

## Goals and Expectations of Young Adult Ministry Diocese of Charleston



### **Purpose of Parish Based Ministry**

*Integrating Catholic Young Adults into parish life by nourishing them spiritually, engaging them socially, and building communities of service.* When the parish invests in young adults by offering them communities of support, opportunities for growth, and a physical location to gather, they will return their gifts to the parish through time, talent, and treasure. Various opportunities to engage in the sacraments and spiritual formation bring young adults into a deeper intimacy with Our Lord: the center of every ministry in the Catholic Church.

### **3-pronged** approach in:

**Faith Formation** through individual discipleship relationships, study, small groups, and retreats

**Service to Parish and Community** through both young adult and other parish ministries

**Social Events** for churched and unchurched young adults to build community life in a relaxed atmosphere

Young Adult Ministry includes ages 18-35 of all walks and stages of life; however, there are instances where other ministries are more appropriate or should be combined.

Examples: Ages 18-22 undergraduates in university- **Campus Ministry**

Ages 18+ but have not yet graduated high school- **Youth Ministry**

Any young adult coping with a traumatic life event that is hindering- **Grief Ministry/ Divorce Ministry/ Family Life**

## **Expectations for Young Adult Ministry**

### **Faith Formation**

Expectations for Studies and Small Groups:

#### **Be prepared: Pray and Study**

Prayer is the most powerful tool that you have. Part of your preparation should be to spend time in prayer with the material your group will be covering. Open and close your own preparation time with prayer, in addition to opening and closing all groups with prayer. It does not have to be Shakespearean prose, it can be anything from a simple Hail Mary to unscripted prayer. As your group develops, introduction and development of intercessory prayer within the group invites the Holy Spirit to move within the hearts of the young adults.

- Read the material ahead of time, pray through it, look at other reliable sources on it, and have discussion questions or points ready. No one wants to be a part of a group that is disorganized.

#### **Be Hospitable: Create a welcoming setting**

While you are not always in control of an ideal location for leading a group, creating an inviting and warm atmosphere by always greeting members, and taking the time to get to know them individually is key to building trust and mutual respect. If your budget can afford it, offer snacks during the group. Not many will turn down a warm chocolate chip cookie! If you feed them (in more ways than one), they will come.

This includes getting to know them and being hospitable outside of the normal study setting. It is truly amazing what taking someone to coffee can do.

Hospitality comes not only from gestures, but from an open heart. Hospitality is a stance of availability (St. Benedict). This starts before you engage the people that you encounter, which means sometimes stepping out of our comfort zones to greet others with a smile, look them in the eye, and engage them in conversation. Hospitality must also be reciprocated to those who host us, which includes respect of other's property and being grateful for the space they allow us to use.

#### **Be a Facilitator: Model the behavior you expect from your group**

The roles of a facilitator for a study are to encourage, guide, and direct. Expect to learn and be challenged by the young adults. The facilitator should have a solid grasp of the material beforehand and understand how it is applied to his or her own life. Ask open ended questions, but do not be afraid of silence. Everyone processes information at different speeds.

Remember that you are a growing missionary disciple and you are helping to form other disciples, which takes time: you aren't expected to have the answer to every question, but you are expected model Christ-like behavior.

Modeling the behavior you expect from your group includes the way that you carry yourself. The Church and its ministries should always be a place of radical hospitality and welcoming. This means using common courtesy.

### **Leadership**

Regional and Parish facilitators must be in good standing with the Catholic Church, available, approachable, and organized. They should also be in contact with parish leadership, in addition to contact with the Associate Director of Young Adult Ministry for the Diocese of Charleston.

- Leadership Teams formed for Regions and Parishes serve a 1 year term, at the end of which will be evaluated on the basis of renewal of service
- All social, service, and faith formative events should be run through local facilitators, but do not need to run through the Associate Director *unless* local leadership has a question, concern, or would like state-wide advertisement
- Information from the Diocese is disseminated to parishes and regional groups through Regional and Parish Coordinators. Coordinators are expected to release and advertise this information to their groups.

### **Prayer and the Sacraments**

Prayer and frequenting the sacraments in ministry is non-negotiable. Everything you do is built on the foundation of remaining in Christ.

Commitments to prayer and reception of the Sacraments include:

- Reception of the Eucharist every Sunday, Holy Days, and whenever it is possible during the week
- Frequenting confession
- Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
- Devotions to the Holy Mother, such as the Rosary
- Quiet, personal prayer time daily

### **Community Building**

Healthy community life is built on a foundation of trust. Often times, there are unexplainable gaps between what we expect people to do and what they actually do. We can choose to fill the gap with trust or suspicion. If you say that you will do something or be somewhere, follow through. Under promise and over deliver. As Christians, we have been called to trust; anything else erodes our team. This means we must sometimes die to ourselves and commit to humble obedience for a full life in Christ.

We choose to trust each other and we choose to be trustworthy. Being trustworthy does not mean that you are flawless in character and performance, but you are simply worthy of trust.

When there is a gap between what is expected and what is experienced, it will be filled with trust. When others fill a gap with suspicion, we come to one another's defense. If something erodes trust, we go to one another directly. If someone confronts us about gaps, those gaps will be filled with truth.

## **Discipleship**

The goal of discipleship is to journey together to help one another live our faith in the everyday routine of life. Christ spoke to thousands while truly investing in twelve through personal relationships. Each of these twelve invested in a few others and so on. Discipleship multiplies infinitely, but is rooted in soul-to-soul personal investment.

6 C's of Discipleship based on Lifeteen's Rules of Life for the New Evangelization

1. **Contact (all)**- Reach out to all people the Lord puts in our path and show interest in them
2. **Connect (most)**- Ask questions, get to know them, and find connections we have with them.
3. **Care (many)**- Show we care for them
4. **Challenge (some)**- A call to action-give them a specific prayer challenge or relational challenge that we will follow up on the next time we see them
5. **Commitment (few)**- Enter into committed discipleship relationship with a few, journey with them. The goal is to disciple and evangelize them into disciplers and evangelizers.
6. **Co-Worker in the Vineyard**- Support them as they go out as evangelizers and disciplers. In relational ministry, we identify where we are with each teen and intentionally move deeper in the C's. In this way, we will make disciples and build the Kingdom of God.

## **Service Projects**

Pope Francis tells us that we cannot truly call ourselves Christians if we are not serving the least among us. Every regional and parish based group is expected to be visible in parish life by participating and serving the parish through another ministry, in addition to planning periodic community service events.

Young Adults in the group will have connections and ideas on service projects. Here are some examples:

- *Cleaning a garden/courtyard at the Church*
- *Signing up for slots for Perpetual Adoration*
- *Volunteering with another ministry in Parish: Bereavement, Social, Prison, etc.*
- *Training as Lectors and Eucharistic Ministers*
- *Serving Catholic Charities at Food Pantry, Clean of Heart, Clothing Closet, etc.*
- *Connecting to Habitat for Humanity, Ronald McDonald House, and other*

## **Social Events**

Social events can bring in young adults that might not normally show up to other events, because they may seem less intimidating and “churchy”. In addition to providing opportunities for fellowship, they offer the chance for growth and promotion for other programming.

Examples:

- Holiday Parties (Christmas Party, Easter BBQ, Fourth of July Cookout)
- Informal Gathering for meal after a study or on a weekend
- Sports Team outings/ sports leagues

Please contact Associate Director of Young Adult Ministry, Lexie Segrest, with questions:

Lexie Segrest  
Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry  
901 Orange Grove Road  
Charleston, SC 29407

Main: (843) 261-0445  
Cell: (843)670-2586  
Email: [LSegrest@catholic-doc.org](mailto:LSegrest@catholic-doc.org)