

St. Dominic CYO Member Code of Conduct

I. Discipline Philosophy

In addition to the mission statement of the St. Dominic CYO found in the organization's by-laws, it should be noted that the St. Dominic CYO exists to further the spiritual and social development of teenagers in the context of their general growth and maturity and to build and sustain their relationship with the Church. These regulations are set down as guides to the members as they develop their potential, learn to conduct themselves in a mature Christian manner, and acquire a sense of mutual respect for all those with whom they must live. In working toward these goals, certain general and specific rules must be enforced in order to ensure the success of the youth ministry program for all involved.

II. Compliance

All members are required to sign the registration form acknowledging their responsibility in adhering to all CYO rules as set forth in the by-laws, code of conduct, and special instructions by the Youth Minister. The Youth Minister will publish in the newsletter or announce at activities any specific rules for an event beyond those rules addressed in this code of conduct. Since these rules are not intended to be comprehensive, they presuppose good will and judgement on the part of the member and his or her parents in the circumstances in which they may find themselves. The registration of a member is considered an agreement on the part of the member and his or her parents that they will read and be familiar with the by-laws and code of conduct and that they will endeavor to earnestly comply with them.

III. General Behavior at CYO Activities

Appropriate Christian behavior consistent with Gospel values and the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, as well as local civil laws, is expected of St. Dominic CYO members at all times. The use of vulgar or profane language and the exhibition of behavior that is disrespectful or discourteous will not be tolerated at any CYO activity; this includes disruptions of any sort that prevent an activity from proceeding as planned. Members are expected to be respectful of each other and of adult chaperones present at CYO activities.

IV. Specific Issues

Attendance

All members are encouraged to attend at least one CYO activity per month, more if the member is able. The beginning and ending times of activities are published in the newsletter and constitute the time frame for an activity to be officially sponsored by the CYO. All rules are in effect during the stated time. Members should make every effort to arrive on time and remain until the stated end time for a CYO activity. In instances designated by the Youth Minister, a member may be required to remain until the published end time for an activity unless picked up by a parent or legal guardian; a CYO member may not be permitted to depart with older siblings, relatives, or other friends that are not legal guardians prior to the official end time of an activity without the express permission of the parent or legal guardian.

Dress Codes

The dress code for CYO activities depends on the nature and circumstances of the given activity. For the most part, casual dress that is consistent with modest Christian values is the normal dress. For certain activities, the Youth Minister may require members to wear the official CYO T-shirt, or require semi-formal dress at events requiring such attire. Athletic uniforms are appropriate at athletic activities and such uniforms are approved and issued by the CYO.

Forbidden Items: Alcohol, Drugs, Tobacco, Medications, and Weapons

The use of alcohol and illegal drugs by high school students affects them adversely spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, physically, and socially. The CYO, therefore, encourages its members to remain free of those substances that are incompatible with their successful maturation into young adults. The possession, consumption, or distribution of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs by underage members at a CYO activity is forbidden. Neither tobacco use nor vaping is allowed at CYO activities. Prescription medications are to be possessed and consumed according to labeling only by the person to whom the medication has been prescribed; the Youth Minister reserves the right to hold such medication during the time of a CYO activity. Weapons of any sort or items that could be used as a weapon are forbidden at CYO activities. Violations of these directives will result in immediate disciplinary actions.

Overnight Events

Due to the extended nature of overnight events and the greater challenges posed for chaperones, discipline violations at such events may be treated more seriously. In addition to the conduct already outlined here, the issue of curfew is of the utmost importance. Members who violate the announced curfew may be subject to serious consequences.

Personal Belongings

Members are responsible for personal belongings brought to CYO activities. The Youth Minister maintains a lost and found for items left at events. All lost and found items become property of the CYO and may be donated to charity or otherwise disposed of one month after the activity at which they were left. While the CYO respects the privacy of its members, the general safety of the group and the overall youth ministry program is paramount and the Youth Minister reserves the right to inspect and search all bags and belongings brought to CYO activities, especially those activities of an extended or overnight nature.

Property/Facilities

Members are expected to demonstrate respect and care toward property and facilities belonging to the CYO and St. Dominic Parish in general, as well as any other venue in which a CYO activity is taking place. Theft, vandalism, and misuse and destruction of property will not be tolerated.

Sexual Matters

CYO activities are not appropriate venues for sexual activities inconsistent with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. Members must also refrain from actions that may be construed as sexual harassment, whether physical, verbal, or otherwise. In the case of pregnancy, whether involving a female CYO member, male CYO member, or both, the Youth Minister will invite the relevant parties and their parents to discuss the matter. It is at the Youth Minister's discretion, in consultation with the pastor, whether to allow continued attendance at CYO activities for the duration of the pregnancy, given concern for the health and well being of the CYO member-parent, the health of the unborn child, the mission of the CYO, and the CYO's responsibility to its other members.

Social Media

CYO members are expected to have their online presence on social media platforms including (but not limited to) Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc., be consistent with Christian values, the teachings of the Catholic Church, and with respect shown toward St. Dominic Parish and CYO. Members should be aware that privacy settings notwithstanding, anything posted on social media that becomes public knowledge and reflects negatively on the CYO will result in disciplinary consequences.

V. Special Member Categories

Athletes

Members violating the code of conduct while participating in athletic activities will first be subject to discipline action by the head coach of the team on which the member is playing. Further, the CYO Athletic Youth Minister may impose consequences related to violations that occur during athletic activities. Decisions of the CYO Athletic Youth Minister shall be considered final, with an appeal only to the CYO Youth Minister, and then the Pastor.

Drivers

When the St. Dominic CYO coordinates transportation for an official activity (defined as one listed in the monthly St. Dominic CYO newsletter,) per Archdiocesan policy, one of the following means will be employed.

- 1) Commercial transportation such as motorcoaches, trains, airlines, etc.
- 2) Rental school busses, with verification of liability insurance required by the Archdiocese
- 3) Vehicles, including school busses, owned and operated by St. Dominic Parish, or another Archdiocesan parish or institution
- 4) Vehicles of adult chaperones with verification of liability insurance required by the Archdiocese

When the St. Dominic CYO does NOT coordinate transportation, members are responsible for their own transportation to and from activities/events. St. Dominic assumes no responsibility for choice of driver, vehicle, etc.

On the matter of teens driving themselves, the following stipulations apply:

- 1) St. Dominic does not require or coordinate members driving themselves; it is always in the context of arranging your own transportation
- 2) No member will ever be required by the CYO, during an official activity, to drive themselves or be a passenger in a vehicle driven by another member
- 3) Driving is a privilege, and not a right. Any member operating a vehicle in an unlawful or dangerous manner when arriving or departing a St. Dominic CYO event may be barred from participating in said event.

Members at least 18 Years of Age

CYO members who turn 18 while a member remain bound by the code of conduct and all other regulations. They may still not use tobacco products at CYO activities even if legally permitted. They do not have to obtain parental permission, however, for events away from the parish. They do not constitute legal chaperones. If they are acting as a junior coach in an Archdiocesan CYO athletic league, all disciplinary action towards members under 18 must be handled by a coach or advisor at least 21 years old.

Office Holders

Members serving on the Youth Board, Peer Ministry Team, or other specific leadership role are expected to set an example insofar as conduct goes. Violations of the by-laws, code of conduct, and instructions of the Youth Minister may be considered more serious because of these members' positions. Consequences as such may be more severe for these members. Conduct violations are not to be confused with failure to carry out assigned duties in the capacity as an office holder. Failure to carry out assigned duties shall be dealt with through the process to remove office-holders outlined in the by-laws.

VI. Major Offenses

Major offenses include, but are not limited to the following. Major offenses are automatic grounds for expulsion.

1. repeated violations of the code of conduct, especially after warnings and prior consequences
2. unauthorized departure from an activity
3. failure to comply with disciplinary consequences
4. theft, vandalism, misuse, or destruction of property
5. illegal possession, consumption, or distribution of alcohol, tobacco, vaping products, drugs, weapons, and prescription medication not belonging to the member
6. inappropriate or immoral sexual activity conducted during a CYO activity
7. dishonesty such as forgery of parent's signatures, lying or concealment about participation in a violation of the code of conduct
8. lying to parents/guardian about attendance at a CYO activity when, in fact, the member did not attend
9. disrespect toward adult advisors or direct confrontation with CYO authorities
10. disrespect and/or harassment of other members whether physical, verbal, or otherwise
11. actions, postings, profiles, etc. on social media that disparage the CYO or the Catholic Church, or promote values and/or actions contrary to Church teaching or civil law
12. fighting; violence
13. any conduct which jeopardizes the good or safety of the member, other members, or the CYO itself
14. reckless operation of a motor vehicle at a CYO activity
15. any conduct which is morally offensive to the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church
16. activities that involve unlawful behavior and/or result in the intervention of law enforcement

VII. Consequences

Violations of the CYO by-laws, code of conduct, and/or instructions of the Youth Minister may result in disciplinary consequences for the member. These consequences may include, and are not limited to, suspension from CYO activities in various manners such as length of time, activity type, number of scheduled events, or any other combination determined by the Youth Minister; fulfilling a service requirement outlined by the Youth Minister; membership probation; disciplinary contracts; and expulsion. Expulsion is especially warranted in cases of serious violations, repeated violations, or violations where illegal activity was involved.

In instances of rule violations, the CYO Youth Minister shall act to preserve the activity taking place and thus may remove the member from the activity. The Youth Minister may further impose consequences as outlined in this code of conduct. The Youth Minister may convene a Discipline Committee to be comprised of any combination of adult advisors, CYO members, and parish personnel to assist in a determination of and to make a recommendation of the appropriate consequence. The convening of a Discipline Committee is within the sole discretion of the Youth Minister and the Youth Minister is not bound by any recommendation of the Committee. The Youth Minister shall make the final decision regarding consequences for rules violations. Any appeal should be made to the Pastor of St. Dominic Parish.