

Theology on Tap

Guidelines updated on October 30, 2020

The Office for Evangelization is here to help as you start your new Theology on Tap chapter! The goal of Theology on Tap in the Diocese of Richmond is to provide a place for young adults (roughly ages 21-35) to gather, delve into a Catholic topic, and connect with other young adults in the area.

Most Theology on Taps meet at a local restaurant or bar on a monthly basis. When you meet at a place that's outside of a parish, it can be easier to invite a coworker or friend who isn't Catholic to join – it's meeting on common ground. We see Theology on Tap as a great moment for pre-evangelization for those who aren't Catholic or engaged in the life of a parish as well as a solid Catholic event for those who consistently practice their faith.

These guidelines will give you the basic pieces for starting your own Theology on Tap chapter.

Start with a Chapter Representative

The Chapter Representative is the main point person for your area's Theology on Tap. They oversee Theology on Tap in a given area, making sure that it is alive and well and that area parishes and young adults are able to connect to it. This person could be either a parish staff person or a young adult volunteer. General Chapter Representative tasks are as follows:

- Sets the regular schedule and secures the location.
- Keeps the Office for Evangelization in the loop by sharing any updates, and consider sharing advertising materials or links so that we can help spread the word!
- Makes sure that all speakers have done the required paperwork in order to be approved to speak (see *Speaker Guidelines* for more details).
- Creates and maintains a Theology on Tap Committee for your chapter, including scheduling meetings and keeping members connected.
- If a young adult volunteer: The Office for Evangelization will check in regularly to make sure you're feeling supported and that parishes in the area are familiar with your event.

Tips for Making a Theology on Tap Committee for Your Chapter

It can be helpful to create a committee of invested young adults to help run a chapter of Theology on Tap – this way, no one gets burnt out and as people's lives change, Theology on tap can still move forward. Plus, young adult events are typically more successful in the long term when young adults are actively involved in the planning process. Committees can meet as frequently as the Chapter Representative finds useful, but we suggest once every 3-4 months. Here's a list of suggested committee roles:

- Chapter Representative
- Night-Of Emcee
- Advertising & Facebook Event Coordinator(s)
- Speaker & Topic Coordinator(s)
- Hospitality Coordinator(s)

People can serve in more than one role, but it can help to involve more people and keep everyone's responsibilities lower so that they stick around for longer.

Speaker Guidelines

Anyone speaking in the Diocese of Richmond must be approved to speak. Those who hold appointed or staff positions in the Diocese of Richmond **do not** need to apply for Speaker Approval. This includes:

- Priests/Deacons in the Diocese of Richmond who are in good standing
- Staff of Diocesan Parishes, Schools and Institutions, including: Parish Staff, Catechists, Diocesan Catholic School Teachers/Administrators

For any other speakers, please follow the approval guidelines which are listed online with the Office for Communications: <http://richmonddiocese.org/office/office-of-communications/>. Click the link for “Guest Speaker Approval” to see the details instructions for gaining approval.

Other Tips for Coordinating Speakers

Stuck on figuring out what to talk about or who to have talk about it? Consider the following options to generate ideas and keep things going well:

- Collect email addresses at your next event and send out a survey asking people for their input.
- Look at who is on staff at your local parishes: priests, youth ministers, social ministers, etc. They might be passionate about a particular topic, or they might have connections to other people who would make great speakers!
- Know of a Catholic or other community service organization in the area? Consider going to their website and looking at their staff contacts, someone might stick out to you.
- Is there a Catholic Campus Ministry in your area? Reach out to the campus minister and see if they have any contacts with professors or other speakers in the area.
- Are there seasonal, liturgical, or hot topics happening in your area, in the Church, or in the world? Make sure to rotate in topics that tie into something bigger.
- Hesitate before inviting someone whom you have no connection to and haven’t heard speak before. You want to feel confident that this person will uphold the Catholic theological point you’re talking about that month and also be engaging for your audience!
- If your speaker is requesting compensation or reimbursement, see if you can partner with a local parish to cover their basic costs.

Advertising for Theology on Tap

If young adults in your area don’t know that your event is happening, they won’t come. To help get the word out to your area, think about advertising in the following places:

- The Office for Evangelization website, www.evangelizerichmond.org. Make sure your contact info is up-to-date on the Theology on Tap page, and add your event to the Young Adult Google Calendar. We are happy to promote your event on our social media accounts!
- Facebook Event for each month and a Facebook Page for your group. This way, people get reminders, post announcements, and can easily share the event with coworkers and friends.
- Parish Bulletins and Email Newsletters. Make sure parishes in your area know when and where you meet each month as well as each speaker and topic.
- Local coffee shops and bars. See a community events board somewhere? Stick a flyer up and invite people who might not hear about it otherwise!

Hospitality is Important

Have you ever walked into an event, listened to a speaker, and left without ever talking to a single person? One of the goals of Theology on Tap is to make connections. Not sure how to start?

Consider the following:

- Have greeters at the entrance, and consider providing nametags and/or a sign-in sheet. (The sign-in sheet can be helpful if you want to send reminder emails or text messages out!)
- Place icebreaker questions on the tables to help people feel like they’re encouraged to talk.
- Have things been quiet lately? Throw in a trivia night to add some energy!
- Use a small whiteboard for announcements, and let people share announcements of other parish and small group events at the end of the night.
- Host a raffle each night! Most parishes have books, CDs, or other religious goods that they could donate for free.

Please let the Office for Evangelization know if you have questions, we are here to help!
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