

TOTUS TUUS MISSIONARY FAQ'S

What is Totus Tuus? How does it work?

Totus Tuus is a summer catechetical program. It started in Wichita, KS, in 1987 and has spread to as many as 50 arch/dioceses across North America. It is authentically Catholic. Missionaries inspire kids with their dynamic Catholic faith. We actively participate in the Sacraments, Adoration, and devotion to our Blessed Mother. There are crazy skits and messy, fun games. Totus Tuus is a summer of intense sacrifice. You will grow as a disciple and as a leader. You will make new friends and be inspired to live your faith in a deeper way.

Teams of four, two women/two men, travel to parishes across the Archdiocese. Each week you will visit a new parish and host a five-day parish mission. Missionaries are responsible for teaching classes to grades 1-6 during the day and hosting a program for grades 7-12 in the evening. Missionaries will be trained to teach classes on theological topics. Missionaries stay with a host family from the parish and meals are provided during the week.

Totus Tuus, a Latin phrase meaning "Totally Yours," was the motto of Pope Saint John Paul II. Taken from St. Louis de Montfort's "True Devotion to Mary" phrase, it signifies our desire to give ourselves entirely to Jesus Christ through Mary. It also expresses our effort to give our all to 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.

What are the 2026 dates?

Tuesday, May 26 – Saturday, August 1 with a week-long break July 4-10.

Training: May 26-June 5 (*Training held at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana – depart St. Louis afternoon of Tuesday, May 26*)

Parish Weeks: June 6-12, June 13-19, June 20-26, June 27-July 3

Break: July 4-10

Parish Weeks: July 11-17, July 18-24, July 25-31

Final Day: August 1

What is the compensation and benefits?

- \$3,500 salary for 9-week period (Pay received every two weeks)
- Milage paid (one person per 4-person team)
- Eligible for college credit (speak with college advisor)
- Meals and Lodging covered
- Mid-Summer Break
- Totus Tuus T-shirt provided
- Professional development including human, intellectual, spiritual, & pastoral formation, team dynamics, & mission alignment

What are my responsibilities as a Totus Tuus missionary?

- Attend an intensive 10-day training for the program
- Work as part of a 4-person team to execute the week-long program at parishes across the Archdiocese
- Prepare for and teach young people in the faith throughout catechetical lessons
- Lead songs, games, activities, and skits designed to help young people grow in their faith
- Stay with a host family or at a parish rectory as a guest at each parish
- Be a model and visible witness of the Catholic faith in word and deed
- Pray daily with your team and frequently receive the sacraments of Confession and Holy Eucharist
- Sacrifice for Others: By being "Totus Tuus" you will need to put the needs of others before your own, particularly those of the youth that you will encounter this summer.

What do we do/What is covered at training?

Training in 2026 will be held at the Newman Center at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana. We will be joining with missionaries from the Diocese of Peoria IL, the Diocese of Springfield IL, and the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend IN. Lodging and meals will be provided for the 10-day training. We will travel together from St. Louis to Champaign-Urbana on Tuesday afternoon, May 26th and return the afternoon of Friday, June 5th. Missionary drivers will receive a stipend for mileage. Lodging and meals will be covered during training.

The OYM cares deeply about the development of its services *and* the formation of its Totus Tuus missionary teachers. The four areas of focus are spiritual, human, intellectual, and apostolic formation. Missionaries are provided training in catechesis, prayer, team dynamics, and leadership over ten days. You will be prepared to enter in to mission and understand the “how” and “why” of mission. In addition, all missionaries will need to complete the Archdiocesan “Prevent and Protect” safe environment process, most of which can be done online.

Teams will be revealed during training, and you will spend time learning the curriculum and developing lesson plans with your teammates. Former missionaries will be mentoring and teaching you. There will also be time for prayer, receiving the sacraments, and fun time!

Additional performance management and professional development is provided throughout the summer.

What does a typical week in a parish look like?

The team arrives at a parish Saturday afternoon prior to the week of teaching. The team will be speaking at all the Masses that weekend. The team will meet with a parish representative, tour the facilities, and set up and prepare for the coming week on Sunday afternoon. After putting on the summer program, the team will have some free time Friday evening and Saturday morning for team recreation and personal time. The teams are due to arrive at their next parish before the anticipatory Mass on Saturday evening.

What does a typical day look like?

The missionaries arrive early at the parish for a holy hour and then are prepared for children arriving starting at 8:30am. The **Teaching Themes for 2026 are The 10 Commandments and the Luminous Mysteries.**

9:00am	Morning pump up and Class
10:00	Snack time
10:15 - 11:30	Class, Mass prep, Confession
11:30	Mass
12:15 - 1:00	Lunch and Recess
1:15 - 2:40	Class
2:40 - 3:00	Review, dismissal

The team then will have a team meeting, clean up, rest, and prayer. They report to a host family for dinner at 5:30 and then back to the parish by 7:00pm for the evening program.

7:30pm	Intro/games/snacks
8pm	Talk
8:15	Small Groups
8:45	Prayer experience
9:00	Send
9:15	Hangout, snacks
9:30	Dismissal/Optional night prayer with team

Where will I stay and how will I get around?

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During parish weeks the team will stay at host family houses to better know the families of the parish. The host families often treat the teachers as though they were part of their own family. Housing of team members occurs from their arrival Saturday afternoon/evening until their departure the following Saturday. Each team will have 1 driver who will receive a stipend for mileage.

What about meals?

Most of the team's meals will be provided during training and while the team is in the parish. The host family provides breakfast by 7:00 am. The parish or a parish family provides lunch. Families in the parish who will invite the team to supper provide the evening meal. This allows for more families to be involved in the hosting of the team and provides an excellent opportunity for the team to interact with families of the parish. In some instances the parish may provide gift cards to restaurants in lieu of a family hosting the team for dinner. Missionaries will sometimes have to pay for meals on Friday night and Saturday afternoon.

What all would I need to bring with me?

You will receive a detailed packing list for the summer before training, but you will need a week's worth of nice clothes and some casual clothes as well. You should have access to do laundry at your host homes each week. Bedding and towels will be provided by host homes as well. Most missionaries bring 1 suitcase and a backpack to use during the day. The OYM will provide you with one Totus Tuus t-shirt.

DRESS CODE:

Weekend Masses

Put on your Sunday best! Please remember this is the first impression each parish will have of you.

Weekdays

Men should wear slacks and a collared shirt. Please make sure shirts are tucked in and clothes are not noticeably wrinkled. **Ladies** blouses must have sleeves and no part of the shirt may be see-through nor skin tight. At no time should you wear yoga pants or spandex leggings as pants (you can wear these under a skirt or dress). Wear dress pants or dresses or skirts (at least knee length) with a nice shirt.

Fridays

Team members are allowed to wear their parish t-shirt and jeans or nice shorts. If your parish has a potluck during the week, you can wear jeans and your parish t-shirt on that day instead. At lunch time you will have the opportunity to change into your water fight clothes. The kids will wear their swim clothes all day on Friday. Cutoffs are not permitted. No bro tanks. Wear dark clothing during water games.

What if I'm not from St. Louis?

We will provide you with a timeline on when you need to arrive in St. Louis for training and when you will have break time and can travel back home. You will need to make your own travel arrangements. Should you need to arrive early or stay late by a day, we can help plan for local lodging in St. Louis.

What if I'm not good with kids?

You will receive a lot of helpful tips during training and from returning missionaries. We will do our best to help you be successful no matter what age group you are working with. The schedule is very structured and there are times for lessons, games, and other activities. You will also have your teammates to help you each week!

Do I get any free time? Am I with the other missionaries 24/7?

There are a few hours during the day to have a breather. However, free time is limited, and you are around your team most of the day. This does not mean you must socialize every waking moment of the day.

How does college credit work?

Check with your college advisor to see if serving as a Totus Tuus missionary can count as college credit and what the requirements would be. If you need more information from our office or to connect us with your advisor, please let us know!

What if I have a vacation, family wedding, or something else already planned for the summer? Can I go home during the mid-summer break?

During the mid-summer break you are free to go home, on vacation, or wherever else you might plan. Break begins at the end of Friday's day program on July 3rd. All team members must report back to their next parish at a designated time on Saturday, July 11th. Any other conflicts with the dates can be discussed individually with the Director and may be approved if there will be minimal disruption to the program.

What are the rewards of being a Totus Tuus missionary?

Working for Totus Tuus for the Archdiocese is life giving. You are able to see the diocese from a unique perspective. The missionary life is life giving and can change hearts. You are able to meet the domestic church through living with various families that love so greatly. The love of Christ is poured out without bounds through Totus Tuus!

Quotes from missionaries:

"My experience with Totus Tuus in Saint Louis was so beautiful. As an out of state missionary, I was welcomed with open arms and hearts that desired to know mine and to serve the church alongside me. I was supported, formed, challenged, and critiqued in so many fruitful ways. I'm forever grateful for my time serving with Totus Tuus."

"It is beautiful to live by God's providence! Totus Tuus is a fun and fruitful summer for you the missionary, not just the kids."

"Being able to share my experiences and see the different reactions of the children just made me love the Lord. I went into the summer thinking this was gonna be more like me leading a retreat but in actuality it was more like me growing in my faith with different groups each week. I was able to actually realize how cool it is to be loved by God and to be able to share his message with people."

"I loved being with all the missionaries in community. They are spectacular people and getting to know them was the best part of the summer. The friendships from Totus Tuus are real and (with effort) will last."