

SAID ED May 14, 2017

We Are COTA Life Teen

Two weeks ago, COTA Life Teen went on Spring Retreat. The theme was "A Light in the Darkness" and the goal was to bring teens into an encounter with Jesus Christ. In our beautiful society, we have comforts undreamed of, but, in spite of our material wealth, darkness surrounds us. This comes in the form of depression, addiction, etc. Without a light to guide us, we fall. The good news is, that the Father gives us this Light!

At retreat, we learned how Jesus Christ is THE light in the darkness for the whole world. Our teens gave talks, participated in skits, and wrote songs attesting to this. Old friendships were strengthened. New friendships were forged. Everyone learned and taught each other a lesson that we don't hear often enough:

YOU MATTER.

You (the young, the elderly, the unborn, the imprisoned, etc.) matter...especially to Jesus, who died for you to prove that point.

Spring Retreat was a small glimpse into the larger COTA Life Teen Community. Our mission is three-fold. For the first part, we want our teens to form a strong friendship with Jesus (the Light in the Darkness) and the Church He established. The second part is to show them that they matter. They are not a mistake! They are amazing and capable of great things. The third part is community. We are a community who supports each other. If you are part of COTA Life Teen, welcome to the family! You have found a place in the COTA Church Community where you belong!

Due to the nature of our mission, we are not (nor will we ever be) a games-based/activities-based ministry. Rather, we carry out our mission by feeding our teens spiritually. We do this weekly, beginning with the 6:00 pm Sunday Mass. This is followed by Life Nights (Youth Group), which takes place most Sundays right after Mass (roughly 7:00 pm).

Life Nights start with a reception in the Living Room, followed by a meeting in our newly renovated Youth Room, (room 7). We discuss various topics, (sainthood, sacraments, weekly issues relevant to teens, etc.). We pray together. We roast marshmallows together. We also have guest speakers who touch on topics close to the hearts of our teens. (Last weekend at 7:30, in the Church, nationally renowned speaker Justin Fatica was here).

To help facilitate our ministry, we have a Core Team of adults who walk the journey with our teens: discipling, mentoring, praying with them, and staffing special events. We also reach out through Social Media. We're on Facebook (cotalifeteen), Twitter (COTA_Life_Teen), and Instagram (cota_lifeteen).

Are you a lady or gentleman of high school age? Are you looking for a place that you can call your own? If the answer is "yes", I invite you to become part of COTA Life Teen. Give us a try. You may be pleasantly surprised.

God Bless — and remember — **YOU MATTER!**

Ted Bianculli
COTA Youth Minister
