

Graduate Recognition

Introduction to Adult Parish Life

Graduation from High School and College are major events in any young person's life. It is a rite of passage that is special and will never happen again. Our role as Young Adult mentors is to help our youth celebrate their accomplishments and make a smooth transition to their next road in life. How can we do this? Below you will find suggestions for honoring graduates and introducing them to life as an adult member of the parish.

GRADUATE RECOGNITION

1. Present graduates from your parish with gifts from the parish. Somewhere on the gift inscribe a special message for the graduate from the parish. Include a card signed by all parish board members. Gifts may include an Orthodox Study Bible, Crosses or Icons. A special and useful gift for the graduates would be the needed items to create an Icon corner in their dorm. Those items would include: An Icon, Vigil Candle and holder, Daily Prayer book or Psalter and instruction as to how an Icon corner is to be used. A "complete package" gift, including most of the items listed above would be the OCF Connect Kit. It is offered in several choices and may be found at www.ocf.net.
2. Publish the names of the graduates in your parish bulletin. Write a small paragraph about the accomplishment of each person. Include information about the special work they have done or roles they play within the parish.
3. If you do not already have one, begin a scholarship program for the graduates of your parish. Construct a plaque in your parish on which names of those who receive the scholarships could be added.

INTRODUCTION TO THE PARISH

1. Inform the graduate of their new status as adult members of the parish family. Many young adults do not realize that once they graduated from High School, that they now develop a greater responsibility to the parish. They will always be Spiritual Members of the Parish but with that comes a financial responsibility as well. Just as in any family, we must all pull together to meet our financial obligations. Also downloadable, you will find a sample plan used by Sts. Peter & Paul Parish in Carnegie, PA to help introduce financial responsibility to the parish.
2. Invite both college and high school graduates to a special luncheon hosted by the Young Adult Ministry Program. Perhaps the luncheon could be a picnic or at a restaurant to create a special memory for the graduates. Ensure that current college students or young adults are present so that they may talk to the graduates about life in college or in the working world.
3. Invite the graduates to a parish council meeting before the end of their senior year. You could explain the steps they need to take to become adult members of your parish. Take the time to explain what current projects you are working on for the parish. Ask them for their ideas or input. If you are inviting college graduates, ask them what projects they may want to work with or spear head!
4. Inform graduates of young adult programs offered by the National Office of College and/or Young Adult Ministry and additional national or regional church organizations and provide them with dates for upcoming events. Have them or you send their school addresses to the current national or regional youth office, so that they may receive mail about young adult events.
5. Keep college students informed of local and national Young Adult events while at school.
6. Provide information about Orthodox Christian Fellowship to your high school graduates. OCF is the campus based Orthodox outreach of the Standing Council of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in America(SCOBA). Help them to discover if there is an OCF chapter at the colleges they will be attending or have applied to. Information about OCF can be found at www.ocf.net.