

BLESSED TRINITY EDGE



First EDGE Retreat

Blessed Trinity EDGE, Blessed Trinity's Middle School Youth Ministry program, first began at Blessed Trinity in 2005, under the leadership of the then youth minister, Chris Gordon, aided by a group of active parents, who each played an instrumental role in forming the program. The first EDGE event had just 2 middle schoolers in attendance, for a trip to a Diocesan Middle School Jamboree, but the seeds of a much larger program were being planted. After that first year, Carla Sochacki ran Edge for two years, followed by Gene Kelly for a short time. EDGE is a segment of the international Life Teen program, with a focus on the middle school years and an overarching mission of "Leading teens closer to Christ."

In the spring of 2012, Becky and I began searching for a group for our oldest daughter and her friends, where they could talk about the real-life situations and issues they were facing and hearing about in middle school. That is when we realized the BT EDGE group was looking for new life and a new core group to lead the middle school aged youth at BT. That spring, with a great team of 7 parents, a new EDGE core team was formed. Our first meeting began with a surprising attendance of 45 kids and the depth



September 2017 Retreat

of topics and conversations quickly helped us realize the need for the ministry and that EDGE was where we were needed.

Since 2012, EDGE attendance has grown to an average attendance of over 80 youth, for twice monthly meetings and socials. Meeting topics range from drugs and alcohol, technology, emotions and self-control, prayer, modesty, time management and depression. Monthly socials include movie nights, swimming parties, picnics, bowling, and 80's themed party nights. Each September we have an awesome and inspiring overnight retreat, held at the Lake in the Forest Resort, sponsored by the owners who are BT parishioners, and we end our year with an overnight themed Lock-in and a big fieldtrip to places like Busch Gardens or Disney's Typhoon Lagoon.

Edge is supported by an amazingly generous and talented Core Team of 14 adults plus many parents and parishioners who regularly support the Edge mission through their time, talent, and treasure. The



Core Team December 2017

team comes together to walk with the middle school youth, as they navigate the pre-teen years of hormones, attitudes, and first crushes and as they battle the messages they receive from Hollywood and social media. Our faith family has grown exponentially through the relationships developed in Edge and we welcome any middle school youth who want to begin this journey of friends, fun and faith, as we all walk together on our journey closer to Christ.

If you would like to join Edge, either as a teen or a volunteer, email ocalaedge@gmail.com or call Tim Westgate at 352-454-4378.

BLESSED TRINITY LIFE TEEN

Blessed Trinity Life Teen, formerly known as BTYG, began under the direction of Tim and Lyn Fogarty in the mid-1970s. It was during this time that the high school youth ministry program became a separate entity from weekly CCD classes. In the summer of 1980, Richard Swiderski was hired as Blessed Trinity's High School Youth Minister and continued his role for 17 years. During this time BTYG began to flourish and grow as a ministry serving our high school teens. These teens encountered Christ through retreats, service projects, bible studies, trips, and weekly "Discovery Nights". In 1996, Father Pat and Richard visited Mesa, Arizona, to learn about the Life Teen movement. It was at that time that Blessed Trinity became a Life Teen parish.

After Richard's tenure, there were a number of subsequent Youth Ministers who continued the ministry. Some of these include Wayne Wycoff, Pat and Pam McBride, and Chris Gordon. In 2008, following in her father Richard's footsteps, Julie Martin then became the Blessed Trinity Youth Minister. She continued her role for 9 years. During

Julie Martin & Shelby Conner in 2011



this time Julie further developed the Life Teen program. Julie continued the tradition of weekly Sunday Life Nights as well as many other aspects her father began years prior.

Just this past July, Shelby Conner has taken on the role of Youth Director. The Life Teen Youth Group has continued to meet on Sunday nights for Mass and Life Night. Many of the teens in the youth group serve as lectors, ushers, and EMHCs at the

Abby Retreat 2018



Life Teen Mass. Through this year the youth group has also continued to take part in retreats, social activities, service projects, trips, many fundraisers, and will be participating in the highly anticipated Steubenville Atlanta Youth Conference this month. It cannot go without saying that Life Teen would not be possible without the help of our adult volunteers



that make up the Core Team: Barbara Sabatino, Jeff Bairstow, Tina Bairstow, Malleri Padgett, Holly Crisera, Jennifer Franco, and Lauren Thompson. When asked why I choose to lead this ministry, there is only one simple answer: to leads teens closer to Christ!

Steubenville

