



Franciscan Center for Evangelization & Renewal  
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Dear Group Leaders,

April 2023

We look forward to having you and your group at one of the 2023 Steubenville Youth Conferences! We are excited about our theme of 'Refuge and Scripture from Matthew 11:28, "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest."

It is our hope that during the conference weekend, through the Sacraments, worship, talks, and community, young people will leave knowing that they have a refuge in Jesus and his Church. This refuge is not an escape or a place, but an embrace of a relationship with the One who animates and gives purpose to our lives.

In the panorama of an ever-changing world, we want young people to know that Jesus isn't just one option among many to answer the longing of our hearts for meaning, fulfillment, security, wholeness, and ultimately love. Rather, *only* Jesus will provide all that we need and desire. With, in, and through him, we have the promise of a faith that is unshakeable, the Church as our refuge and guide, and a God who never wearies of loving us.

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

#### Men's & Women's Sessions

During the Men's and Women's session, in order to counter the lies the world tells young people surrounding their identity, we will be stressing the identity we receive from God in Baptism ("This is my beloved son" Mt. 3:17) and how our worth is proven in Jesus' Passion (cf. Rom. 5:8). At the end of each session, young people and their group leaders will have the opportunity to pray with and over one another, allowing the Father to speak truth in each of their situations.

#### Saturday Afternoon

Based on feedback received last year, this year, during the "Recharge" portion of the schedule, rather than offering back-to-back workshops, group leaders and young people will have the opportunity to rest, have fun, and invest in their small groups. This time allows the afternoon to be tailored to what your group may need. After this time, we will gather for a late-afternoon session where young people will have the opportunity to learn how God speaks so that they can create an interior life and become aware of his presence at all moments. This will be followed by an extended time of Q&A.

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!

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