

Saint Thomas the Apostle

Core App Packet 2026-2027

What's Inside:

- **Core Application**
- **Summer Schedule** - Please plan to come to as many Core Socials as possible!
- **Summer Schedule**
- **Guide to Giving a Witness**

Please prayerfully look at the expectations for Core – you need to be confident and comfortable talking about your relationship with God, and you need to take a realistic look at your Friday schedule and ensure there are not major conflicts

Main Things to Consider:

- In addition to the regular Youth Group events, Core is **REQUIRED** to be at the following:
 - Damascus Retreat at St Thomas
 - **August 14th from 10am-5pm**
 - Core Training:
 - **August 28th from 6:30-7:50pm**
 - Core Formations on Thursdays from 6pm-8pm:
 - **9/17, 10/22, 11/19, 12/10, 2/4, 3/4, 4/1**
 - Youth Group Retreat
 - **May 1st**
 - Core Thank You Dinner:
 - **Friday May 28th at 6pm**

PLEASE NOTE: You are allowed to miss ONE formation. After that, you lose 36 points for each absence!

- **Giving a Witness is a major component of being on Core!** Being able to share what Christ has done in your life in a deep and personal way is a key aspect of leading relational ministry. To be on Core, you must demonstrate that you are willing and able to give a personal testimony by **sharing one as a part of your application process, BEFORE you are approved to be on Core!!**

You have until May 21st to send over your signed Core Application. If we don't hear from you, we will assume you are not interested. After we have your answer, we will contact you to come in and give your witness as part of the application process.

Saint Thomas Youth Group Core Application

The Role of Core:

Core is a small group of Confirmed upperclassmen in high school seeking to deepen their personal relationship to Christ through ongoing formation and intentional opportunities to practice evangelization to their peers in the St Thomas Youth Group. The goal of Core is twofold: to intentionally invest in the formation of older teens in a way that is invigorating and relevant to their spiritual development, and to help them exercise and take ownership of their own call to evangelization.

As leaders being equipped to share the faith, Core will be trained in, and expected to:

- Lead small group discussions at the beginning and end of different Youth Group sessions
- Be comfortable leading spontaneous prayer with and for peers
- Help organize and lead a weekly Zoom rosary for teens
- Write a testimony to share with peers in different settings throughout the year

In order to further their own spiritual growth, Core will be expected to

- Attend a leadership **training on 8/28** to review practical skills needed for the year (witness writing, intercessory prayer, etc.)
- Attend monthly formation sessions held from 6pm-8pm on Thursdays to bond and develop a deeper spiritual life, **9/17, 10/22, 11/19, 12/10, 2/4, 3/4, 4/1**. Potential outings may include dinner and Holy Hour at the rectory, Rosaries at the Fatima Shrine, etc.

Additionally, Core members are invited to attend the Focus Catholic Seek Conference in Columbus, OH (12/31-1/6) or Damascus Summer Camp in Maryland (6/13-6/18). Please note: Attending Seek requires missing 2 days of school. To go to the Seek Conference at no cost, core must earn at least 700 points by the end of November. To go to Damascus at no cost, Core must earn 1000 points by the end of February. More info about seek can be found at <https://seek.focus.org/what-to-expect/>

A Breakdown of Core Requirements

- Student is a confirmed Upperclassman
- Student understands that they can/will be asked to lead prayer, small groups, and give witness
- Student will plan to attend as many Holy Hours, Youth Groups, Rosary and Service sessions as possible, as well as the regular teen retreat on May 1st in the Spring
- Student will be expected to attend all monthly Core Formation sessions, with one allowed absence
- Student will arrive **NO LATER THAN 6:15** to Youth Group, wearing their sweatshirt.

Core Rewards

Members of Core will follow the same Point Tracking System as the rest of the Youth Group students. However, Core will earn 6 points for every 20 minutes, rather than 5. That means that each Service/Holy Hour is worth 18 points (rather than 15), Youth Group is worth 24 points (rather than 20), and Rosary is worth 10 points (rather than 8).

Core is eligible for the same trip incentive as all other teens in the Youth Group, but to honor their commitment and time, they will earn higher point values to give them an edge over their peers in earning discounted trips. **Points will be taken away from Core members when they fail to give notice of their absence from Youth Group in advance. miss more than one Core Formation or are late! Failure to wear their sweatshirt will result in only earning 5 points per 20-minute interval, rather than 6 (a.k.a. loss of Core reward for that event)**

As a Core Member I will dress modestly and will not be dating other Core members at any time throughout the year end which will be in May 2027. Failure to meet that requirement will lead to loss of Core membership, points, and any trips to be taken.

I understand the Core Requirements listed above and want to commit myself to meet them this year.

Name: _____ Initials: _____ Parent Initials: _____

YOU MUST SIGN AND SUBMIT THIS PAGE TO FR SINISA BY MAY 21ST TO APPLY FOR CORE!

Parents, by signing above, you support your child's commitment to the above, and grant Fr Sinisa, Alyssa and the Adult Core volunteers permission to contact your child via text/email

Saint Thomas CORE Summer Schedule 2026

Date	Event	Point Value
May 29 th	7:00-8:00PM Teen Holy Hour Social to Follow!	None! Just come pray!
June 5 th	6:30-7:50PM Core Formation/Social @ Rectory 8:00-9:00PM Teen Holy Hour	0 pts. 18 pts.
June 12 th	8:00-9:00PM Teen Holy Hour	18 pts.
June 19 th	6:30-7:50PM Core Formation/Social @ Rectory 8:00-9:00PM Teen Holy Hour	0 pts. 18 pts.
June 22 nd -26 th	Vacation Bible School – Sign Ups Coming!	300-375 pts.
July 6 th	10am-5pm Retreat for Lagmore Youth	50 pts.
July 17 th	6:30-7:50PM Core Formation/Social @ Rectory 8:00-9:00PM Teen Holy Hour	0 pts. 18 pts.
August 14 th	10am-5pm Damascus Retreat 8:00-9:00PM Teen Holy Hour	50 pts. 18 pts.
August 21 st	6:30-7:50PM Core Formation/Social @ Rectory 8:00-9:00PM Teen Holy Hour	0 pts. 18 pts.
August 28 th	6:30-7:50PM Mandatory Core Training 8:00-9:00PM Teen Holy Hour	24 pts. 18 pts.

PLEASE NOTE: The first service opportunity of the year, and major opportunity to earn points will be Vacation Bible School – worth 300 to 375 points!

Contact Molly Judge if interested: [ybssaintthomasapostle@gmail.com](mailto:ybsaintthomasapostle@gmail.com)

Rosary continues every Tuesday in the Summer at 8:15pm via Zoom!

St. Thomas Youth Group Schedule 2026-2027

Youth Activities Breakdown:

Youth Group (24 points each) - Youth Group Sessions are held in the St. Thomas Large Hall (974 Main St.) on Friday Nights from 6:30-7:50pm, starting September 4th and ending May 21st, **EXCEPT FOR 11/27, 12/25, 1/1, and 4/23**

Teen Holy Hour (18 points each) - Teen Holy Hour is held every Friday night from 8pm-9pm at the church (82 Exchange Street).

Teen Rosary (10 points each) - Teen Rosary on Zoom will be held every Tuesday at 8:15pm. You must have your camera on and be actively participating to get points! The link to join is here:
us06web.zoom.us/j/4538948857?pwd=LboisVbPrBYuuBrTVSMmq86nXLj43R.1

Service (18 points per hour) - Service Events will be held every Saturday morning, starting in September and running through May, **EXCEPT for 9/19, 10/17, 11/21, 12/19, 2/6, 3/6, and 4/3**, and during school breaks and holiday weekends.

A sign up for service will be sent out on Tuesday Nights via Flocknote. Please be aware that if you sign up for an event and don't show up, you will lose 10 points, unless of the event of an emergency.

Apart from Saturday service, you can earn 15 pts. Per hour by helping at the Medway Village Food Pantry. To get credit at the Food Pantry, you must text Alyssa your hours within in a week of volunteering.

Confirmation Requirements:

All 7th Graders must earn 300 pts. and all 8th Graders must earn 700 pts. to satisfy Confirmation preparation! VBS points will NOT count towards satisfying the Confirmation requirement!

Point Incentives:

All teens who earn at least 1300 points, beginning on June 1st, will get their point total transferred over to its dollar value, which can be applied for a trip discount!

So, if you earn 1,500 points, you get \$1,500 off!

The trips for 2027 are: Jamaica Mission (April Break – around \$2000) and World Youth Day in South Korea (July/August – around \$4000) – yes, even with discounts/a lot of points, you will still need to fundraise!

Guide to Giving a Witness Talk

The goal of a personal witness talk is to share about how you have come to know Jesus Christ in a personal way, and how knowing Christ impacts your day-to-day life. Witness talks should be around 2-3 minutes, and should include the following:

1. **Give Background Context.** Who you are, your age, school, family life, where you grew up, what you're family dynamic is like, siblings....
2. **Talk about your experience with Christ before the faith became your own.** Did you grow up Catholic? How did you experience Christ, the Church, Faith, before it became your own. What did you used to think/feel going to Mass and other church related things?
3. **Share the experience that led you to encounter Christ in a personal way.** When did the faith become your own? What event, or experience led you to encounter Christ in a personal way, something that was authentic? If it was on a trip, what specifically helped you on that trip (service, increased daily prayer, adoration, encountering people, etc.). If it was in church/adoration/through prayer, how was your relationship with God changed? What lead up to the change? **As much as possible, state clearly what exactly convicted you.**
4. **Share how this conviction changed you.** How has your life looked different? How has your prayer life changed? What vices have you been able to cut out? What habits/routines have you incorporated into your daily routine?
5. **Share how you're continuing to try and grow in virtue.** Name a specific virtue you are trying to cultivate, and how you are aiming to achieve it (see virtue chart below). You can also share any prayers, devotions, etc. that you find to be helpful and encouraging.