



Dead Theologians Society

Chapter Tips

From Eddie Cotter, Jr., National Director

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DTS Rooms and Safety

DTS meetings are held in a variety of rooms and spaces. Some utilize existing parish “youth group rooms” by moving aside the foosball tables, etc. and transform them into little chapels for the night. Others use church choir lofts for the “Upper Room” effect, while others have transformed unused church basements into beautiful undercroft chapels. Some groups meet in their churches, and existing chapels. Some school-based chapters utilize their libraries for that “old school academic vibe”.

By policy the National Office does not mandate a particular meeting space or room décor, however we do stress that the room should be conducive to prayer and appropriate for the DTS format. Using a place on parish grounds is preferred, and it must be at a place approved by the Pastor. It is also highly suggested that sacramentals, icons, statuary and devotional objects are to be used in the meeting space. Effective use of sensory aspects like lighting, incense, and recorded meditative music (chant) are encouraged.

Setting a desirable meeting space is essential for maximizing the DTS experience for young people. It is encouraged to avoid having a DTS meeting in a space that could be looked upon by young people as “too institutional,” however, it is important to stress that we emphasize the teachings, mission and format above the meeting space. The room should be set at a comfortable temperature and pass all fire and safety codes. Food and drink should not be brought into the meeting space. Above all, the National Office stresses SAFETY!!!



A DTS chapel during a meeting.

Here are some very important things to remember:

- Be sure that all meeting spaces meet fire codes.
- Be sure that no doors are ever locked and exits are clearly indicated.
- Be sure to have a working fire extinguisher and a bucket of sand in quick reach, especially if candles are used for lighting. Use extreme caution with the placement of candles.

All DTS chapters must adhere to the Diocesan policies regarding the safety of youth in the diocese in which they operate. The leadership of the individual chapter must be familiar with these policies. In addition, remember to have at least two adults present at each meeting. A phrase I commonly used for my associates as well as teens in youth ministry was, “stay out of the gray”! Be very clear and consistent in your policies to protect all involved in youth ministry. In the fight to win souls we must always be very prayerful and very prudent. God Bless you and yours.

Eddie Cotter, Jr., National Director

