

# Meet Grant Bright

## Youth Ministry Coordinator

By Emma Roberts, 2018 Frassati Catholic Academy Graduate

Last September Grant Bright joined St. Mary's parish staff as the new Coordinator of Youth Ministry. So that we can get to know Grant a little better, he shared with us some information about his background, experiences, and goals for the Youth Ministry.

**Q: What did you do before coming to St. Mary's?**

**A:** Before I started working at St. Mary's I was in college. I graduated in May 2017 from Franciscan University in Steubenville, OH, with a Bachelor's degree in Theology and Catechetics. While I was in college I helped facilitate a middle school youth group, and I also interned at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in Crystal Lake, IL, helping with Youth Ministry.

**Q: One Youth Group activity is the Catholic Heart Work Camp (CHWC) and this year's mission trip to Knoxville, TN. Have you attended any mission trips in the past?**

**A:** I have been on twelve mission trips, seven while I was in high school. Five of those trips were to New Orleans and two to Joplin, MO. I also attended four mission trips while I was in college, three of them to a Native American Reservation in North Dakota and one to Jamaica.

**Q: Do any of those trips stand out as particularly memorable?**

**A:** It is really hard to pick one mission trip as most memorable because they were all unique, not only in the location but also in the work that we did. My most memorable moments in Joplin were ones of backbreaking labor. One time we tore up a whole concrete foundation of a house; another time we took eight layers of shingles off a roof and by the end of the week we had started to put on new shingles.

**Q: What effect can mission trips have on young adults? What have you witnessed on your past trips?**

**A:** Mission trips can have a big impact on everyone, not just young adults. Depending on the focus of the mission trip, everyone will feel that impact differently. I believe that, at its base, mission work is about serving others, and such service can affect each person in a positive way. I have witnessed this most especially on high school trips when the teens who go don't necessarily want to be there. However; throughout the week of service you can see them grow in faith and interest and often they come out with a totally new attitude and perspective.

**Q: Are mission trips all about work?**

**A:** No! They're a lot of fun, too. What makes mission trips fun is the opportunity to get away from your ordinary daily life at home and be your true authentic self with other kids your age. Yes, mission work is a lot of work but the benefits to your life are incredible! The fantastic evening worship programs allow each person to have daily time with God.

**Q: What has been your experience at St. Mary thus far?**

**A:** St. Mary's has been great; I feel very much at home here. Fr. Jerry and Fr. Matt have been fantastic, and I really enjoy working with them. The parish staff and parishioners have been nothing but welcoming. I am looking forward to the future and am confident it will be bright – no pun intended!

**Q: What are your goals for St. Mary's Youth Ministry?**

**A:** I see a lot of promise in the incoming 8th graders and for all the teens going on the CHWC this summer. Both of these groups question their faith a lot, and I see that as encouraging because it means that they care enough to ask the tough questions. I am confident the youth group will build up again, and soon St. Mary's Youth Ministry will be a vibrant, thriving ministry of great benefit to our parish.