



## Archdiocesan Guide for Ministerial Services with Youth

### INTRODUCTION

In recent years there has been a tremendous increase in efforts toward youth ministry in our nation. Many parishes and schools are providing new and creative activities to meet the growing demand for spiritually enriching experiences for young people. In addition, many are utilizing outside resources for these services. The number of opportunities for youth in the Catholic Church and the number of youth participating in these opportunities is indeed encouraging.

With this great movement however, it is becoming increasingly necessary to establish a means by which we can all support and collaborate with each other, effectively communicating and coordinating with each other regarding youth ministry efforts.

The following guidelines approved by Archbishop George J. Lucas are designed to facilitate the awareness of and communication among the various youth ministry efforts in our archdiocese. Further, these guidelines will help ensure that all youth ministries utilize a healthy structure and implementation, and meet safe environment criteria. These guidelines are not meant to discourage people from planning programs, activities and events. They are meant to ensure that youth ministry efforts fall within the goals and vision outlined in *Renewing the Vision, A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry* (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1997) and the *Challenge of Adolescent Catechesis* (National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry, 1986). Please see the enclosed "Components of Youth Ministry" for guidance.

When planning any function where **youth between the ages of 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade** are invited to gather for a *'ministry'* event, either a onetime event or ongoing, and you **actively recruit youth from outside of your parish, school, or organization**, you are asked to review these guidelines, complete the attached form and return it to the Catholic Faith Formation Office-Youth Ministry.

This will help the Coordinator of Youth Ministry in the Catholic Faith Formation Office respond to questions about particular programs, activities and/or events and, if necessary, guide you in any further actions you might need to take. The Coordinator of Youth Ministry will gladly help with promotion once the completed forms have been received and reviewed.

### YOUTH MINISTRY and CATECHETICAL Guidelines

1. *Youth ministry is to enliven and implement the three goals of youth ministry as articulated by the bishops in **Renewing the Vision**.*
  - A. *Calling young people to be disciples of Jesus, challenging them to lives of service, calling them to roles of leadership.*
  - B. *Leading young people to responsible participation in the life of the faith community, seeing parish life as the curriculum for fostering authentic Catholic identity.*
  - C. *Fostering the total personal and spiritual growth of young people, enhancing their internal and external assets, deepening their spiritual life and knowledge of church teachings.*
2. *Youth ministry is to foster **unity** in the church by supporting and enhancing a unity of participation in the life of the parish and in the Archdiocese.*
3. *Youth ministry efforts are to be in **collaboration** with the archdiocesan leadership charged with developing a comprehensive ministry to, with, for, and by young people. This collaboration involves good communication with archdiocesan offices, consultations concerning calendars and planning, and sharing of program schedules, content, and resources.*
4. *Catechetical efforts:*
  - *Respond to the developmental, social, and cultural needs of adolescence.*
  - *Respect the variability in maturation and learning needs of adolescence.*
  - *Use a variety of learning formats, environments, schedules, and educational techniques.*
5. *Please contact us at any time with your questions. Rita Ramos, Coordinator of Youth Ministry, 402-554-8493.*

# EVENT INFORMATION FORM

For help with any part of this form please call the Coordinator of Youth Ministry  
at the Catholic Faith Formation Office, 402-554-8493

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Date/Place/Length of ministry event \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting schedule:    \_\_\_\_\_ One-time only    \_\_\_\_\_ Monthly    \_\_\_\_\_ Weekly    \_\_\_\_\_ Daily  
                                 \_\_\_\_\_ Other: Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

Target audience (check all that apply): \_\_\_\_\_ Male    \_\_\_\_\_ Female    \_\_\_\_\_ Jr. high age    \_\_\_\_\_ High school age

Anticipated number of youth \_\_\_\_\_

Name of sponsoring organization/individual: \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliated with National/Local Organizations? If so, please list: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Website (if applicable); \_\_\_\_\_

Attached is a full schedule or outline of program format.                      Yes \_\_\_\_\_                      No \_\_\_\_\_

## YOUTH MINISTRY CRITERIA

In *Renewing the Vision, a Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry*, the United States Conference of Bishops clearly emphasizes the goals of ministry with adolescents as ones of empowerment, participation and growth.

The primary purpose/goal of this program is (check all that apply):

_____ Community life	_____ Advocacy	_____ Pastoral care
_____ Catechetical	_____ Evangelization	_____ Prayer and worship
_____ Leadership Development		_____ Justice and service

### ***Empowerment***

How does your program evangelize, call young people to discipleship, provide opportunities for youth to discover their gifts and talents, provide opportunities to do service?

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### ***Participation within Parish Life***

What opportunities are provided for integration of youth into the life and mission of their parish?

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**Growth**

How does your program support the development of healthy competent, caring and faith-filled youth? In what ways does it promote Catholic identity?

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UNITY:

How does this program build up parish life and enhance youth participation in parish life? How will you communicate with the parish communities from which the young people come? (i.e. preparation, follow-up)

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COLLABORATION:

With which parish, school or diocesan organization(s) are you collaborating?

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Have you checked with appropriate offices to avoid conflicts in scheduling? (i.e. Catholic School Office, Catholic Faith Formation Office, etc.)      Yes\_\_\_      No\_\_

Which offices? \_\_\_\_\_

**SAFE ENVIRONMENT CRITERIA**

Please review the 'Guidelines, Procedures and Recommendations' before answering the following questions at [www.archomaha.org/education/cffo/youth-ministry/index.html](http://www.archomaha.org/education/cffo/youth-ministry/index.html)

(check all that apply)

- \_\_\_\_\_ All leaders are 21 years of age or older and are in compliance with the archdiocesan safe environment policy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ All leaders have undergone background checks
- \_\_\_\_\_ There is an appropriate adult-student ratio (adult must be 21 yrs of age)
- \_\_\_\_\_ All youth participants have submitted signed permission and medical/release forms.
- \_\_\_\_\_ All parents have been fully informed (in writing) about the activities in which their children will be involved.
- \_\_\_\_\_ There are current phone numbers to contact parents in case of an emergency.
- \_\_\_\_\_ All applicable travel arrangements are in compliance with the archdiocesan guidelines
- \_\_\_\_\_ All applicable sleeping arrangements are in compliance with the archdiocesan guidelines
- \_\_\_\_\_ First aid provisions are available and accessible
- \_\_\_\_\_ An emergency evacuation plan has been established
- \_\_\_\_\_ For non-parish, non-archdiocesan groups: List insurance/liability coverage—Primary carrier: \_\_\_\_\_

RETURN A COPY OF THIS TO:  
Rita Ramos  
Catholic Faith Formation Office  
Youth Ministry  
Box 4130  
Omaha, NE 68104

## COMPONENTS OF YOUTH MINISTRY

(The following are taken from *Renewing the Vision*, which may be accessed at: [archomaha.org/education/cffo/pdf/2005/RenewingtheVisionDocument.pdf](http://archomaha.org/education/cffo/pdf/2005/RenewingtheVisionDocument.pdf))

### ADVOCACY

The ministry of advocacy engages the church to examine its priorities and practices to determine how well young people are integrated into the life, mission and work of the Catholic community. It places adolescents and families first by analyzing every policy and program—diocesan, parish, domestic and international—for its impact on adolescents and families. Poor, vulnerable and at-risk adolescents have first claim on our common efforts. (Page 27)

### CATECHESIS

The ministry of catechesis, helps adolescents develop a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and the Christian community, and increase their knowledge of the core content of the Catholic faith. The ministry of catechesis also helps young people enrich and expand their understanding of the Scriptures and the Sacred Tradition and the application to life today, and live more faithfully as disciples of Jesus Christ in their daily lives, especially through a life of prayer, justice and loving service. (Page 29)

### COMMUNITY LIFE

The ministry of community life builds an environment of love, support, appreciation for diversity, and acceptance which models Catholic principles, develops meaningful relationships, and nurtures Catholic faith. To teach compassion, generosity, peace, forgiveness, acceptance, and love as gospel values and to identify ourselves as Christians requires us to live these values in our interactions with young people and in our community life. (Page 34)

### EVANGELIZATION

The ministry of evangelization shares the good news of the reign of God and invites young people to hear about the Word Made Flesh. The starting point for the ministry of evangelization “is our recognition of the presence of God already in young people, their experiences, their families, and their culture...Evangelization, therefore, enables young people to uncover and name the experience of God already active and present in their lives. This provides openness to the gift of the Good News of Jesus Christ.” (Page 36)

### JUSTICE AND SERVICE

The ministry of justice and service *nurtures* in young people a social consciousness and a commitment to a life of justice and service rooted in their faith in Jesus Christ, in the Scriptures, and in Catholic social teaching; *empowers* young people to work for justice by concrete efforts to address the causes of human suffering, to serve those in need, to pursue peace, and to defend the life, dignity, and rights of all people; *infuses* the concepts of justice, peace, and human dignity into all ministry efforts. (Page 38)

### LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The ministry of leadership development *calls forth*, *affirms*, and *empowers* the diverse gifts, talents, and abilities of adults and young people in our faith communities for comprehensive ministry with adolescents. Leadership roles in adolescent ministry are key. Leaders must be trained and encouraged. This approach involves a wide diversity of adult *and* youth leaders in a variety of roles. (Page 40)

### PASTORAL CARE

The ministry of pastoral care is a compassionate presence in imitation of Jesus' care of people, especially those who are struggling or suffering and in need. The ministry of pastoral care involves *promoting* positive adolescent and family development through a variety of positive (preventive) strategies; *caring* for adolescents and families in crisis through support, counseling, and referral to appropriate community agencies; *providing guidance* as young people face life decisions and make moral choices; *challenging* systems that are obstacles to positive development. (Page 42)

### PRAYER AND WORSHIP

The ministry of prayer and worship *celebrates* and *deepens* young people's relationship with Jesus Christ through communal prayer and liturgical experiences; it *awakens* their awareness of the spirit at work in their lives; it *incorporates* young people more fully into the sacramental life of the Church, especially the Eucharist; it *nurtures* the personal prayer life of young people; and it *fosters* family rituals and prayer. (Page 44)