



Diocesan WorkCamp Information Meeting **November 16, 2025**

They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers ... all who believed were together and had all things in common ... they ate their meals with exultation and sincerity of heart, praising God and enjoying favor with all the people. And every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

– Acts 2:42-47

The What:

In the mid-1980s, several parishes began to participate in non-denominational WorkCamps around the country. Inspired by the Word of God to better the lives of those in need, young people from these parishes rebuilt homes in disrepair. The experience invariably changed the hearts and perspectives of all involved.

Encouraged by these experiences and recognizing similar needs closer to home, a few youth workers sought to bring the WorkCamp experience to the Diocese of Arlington in 1989. Their efforts produced an experience of serving others that was both Catholic and customized to the culture and needs of young people. Scripture, the Sacraments, and Catholic social teaching were integrated with challenging home repair projects, music, and shared stories of faith. Since that time, the Diocese has continued to sponsor a WorkCamp in areas within its boundaries.

Since 1989 WorkCamp has been venturing into underserved areas of Virginia with a twofold objective. First, we seek to provide the teens of our Diocese with an intense conversion experience through service, community, and prayer. Second, we seek to serve our fellow Virginians by making their homes warmer, safer, and drier.

WorkCamp is an annual youth ministry program culminating in a week-long overnight camp providing the teens of the Diocese with an opportunity to encounter Christ through service, faith, and fellowship. This program is coordinated by the Office of Youth, Campus, & Young Adult Ministries (OYCYAM). This service opportunity combines prayer, great speakers, daily Mass, confession, and tons of fun, making it an experience of true Christian community and one of the most transformational opportunities of the year!

The When/Where: **Saturday, June 20, 2026 through Friday, June 26, 2026** in Shenandoah County, Virginia. Our homebase location is Stonewall Jackson High School in Quicksburg, VA.

The Who: Teen participants must be current 9th–12th graders during the 2025–2026 school year.

The Costs: The Diocese charges **\$600 per participant** (youth & adult crew leader). Adding in van costs, tool day supplies, food, etc., total costs typically reach about \$800 per participant. We will fundraise through a variety of ways to bring that cost down. First, teens must apply to attend WorkCamp with Nativity. This includes a \$50 nonrefundable deposit which will be put toward the full registration fee. **Our goal is to raise the remaining \$550 per teen and any additional costs so parents do not have any other out of pocket costs.** As a courtesy, Nativity will cover the costs of all adult volunteers. Final payments will vary based on the success of our fundraising efforts. If we do not reach our goal, the remaining balance (after applying fundraising) will be due April 1, 2026.

Parent and Adult Opportunities

Adult Crew Leader: People who are excited about working with teens and who are not afraid of hard work. These Adult Crew Leaders are not simply chaperoning, but rather directly responsible for the safety and well-being of their teens at WorkCamp. They are with the teens constantly, working with them all day on the job site, eating meals with them, praying with them, and leading them in team-building activities. You must be available for the full week and be over the age of 25.

Contractor: These volunteers are not always “contractors” in the professional sense. They’re responsible for leading the work on the project rather than looking after the teens. Some background in basic construction or remodeling skills is necessary for this role. While contractors are not directly responsible for the teens, they spend a great deal of time with the teens, so their ability to teach and be patient is important. You must be available the full week (Monday-Thursday minimum) and be over the age of 21.

Homebase: This role is for adults at least 2 years out of high school who like to work on the behind the scenes tasks. These volunteers will assist with setup & strike at the beginning and end of the week. They typically help with the logistics of WorkCamp: organizing morning Mass, setting up nightly Program, video team, visit project sites, run errands, brew tons of coffee, organize ice coolers, post-dinner games, praying with teens, sorting crew lunches, and more. Spend a couple days with us or all week – you choose based on your availability, though it is ideal if you can be present all week.

Nurses: Be on site the week of WorkCamp as a nurse (must provide proof of certification) or assist in the clinic. Spend a couple days with us or all week – you choose based on your availability.

Tool Coordinator: Organize the parish tool collection in the weeks leading up to WorkCamp, label tools, and transport them to/from WorkCamp.

WorkCamp Security: Join us at WorkCamp one afternoon/evening to supervise the teens while the adults take showers. You have the option of staying with our group for that evening’s Program. We are typically assigned the Tuesday during the week of WorkCamp, and your shift would run from 2:15 – 7:30 p.m. Our security crew will carpool from Nativity around 12:00 p.m. on the day we are assigned.

Lunches: Make PB&J and cheese sandwiches at Nativity the week of WorkCamp, typically that Tuesday from 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Many hands make light work. This is a great way for families to get involved!

2026 Monthly Participant Meeting Schedule

All meetings are required for teen participants and Adult Crew Leaders

- Formation: Sunday, January 25, 2026 | 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. (The Well)
- Service: Sunday, February 08, 2026 | 7:00 – 12:00 p.m. (Offsite with No Hands But Yours Homeless Ministry, includes Sunday Mass)
- Donation & Blessing Weekend: February 21 – 22, 2026 | 11:00 a.m. Sunday Mass required; sign up for 3 additional Masses throughout the weekend
- Formation: Sunday, March 08, 2026 | 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.
- Soup Supper: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 | 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.
- Tool Day: Sunday, April 19, 2026 | 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (includes Sunday Mass)
- Fellowship: Wednesday, May 6, 2026 | 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. Potluck Dinner and Adoration
- Final Meeting: June 7, 2026 | 11:00 a.m. (Mass) – 1:30 p.m. One parent must attend
- WorkCamp: Saturday, June 20 – Friday, June 26, 2026
- Witness Weekend: June 27–28, 2026 – Each teen will share a brief testimony at one of the Masses that weekend.
- Additional Requirement: Attend one Life Teen | Sundays, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. – see full schedule on the website

Attendance Policy: All meetings are required for teen participants. We can accommodate **one excused absence**, but it must be communicated **at least one week** in advance. After an unexcused absence, we will sit down with parents and the teen to discuss their commitment to WorkCamp and determine if it is still a good year for them to participate. Please note that all teens must attend Donation Weekend and Nativity's Tool Training before going to WorkCamp. We do not allow absences due to sports or other activities – only extenuating circumstances such as sickness or out of town travel.

Adult Meetings: All adult volunteers are invited to attend the formation meetings listed above. These meetings are required for Adult Crew Leaders. They are optional but highly encouraged for Contractors and Homebase volunteers.

Additional Adult Meetings

1. Adult Crew Leaders Only – must attend ONE training in March
 - a. Wednesday, March 4, 6:30–9:30 p.m. at St. Mark in Vienna
 - b. Saturday, March 21, 1:30–4:30 p.m. at Holy Family in Dale City
 - c. Thursday, March 26, 6:30–9:30 p.m. at St. Ambrose in Annandale
2. Contractors Only – must attend the Diocesan WorkCamp Contractor Meeting: Thursday, May 28, 2026 at Nativity, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.
3. Homebase Volunteers Only – must attend the Diocesan Homebase Volunteer Meeting – Tuesday, June 2, 6:30–9:30 p.m. (location TBD)

Registration Process for Teens:

1. Make sure you're registered for the 2025 – 2026 year of Youth Ministry (**Life Teen**) at Nativity.
2. Next, fill out our online **Nativity WorkCamp Application** which opens this week. A \$50 nonrefundable fee per teen participant will be charged upon submission. The deadline to register with Nativity is Tuesday, January 20, 2026 at 11:59 p.m.
3. Finally, our team will reach out to you with instructions on how to register your child on the **Diocesan WorkCamp Portal**. The deadline to register is Monday, February 16, 2026.

Registration Process for All Adult Volunteers:

1. Nativity will cover the costs of all adult participants through our fundraising efforts. *If Contractors choose to stay at a nearby hotel, you will be responsible for covering your own hotel costs.
2. You must apply to attend with Nativity by filling out the online application that opens at the end of November, but you do **not** need to pay the \$50 deposit.
3. You will need to register on the Diocesan WorkCamp Portal like the teens, and we will provide you with instructions after you fill out the Nativity application.
4. All adult volunteers must be fully compliant with the Child Protection Office (OPCYP). Adult Crew Leaders must be certified as an authorized driver with the Diocese since they are responsible for driving our Nativity teens to/from WorkCamp and their crew to/from their worksite. We will reach out to you with next steps for all these processes after you complete your registration.

Drops: Nativity will be billed \$600 for all teen participants and adult crew leaders who are registered by the date of April 20, 2026. If you have to drop from the program due to unforeseen circumstances and you notify us by April 20, you will not be charged. However, if you cancel on April 21 or after, you will be charged half of the registration fee – \$300. We will evaluate on a case-by-case basis any drops that are made after April 20 that are due to extenuating circumstances (illness, death, etc.)

Contact:

Rebecca Judge, Director of Youth Ministry: rjudge@nativityburke.org

Tom Svercl, Stakeholder: wc@nativityburke.org

Bob Colella, Tool Coordinator

Additional Registration Information

1. **This year's maximum capacity is 35 teens** (18 boys, 17 girls). This number is fully dependent on the number of adult volunteers we can recruit. If we do not have enough ACLs or Contractors, we will have to cut teen participants.
2. **Nativity Application** – Registration opens this week and **closes January 20**.
 - a. We will accept as many applications as possible, but if we receive a large number, the form **may close early**.
 - b. All teens who submit an application may begin the WorkCamp formation process in January.
3. **Diocesan Registration** – All teens must register on the Diocesan WorkCamp portal. The Diocese notes that registering on their website does **not** guarantee a spot. There are 600 spots available for registration for all parishes in the Diocese. You must apply by Monday, February 16, though the 600 spots may fill up before then.
4. **Probationary Participation – New This Year**
 - a. We expect more than 35 teens to apply with Nativity and begin formation in January
 - b. This year, all teens are considered “probationary” until March
5. **Conditions for Teen Participation in WorkCamp**

Teens will be notified in March if they've been invited to attend WorkCamp. A teen is officially accepted **only when all of the following are met**:

 1. Nativity endorses the teen's spot
We are looking for teens who demonstrate:
 - Consistent attendance and respect for the attendance policy
 - Openness to spiritual growth
 - A team-player attitude
 - Maturity in using tools
 - Willingness to detach from their phone
 - Kindness and respect toward peers
 - A positive, cooperative attitude
 - Willingness to make new friends
 2. Diocesan registration deadline of February 16 was met
 3. Nativity has secured the required number of adult volunteers:
 - 1 ACL per 5 teens of the same gender
 - 1 Contractor per 5 teens (any gender)

Our WorkCamp leadership team reserves the right to rescind an invitation based on the teen's behavior and participation.

Behaviors we do not tolerate that would be grounds for removal from program:

- Bullying or unkindness
- Disrespect or disruptive behavior
- Not giving minimum of one week advance notice to request an excused absence
- Unexcused absences
- Misuse of tools
- Phone use during meetings or refusal to turn phones in