



2026 Parish Leader Guide



November 7-8, 2026
Phantom Ranch Bible Camp, Mukwonago

Supported through a Grant By:

FAITH
IN OUR FUTURE



Welcome Message

Welcome to Camp!

We are excited that you are exploring bringing a group to camp this fall. Middle School Camp is a new ministry of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministries started in 2026 with the generous support of a Faith in our Future Grant.

Middle School Camp is where faith meets adventure!

This unforgettable overnight retreat is designed just for middle schoolers, blending the energy of summer camp with powerful encounters with Christ. From high-energy team-building games and a camp-wide parish vs. parish showdown, to inspiring witness talks, dynamic praise & worship, and life-changing moments in Adoration and Mass—every part of the weekend is built to ignite faith, build friendships, and create memories that last long after the campfire fades. Get ready to compete, connect, and encounter something bigger than yourself!

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. We're excited to partner with you in this meaningful ministry!

God Bless,



Andrew Schueller, MA

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Camper Information

Camp is open to middle school students in 6th, 7th, and 8th grade during the **2026–2027 academic year**.

Each parish group must have a **Parish Group Leader** and additional 21+ adult campers (chaperones) based on group make-up and size. All adults, 18+ must be Safe Environment Certified.

Camp Cost

Camp is \$80/person and includes overnight lodging and three meals: Saturday Lunch, Dinner, and Sunday Breakfast.

Parish Groups, especially those traveling from the far ends of our diocese, are welcome to arrive at camp on Friday evening for an extra \$10/person. This cost includes Saturday Breakfast.

Glossary of Camp Terms

You may see reference to the following terms in this guide or at camp. Here's more information on what each term means:

- **Teen Camper:** A youth (grades 6–8) who is attending camp.
- **Adult Camper:** An safe environment trained adult leader/chaperone (21+) attending camp.
- **Camp Staff:** A staff member or contractor of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee who run Middle School Camp.
- **Core Team:** A team of volunteers who are present during the days of camp to help run activities.
- **Ranch Staff:** This is the staff employed by Phantom Ranch Bible Camp. Our interactions will be limited as they are not safe environment trained.
- **Parish Group:** A group coming to camp from the same parish or cluster, along with their adult leaders. Most activities during camp will be done as a parish group.
- **Parish Group Leader:** The Parish Group Leader is a paid staff member from the parish (Policy #6153.1) who is the main contact responsible for a parish group. They handle registration, promotion, and coordination for bringing a parish group AND serves as the “lead camper” for a parish group (if you are reading this, you are likely the parish leader!)

Sample Camp Schedule

Saturday

08:15am - 9:00am	Breakfast for Overnight Guests
08:00am - 09:00am	Parish Check-In
09:15am - 11:15am	Opening Session
11:30am - Noon	Parish SG Time
12:15pm - 01:35pm	Lunch Break/Free Time
01:45pm - 02:00pm	Afternoon Session
02:00pm - 03:30pm	Team Builders
03:45pm - 05:00pm	Afternoon Session
05:00pm - 05:15pm	Rosary
05:30pm - 06:30pm	Dinner
06:30pm - 09:00pm	Evening Program Adoration & Confession
09:00pm - 09:30pm	Parish Time
09:30pm - 10:00pm	Camp Fire (Smores)
10:00pm - 10:30pm	Get Ready for Bed
10:30pm	Lights Out

Sunday

07:45am - 08:00am	Wake-Up Group Leader Meeting
08:15am - 09:00am	Breakfast
09:00am - 10:00am	Morning Session
10:00am - 11:30am	Camp Wide Games
11:30am - 12:30pm	Mass
12:30pm - 01:00pm	Closing Ceremony
01:00pm - 01:30pm	Depart Camp

Packing List

Footwear: Campers must wear sturdy, closed-toed shoes, such as tennis shoes around camp. Sandals, Crocs, and similar footwear are not acceptable.

Clothing: Campers are encouraged to dress for the weather, modestly, and appropriately. Clothing that is overly revealing, such as bare midriffs, spaghetti straps, and sagging or excessively short shorts (for ladies, shorts must have a minimum 3-inch inseam) is not permitted.

- Leggings, tights, and other form-fitting pants should be paired with a skirt or shorts worn over them.
- Please refrain from bringing clothing that displays or promotes messages inappropriate for your age (e.g., alcohol logos) or that conflict with Christian values.
- Dress for the weather! We will have outside activities and need to walk between buildings at camp.

Electronics: Student Campers are expected to keep their cell phone, music players, and portable game systems at home during camp.

Prohibited Items: Alcohol, tobacco products, illegal drugs, weapons (including knives), and pornographic materials are prohibited from camp. Campers found with these items at a minimum will be immediately sent home. In some instances, local authorities will be contacted.

Medications: Campers needing prescriptions need a **medical consent form** signed by a provider and submitted at least a month in advance. Campers should bring medication in original containers, with the exact amount needed, and given to the parish group leader.

The Essentials

- Sleep bag **OR** Sheets and a blanket
- Pillow
- Toiletries (shampoo, soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant)
- Towel
- Parish Group T-Shirt
- Underwear
- Socks
- Pajamas
- Sweatshirt
- Closed-toed (tennis) shoes
- Money for Merch
- Sunscreen
- Bug Spray
- Cap/hat
- Medications
- Water bottle

Optional Items

- Pen & Journal
- Rosary
- Nicer Clothes for Mass
- Shower Sandals
- Stuffed Animal

DO NOT BRING

- Alcohol
- Tobacco Products
- Illegal Drugs
- Weapons & knives
- Pornographic Materials
- **Cell Phones**
- Portable video games & music players
- Hair dryers & curling irons

Registration & Important Dates

April 13 2026: Parish Registration Open

- Parish registration opens at **9:00am** on **Monday, April 13th**.
 - Use the **Parish Registration form** to reserve spots for Middle School Camp! We ask parishes to be realistic about the number of spots they request. We want camp to be as full as possible.
 - Please **DO NOT** guarantee your students spots as you may not get all of the spots you request.
- Initial parish registrations will close at **11:59pm** on **Sunday, May 3rd**.
- We will take requests and contact parishes with the number of spots available to them by **Friday, May 8st**. We'll send an invoice at this time for the \$10/person deposit. This will be due July 10th to help accomindate for fiscal years.
- After May 11th, open spots will be available on a first come, first serve basis.

May, 18 2026: Camper Registration Open

- All individual camper registration will be completed online through the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.
 - Campers do not pay the Archdiocese directly. Your parish will be invoiced for the final number of campers who register from your parish.
- Parish group leaders will receive an individual link to an online spreadsheet to track registration information for all their teens. This sheet will be updated on a regular basis (about once a week, usually on Mondays).

September 11, 2026: Spot Drop/Sell/Buy Deadline

- Requests to drop/sell/drop spots must be submitted by **noon on Friday, September 11th**. Groups are responsible for paying the final balance on all spots held at this time.
- Invoices will be sent to your parish after the September 11th deadline for all spots claimed.

October 04, 2026: Paperwork Deadline

- To ensure that we have adequate time to prepare for camp, **all teen and adult campers must be registered by 11:59 pm on Sunday, October 4th**.
- After this date, registration will be closed for all parishes, regardless of how many spots remain unfilled. Adding campers after this date may not be possible.
- Parish Safe Environment Certification forms and Medication Forms are also due at this time.

October 30, 2026: Final Payments Due

Policies & Procedures

Overnight Policy

We understand that families may feel anxious about their teen sleeping overnight at camp. Middle School Camp is an overnight program, requiring all campers (including adults) to participate for the entire retreat and stay overnight. However, Middle School Camp will consider an accommodate for families who have a need for a “sleep at home” arrangement on a case by case basis. This must be discussed with us well in advance of camp – please contact us if this is your situation!

Late Arrival/Early Departures

Late arrivals or early departures are typically not permitted, nor are mid-camp pickups for activities like sports practice or try-outs. We understand this may require some sacrifice, but we believe it is a sacrifice worth making! Our experience shows that teens who arrive late or leave early struggle to connect with the community.

Cell Phone Policy

Student campers are expected to keep their cell phones at home during camp. Cell phones prevent students from fully entering into the camp experience AND they pose a privacy risk in the sleeping quarters. Adult Campers, Camp Staff, and Core Team will confiscate phones if found.

Adult Campers are expected to bring a cell phone to provide for the safety of their parish group. Additionally, Adult Campers are asked to limit their usage to emergency purposes, and not to use them during evening programming.

Refund Policy for 2026

We aim to ensure that finances do not become a burden for any parish or family, and we strive to alleviate any concerns. We are committed to working with any family requesting a refund, following these guidelines:

- Cancellations for other reasons may be made without penalty through September 11th, and these will be reflected in your parish’s invoice. After September 11th, your parish will be responsible for all registrations on file. Since each parish collects funds from families, it is up to each parish to decide how or if to refund individual families.
- To receive a refund, our offices must receive a drop/change form before NOON on September 11.
- Cancellations made after noon on September 11th for reasons such as personal decisions, scheduling conflicts, or friends dropping out will not qualify for refunds from Camp; your parish will still be invoiced for those spots.
- After September 11th, spots become non-transferable. While it may be possible to find another teen to take someone’s place, this will incur an additional registration fee. Depending on our capacity, we may waive this fee and facilitate the transfer.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is required of me as a parish leader?

We are excited for you to bring a group to camp to encounter Christ and build parish community. Here are a few expectations for group leaders:

1. Register Parish Group, make travel arrangements for you parish group, and get parish specific t-shirts or sweatshirts for your parish group (see below).
2. Promote Camp (template ads available) and facilitate individual registration.
3. Collect parish permission slips and certify adult campers (safe environment).
4. Participate with and accompany your group, ensuring campers engaged in activities and follow all camp expectations. You are responsible for your students during overnight hours.

How many adult leaders can/should I bring with my parish group?

We require 1 adult for every 8 teens (if you have boys and girls attending, you need to have male and female adult leaders). All adults need to be Safeguarding trained and should be ready and capable of accompanying your youth at camp.

Can my priest come?

We have a few spots for priests to accompany your group and assist in liturgical duties at camp! Because they may have different duties during camp, you should not count them as adult leaders.

Can I still sign-up if my parish is not sending a group?

Yes! We have a limited number of "Free Agent" spots for teens who join us without a parish group. To register as a Free Agent, find the registration link on the main Camp page once registration opens!

What are the Lodging Accommodations?

Phantom Ranch Bible Camp has 13 heated cabins with bunk beds and a bathroom with showers. Each cabin accommodates between 8-14 teens, with the majority holding 10 students and 2 adults.

What Meals are Provided?

Saturday Lunch, Dinner, and Sunday Breakfast are provided.

Is it possible for our group to arrive on Friday Night?

Yes! We are happy to offer this for all of our groups attending camp. Please arrive between 7 PM and 8 PM so your teens and our staff can all get a good night of sleep before the first day of camp! The early night costs \$10/person and includes lodging and Saturday breakfast. There is no programming the first night, you will be responsible for entertaining and chaperoning your students this evening.

What is the parish specific t-shirt?

A hallmark of every camp is the camp wide games. Parishes (or combined parish groups) will be competing against one another in friendly competitions to be crowned the camp champions. Like sports teams wear uniforms, each group needs a parish/cluster specific shirt or sweatshirt to designate your group from the others. We recommend designing a group specific shirt and ordering them for your campers (teens and adults).



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