

# What Is Totus Tuus

## Totus Tuus - "Totally Yours"

Totus Tuus is a summer Catholic youth program dedicated to sharing the Gospel and promoting the Catholic faith through evangelization, catechesis, Christian witness, and Eucharistic worship. Our week-long Parish Summer Catechetical Program assists parents and parishes in the evangelizing and catechizing of their youth by supplementing the work they are already doing.

The methodology, structure, content, and enthusiasm of Totus Tuus is concerned not only with teaching the faith, but also igniting the hearts of the team members and young people. The result has been the formation of young adults who continue to dedicate themselves to the Church's mission of evangelization.

## Our Mission

The mission of Totus Tuus is to inspire in young people a true longing for holiness, a deep desire for daily conversion, and openness to their vocation by constantly challenging them to give themselves entirely to Christ through Mary and by continually strengthening their prayer lives in imitation of Her.

## Our Motivation

Totus Tuus, a Latin phrase meaning "totally yours," was the motto of Pope John Paul II. Taken from St. Louis de Montfort's True Devotion to Mary, it signifies our desire to give ourselves entirely to Jesus Christ through Mary. It also expresses our effort to give our all too every young person we encounter. Through the teams' example of joy and service, the youth see that these men and women are ON FIRE with the Catholic faith and long for the same thing in their lives.

## Our Method

Totus Tuus calls upon college students and seminarians from the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas and across the United States to carry this mission to every young person they encounter in the parish program. Students are hired for their energy, enthusiasm, love for the faith, commitment to spiritual growth, ability to work with a team, and desire to work with youth.

Parish catechists are grouped into teams of four, each consisting of two men and two women, and are invited to a different parish every week for seven weeks, where they conduct a week-long "parish mission," teaching and inspiring the parish's youth.

# **Our History**

## **History of Totus Tuus**

In 1987, Bernard X. Gorges, a seminarian for the Diocese of Wichita, teaches a catechetical summer program to elementary grade students at St. Michael's Parish in Girard, KS. To keep busy during the summers of 1988-1990, Gorges accepts calls to teach at 15 different parishes in Southeast Kansas and hires college students to assist him. In 1991, two teams of four college students are formed to meet the demand for the Summer Catechetical Program, as it was then known.

In 1993, the program increases to four teams and expands services into parishes in the Diocese of Dodge City, Kansas. The program informally begins to be called Totus Tuus.

Over the next decade Totus Tuus grew and expanded to many other Dioceses in the Midwest and in 2002, Fr. Jerry Volz, then Director of the Didde Catholic Campus Center at Emporia State University received permission from Archbishop James P, Keleher to be trained with the first team to come to the Archdiocese of Kansas city in Kansas as a ministry of the Archdiocese. On that first team was Andrew Strobl, a student of Washburn University in Topeka, Kansas. He is one of many men who have entered the seminary after serving on a Totus Tuus team, and he now serves as Co-Director of the program with Fr. Jerry Volz. In the first 11 years of the program being in the Archdiocese, there have also been 7 women who have entered religious life after serving on a team for the summer.

Since its beginnings as a ministry of the Archdiocese in 2001, Totus Tuus of KCK has continued to expand its reach and ministry. The summer of 2013, four teams ministered in 23 parishes in the Archdiocese ministering to 1816 students.

## **Where is Totus Tuus located now?**

Since its inception in the Diocese of Wichita in 1987, Totus Tuus has expanded from one parish in Kansas to numerous parishes throughout the country. In 2012, 29 dioceses in 16 states throughout the United States and one diocese in Canada will host their own Totus Tuus teams!