CODE OF CONDUCT FOR YOUTH VOLUNTEERS/WORKERS

This Code of Conduct is for use with youth under 18 years who serve as volunteers or are in work placement in parishes or schools. Young people under 18 are not required to attend VIRTUS training and apply for a background check as a condition for their ministry or work. (Young people covered by this Code of Conduct are required to attend Virtus training and have a background check if they are working with Minors when they become 18.) Adults responsible for the supervision of young people in ministry or work situations need to review this document with the young person and clarify/explain any part that may not be understood by the young person. This can be done in a group or individual meeting. This form is to be signed by the young person, the parent/guardian, and the supervisor. The form is to be kept in the parish or school.

I promise to follow the rules and guidelines in this Code of Conduct. I understand that any action inconsistent with or failure to take action mandated by this Code of Conduct may result in my removal from my volunteer or work assignment.

As a youth volunteer or worker I will:

- Safeguard children and other youth entrusted to my care at all times.
- Treat everyone with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, and dignity.
- Take care to be positive, supportive, and caring in my speaking, writing, and interacting with children and youth.
- Avoid situations in ministry or work where I am alone with any child.
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism or comparison when working with children/youth.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of children/youth. Report suspected abuse to my supervisor, or if it involves my supervisor, report it to the pastor.
- Be aware that children/young people can easily become infatuated with a youth leader or an adult. If I sense this is happening, I will not encourage it. I will make my supervisor aware of it so that he/she can resolve the matter, including reassigning me to other activities.
- Maintain appropriate physical and emotional boundaries with children/youth.
- Dress modestly and appropriately and not wear any clothing with offensive messages or pictures while exercising my ministry or working.
- Adheres to the same rules as child/youth (e.g. cell phone usage, i-pods, boundaries)

As a youth volunteer or worker I will not:

- Endorse, during my ministry, any view contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church.
- Commit an illegal or immoral act.
- Smoke or use tobacco products in the presence of minors.
- Use, possess or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at any time while at work or volunteering.
- Verbally threaten or physically abuse anyone.
- Use profanity in the presence of any child, youth or adult.
- Use discipline that frightens or humiliates a child/youth.
- Touch a child/youth in a sexual, overly affectionate or other inappropriate manner.
- Place myself in a situation where my interactions with a child/youth would not be visible to others.
- Accept gifts from or give gifts to children/youth in my care without approval from my supervisor.
- Tolerate inappropriate or bullying behavior by a child/youth toward another child/youth.
- Communicate with minors in my charge about matters unrelated to my responsibilities within ministry.
- Use, possess, purchase, or give pornographic material to anyone.
- Engage in sexual intimacies. This includes consensual, non-consensual, forced physical contact, sex texting, and/or any inappropriate sexual comments.

We, the undersigned, have read and understand the **Roman Catholic Diocese of Ogdensburg Code of Conduct for Youth Workers and Volunteers** and will honor them while at work or as a volunteer. We understand and agree that the parent/guardian will be notified at the time of any infraction requiring dismissal from work or volunteer assignment at the parish or school where the young person is working or ministering.

Name of Youth (print): _____

Signature of Youth: _____

School or Parish Position: _____

Date: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

Date: _____

Signature of Supervisor: _____

Date: _____