

HOLY FIRE Youth Code of Conduct

The National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry in association with Declan Weir Productions welcomes your participation in Holy Fire!

We have expectations of you as a Holy Fire participant. In addition to your family, parish, school, organization, or diocese, today you also represent one of the largest and most respected Catholic youth organizations in the world. We know that you will represent all of us well during our time together. Please express thanks to our volunteers for the hospitality they provide us. Recall that you are a witness for our church to all those who attend Holy Fire. We expect you to project an image of Christian consideration, sensitivity, and respect to everyone, and to the property around you.

In the last decade the Catholic Church in the United States has suffered through revelations of sexual misconduct and abuse by clergy and others. As a community, we have been called upon to individually examine our conduct and to raise our expectations of one another when we gather in God's name. The Catholic bishops of the United States have issued the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* (the Charter) as a guide and measure for all dioceses in the construction of their own youth protection policies. NFCYM also used the Charter as a basis for its youth protection policy, *Safeguarding God's Children*.

The following code of conduct is excerpted from *Safeguarding God's Children* and are provided as a reminder. Failure to abide by the code of conduct could result in your being barred from further participation in Holy Fire.

Youth participants will:

- Project an image of Christian consideration, sensitivity, and respect to everyone and to the property around them through language, dress, and behavior
- Refrain from inappropriate touching and verbal harassment
- Respect other persons and/or property
- Refrain from actions that could result in injury and/or damage to property
- Adhere to stated curfew
- Wear appropriate credentials in order to gain and maintain access to NFCYM events and activities
- Keep their personal belongings with them at all times
- Attend all scheduled activities, arriving promptly, and staying for the entire event
- Be aware of noise levels in lobbies, hallways, and concourses
- Maintain the spirit of the event
- Report problems of any kind to a trusted adult

Youth participants will not:

- Possess weapons of any kind
- Purchase, possess, consume, or distribute alcohol or illegal drugs
- Engage in any form of sexual activity or peer sexual harassment
- Purchase, download, possess, or distribute pornography

The following behaviors are generally considered appropriate at an NFCYM event:

- Side hugs
- Shoulder to shoulder or "temple" hugs
- Handshakes
- "High-fives" and hand slapping
- Verbal praise for a job well-done (not regarding physical attributes)
- Touching hands, faces (usually in context of a blessing), shoulders, and arms of minors
- Arms around shoulders
- Holding hands while walking with younger minors

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Holy Fire is brought to you by:



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- Sitting beside younger minors
- Kneeling or bending down for hugs with younger minors
- Holding hands during prayer
- Pats on the head when culturally appropriate

The following behaviors are generally considered inappropriate at an NFCYM event:

- Inappropriate or lengthy embraces
- Kisses on the mouth
- Holding children on the lap who are capable of sitting on their own
- Touching bottoms, chests, or genital areas
- Showing affection in isolated areas of a facility such as bedrooms, restrooms, bathrooms, closets, staff-only areas, or other private rooms
- Being in or on a bed with an adult
- Touching knees or legs of minors
- Wrestling with minors
- Tickling minors
- Piggyback rides
- Any type of massage given by minor to adult or another minor
- Any type of massage given by adult to minor
- Any form of unwanted affection or peer sexual harassment
- Compliments or put downs that relate to physique or body development
- Going to an isolated area away from the group, or being taken to an isolated area by an adult or peer

If a problem of any kind occurs during this event, please go immediately to a trusted adult to discuss the matter.