

QWEST Kick-off in Worcester

Takayoshi Sugawara
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The newly-developed QWEST curriculum was launched at a kick-off event this past Saturday, October 2. The program was well-attended by many of the community's middle school, high school, and young adults. The goal of the event was to inspire the Blessed Children of Worcester to practice a life of faith and spiritual growth.



QWEST, which stands for “Quality Worcester Education and Spiritual Training”, was conceived and developed as a joint project between Worcester’s Youth Ministry and volunteers in the area consisting of parents and college-age young adults. The idea is to provide spiritual nourishment beyond the scope of Sunday Service and traditional Sunday School. The involvement of college students in the lives of younger brothers and sisters also introduces an element of mentorship that was lacking in the community. The kick-off served as a great way to introduce the program to the kids and set the tone for the rest of the semester.



Daniel D. explaining the significance of his team's panda-turtle coat of arms.

The evening began with a short orientation by Takayoshi Sugawara, followed by the announcement of teams. Teams were then asked to create a “coat of arms” to display what values they held or wished to embody. This activity not only challenged their creativity but tested their team’s ability to focus on the task and the group leaders’ ability to manage.

Our former youth minister Masao Okano spoke to the audience about the importance of a life of faith. Kids were challenged to work on spiritual growth through continual practice. He likened people without a life of faith to zombies and encouraged everyone to “think outside of the box”, i.e. beyond normal conventions and trends followed by our peers. Afterwards, teams had lively discussions on Mr. Okano’s talk over a pizza dinner.



A team discussing over dinner.

The final activity was a group challenge wherein teams were tasked to “pump up” their smallest member into a muscular piece of art. This was done by filling XXXL shirts with a limited amount of balloons. The whole process was uproariously funny, even for the parents in attendance, but ultimately it was a serious competition that revealed Keisuke Tomizawa’s team as the most united.



“And the winner is... “

The QWEST Kick-off closed the night with a summary of the evening and prayer by Mr. Sugawara. He challenged everyone to bring that spirit felt that evening to each and every QWEST meeting this semester. By all accounts, QWEST looks to have taken a running start, charting a course through a fun yet spiritually uplifting semester.

For more information about our Youth Ministry, contact Arlena Feraboli or Takayoshi Sugawara at. To view all the photos of the event, and other albums of our Youth Ministry activities, go to flickr.com/youthministry.

Written by Takayoshi Sugawara with photographs by Arlena Feraboli.