



Dear Group Leaders,

March 2024

We look forward to having you and your group at one of the 2024 Steubenville Youth Conferences! We are excited about our theme of 'Illuminate' and Scripture from John 1:5, "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." It is our hope that during the conference weekend, through the Sacraments, worship, talks, and community, young people will leave having encountered the personal love of the Father through Christ's saving actions and empowered to live a life transformed in the Holy Spirit.

We don't have to tell young people that darkness exists in the world – they see it all around them. Young people also have a desire to purge this darkness they perceive, either through the pursuit of false lights the world and culture gives them or through their own will and actions. Yet, we know that it's through the incarnation that Jesus comes to this dark world, and to our darkened lives, and brings light. This light, which is Christ, brings clarity, understanding, meaning, reconciliation, and ultimately love to our lives by illuminating who He is and, in turn, who we are. Then, having encountered this light, we learn that Jesus calls us to something great: to join his mission to illuminate the world.

In addition, we wanted to highlight/ share with you a couple aspects of the programming this year:

#### Prayer and Scripture

Throughout the weekend, there will be a particular focus on communal prayer and praying individually with Scripture. Within the context of each keynote, the speaker or the host will walk young people through a time of reading, reflecting, and praying with Scripture, building comfortability with and confidence in being able to pray with Scripture upon returning home. In addition, there will be several moments where young people and groups will be encouraged to pray with one another. As the weekend progresses, young people will grow in confidence to boldly pray with one another in a context outside of the conference weekend.

#### Small Groups

In an effort to emphasize small groups, knowing that the time spent with your young people this weekend is incredibly valuable, the last portion of the Friday night schedule will be dedicated to small groups. After modeling a small group from stage, groups will be encouraged to meet in small groups for the first 20 minutes at the end of Friday night programming. Please take advantage of this time as there will be nothing else offered for that portion of the schedule.

For more information regarding the above and additional information about the conference weekend programming and schedule, please watch the [Group Leader video \(LINK\)](#). Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions. We cannot thank you enough for all that you do for the youth. Know of our prayers for you and your intentions. May God bless you and your ministry!

Bryan Wells  
Manager of Youth Programming  
Steubenville Conferences  
Franciscan University of Steubenville  
[bwells@franciscan.edu](mailto:bwells@franciscan.edu)  
740-284-5886