD around 3:30pm on Friday, July 14th. **We will back in the church parking lot around 4:30pm for pick-up**, students will call on the way home to give parents a better ETA.

Behavioral note:

- The behavior and rules pages included at the end of this packet are directly from the EGL staff. Our Parish Group Leaders, Mary Moss and Brandyn Miller, will be helping to enforce these rules for St Paul Participant and we do take them seriously.
- We particularly will not tolerate any student who is found to be leaving adult supervision, leaving their room at night, or allowing anyone into their room at night or any coed mingling in the dorms at any time. We do not anticipate we will have any problems with this among our students, but I will make it very clear now that these behaviors will not be tolerated and may result in my personal decision to *send that teen home immediately even on first offense*.
- This obviously also applies to any drug, alcohol, or weapons with a teen or in his/her dorm. This would cause for immediate dismissal from the camp. Again, we definitely do not anticipate this being a problem with any of our teens, but I feel it is important to note so that our teens understand the seriousness of our rules and their consequences.
- Be sure to discuss these points with your teen and remind them that if they see something they should say something. It is extremely important to me that we, as a parish group, promote an appropriate and safe atmosphere for all participants.

There are three things I would like to ask of you as parents.

1. The best possible thing you could do for us is to PRAY. Pray that our trip goes well logistically, but most importantly pray for your teen and the other teens attending, that they may be able to truly open their hearts this weekend and that the Lord will fill them with an understanding of His truth and His love. Pray also for the adult leaders, that they may stay strong through the stress and sleep deprivation to be instruments of God's message to the hearts of our teens. And finally, please pray for the poor and vulnerable people we will be serving at our sites.
2. Our parish is signed up to help provide 100 lunches for Thursday, July 13th. We need to provide the makings of 100 lunches (not packed, just supplies) and have it up at UMD by 5pm on Wednesday the 12th. I need a parent or parents who are willing to be in charge of gathering the items and bringing them up to campus.
3. Finally, I strongly encourage you to discuss the trip with your teens after he/she gets home. It's an awesome opportunity to get them talking about their faith life. Let's face it, for some teens it's tough enough to get them talking about what happened in school today, so being open about their spirituality isn't so easy. Hopefully sharing stories from our retreat can break the ice a bit between you and your teen when it comes to their faith.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about our trip. My email address, once again, is ym@stpauldamascus.org. Below you will find the emergency contact information for when we are at Encounter. Further down you will find more EGL info, the packing list, and behavior/safety information. Please review them both with your teen!

God bless, and thank you for your prayers!

In Christ,

Cathy McTighe

*Cathy McTighe
Director of Youth Ministry
St. Paul Catholic Church*

Emergency Contact Information:

Mary Moss Cell: - (240) 674-5773

Brandyn Miller Cell: - (240) 499-6769

(Both our adult trip leaders will have their phones on them at all times and the cell reception is good. In the case of an absolute emergency if you cannot reach my cell, call Student Union: 301-314-3375 and ask to speak with someone from Encounter, the group meeting in the Colony Ballroom. If you have general questions during the week, you can reach me here: Cathy McTighe Cell – 301.693.2234)

OTHER INFORMATION FROM EGL

Medical Needs

We will have a first aid supply/station at Encounter for treatment of minor injuries, illness, including pain relief, allergy, upset stomach, and mild dehydration/exhaustion. All other issues are the responsibility of the parish group leader, or can use the UMD Emergency Care facility.

Meds info

- All participants who are on daily medications must provide that information as part of your registration.
- Participants are responsible for the supply and the dispensing of their own medications.
- Daily meds taken during the school year for performance and/or attention issues **SHOULD NOT** be stopped during Encounter. Individuals with these needs will **NEED** to remain on their medication during Encounter.
- Emergency medicines such as inhalers, Epi-pens, etc. must be provided and with the person in need at all times

UMD medical

- There is an on-campus emergency medical center
- We will have first aid trained individuals on hand at Encounter to do minimum assessments of illness and injury – anything beyond our ability, we will refer to the UMD Emergency Center.

Meals

- Breakfast will be provided by Goodies to Go, a UMD catering company, in the Stamp Union and is continental style
- Lunches are self-assembly brown bag lunches made from food donated by various parishes. Choices will have a variety of options some GF, some dairy free, some nut free
- Dinner will be in the campus dining hall – various options are available for meals, and is of an all you can eat variety

Dietary Restrictions

Food allergies will be considered, but not guaranteed – no dairy, wheat, peanut butter etc. options are generally available. Those with severe allergies should plan to bring safe food products with them for safe consumption. Refrigeration is **NOT** guaranteed – do not plan to bring perishables.

Individuals with food allergies can check out the UMD catering/cafeteria for food options www.umd.edu and should **directly contact the UMD nutritionist at schrimpe@umd.edu to be sure they are aware of specific allergies** - they work very well with this. Otherwise, those with food allergies should bring their own non-perishable food for safe personal consumption.

Rules of Encounter

We have always believed that with an understanding of RESPECT for oneself, others and our environment that a long list of rules was not necessary. Mutual understanding and evaluation of situations may be the guide for most issues that may need addressing. However, we do have some rules that are Non-Negotiable and do need to be stated.]

- Teen Participants must stay within visual contact of adult leaders at all times
- Nametags with pertinent safety information **MUST** be worn at all times
- No switching of meal cards or keys (loss results in \$100 fee)
- No room or roommate changes (any issues can be handled by Encounter staff)
- Teen participants must check in with parish leaders when arriving back from sites
- NO Co-Ed mingling in the dorms at ANY TIME
- Noise levels must be reasonable
- LIGHTS OUT - 11pm (may vary, always announced) This is for ALL participants. Staff will do nighttime rotations
- No Late Night Food Orders - this is why we have snacks stock-piled!
- No Alcohol, illegal substances, smoking, profanity, inappropriate sexual/social behavior, violent/aggressive/defiant behavior

Any activity that is deemed unsafe to oneself or to others may result in removal from the camp. This includes but is not limited to the possession or use of banned substances, violent actions or threats, destruction of property, pranks that can involve injury or harm to others.

Cell Phone Policy

Cell phones **ARE permitted** at Encounter, in fact they are *encouraged* for:

- Communication with your parish chaperones
- Tweeting/Posting Encounter updates
- Checking in with parents
- Emergency situations

Cell phones **should not be used for:**

- Texting/talking to friends
- Playing games, watching videos, or listening to music (music is fine when falling asleep)
- Disengaging or distracting others

Encounter staff reserve the right to confiscate cell phones being used for disengaging, distracting, and/or inappropriate activity. Adult chaperones will always have their phones with them and students will never be without adult leaders, so students who have their phones taken away will still have access to phones for emergencies and checking in.

Safety and Security

We strive to adhere to the highest standard of safety practices available to us as a large youth camp. We begin with our staff and leaders – all whom have been involved in youth ministry and the implementation of this particular camp, some for more than 14 years. Thus while some of our rules and expectations may seem more restrictive than other camps, we take our role of protecting our youth seriously. We have no fear of problems, nor have we encountered any over the years, but we respect the needs of our families who want to know their youth are safe.

Adult to youth ratio 1:6.

- We have a higher ratio than most camps – with more adults on hand to assist and monitor young people. We also have Young adults, 18 – 20 years of age, who can also assist with the implementation of safe practices. (Most camps are 1:15)
- Adults and Young Adults are required to have completed the Child Protection Safety programs of the diocese in which they reside. Adults and Young Adults are NOT to be alone with a youth – they must be in the presence of other people at all times.
- Youth cannot walk alone, or without adult supervision anywhere on UMD campus, or at sites. They are required to abide by this rule and we do repeatedly remind them.
- Transportation is by adult driven vehicles, private bus, or Metro transit. Again, all measures of safety are taken when moving from one location to another. Walking is also the main form of transportation, and once again YOUTH CANNOT WALK ALONE OR UNSUPERVISED.
- Encounter is equipped with basic medical care needs (basic first aid, illness prevention and detection); Director and other staff are CPR and First Aid trained – often other adult volunteers have medical training, or backgrounds adding to assistance medically on hand.
- UMD campus is a typical large college campus, and has security, medical, fire, and emergency personnel on duty 24/7. Urgent medical care is located directly opposite our meeting space building, and takes medical insurance or individual payment as needed. Similar to Emergency Room in a hospital, they will triage a person, and can do certain medical intervention procedures as needed.
- Food is provided by the UMD dining services and catering department – those with food allergies are encouraged to visit the UMD site for food options. Both the dining hall and catering offer vegetarian options.
- Lunches are provided by parishes donating mostly pre-packaged prepared foods such as chips, snacks, crackers, fruit, canned tuna/meat, as well as sandwiches prepared freshly for each days lunch.
- Again, those with dietary issues or restrictions can check the UMD site, inform the Encounter staff of the issue, and also bring food that meets their dietary needs. Please note that most of the dorms do not have refrigeration.

For more information about the University of Maryland Campus, including maps see www.umd.edu

What to Pack

An overall rule to follow when packing for Encounter is that it's 5 days, not 5 weeks.

PLEASE NOTE:

- *Many sites involve elderly or disabled individuals who can become quite upset by inappropriate clothing. Please be respectful and pack clothes that would not offend.*
- *Some sites require messy activities so pack clothes that won't get ruined easily*
- **CLOSED TOE SHOES** are required at every site.

- _____ T-Shirts (AVOID: strappy tank tops, bra straps showing, low-cut or tight fitting, profanity or inappropriate messages printed on shirts, team logos... just stick to plain to be safe)
- _____ Shorts (AVOID: short shorts, wearing shorts that hang below the waist/show underwear)
- _____ Jeans, Khakis, Capris (many sites require long pants, bring at least one pair)
- _____ Sweat Shirt
- _____ Pajamas (appropriate)
- _____ Bathing Suit (no bikinis, some sites may involve taking children to the pool)
- _____ Underwear
- _____ Socks
- _____ Tennis Shoes/Sneakers (ALL SITES require closed toe shoes!)
- _____ Flip Flops (only to be worn at UMD after sites)
- _____ Hat
- _____ Rain gear
- _____ Shower shoes
- _____ Toiletries (soap, shampoo, toothbrush, toothpaste, hairbrush, DEODORANT, etc)
- _____ Towels (two total, for showering and/or site use)
- _____ Sunscreen
- _____ Snacks to share
- _____ Pillow
- _____ **Sleeping Bag, Sheets, or Blankets - ESSENTIAL**
- _____ **Reusable Water Bottle** (to refill at UMD clean water stations and use daily for personal water)
- _____ **Medications** (you are responsible for your own meds, but must inform chaperones)
- _____ Money (\$50-\$60 - some site require \$ for metro, there will also be chances to buy snacks/etc.)

Please do NOT bring:

- Drugs, alcohol, smoking items of any kind, weapons (including pocket knives)
- Gaming equipment, TVs, Tablets, Laptops, iHomes/speakers
- Anything of value that you would not want to lose