



# PROGRAM OVERVIEW



# TOTUS TUUS



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

WHAT IS TOTUS TUUS? ..... 4

- Mission
- “Totally Yours”
- Our Method
- Fostering Vocations
- The Five Pillars of Totus Tuus
- Totus Tuus Curriculum
- From Wichita, Kansas to Portland, Maine
- Diocese of Portland Leadership Structure

1<sup>ST</sup>-8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE PROGRAM..... 8

- Schedule
- Curriculum
- Mass and Reconciliation
- Lunch, Snacks and Outdoor Play
- Friday Afternoon

High School Program..... 10

- Tuesday Evening Adoration
- Thursday Evening Social
- Curriculum

Host Parish Support ..... 11

- Volunteers and a Safe Environment
- Intercessors
- Wednesday Evening Parish Supper
- Financial Assistance to Low Income Families

Cost and Registration ..... 12

- Totus Tuus Maine Schedule
- Contact Information



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# WHAT IS TOTUS TUUS?

Totus Tuus is a Catholic youth program for students from 1st through 12th grade dedicated to teaching the Gospel and deepening love for the Church through catechesis, prayer, Christian witness, and the sacraments. The program's strong emphasis on devotion and love for Christ in the Eucharist and for Mary, Mother of the Church, leads participants to an exhilarating encounter with the timeless treasures of the Catholic Faith. Through age-appropriate, dynamic, and faithful content presented each day, young people are motivated and equipped to live the radical call of the Gospel in today's world.

## 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 strengthening their prayer lives in imitation of her.

## “TOTALLY YOURS”

“Totus Tuus ego sum et omnia mea tua sunt.” Thus begins the episcopal motto of the late Holy Father, John Paul II: “I am totally yours, and all that I have is yours.” With these words, John Paul II inspired and continues to inspire men and women from all over the world to entrust their lives completely to Jesus Christ through the Virgin Mary. Mary's total devotion to the will of the Father is the model for Totus Tuus, as it seeks to respond to John Paul II's urgent call for a “New Evangelization.” We hope to instill these virtues in the young people.



## OUR METHOD

Totus Tuus draws upon the energy and dedication of faith-filled college students and seminarians from Maine and across the United States to witness to this mission. Teams of four (two men and two women) are hired each year through a rigorous selection process and spend the first two weeks of the summer in training to carry out the program. In collaboration with local pastors and parish coordinators, the Teaching Team spends the remainder of the summer traveling throughout the diocese, conducting the Totus Tuus program at six separate parish locations.

## FOSTERING VOCATIONS

In addition to communicating the faith and translating it into daily life, the Totus Tuus teaching team strives to increase a deeper awareness and desire among young people to give their lives in service to Christ and his people. The concepts of discernment, vocation and radical service of Christ are themes taught in catechesis and powerfully witnessed to in a concrete way by the Teaching Team, a seminarian for the Diocese of Portland and three college students who have generously chosen to dedicate long hours over the course of the summer to building up the Church. In a secular society whose icons obsess over self-fulfillment and worldliness, the witness of a group of young men and women on fire with Jesus Christ is uniquely inspiring.

## THE FIVE PILLARS OF TOTUS TUUS

### I. THE EUCHARIST

The Eucharist has pride of place in the Totus Tuus schedule, for both teachers and youth. Other prayers – the Liturgy of the Hours, the Rosary, the Angelus, the Chaplet of Divine Mercy and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament – provide a great deal of nourishment, but the celebration of the Mass is the “source and summit” of our faith.

“It is Jesus you seek when you dream of happiness; he is waiting for you when nothing else you find satisfies you; he is the beauty to which you are so attracted; it is he who provokes you with that thirst for fullness that will not let you settle for compromise...” - Pope St. John Paul II, World Youth Day Vigil of Prayer, 2000

### II. MARIAN DEVOTION

The Teaching Team works to lead the youth to Jesus for a week, but Mary will lead them to Jesus for a lifetime. The team brings them to Mary by helping them dialogue with her as they meditate on the mysteries of the Rosary. Praying with her and through her, we hear her say to us, “Do whatever He tells you” (John 2:5).

### III. CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTION

An authentic catechesis, rooted in an orderly and systematic explanation of God’s self-revelation through the person of Jesus Christ, provides the foundation of the program’s teaching. We instruct the participants in the truths of the Catholic faith in accord with the Tradition of the Church to cultivate both a firm intellectual grounding and a solid relationship with Jesus. All of our teaching is directed toward helping the youth deepen their understanding of God, strengthen their faith in Him and, most importantly, cultivate a more intimate union with Him.

### IV. VOCATIONAL DISCERNMENT

Totus Tuus strives to foster Christian vocations by encouraging the youth to begin discerning God’s call to the married life, priesthood, or consecrated life. Because the teachers are striving to live an authentic Christian life and are actively discerning their own vocations, they can better help the youth to do the same.

### V. FUN

Totus Tuus demonstrates that one can be a faithful Catholic and have a lot of fun doing so! Morning pump up, skits, songs, recess, and a Friday afternoon water fight with the teachers make the program come alive!

## TOTUS TUUS CURRICULUM

The Totus Tuus curriculum is an orderly and systematic initiation and explanation of God’s revelation of Himself through the person of Jesus Christ. Each year participants explore this revelation by delving into a new aspect of the Catholic Church’s sacred tradition and scripture, and her continued magisterial teaching and sacramental life.

The methodology, content, structure, and approach of Totus Tuus is not limited to religious classroom instruction. It embraces a holistic and communal approach aimed at setting the hearts and minds of participants on fire with the joy of the Gospel. Catechesis is therefore dynamic, engaging, high energy, and action oriented.

Totus Tuus catechesis is based on the structure and content of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and divided into a six-year cycle. Each year participants explore one of the following themes:

- The Mysteries of Salvation
- The Apostles Creed
- The Sacraments
- The Commandments
- The Virtues
- Prayer and the Our Father

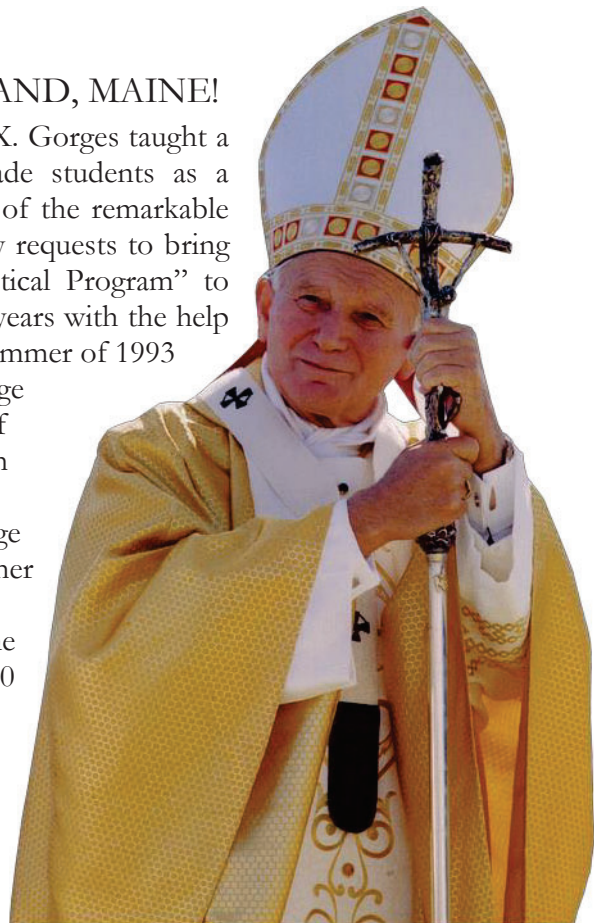
The six-year catechetical cycle is complemented by a four-year cycle reflecting on the mysteries of the Rosary:

- Joyful Mysteries
- Luminous Mysteries
- Sorrowful Mysteries
- Glorious Mysteries

## FROM WICHITA, KANSAS TO PORTLAND, MAINE!

Totus Tuus started in 1987 when Father Bernard X. Gorges taught a catechetical summer program to elementary grade students as a seminarian with the Diocese of Wichita. Because of the remarkable success of the program, Fr. Gorges received many requests to bring what was then known as the “Summer Catechetical Program” to neighboring parishes, which he did in the coming years with the help of college students hired for the summer. By the summer of 1993 the program had expanded to four teams of 4 college students and spread into the neighboring diocese of Dodge City, Kansas. In that same year, the program took the name of “Totus Tuus” from the motto of Pope St. John Paul II. By 1998, 10 teams of 4 college students were serving 52 parish sites over the summer in Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Georgia. By 2017, Totus Tuus had spread across the country to over 25 dioceses and reached over 60,000 children.

At the request of Fr. Seamus Griesbach, the former Director of Vocations, in May of 2017, Bishop Deeley approved the introduction of the Totus Tuus program to the Diocese of Portland under the direction of the Office of Vocations.



## DIOCESE OF PORTLAND LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE

### *Director of Vocations*

At the direction of Bishop Ruggieri, the Director of Vocations oversees Totus Tuus in the Diocese of Portland. This responsibility includes the oversight of all program budgeting, funding, communication, organization, and staffing in the Diocese of Portland. The current Director of Vocations is Fr. Brad Morin.

### *Program Coordinator*

A Program Coordinator works in close collaboration with the Director of Vocations in carrying out each core aspect of the program. The current Program Coordinator is Linda Freese, from the Diocesan Office of Ministerial Services.

### *Leadership Committee*

In collaboration with the Director of Vocations, the Program Coordinator chairs a Totus Tuus Leadership Committee composed of between three and five members. The team meets regularly throughout the year to aid in program scheduling, communications, Teaching Team interviews, and other aspects of program operations.

### *Teaching Team*

A Teaching Team is composed of seminarian (s) and Catholic college students. College students apply in late fall and interviews are conducted by the Leadership Committee after Christmas. After considering the recommendations of the Leadership Committee, the Program Coordinator and Vocation Director determine the applicants who will be offered positions on the team. The Director of Vocations consults with the Director of Seminarians to determine which seminarians will be available to participate each summer. The Totus Tuus Teaching Team reports directly to the Program Coordinator, who oversees their performance in collaboration with the Director of Vocations.

### *Local Pastor*

In consultation with the Director of Vocations and Program Coordinator, local pastors invite Totus Tuus to their parish(es) and appoint a Parish Coordinator to oversee necessary on-site promotion, preparation, program logistics and support.

### *Parish Coordinator*

Parish Coordinators are appointed by their pastors and serve as the primary liaisons between local parishes and the Totus Tuus Program Coordinator and Teaching Team. Parish Coordinators are responsible for working with the pastor, parish staff, and volunteers to ensure that all communication, promotion, preparation, and support for Totus Tuus is carried out as needed and on time.







## 1<sup>ST</sup> - 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE PROGRAM

The Totus Tuus morning and afternoon program is designed for children going into 1<sup>st</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> grades in the school year. This program runs Monday through Friday.

Children participating in the Totus Tuus are encouraged to engage the faith and make it their own. We teach them how to view God as their loving Father, Jesus their Savior, and the Holy Spirit their Comfort and Guide. This message of God's love is made tangible through the love the teachers give to the kids, following St. Paul's exhortation to share "not only the gospel of God but also our own selves" (1 Thess. 2:8).

Developing a personal relationship with God gives them the confidence to be Jesus' witnesses in the world around them. We endeavor to show the youth that a strong desire to know and love God can only be fostered by a steadfast prayer life and the frequent reception of the Sacraments.

### SCHEDULE

#### *Monday-Thursday:*

9:00 am INTRODUCTION/WELCOME  
 9:15 am Warm-up/Songs  
 9:30 am CLASS PERIOD 1  
 10:00 am Snack Break  
 10:15 am Music Preparation for Mass  
 10:30 am CLASS PERIOD 2  
 11:00 am Mass Preparation/Confessions  
 11:30 am MASS  
 12:15 pm Lunch-Recess  
 1:15 pm Cool Down-Water Break  
 1:30 pm CLASS PERIOD 3  
 2:00 pm Break  
 2:10 pm CLASS PERIOD 4  
 2:40 pm Gather, Review and Closing Prayer  
 3:00 pm DISMISSAL

#### *Friday:*

On Friday, the daily schedule is altered after lunch as follows:  
 1:00 pm Outdoor field games and recreational activities.  
 2:45 pm Gather, Review and Closing Prayer  
 3:00 pm DISMISSAL

## DAILY MASS AND RECONCILIATION

It is in the Sacraments, especially in the Eucharist, that Christ Jesus works most powerfully for the redemption and sanctification of mankind. Totus Tuus has found over the years that participating in the Sacraments on such an intimate level has a tremendous effect on children. The Teaching Team strives to help the kids participate fully and actively in the liturgy, which is an integral and indispensable part of our program.

Mass is celebrated with the children every day, which the parishioners are encouraged to attend. There are also opportunities for Confession each day. The children participate at Mass by serving, bringing up the gifts, proclaiming the readings and reading the petitions. The Teaching Team leads participants in songs during Mass. They also prepare them daily for Mass and Confession and remind them to be reverent during Mass and to behave well throughout the week (their fun Friday afternoon depends on it!). One of the biggest compliments received by Totus Tuus in other Dioceses is that kids often behave better at Mass after attending the program.

## LUNCH, BREAKS AND OUTDOOR PLAY

While a large part of the day is spent in classes, Totus Tuus is not “school”, and we make sure the kids have lots of fun! There is a snack break in the morning, recess and “cool down” after lunch. Children are given plenty of water, and parishes may choose to offer other healthy drinks and snacks. The children bring bag lunches, unless the parish chooses to provide lunch for them.

Recess follows lunch. To facilitate team sports and other games, participants bring (or the parish provides) Frisbees, hula hoops, gloves, balls, bats, jump ropes, etc. The Teaching Team participates in recess with the children.

## FRIDAY AFTERNOON

On Fridays, the schedule is the same until lunch. However, the afternoon is just for fun, and so there are no classes. The children can bring lunches as usual, or the parish can have a cookout. In the afternoon, the kids change into swimsuits if they don't already have them on under their clothes. Then the water games begin! There is a water fun with water balloons, for which the children can bring buckets and/or water soakers. Some parishes have even brought the Fire Department to spray the kids and make it “rain”! After it's over, the kids help the Teaching Team clean up the area. Parishes may also choose to provide popsicles, ice cream sandwiches or other treats at the conclusion of Friday afternoon. The program is brought to conclusion with prayer and song.





# HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

The High School Program runs Sunday through Thursday in the evening. Totus Tuus has found that vibrant, faithful, college-age teachers make a lasting impact on high school youth. Two reasons stand out: their proximity in age, and the ability to establish mentor relationships like those of a big brother or sister.

Throughout the week of Totus Tuus, members of the Teaching Team give witness to their faith and relationship with God through powerful talks and testimonies. They also lead small group discussions, quiet meditation, prayer, games and fellowship.

Each evening session runs from 6:30pm until 8:30pm with a 15-minute snack break at 8:00pm. Parish volunteers are asked to supply the snacks Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday evening.

| SCHEDULE: |                           |
|-----------|---------------------------|
| 6:30 pm   | Introduction/Ice Breakers |
| 6:45 pm   | SESSION 1                 |
| 7:10 pm   | SESSION 2                 |
| 7:35 pm   | SESSION 3                 |
| 8:00 pm   | Break                     |
| 8:15 pm   | Night Prayer (Compline)   |
| 8:30pm    | DISMISSAL                 |

## TUESDAY EVENING ADORATION

On Tuesday evening, high school youth adore Christ during Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Students are also encouraged to go to Confession, which is offered during this time. Tuesday night is often very moving for teens, regardless of where they find themselves on their spiritual journey. It serves as the focal point of the week, anchoring all other presentations in one central goal: intimacy with Jesus Christ.

## THURSDAY EVENING SOCIAL

On Thursday evening, the last night of the program, the Teaching Team spends some fun time with the teens. Activities for Thursday evening may include anything that allows the team members and youth to interact on a social basis, e.g., a barbecue at the lake, going out for pizza and bowling, going to a parishioner's home for a cookout and swimming, etc. This is a great chance for the team to make a personal connection with the youth and establish a mentor relationship. Families are responsible for the cost of the outing, usually no more than \$5. If the activity is off-site, the youth are to provide their own transportation; Totus Tuus is not responsible for transportation. The evening's activity is determined ahead of time by the Parish Coordinator and volunteers after asking for input from the participating teens.



## HOST PARISH SUPPORT

After inviting Totus Tuus to the parish, the Pastor is asked to appoint a Parish Coordinator to oversee all parish support for the program. While the focus of the Totus Tuus program is obviously on the youth of the parish; the Parish Coordinator is encouraged to involve the as much of the parish as possible in this wonderful program.

### TEACHING TEAM HOSPITALITY

Our teaching teams travel from parish to parish over the course of the summer, relying on the generosity and hospitality of the parishes where they serve. Parishes provide host families for the team and supply all of their meals while in the parish, allowing the team to stay focused on their teaching. The parish also provides snacks and hospitality to Totus Tuus participants over the course of the week.



### VOLUNTEERS AND A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

In order to run Totus Tuus smoothly, we depend on the generosity of volunteers. Volunteers assist by setting up, cleaning, supervising children during breaks, lunch and recess, helping out during classroom time during the day, providing support for evening high school gatherings and carrying out other tasks as needed. The Teaching Team receives Safe Environment training before they arrive at the parish. The Parish Coordinator ensures that all parish volunteers over 18 years of age are Safe Environment trained as well. Totus Tuus takes the safety of children very seriously.

### INTERCESSORS

While the team is at your parish, and even before they arrive, parishes are asked to pray for the teaching team, participants, coordinators, volunteers and parish priests who will be involved in the program. This is a great way to involve parishioners who don't have school-aged children attending Totus Tuus.

### WEDNESDAY EVENING PARISH SUPPER

Totus Tuus requests that hosting parishes sponsor a community supper with the Teaching Team on Wednesday night. We encourage this to be a parish-wide event. The dinner should be promoted throughout the parish in the preceding weeks.

### FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO LOW INCOME FAMILIES

Totus Tuus is funded by the Office of Vocations of the Diocese of Portland and assumes all of the training and stipend costs for the Teaching Teams that travel to parishes over the summer. Due to the workload involved in running such a large program, Totus Tuus Maine asks that each parish locally raise and distribute funds to help low-income families to participate. Parish Coordinators will be provided financial assistance request form templates and given instructions on how to oversee the distribution of financial help. Parishioners are encouraged to donate to a parish fund set aside for this purpose.



## COST AND REGISTRATION

The cost for Totus Tuus is \$65.00 per student, with a maximum of \$130.00 per family.

Unlike many Dioceses, where parishes are asked to pay a substantial upfront fee to host Totus Tuus and to administer the registration and fee collection process locally, Totus Tuus Maine is providing an online registration option that will simplify the financial and paperwork burden on parishes.

All families are encouraged to register their children online at the Totus Tuus website. Payment can be received online with credit or debit card only. Families that wish to pay with cash or check are asked to fill out a hard copy registration form provided by the parish and to submit their payment to the parish office, as they would for other parish programs. Parishes keep track of families that pay with cash or check and forward these funds to the Office of Vocations at the conclusion of the program.

Families seeking financial assistance to send children to Totus Tuus are invited to fill out a financial assistance form that is submitted to the parish office for processing along with a hard copy registration form. The local parish will determine what amount, if any, of financial assistance can be provided to local families.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

To host Totus Tuus in your parish, please contact the Office of Vocations and speak with Linda Freese, the Program Coordinator, or Fr. Brad Morin, who oversees the program.

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## TOTUS TUUS CALENDAR 2025

June 4 - 13.....Team Training

Anna Maria College, Paxton, MA

June 15 - 20..... St. Mary of the Visitation, Houlton

June 22 - 27.....Parish Camp, Livermore for (St. Rose & St. Joseph)

June 29 - July 3.....Prince of Peace Parish, Lewiston

July 6 – 11.....St. John Paul II Parish, Scarborough

July 13 - 18.....St. Anthony of Padua, Westbrook

will be held @ Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Windham

July 20 - 25.....All Saints Parish, Brunswick

July 27 – Aug. 1.....Christian Life Center, Frenchville

