



News from the

Catholic Diocese of Palm Beach

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NEWS RELEASE

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STEUBENVILLE FLORIDA YOUTH CONFERENCE 2008

The Catholic Diocese of Palm Beach and Franciscan University of Steubenville have teamed up to co-sponsor the first ever three day summer youth conference set to take place in southern Florida June 13 – 15. This inaugural Catholic youth gathering will be host to as many as 2-thousand teenagers, hundreds of lay volunteers, clergy and religious. Registration remains open for the event which has already attracted participants from *all* over Florida and various parts of the United States!

After a successful one-day rally held in the Diocese of Palm Beach last spring which was host to 900 teenagers, plans were immediately launched to return this event to southern Florida on a larger scale to continue the ongoing and vital mission for Catholic evangelization of young people in this rapidly growing region.

The Steubenville Florida 2008 summer youth conference themed *WITNESS*, based on Acts of the Apostles 1:8 in scripture, is set to take place on the campus of Lynn University and adjacent Pope John Paul II High School in Boca Raton. This *first* of a kind weekend summer conference will provide an opportunity for high school aged teens to come to a deeper knowledge of the saving love of Jesus Christ by providing a powerful experience of the sacramental life of the Catholic Church. During the course of the weekend, young people will be catechized by dynamic lay witnesses, priests, the local Bishop, and Catholic musicians who will challenge Catholic youth to embrace and stand firm in the faith and then go forth as witnesses to the world.

Most Rev. Gerald M. Barbarito, Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Palm Beach, extended an invitation and welcome to the prospective participants saying, “*We are very excited about what’s going to happen*

here next summer... We have wonderful young people in our Diocese and wonderful young people in our society. This event promises to be an opportunity to bring them together so they can share their faith and be what they are - which is truly a living witness."

National speakers for this weekend include: Most Reverend Gerald M. Barbarito, Fr. Stan Fortuna, Fr. Larry Richards, Jim Beckman, Lisa Epperson, Shannon Dietz, Deacon Ralph Poyo, Jim Beaulieu and music by the Servant Singers.

As one of the largest gatherings ever planned for in the Diocese of Palm Beach, Steubenville Florida 2008 has required countless hours of spiritual and logistical planning including background checks, fingerprinting and volunteer training for hundreds of lay volunteers from around the diocese. Kit Johansen, diocesan liaison to the conference committee, said, *"I am getting very excited about it because of the enthusiasm all the people who have been involved... anything we can do to motivate our teens to become excited about their faith is our mission and our responsibility."*

Kathy Twist, of St. Ignatius Loyola Cathedral in Palm Beach Gardens, coordinator for Steubenville Florida 2008, said, *"As our youth open their hearts through the sacraments and adoration God will speak to them on a very personal and intimate level changing their lives. They will be set forth to evangelize and witness their faith to their peers. This conference will fan the flame to foster vocations to the priesthood and the religious life."*

For more information about Steubenville Florida 2008 (speaker bios, multi-media and more), visit www.steubenvilleflorida.com.

About Franciscan University of Steubenville

Franciscan University of Steubenville summer youth conferences have transformed young Catholics for the past thirty years by evangelizing young people through its outreach. This is the first time that Franciscan University of Steubenville has co-sponsored a summer youth conference in the entire state of Florida. Franciscan University of Steubenville is a vibrant Catholic college built upon Jesus Christ – the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Rooted in Franciscan tradition, the university has embraced the call given to St. Francis to, "Go and rebuild My Church." Their focus for outreach is to bring high school students into a life changing relationship with God and serving those who serve them. For a history of the Franciscan University youth conferences visit <http://www.franciscanyouth.com/About/history.asp>

