

# HOLY TONY NEWS

St. Anthony's, Angola, IN | Teens with Christ

## Cedar Point

High School students will share in a great time together. The final date will be chosen based on those attending

Date: Last week in June

Cost \$45.00

Deadline to commit: June 1 st

Contact: Cara Molyet  
260-665-2259

## Help with Carnival

What a fun day we will have at the St. Anthony Carnival. Help is needed!

June 3 and 4th

Contact : Patti Webster  
260-665-2259

## Like to garden?

Sign up to take care of your very own special spot on the St. Anthony property! Sign-up is located in the gathering space.

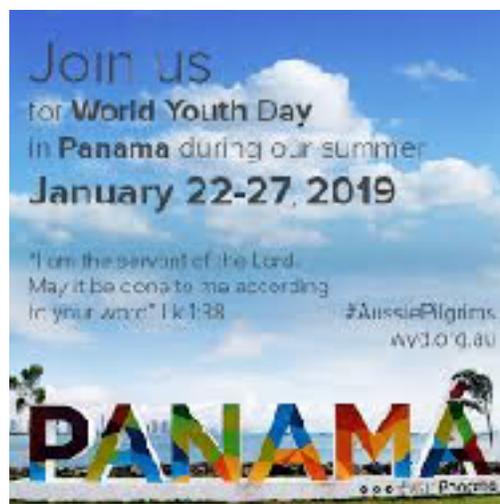
## Softball is in full swing!

Come out and cheer on the church softball league. Meets every Monday (except Memorial Day) from 6-8 pm on the field next to the dog run. Our church requires you to be 18 years and up to play. Great fun with no competitiveness and no experience required!

Start saving your money, because there are many fabulous trips coming your way!

High school retreat in planning for February 2018.

Mission Trip to Kentucky currently being planned for June/



July 2018.

Trip to Rome and Assisi, Italy 2020: Essay and age restrictions will apply.



*Build  
at your home*

*fun little eclectic recycle creatures, to help decorate for the little ones at our parish VBS program. Drop them off in the parish office.*



### **Before You Watch 13 Reasons Why...**

by LEAH MURPHY

When I first saw an ad for *13 Reasons Why* come up on YouTube, I honestly didn't think I'd watch it. It seemed like an over dramatic high school soap opera and I didn't think I would have enjoyed it that much. But when I found myself bored on a Friday night, I decided to give it a shot. I'm not usually much of a Netflix binger, but eventually found myself, 7 episodes later, fighting the need to sleep because I was so desperate to know what would happen next.

*13 Reasons Why*, a new Netflix original series based on the novel of the same name, has virally captivated audiences, with many expressing serious, strong emotional investments in the stories of the characters depicted. Social media is full of loads of people commenting on the most "important," "powerful," and "deep," moments depicted in the series. However, this show, despite it's mysterious, captivating nature, is not harmless and there are some serious considerations you should make before watching, or as you reflect on what you've already seen.

What it's About

*13 Reasons Why* is a drama narrated by Hannah Baker, a high school junior who commits suicide and leaves behind thirteen audio cassette tapes, each with her voice naming a person and describing what he or she did to lead her to take her own life. The story follows Clay Jensen, one of Hannah's classmates and friends, as he listens to each of the cassette tapes and retraces Hannah's suicidal steps all the way from a terrible rumor that was started about her, to losing her best girlfriend, to being raped (shown in graphic detail) at a party, and to her eventually slitting her wrists (shown in graphic detail) in a bathtub.

I've watched every episode and, for better or worse, found myself hooked by the story being told — I was desperately eager to know what would happen next throughout the series (despite the fact that Hannah's suicide is revealed in the first moments of the very first episode). I know how addicting it can be, but I also think there's some important stuff to consider when watching. If you've started this show or you plan to, it's important that you consider what you're exposing yourself to and how it could be affecting you.

#### The Drama is Real

While watching the series, I found myself stunned by how dramatic high school is portrayed — I've been out of high school for seven years, so the days of pep rallies and school dances are behind me, but if this show is anything close to reality (I have my doubts) tensions certainly seem to have heightened since my graduation. The circumstances that the teens at "Liberty High" find themselves encountering in *13 Reasons Why* are incredibly intense and dramatic. Though I don't intend to trivialize any of the topics presented in the series, they are highly concentrated and dramatized in a way that may not be entirely realistic, but more importantly, could seriously affect viewers that have any experiences with the issues covered.

#### The Triggers are Real

The series contains multiple graphic depictions of sexual assault and an incredibly graphic and painful-to-watch on-screen suicide. Additionally, *13 Reasons Why* depicts casual drug and alcohol use among high schoolers; though it doesn't necessarily portray these things in a positive light, it does seem to further normalize the idea that substance abuse is just another inescapable reality of high school, and that simply doesn't need to be the case.

A viewer who has ever struggled with bullying, sexual assault, sexual shame, depression, and/or suicidal thoughts will likely be very negatively affected by watching this show. The memories, fears, and any current thoughts or feelings associated with such experiences will certainly be triggered. If you struggle or have struggled in any of these areas, there's a good chance that watching it won't be worth the pain it will bring up. Furthermore, many have commented on how dangerous this show is for any who may be currently dealing with suicidal thoughts, which leads me to my next major warning:

#### Suicide, Depression, And Mental Illness Are Not Portrayed Honestly

Nowhere in the series is mental illness explicitly discussed or dealt with and the audience is left having been told that the people around Hannah Baker are responsible for her death because of their actions or lack thereof. The season ends with the suggestion that, if only these people had done things a little bit differently, been a little more kind, been a little more aware, a little more loving, Hannah might still be alive. And while a push for more kindness and overall goodness is not a bad thing, this message suggests that suicide is avoidable if we're all just nicer to each other.

While bullying, not saying anything when you see depressive or suicidal signs, and sexual assault are serious issues and can drive people to suicide, the reality is that suicide is rarely

something avoided by good sentiments alone. It's been reported that [90% of all suicides are committed by people who experience diagnosable mental illnesses](#). The vast majority of suicides can be traced to actual health issues, not just bullying or traumatic events. These health issues, actual, mental illnesses require a lot more than the presence of a good friend or the absence of any serious issues or struggles — they require serious, professional help. Because that's not depicted clearly in the show, suicide is romanticized and almost glorified in this show, as Hannah reclaims control of her life by ending it and making sure any person who contributed to that decision is aware of his or her responsibility. She is painted as a sort of heroic martyr, taking her own life and leaving behind a "lesson" for each of the thirteen reasons, so they can know what not to do to avoid anyone else committing suicide. Unfortunately, there's a legitimate cause for concern over how this message might affect someone struggling with suicidal thoughts. It's easy to see how one might watch this show and walk away feeling even more attracted to the idea of ending his or her own life, especially if he or she is suffering from a serious mental illness already, as Hannah's death is romanticized as a sort of heroic sacrifice, in which she regains control of her life and tells her community what they did to cause her suicide so that they can do better in the future. If this is you, if you've watched or are watching and feeling drawn to the idea of leaving some kind of mark on the world by ending your own life, ask for help — I assure you there are people in your life eager to remind you of how much your life matters, whether you believe that in this moment or not. Despite what's depicted in the show, when a person takes his or her own life, he or she doesn't become a hero, gain control, and acquire any power by identifying the people around them as reasons for their suicide. Suicide will always be incredibly hurtful to countless individuals, but most tragically hurtful to the person who takes his or her own life — a life that was meant to continue, that was full of meaning, purpose, and infinite worth.

### Don't be Afraid to Ask for Help

If you've been watching and are beginning to think you might be struggling in these areas, don't hesitate to ask for help and check out some of these resources on how to cope with [anxiety](#), [depression](#), and [mental illness](#). If you find yourself attracted to the idea of suicide because of the way it looks in *13 Reasons Why*, please seek help. If you're struggling with suicidal thoughts talk to a parent, a counselor, a teacher, a priest, a youth minister — there are people who want to help you but might not know that you need them if you don't talk to them. And if you think a friend might be in need of help but unable to ask for it, ask for help on their behalf.

*You become a hero when you trust that your life has worth and are brave enough to ask for help, even when you feel like it doesn't.*

Every human being is full of infinite worth and is loved by an infinite God who wants us all to experience the fullness of life. Don't let the dramatic story being told in *13 Reasons Why* lead you to believe otherwise — you were made for so much more.

*If you think you or a friend is struggling with suicidal thoughts, ask for help from someone you can trust and/or call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 (available 24 hours everyday).*

Lifeteen.com

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