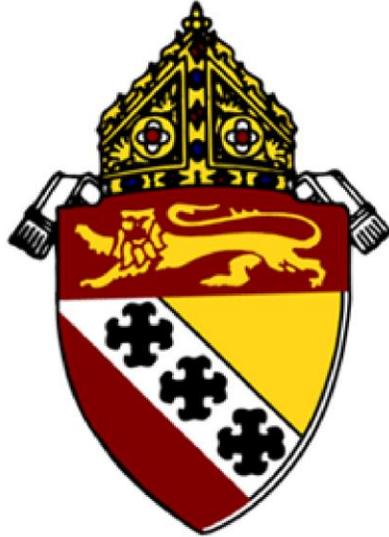


Policies and Guidelines

For Ministry with Youth



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Diocese of Charleston Policies and Guidelines
For Ministry with Youth

Introduction

The Office of Youth Ministry is the diocesan agency mandated to foster the development of a comprehensive Catholic Youth Ministry, rooted in Gospel values, which reflects a family and multicultural perspective in all the parishes of the Diocese of Charleston.

This mission is implemented through six functions:

- Training and continuing education of parish youth ministry leadership
- Providing consultation and resource services
- Networking leadership in youth ministry
- Coordinating Junior and Senior High School Conferences, retreats, Christian Leadership Institutes, and other such programs
- Creating and sponsoring innovative pilot projects in youth ministry
- Promoting quality standards for parish youth ministry

Consistent with the role of “promoting quality standards for parish youth ministry,” the Office of Youth Ministry has developed the following **Policies and Guidelines for Ministry with Youth** in the Diocese of Charleston.

Purpose of the Guidelines

Policies and Guidelines for Ministry with Youth are needed in the diocese in order to:

- Ensure that a comprehensive approach to serving youth of the Catholic community is effectively promulgated and understood within the parishes of the Diocese of Charleston
- Provide norms against which the progress of the parish youth ministries toward implementing a comprehensive youth ministry can be measured
- Manage risk effectively and minimize the liability of parishes and the Diocese.
- Resource and serve pastors in their role in oversight of youth ministry on the parish level.

Chapter 1

What is Youth Ministry?

(For the purpose of these Guidelines, the terms “youth” or “adolescent” refers to two groups: Early adolescence (10/11–14/15 years of age) and late adolescence (15/16–18/19 years of age).

General Description

“Youth Ministry may be defined as the response of the Christian community to the needs of young people and the sharing of the unique gifts of youth with the larger community.” (*A Vision of Youth Ministry, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB, 1976)*).

Youth Ministry is TO, WITH, BY and FOR youth. Youth Ministry is not only a ministry to youth, by adults. It is a responsibility in which youth share. Youth ARE the Church of today, not only the Church of tomorrow.

A Vision for Catholic Youth Ministry

The great changes in society during the 1960’s, and the revitalization of the institutional Church following the Second Vatican Council, provided the context for rethinking and articulation of effective youth work in the Catholic Church. Thus, in 1976 the United States Bishops published *A Vision of Youth Ministry*. This document set the Church in the United States on the road toward what has been termed as “comprehensive youth ministry.”

One of the foundations of the vision is the connection of youth ministry with the overall mission of the Church. “While parishes must choose the methods, leaders and programs that best match their particular resources and community, providing for ministry to youth is NOT optional or peripheral to parish life: It is integral and necessary that youth are attended to and included in the Church’s three-fold mission of community, message and service.” (*A Vision of Youth Ministry, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB, 1976)*).

A second foundation centers Jesus as the model of the Church’s ministry on behalf of adolescents. The gospel story of Jesus’ encounter with the disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35) captures the dynamics of a ministry which is fundamentally relational and manifested by the actions of presence, listening, responding and empowering. Thus, this ministry is firmly rooted in the person and Gospel of Jesus Christ, and it calls leaders to constantly invite young people into relationship and to imitate Jesus’ action of service to others, especially those forgotten in society.

A. Definition of Who Catholic Ministry Serves

For the purpose of these Guidelines, the terms “youth” or “adolescent” refers to two groups: Early adolescence (10/11–14/15 years of age) and late adolescence (15/16–18/19 years of age).

B. Goals of Catholic Youth Ministry

In 1997, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops produced a document entitled “Renewing the Vision”, a pastoral plan for youth and those who work with them. In the document “Renewing the Vision” the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops stipulated three main goals for youth ministry:

- **Goal #1:** To empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today.
- **Goal #2:** To draw young people to responsible participation in the life, mission and work of the faith community.
- **Goal #3:** To foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person.

Achieving these goals is brought about through encounter, authentic discipleship, and apostleship.

C. The Context of Catholic Youth Ministry in the Diocese of Charleston

Ministry occurs within a given social, cultural and religious context or perspective. Each of these exert an important influence on those being served and thus must be considered before designing the specific form of ministry.

Within the Diocese of Charleston, there exists a diversity of ethnic, financial, and geographic perspectives, the knowledge of which will enhance the effectiveness of the parish’s ministry to youth.

Family Perspective

The primacy of parents and guardians in the catechizing of their children must be recognized. As such, they must be partners on the team that forms the faith of youth. Further, the needs of the parents and families must be considered when designing activities that are part of the parish ministry.

Culture and Ethnic Perspective

The Diocese of Charleston is rich in its cultural and ethnic heritage. Each culture brings its own language, custom, special needs, value system, relational patterns, as well as particular signs and symbols that carry faith for them.

Catholic Youth Ministry must seek to include and affirm youth in their culture, to minister to them within that context, and promote the appreciation of all cultures and races through cross-cultural experiences. In this way, parish youth ministries play an essential role in diminishing the evil of racism that has been so destructive in our society.

Rural/Urban/Suburban Perspective

The Diocese of Charleston is composed of seven deaneries representing a wide variety of parish settings: Rural farms; heavy manufacturing towns; cities and towns that cater to tourism; suburban communities surrounding large cities, urban, rural and center city communities.

The following is a generalized description of characteristics for each of these settings:

- Parishes in rural/small town settings are characterized by smaller numbers, greater distances, fewer resources, and usually are family/community-centered and more closely knit. Catholic Youth Ministry in this setting should seek partnership with other parish youth ministries, community events, school activities, and other religious traditions. Further, parishes are encouraged to plan regional activities with other parishes in their area, and to avail themselves of the diocesan youth programs.
- Parishes in suburban settings generally serve a constituency that is larger in numbers, have adequate financial resources, and possess more options for youth. These parishes are encouraged to develop a wide variety of opportunities in varied formats, and to develop partnership with other parishes in their area which have fewer resources.
- Catholic parishes in center-city settings tend to have a smaller number of young people and below average financial resources. These parishes are encouraged to offer outreach efforts and greater focus on immediate, critical needs of youth as essential ingredients of their ministry.

Summarizing the rural, suburban, and urban perspective: Parishes need to know their community, neighborhood and programs. Avoid competition with other parishes and seek partnership with parishes and churches nearby. Take advantage of diocesan training and programs.

Economic Perspective

Since Catholic parishes exist in many geographic settings, they also reflect the economic characteristics of the neighborhoods and communities they serve. Thus, there exists among parishes in the diocese a significant wealth disparity. Often the parishes with the least amount of resources are in the greatest need of a viable youth ministry program.

While being respectful of each parish community's individual rights, Catholic Youth Ministry in the Diocese of Charleston challenges parish leaders to recognize a jointly shared responsibility to all Catholic youth, regardless of where they live. Further, youth leaders are encouraged to provide and to avail themselves of opportunities (according to the social teaching and tenet of the Catholic Church) where youth from different economic backgrounds can come together to develop relationships and appreciate their common faith tradition.

D. Components of a Comprehensive Catholic Youth Ministry

"Renewing the Vision" speaks of eight components which make up youth ministry. These may be seen as organizational sections that make up what is called a comprehensive youth ministry. They may also be considered opportunities that are provided for youth as a response to needs.

The components for Catholic Youth Ministry are not separate programs. Instead, they are the essential ingredients that comprise a balanced program. A youth program should have all of the components within their parish youth ministry.

Ministry with adolescents utilizes each of the Church's ministries – advocacy, catechesis, community life, evangelization, justice and service, leadership development, pastoral care, prayer and worship

– in an integrated approach to achieve the three goals for ministry to youth. These ministry components describe the “essence” of ministry with adolescents and provide the Church with eight fundamental ways to minister with adolescents. These components provide a framework for the Catholic community to respond to the needs of young people and to involve young people in sharing their unique gifts with the larger community. They provide a structure for the Church’s ministry with adolescents, while encouraging local creativity in developing programs, activities, and strategies for each component. Each ministry component supports and enhances the others. A comprehensive ministry with adolescents provides balance among all eight components. The balance can be achieved throughout a year or season of programming. Even a single program or strategy can incorporate several of the ministry components.

The following listing represents a brief explanation of each component for effective youth ministry:

1. The Ministry of Advocacy

“Speak out for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of the destitute, open your mouth, decree what is just, defend the needy and the poor.” (Proverbs 31:8-9) Advocacy in youth ministry is an ongoing and pervasive commitment to listening, interpreting, and speaking for youth within the Church and the community. It calls for adults to help bring about change when there is injustice to the youth of our Church and community. Advocacy calls adults to act on the behalf of young people in order to give a voice that empowers young people to address the many problems they face.

2. The Ministry of Catechesis

“Quite early on, the name *catechesis* was given to the totality of the Church’s efforts to make disciples, to help people believe that Jesus is the Son of God so that believing they might have life in His name, and to educate and instruct them in this life, thus building upon the body of Christ.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church #4)

Being in a relationship with Jesus Christ and the faith community demands that systematic and ongoing formation and education be available to help youth understand the content of Catholic Christianity, its history and application to their lives. Traditionally, we have referred to this effort as catechesis. Catechesis can be accomplished (traditionally) through classes that are age or interest appropriate and are offered in a variety of formats (youth nights) and time periods. Catechesis also occurs through other experiences such as retreats, liturgy, workshops, conferences, service and preparation for the sacraments.

3. The Ministry of Community Life

“The Church is the body of Christ. Through the Spirit and His actions in the sacraments, above all the Eucharist, Christ, who once was dead and is now risen, establishes the community of believers as His own Body. In the unity of this Body, there is a diversity of members and functions. All members are linked to one another, especially to those who are suffering, to the poor and persecuted.” (The Catechism of the Catholic Church #805-806)

Opportunities for creating community help young people to develop relationships among themselves, with caring adult leaders as well as with the community as a whole. Community life is nurtured when the atmosphere is welcoming, comfortable, and safe - one in which adolescents

know that their contribution is welcomed, their energy is appreciated, and their presence affirmed. Community life is enhanced when leaders promote and model an attitude that is authentic, positive, accepting and understanding – assuring young people that they are valued and cared for as gifted individuals.

Community building takes place through many youth functions such as: Retreats, small group discussions, games, service projects, liturgy experiences, parish events, trips, youth nights, and sports.

4. The Ministry of Evangelization

Evangelization is “...the initial effort by the faith community as a whole to proclaim through word and witness, the Good News of the Gospel to those who have not yet heard or seen it, and then to invite those persons into a relationship with Jesus Christ and the community of believers.” (Challenge of Catholic Youth Evangelization). The Ministry of Evangelization with adolescents incorporates several essential elements: Witness, outreach, encounter, proclamation, invitation, conversion, and discipleship.

“We are always evangelizing. Evangelization is the energizing core of all ministry with adolescents. Every relationship, program, and ministry with adolescents and their families must proclaim the Good News, invite them into a deeper relationship with the Lord Jesus, and empower them to live as disciples.” (Renewing the Vision – A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry)

5. The Ministry of Justice and Service

Opportunities for service and action on behalf of justice call youth to experience and appreciate the concrete application of the Gospel to the needs of others. While service projects by young people are praiseworthy, the development of a Christian social consciousness as a thread throughout the lived experiences of youth must be the goal of this component. It is not enough for youth to simply do, without knowing the why of what they do. In the world we live in today, we must give the youth every opportunity to develop a “ministry” that is rooted in the Gospel values.

6. The Ministry of Leadership Development

“There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same spirit; there are different forms of service but the same Lord; there are different workings by the same God who produces all of them in everyone. To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit.” (1 Cor. 12:4-7)

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 on behalf of a comprehensive ministry with adolescents. This approach involves a wide diversity of adult and youth leaders in a variety of roles. Many will be involved in direct ministry with adolescents, others will provide support services, and yet others will link the ministry effort to the resources of the broader community.

This approach must include young people in leadership roles (to, with, and by) as to incorporate and provide ownership for and by youth of our church. Young people must be included in the ministries of our church if we are going to truly live out the core of the Gospel. As echoed in the words of Pope John Paul II at World Youth Day in Denver, “Young pilgrims, Christ needs you to

enlighten the world and to show it the 'path to life' (Psalm 16:11)...Place your intelligence, your talents, your enthusiasm, your compassion, and your fortitude at the service of life...The Church needs your energies, your enthusiasm, your youthful ideas, in order to make the Gospel of life penetrate the fabric of society, transforming people's hearts and the structures of our society in order to create a civilization of true justice and love."

7. The Ministry of Pastoral Care

Pastoral care is the effort that responds to the profound needs of adolescents for personal and spiritual direction. For example, being present with youth (and parents) during times of crisis and stress, developing skills in communication and problem solving, listening, providing resources for timely intervention when there are suicide attempts, substance abuse problems, family problems and pregnancy issues, etc. are ways in which this component becomes real for youth.

8. The Ministry of Prayer and Worship

Opportunities for prayer and worship help youth deepen and celebrate their faith by experiencing different types of communal prayer and liturgical experiences. This provides opportunities for youth to gain a deeper awareness of who they are, and why they believe what they do.

Integrating prayer in all activities for youth, creating meaningful liturgies where they are allowed to be ministers as well as celebrants, penitential services, retreats, guided personal prayer, and adoration. These are just a few examples of the experiences that should be available for youth.

Principles of Youth Ministry

Adolescence is a Unique Time of Personal Development

The teenage years represent the critical period of transition from childhood to adulthood, during which physical, psychological, and social growth is more concentrated than at any comparable time span in life. The teenage years are an important juncture for individual spiritual development. Recent studies show that young people decide whether to continue on in their faith by age 13. Youth begin to form a personal sense of meaning, sets values, and becomes capable of a deeper personal relationship with Christ, coupled with responsible Christian action.

Youth Ministry is Concerned with the Total Person

Youth ministry must take seriously its responsibility to help young people grow as total persons: Socially, spiritually, culturally, etc.

Youth Ministry is Rooted in Relationships

Youth ministry involves first and foremost, not programs, but relationships! Within accepting relationships, young people are enabled to face and accept themselves and others, to clarify their goals and values, and dare to become the person they are called to be. These relationships challenge young people to a greater growth and openness to God.

Youth Ministry is a Call to Community

God calls youth and adults to be members of God's people, the Church. The community brings the living presence of Jesus in Word and Sacrament to the youth. Youth Ministry seeks to enhance and

support the basic faith commitment of youth in each of the local communities of family, parish and school.

Youth Ministry Proceeds as an Affirmation of Gifts

The recognition and development of individual gifts and the building of a positive sense of personal worth and ability are an important aspect of the process of youth ministry. Youth ministry effectively calls the young person toward maturity. Affirmation must be united with genuine trust of the young person's integrity and ability.

E. Implementing a Comprehensive Catholic Youth Ministry

Implementing the goals and components of Catholic Youth Ministry has resulted in a great diversity of programs and processes in the parishes of the Diocese of Charleston. At the same time, the full dimension of Catholic Youth Ministry has often been confused with only one form of ministry – the youth group.

Youth groups (or some form of youth groups such as the old CYO model) have been a prevalent way of ministering to young people. However, studies and experience have revealed limitations in relying upon this form as the only way to minister to young people. Most youth groups focus on only a few of the eight components, which make up a total youth ministry. Studies show that parishes that adopt a total youth ministry program which has all of the eight components functioning in their youth ministry are far more likely to reach a broader-size membership.

Both approaches can be contrasted in the following way: Group ministry starts with a group and asks others to join. The assumptions of this approach are:

- that youth needs are similar
- that youth like to join groups
- that youth are available at the same time one or a few adults can meet the needs of the group

Comprehensive youth ministry begins with a team of adults and youth that are formed for ministry. The assumptions in this approach are:

- that youth have different needs
- that youth like to choose how to be involved
- that youth have hectic schedules
- that many people doing a little can get more accomplished
- that young people benefit by having a variety of adults to relate to

Characteristics of the Comprehensive Model

The comprehensive model is best implemented using a variety of programs offered and organized in time formats and settings designed to meet the needs and interests of youth and families. This comprehensive style of programming is characterized by the following elements of effective ministry with youth:

- **Balanced Ministry Programming**

Demonstrates a balance among the eight components, program settings and methods so that the needs of all the young people and their families can be reached and all the resources of the community are wisely used. Given this broad scope, it is very tempting to emphasize only one or two components, or to sponsor only gathered youth programs.

- **Interest-Centered**

Develops programming based on the needs of youth and families. Programs are designed around the different interests of youth and families so that they attract a wide spectrum of participation. This avoids the problem of attempting to create every program “with everybody in mind.”

- **Variety**

Realize that no one format or timeframe works for everyone. Work on a variety of program formats – gathered and non-gathered; a variety of program schedules – weekly, monthly, extended time, daily, overnight, weekend, week-long, weekdays; a variety of environments for programming – parish facility, homes, retreat centers, community centers; and a variety of leaders – in different program settings. There is so much diversity in needs and so much competition for young people’s time that a youth minister must be very creative in offering formats, settings, and schedules that respond to the real life situation of young people.

- **Freedom of Choice**

Overcome the “you have to come to everything” mentality by allowing young people to select the programs that address their needs in a time schedule and format that best suits their interests and life situation.

Catholic Youth Ministry is best expressed when the needs of all of the young people are considered and opportunities to meet their needs are provided. This philosophy asks for a paradigm shift in our thinking. No longer can we be content to let programs be our only response. We must work collaboratively, not only among our Catholic agencies and organizations, but with civic and other faith communities as well. Young people are the young Church of today, with gifts, talents, enthusiasm, and a longing for God. It is the responsibility of the entire faith community to provide for their personal and spiritual development as Catholic Christians.

F. Comprehensive Youth Ministry

Comprehensive Youth Ministry is the approach recommended by the Diocese of Charleston, for the following reasons: It reflects more accurately the reality of youth in today’s society, it is effective in terms of both time and cost, and is the best use of human resources in the parish.

Whatever form Catholic Youth Ministry takes in a parish, it is important to keep in mind that effective implementation will require that:

- proper assessment and planning take place
- the pastor be active and visible in his support of the efforts of the parish youth ministry
- programming is based on the needs of the parish and the neighborhood community in which the parish is located
- the parish commits adequate financial resources to ensure the viability of the ministry

- a team is formed of adults and youth who are accountable and responsible for the implementation of the various components of Catholic Youth Ministry

Concluding Comments

The pastor holds the key pivotal role in ministry to the youth in their own parish in which they serve. Often the type of support the pastor offers to the parish youth ministry determines whether the program will fail or be successful. It is important that the pastor provides the vision, goals with desired outcomes, and the resources to have a successful and fruitful comprehensive parish youth ministry. The other main responsibility for the pastor is to ensure that the entire parish understands its role in supporting a comprehensive youth ministry, and that it is not the sole responsibility of the pastor or parish youth minister.

The vision for Catholic Youth Ministry presents a challenge for all those concerned about young people. There is much to be learned and integrated into the way parishes do ministry with youth. There is also a need to recognize that Catholic Youth Ministry is not a group that youth join. Rather, membership comes through baptism into the Christian community. Thus, the invitation to participate is offered to all youth and all youth are welcome at all programs. If parishes broaden their vision of who they serve, they will, indeed model the inclusive servant leadership of Jesus in the Gospel.

It is important that parish youth ministry programs have a clear and defined vision of how to help young people not only encounter Christ, but have an authentic formation process in developing intentional discipleship. In other words, parish programs need to offer opportunities for young people to have encounter with Christ through their programming. Parish programs need to be able to articulate their vision which must provide a clear and defined way of developing intentional discipleship within one's parish youth ministry program. The way one can measure the effectiveness of a parish youth ministry program is how many disciples/apostles are being formed and sent.

Chapter 2

Services of the Office of Youth Ministry

The Office of Youth Ministry for the Diocese of Charleston is committed to assisting parishes in the development of ministry to, with, by, and for young people. The Youth Office serves adult and youth leaders through training and formation opportunities, consultation and resource services, participation in diocesan, regional, and national events, and advocacy on behalf of youth to the Church and larger society.

Goals

- To serve pastors and parish council within the scope of youth ministry.
- To serve youth and adult leaders in their ministry to, with, by, and for young people
- To provide training and formation opportunities for youth ministry leaders to carry out effectively their role in educating and forming young people as Catholic Christians
- To assist parishes in the development of a comprehensive ministry with young people, taking into consideration the needs, culture, resources, and contexts of ministry
- To educate the wider Church and civic community on issues related to young people and youth ministry
- To provide opportunities for youth and adults to experience the larger Church community
- To advocate on behalf of the needs of young people

These goals are met through the following programs:

Adult Leadership Opportunities

- **Consultation**

The Office of Youth Ministry is available for on-site consultation regarding personnel placement, personnel issues, diocesan policies and guidelines, crisis questions, program designs, implementation and evaluations. This service is available to pastors, parish youth leaders, pastoral associates, directors of religious education, parish council and staff, and principals.

- **Orientation for New Youth Leaders**

The Office of Youth Ministry is available for full orientation of new leaders in Youth Ministry. During the orientation, youth leaders are given an overview of diocesan activities, policies, and resources.

- **Network Gatherings/Deanery Meetings**

Network gatherings take place in each of the deaneries of the Diocese of Charleston on a bi-monthly basis. Youth leaders from the parishes meet with the diocesan director to gain regional and diocesan information, instruction, resources, and networking opportunities among parishes.

Bootcamp/ Youth Ministry 101:

Bootcamp/YM101 is an introductory training for those beginning their ministry with young people. The training includes presentations on adolescent growth and development, youth culture, trends and issues, youth ministry goals, comprehensive youth ministry components, resource alternatives,

and the planning processes (such as designing a calendar with all eight components of youth ministry). The training is specifically geared to parish youth ministry core groups that are comprised of adults and youth. This training is offered in the fall or by appointment.

Ministry Mentoring:

With recognition that new ministry professionals and volunteers need assistance and guidance during their first few years of service, the mentoring program connects veterans in the field with newcomers. The program is intended to help with adjustments, transition, and chaos that many new youth ministry personnel experience. If you would like a mentor, please contact the diocesan office.

CEO Days:

CEO means continuing educational opportunities. The Youth Ministry CEO Days are designed to act as an educational opportunity for those who work with youth on the parish level. The topics range from special national studies regarding youth and families and the church and catechetical training to formational opportunities for leaders and those who assist with youth ministry. The main purpose is to provide quality and needed resources and information regarding youth ministry.

CORE Training:

Each fall the Diocesan Youth Office provides an opportunity for parish core groups to participate in training that is specifically designed for core groups. The Youth Office provides a national presenter and musicians to guide and encourage youth ministers and core groups to develop the necessary tools to serve the young church at their parish. The core training serves as a great opportunity for training, encouragement, and vision for the upcoming year.

Renew and Rejoice Retreat:

The annual retreat is for Youth Ministers, Campus Ministers, and Religious Education Directors to experience renewal and rejoicing during this retreat. The presenters are nationally known and talks are geared to the needs of those in the vineyard. This retreat is well-balanced with both spiritual nourishment and time for relaxing. Come away and renew your spirit and mind, make new friends, and take a break from the fast pace of ministry!

Diocesan Youth Ministry Advisory Board (Think Tank):

The youth ministry advisory committee known as the “think tank” consists of 7-10 youth ministry leaders who gather two times a year with the Diocesan staff to provide insight, input, evaluation, vision and direction to the office. Members are invited to serve on the committee for a minimum of two years (renewable term).

Catholic Faith Development for Youth

National Catholic Youth Conference

The National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) is an exciting, biennial, three-day experience of prayer, community, and empowerment for Catholic teenagers and their adult chaperones. The schedule includes general sessions and workshops addressing a wide variety of topics as well as

opportunities for reconciliation, daily liturgy, adoration, and special activities such as concerts, and so much more! This the largest gathering of Catholic young people in North America!

World Youth Day

World Youth Day is a week-long series of events attended by the Pope and hundreds of thousands of young people from all over the globe. It has become the largest single mobilization of young people in the world.

High School Christian Leadership Institute

The High School Christian Leadership Institute (CLI) is a five-day long experience for high school students from throughout the diocese. The students come together, with adult ministers, to foster leadership development, experience community, and spiritual growth in order to produce Christian leaders for parishes, schools, and the larger community.

Junior High Christian Leadership Institute

The Junior High Christian Leadership Institute (CLI) is a five-day long experience for junior high school students from throughout the diocese. The students come together, with high school counselors and adult coordinators, to foster leadership development, experience community, and spiritual growth in order to produce Christian leaders for parishes, schools, and the larger community.

Middle School (Grades 6-8) Youth Rally

This annual event offers Middle School students from around the diocese a day to gather and learn more about themselves, their Church, and their faith. The rally usually features a keynote presentation, music, icebreakers, prayer, and liturgy experiences.

High School (Grades 9-12) Youth Conference

The annual conference is an opportunity for high school youth from around the diocese to gather for a weekend of spiritual motivation, sharing, and good fun. The event features nationally known keynote presenters, icebreakers, music, adoration, and liturgy with the Bishop in a “big” Church experience.

High School Young Men’s Retreat

The High School Young Men’s Retreat is a weekend for any and all young men in grades 9-12. This weekend is action packed with music, games, talks, small groups, faith sharing, and much more - all directed towards young men. The weekend is not restricted to the topic of religious vocations, but how to live as a Man of God within today’s worldly values.

Jr. High Young Men’s Retreat

The Jr. High Young Men’s retreat is a weekend for any and all young men in grades 6-8. This weekend is action packed with music, games, talks, small groups, faith sharing, adoration and mass. This weekend is upbeat and fun!

High School Young Ladies Retreat

The High School Young Ladies Retreat is a weekend for any and all young ladies in High School in grades 9-12. The weekend consists of adoration and mass, music, games, talks, small groups, and

much more. The weekend will also focus on self-esteem, self-worth and how to live as young ladies of God.

Jr. High Young Ladies Retreat

The Jr. High Young Ladies Retreat is geared for any and all young ladies in grades 6-8. The weekend is fast paced and upbeat. The weekend consists of adoration and mass, music, games, talks, small groups, and much more. The weekend will also focus on self-esteem, self-worth and how to live as young ladies of God.

Evangelization Team

The Evangelization Team is designed for young people to have a voice and input into the ministry for youth. The prime directive of the Evangelization Team is to develop disciples who plan and put on retreats and conferences for the youth of the diocese. Each youth must go through an application process to be accepted on the team. The team meets one weekend a month from August through March.

Distribution of Catholic Scouting Materials

The Youth Office serves as a resource center for Catholic scouting materials such as religious awards, workbooks, awards, and emblems.

Stand Up For Life Rally

Every year in January, the diocesan youth office holds a one-day rally which is usually the same day as the state rally at the capital. This four-hour rally includes, prayer, music, games, talks by national presenters on "Right to Life Issues," and a concluding mass with the bishop. This day is designed for both Jr. High and High school students and youth groups. Families/parents are most welcome. However, please be aware that this is designed for students in grades 6-12.

Diocesan Missionary Team

The DMT mission is to proclaim the "Good News," and draw young people into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, which will radically challenge and encourage them to embrace the life of the Church.

The DMT is made up of young adults, ages ranging from 19-26, who choose to live in community. Their main charism is developing and putting on retreats for parishes and schools. Before team members go out on retreats, they undergo a four-week training from local and national Catholic presenters/trainers. The DMT has four main retreat topics that a parish or school can choose from. The DMT can also plan a special retreat theme if given appropriate time to plan. The majority of retreats put on by the DMT are Confirmation retreats. If you would like to book a retreat or find out more on what they can offer your school or parish, please contact the Office of Youth Ministry.

Certificate in Youth Ministry

The diocese youth office is offering a two-year youth ministry certificate program. The program is a mixture of online and in-person meetings that take place over four weekends during the year. The certificate program will center on each person's own youth ministry program. It is the hope of the program that youth ministers will leave with an understanding of both a theological foundation and practical plan for their parish youth program.

Social Ministry Work Camp

This work camp will be one week in length, and will focus on working with those in need, but will also focus on the church teaching regarding social ministry. Only parish youth ministry programs with their youth minister may attend. The basic schedule will be morning prayer, breakfast, worksites and lunch, clean up, presenters on church teaching, Mass, dinner, parish time, youth night/rally, and closing evening prayer.

The main focus of the work camp is working and serving the poor and elderly, and developing a real foundation for the church with regards to social teaching, while at the same time making it as affordable for all youth programs within the diocese.

Chapter 3

Competency Standards for Youth Ministry

A. Competency-Based Standards

Competency standards for Youth Ministry have been developed by the NFCYM, whose guidelines all parishes should follow. These standards present the youth minister with a self-assessment tool which guides him or her in developing the proficiency for ministering to and with the demands of young people. An effective youth minister is committed to ongoing enrichment and learning. The particular cultural and geographic setting, the context in which youth ministry is to be carried out, as well as the size and location of the community, will require additional skills and/or modifications in these standards.

The Office of Youth Ministry strives to make available training on each of the levels of competency standards. These training sessions provide classroom training and in-service training, as well as ongoing enrichment.

The following is a summary of the *National Federation of Catholic Youth Ministry Competency-Based Standards for Youth Leaders in Youth Ministry*

Person of the Minister:

The minister has an “understanding of vocation, work of the Gospel, mission and ministry of the Church as personal and professional lifestyle.” (Committee on Certification and Accreditation, NFCYM Competency-Based Standards, p. 1)

Knowledge and competency (ability to apply what is known) are sought in the areas of:

- Spirituality and Prayer
- Ministry in the Church

Theology and Spirituality:

The minister recognizes the need for “study, understanding and application of Catholic theology as core to the vocation of Ministry.” (Ibid p. 2)

Knowledge and competency are sought in the areas of:

- Hebrew and Christian Scriptures
- Christology
- Ecclesiology
- Catholic Doctrine
- Sacraments
- Moral Theology and Decision Making
- Catholic Identity and Ecumenism

Human Resource Management:

The youth minister develops and manages structures and processes that enable youth, as well as adult co-ministers, in their personal growth, group interaction and development aimed at effective integration of all dimensions of youth ministry.

Knowledge and competency are sought in:

- Communication Skills
- Ministry Management Skills
- Understanding the Diocesan Requirements and Policies of the Position

Foundations of Youth Ministry and Ministry to the Adolescent:

The Catholic Youth Minister is familiar with “adolescent maturing patterns, physical and physiological development, sexuality, social behavior and emotional attitudes.” 9 (Ibid p.2.) He or she also recognizes the impact of adolescent development on faith development and maturity.

Knowledge and competency are sought in:

- Adolescent Development
- Principles of Catholic Youth Ministry
- Components of Catholic Youth Ministry
- Family and Multicultural Perspective in Youth Ministry
- Resources in Youth Ministry

B. Recommended Minimum Qualifications and Competencies for CYM

The Competency-Based Standards provide a comprehensive picture of the knowledge and competency needed for the role of CYM. Parishes are not always able, however, to find someone for the role of CYM who has such competencies and knowledge at the outset. Therefore, we require the following minimum qualifications for use in discerning whether a person should be considered for the role of CYM. Once so discerned, the pastor and pastoral council should require and provide ongoing training for the CYM to meet and obtain the minimum standards.

Personal Qualities:

- Commitment to Catholic Christianity evidenced by an active prayer life and participation in the sacramental life and mission of the Church.
- Genuine love for youth and a desire to advocate on their behalf.
- Demonstration of a balanced lifestyle and healthy adult relationships.
- Commitment to ongoing professional training and spiritual development
- Demonstration of age-appropriate behavior and maturity.

It is appropriate, at this point, to address the issue of age. There is a tendency to consider young adults, usually between the ages of 19-22, for the role of CYM. Considering the scope of responsibilities, the minimum education, experience, knowledge and skills needed for the role, and

the life tasks required for the transition from young adulthood to adulthood, it is strongly recommended that persons of more maturity be considered. Since it is difficult to assign a specific age to "maturity," those responsible for discerning and selecting the CYM are urged to utilize extreme care.

Skills and Competencies:

Besides personal qualities, the Diocese of Charleston recognizes the need to discern the skills and competency level (standards) to be in ministry to and with young people. The following represent the skills and competencies required for each of the following positions

Youth Minister

Basic Description:

The youth minister has full administrative responsibilities for the total youth ministry program. This person is capable of supervising other youth ministry personnel, managing a youth ministry office, recruiting, training and supervising volunteers who work in youth ministry, planning and developing all the components of youth ministry for the young people in grades 6-12, planning and developing the catechetical component for this program, scheduling programs and special events, acting as a youth ministry resource person, and evaluating this program in accordance with the norms of the diocese.

Skills Required:

(To include the qualities and competencies needed by all pastoral ministers.)

Competencies and Scope of Responsibilities:

- A. Knowledge of and ability to convey effectively the official teachings of the Church regarding scripture, doctrine, morality, and spirituality with a demonstrated fidelity to these teachings.
- B. Ability to initiate, plan, organize, implement, and evaluate all components of youth ministry to meet the faith formation needs of adolescents in grades 6-12 by developing all components of youth ministry – word, worship, community, pastoral care, justice and ministry, enablement, advocacy, and evangelization.
 - Developing, coordinating, and directing preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation if responsible for Confirmation.
 - Recruitment, training, and supervision of volunteers to assist in these programs.
 - Arranging facilities, schedules, and communication for these programs.
 - Developing and fostering formation of the youth ministry core team.
 - Forming retreat teams.
 - Planning retreats.
 - Planning and facilitating programs with a family perspective.
 - Maintaining all necessary records.
 - Set and follow proper timelines for all programming
- C. Knowledge of youth ministry and catechetical documents, resources, and processes.
- D. Preparation of annual budget for youth ministry program.
- E. Working collaboratively with pastor, parish staff, and especially catechetical leaders.
- F. Knowledge of diocesan policies and guidelines to ensure that youth ministry programs are developed in accordance with diocesan guidelines.

- G. Active participation in deaneries and diocesan youth ministry meetings and in-service events.
- H. Active on-going personal spiritual formation.

Chapter 4

Personnel Guidelines: Hiring a Youth Minister

The Office of Youth Ministry offers the following seven-step process for hiring a youth minister:

Step 1 – Job Description

The Office of Youth Ministry recommends that the pastor and parish leadership discuss the following issues and arrive at a shared understanding before a person is sought for the position of Youth Minister.

The first step is to have the Pastor, Pastoral Staff, and any other parties assigned by the pastor to discern the following questions:

1. Why is our parish interested in hiring a youth minister?
2. What advantages will a paid youth worker bring, which are not possible with the volunteers we now have?
3. In 100 or fewer words, what is the goal of our youth program?
4. Have we consulted with parish teenagers and their parents?
5. Do we want a full-time or a part-time person? Why? Also consider additional benefits costs for a full-time person (anyone regularly scheduled to work 30 or more hours/week).
6. What are the unique needs of the youth in our parish?
7. How does a youth ministry position fit into our overall parish goals, vision, and financial priorities?

Analyze the Needs

Once you have decided that you want to hire a Youth Minister, it is important to put together a committee whose task is to define the needs and develop a job description for the position of youth minister. It is important that you establish your criteria of what you want the youth minister to do *before* you start the process of actually looking for someone to fill the role.

1. Discuss the answers from the previous seven questions.
2. List the needs of the youth the church ought to address.
3. Identify key needs which are not being met.
4. Discuss the parental and youth input from phone surveys, church surveys, mailed questionnaires, listening sessions, etc.

Determine Principle Objectives of your Youth Ministry Program

1. Based on the needs you have determined, set objectives for your ministry effort based on the eight components of Youth Ministry. An objective generally begins with “To...” and states a specific outcome that is being aimed for by the group. It forms the basis for evaluation when the effort is completed, so it should be capable of being measured in tangible terms.
2. List objectives in order of importance.

3. List objectives in time order. Sometimes a less important objective should be met first in order to facilitate work on a more important one.

Establish A Search Committee

After determining the above tasks are completed, the pastor (or pastor designate in charge of hiring) shall establish a search committee, most likely comprised of the pastor or his delegate, youth ministry volunteers, parents, and pastoral staff/council members. The search committee's main job is to formulate and write a job description based on the needs drawn out by the listening sessions, youth and parent surveys, and any other previous group discussions.

Formulate a Job Description

1. Using your needs and objectives and the job description elements set forth in these guidelines, "Competency-Based Standards in Youth Ministry," determine what to include in the job description for a youth minister in your parish.
2. Determine what objectives and goals could be realistically accomplished by an individual in a year. Ask yourself - where do you realistically see your youth program five years down the road?

Sample Youth Minister Job Description:

St. Gerard Catholic Church
123 Evangelization Way
Mission, SC 29414

Parish Youth Minister
Job Description:

Parish Profile

(Gives applicant an immediate picture of the parish)

- A. Pastor
- B. Location
(Rural, urban, city, etc.)
- C. Mission Statement
- D. Parish Staff
(Lets applicant know whom he/she will be working with)
- E. Membership
(How many households?)
- F. Characteristics
(Economic level, cultural makeup, etc.)
- G. Community Description
(One or two sentences describing the local community, city, etc.)
- H. Parish Plan
(What is available for the youth ministry program – youth office, youth room, church, gym, outdoor area, etc.)
- I. Schools
(What schools do most of the youth attend – small, large, private, Catholic, etc.)

Accountability and Work Relationships

The Youth Minister is directly accountable to the Pastor (or pastor designate) and indirectly accountable to the pastoral council and parish community. Since the roles of Director of Religious Education and Director of Youth Ministry are co-equal ministries, the Youth Minister should not be accountable to the DRE, except as he/she develops, coordinates, and oversees adolescent catechesis.

- A. The youth minister will serve on the Pastoral Team, attending team meetings, in-services, and days of reflection.
- B. The youth minister will develop annual ministry objectives which, along with this job description and the letter of employment, will serve as the basis for ministry evaluation by the youth minister and the Pastor.
- C. The youth minister will serve as liaison between the Pastoral Team and all youth serving programs in the parish programs and agencies in the community.
- D. The youth minister will develop and maintain a collaborative relationship with the Director of Religious Education and the school principal.
- E. The youth minister will attend parish events, which includes liturgy.

Programming

In line with the USCCB document *Renewing the Vision of Youth Ministry*, the youth minister will develop programming, which is comprehensive, intentional, and year-round.

- A. Ministry of Catechesis (Religious Education, Faith Formation)
 - 1. Be responsible for (or be involved in) the religious education program for young (middle school and high school age youth) people.
 - 2. Be responsible for recruitment, in-service and training, and evaluation of volunteer catechists.
 - 3. Maintain personal, professional, and spiritual development through course work, reading, seminars, workshops, etc.
- B. Ministry of Prayer and Worship
 - 1. Work with Parish Liturgy Committee to involve young people in the parish's worship experience.
 - 2. Facilitate the planning and implementation of special masses, prayer services, and reconciliation services for youth.
 - 3. Facilitate the planning and implementation of retreat experiences for the youth.
- C. Ministry of Community Life
 - 1. Facilitate the coming together of the parish youth through liturgical events, social events, youth nights, retreats, lock-ins, service projects, speaker forums, etc.

2. Establish a core group of adults and teens to oversee youth activities.

D. Ministry of Pastoral Care

1. Be present to the parish youth and, to the extent possible, get to know them personally. Develop a strong outreach to all the youth of the parish.
2. Initiate and oversee training opportunities in pastoral care for adults and youth volunteers.
3. Develop a community agency referral system that can be used in times of crisis for youth and their parents.
4. Participate in on-going education in the area of pastoral care.
5. Develop and implement a family and multicultural perspective in all areas of ministry to and with youth when and where appropriate.

E. Ministry of Justice and Service

1. Develop a knowledge of the parish and local community service organizations and establish a rapport with them.
2. Initiate and oversee justice and service awareness workshops, religious education opportunities, special speakers, etc. for adult volunteers and youth.
3. Develop service (ministry) opportunities that are a part of and foundational to the youth ministry program of the parish.

F. Ministry of Leader Development

1. Develop and maintain core teams of adults and youth leaders to direct and carry youth ministry programs, activities, and events.
2. Develop and implement a needs assessment, set goals and objectives, and develop action plans for the parish youth ministry.
3. Develop and implement specific training for youth to participate in the different ministries in the Church community (training lectors, Eucharistic ministers, greeters, etc.)

G. Ministry of Advocacy

1. Maintain communication with the Pastor, parish staff/council, adult volunteers, and local high school(s).
2. Participate in pastoral staff meetings and prepare and submit written reports to the necessary personnel.
3. Advocate for youth needs and activities in the broader community.
4. Maintain a liaison with other levels of structure for youth ministry: cluster, deanery, and diocesan levels.

H. Ministry of Evangelization

1. Empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today.
2. Develop and implement opportunities for young people to participate in the life, mission, and work of the Catholic faith community.

3. Design and develop programs that foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person in the parish.
4. Train, equip, and empower young people to be peer evangelizers to other youth, their families, and community.

Qualifications

- A. Personal
- B. Education and Personal Experience
- C. Competencies

Compensation and Benefits

The Diocesan Youth Office recommends that parishes contact the Diocesan Human Resources Office for any new and updated changes in the policies involved in the hiring process.

When the job description is complete, the search for a youth minister that fits the parish job description can begin.

Step 2 – Announce the Position

- A. Begin the recruiting process by announcing the position at least three months prior to the target hiring date. It is a good idea to notify the Office of Youth Ministry that you have begun the search process. The Office of Youth Ministry on occasion receives resumes from those looking for a job in youth ministry. When announcing the job opening, the search committee must decide whether they will advertise locally, regionally, or on a national level (and understand the implications associated with this decision, i.e., potential relocation for regional and/or national candidates).
- B. When recruiting a youth minister, the search committee should ask itself the following questions:
 1. What qualifications should our candidates have?
 2. How important is previous experience versus education? What kind of education is appropriate for the job?
 3. When do we want the minister to start?
 4. What is the pay range we are prepared to offer (based on candidate)?
 5. Are we only going to interview local candidates or will we be interviewing candidates from out of town?
 6. How many candidates do we want to interview? How many candidates can we afford to bring in for an interview from out of state?
 7. Who will do the interviewing? How many stages will we have in the process?
 8. What kinds of questions will be asked?
 9. How/by whom (Pastor) will the final hiring decision be made? By what date?

Qualifications and Skills

It is important that the search committee concentrate on the specific qualifications and skills that best match what their job description says and how this corresponds to their ideal candidate.

Qualifications

The candidate should have the following minimum qualifications for youth ministers:

1. Practicing Roman Catholic in good standing, with an active prayer and faith life.
2. Personal maturity. (Minimum age of 21)
3. At the minimum, a basic competence in the key knowledge and skills areas.
4. At the minimum, a basic understanding of current Catholic theology: Morality, Catholic Doctrine, Sacraments, Scriptures, Christology, and Ecclesiology.
5. A thorough working knowledge of principles of total youth ministry and its theory and practice, as well as current trends in the field (has read and understands the USCCB document "Renewing the Vision" on youth ministry).

Skills

The search committee should check to ensure that the candidates possess the necessary skills to implement a total youth ministry program. These skills include the following, but are not limited to:

1. Listening skills.
2. Organization and planning skills.
3. Small group facilitation and meeting skills.
4. Relational ministry skills.
5. Outreach ministry skills.
6. Ability to recruit, train, and support adult and teen leaders.
7. Ability to design and develop a sacramental preparation class for those in Confirmation.
8. Ability to design and develop retreat models and the ability to train a retreat team.
9. Ability to plan and lead community-building activities such as liturgies, prayer services, youth nights, and retreats.
10. Ability to collaborate effectively with the pastor, parish staff, parish council, and parents.
11. Ability to develop and plan a calendar for the year which reflects an effective, comprehensive youth program. (This would include planning and maintaining a budget.)

Please Note: If a youth minister is hired but does not have the necessary skills to implement a total youth ministry program, the parish should require and be willing to support continuing education to achieve proficiency within a specified time period.

Step 3 – Screen the Applicants

The search committee should gather on a periodic basis to review and screen applicant resumes, looking for those applicants who match the qualifications and skills desired.

Upon review of the resumes, the search committee should select those candidates that best reflect the qualifications desired. After the interviews and selection, the committee should check all candidates' references thoroughly. **Make sure you have the candidate's permission prior to checking references.**

The following are a few sample questions that you may want to ask those who are listed as references:

1. In what capacity do you know the candidate?
2. How long have you known the candidate?

3. Have you ever experienced the candidate in the context of their ministry?
4. Can you describe any successes they have had in their ministry?
5. How would you describe the candidate's maturity and ability to work with others? Adults? Young people?
6. What would you say are the candidate's strengths and weaknesses?

Step 4 - The Interview

The interview process should be conducted by the search committee with no more than 2-3 members, as too many people could serve to intimidate the candidates. The interviewers should plan out and practice how they will conduct the interview. After each interview, there should be a period for the committee to review each candidate's responses. Generally, this can be done by providing each member of the search committee with a post-interview form that asks them to reflect on the candidate's responses. This is usually best done first by themselves and then as a group.

During the interview, it is important to have the candidate do most of the talking. Too often the interviewer does more talking by telling the prospective candidate about what kind of person it will take to do the job instead of allowing the candidate to describe him/herself and what type of ministry they can provide. By allowing the candidate to describe their ministry, the interviewer can then decide if the candidate fits the needs of the parish.

It is good to use at least 10 standard questions for candidates being interviewed, while still allowing the conversation to flow freely between questions. Standardized questions provide a means of treating each candidate the same and covering the same materials in each interview. Thus, fair comparisons can be made between the candidates. The questions should cover all aspects of the candidate's background: education, experience, ministry style, mental and spiritual well-roundedness, communications and management skills, and spirituality.

- As a reminder, review the background data on the candidate and contact references prior to the interview. (Remember to get permission to contact references.)
- Determine interview questions and design a grid to compare responses.
- Ask open-ended questions.

Here is a sample of standard interview questions in no particular order:

1. Tell us a little about yourself.
2. Why are you interested in youth ministry?
3. Describe your spiritual life. How do you nurture your spiritual life?
4. What strengths do you bring to this job? What are your weaknesses?
5. Describe the best boss you ever had. Describe the worst boss you ever had.
6. How has your education prepared you for youth ministry?
7. How do you plan out your day? Your week?
8. How do you relate to young people? Adults?
9. What is your vision for youth ministry?
10. What would you hope to accomplish in the first year if you were to be hired?
11. What ministry models have you worked with and what curriculums have you used?

12. How much public speaking have you done?
13. How would you go about beginning a high school youth program?
14. What kind of experience and involvement do you have with liturgy?
15. Why should we hire you?
16. What are your long-term goals?

It is also helpful to give a few scenarios to see how the candidate responds. Here are several examples:

17. What would you do if...
 - a. A teenager came to an activity high or drunk?
 - b. One of your adult volunteers was accused of sexually abusing a parish teenager?
 - c. A teenager confided to you that he was thinking about suicide?
 - d. A teenage girl said that she thought she was pregnant and was afraid to tell her parents?
 - e. You thought you did not have enough adult volunteers?
 - f. You had a youth who was always causing trouble at your youth group meetings?

Step 5 - Selection and Notification

After the search committee has interviewed all potential candidates, the committee should then decide on the top three applicants. The search committee should then pick the best candidate that meets their specific qualifications. Sometimes search committees face the problem of not finding a candidate that meets at least their minimum qualifications. Instead of compromising, the search committee should regroup to determine if they might need to begin the process all over again. Although this may delay the timeline in the hiring process, it is better to find the right fit for the role.

Once the committee has reached an agreement on its first choice, it should notify the applicant by a formal phone call and “letter of employment”, which will include details on compensation and benefits as well as the start date. The letter should be accompanied by the following

- Job Description
- Method and Timing of Evaluations and Who They Report To
- Terms of Accountability

Step 6 - Salary & Negotiation

The pastor and the new youth minister need to mutually agree upon the salary and benefits offered by the parish. It is recommended that the Location Coordinator consult the HR website, then contact the Office of Human Resources for any questions regarding benefits and salary.

The experience of the Church in the United States through the mid-1970’s was that “ministry” in the Church was done by either vowed religious or diocesan priests.

Belonging to a religious community or a diocese made it possible to serve free from the worries and distractions of supporting oneself. The ministry of these men and women made it possible for parishes, schools, and other institutions to provide services at a very low cost. The resulting belief, conscious or unconscious, was that these same services could be provided by lay people at the same or slightly higher cost. Officially, the Church is clear about compensation for services. After acknowledging the need for appropriate formation, the Revised Code of Canon Law states:

“The (lay people) have a right to a decent remuneration suited to their condition; by such remuneration they should be able to provide decently for their own needs and for those of their family with due regard for the prescriptions of civil law; they likewise have a right that their pension, social security and health benefits be duly provided.”

The Bishops of this country declared in their economic pastoral:

“All the moral principles that govern the just operation of any economic endeavor apply to the Church and its agencies and institutions; indeed the Church should be exemplary.”
(Emphasis there.)

The Bishops further state:

“Those who serve the Church
...should receive a sufficient livelihood and the social benefits provided by responsible employers in our nations.”

Step 7 - Notification of Applicants Not Chosen

After the negotiations are finalized, the search committee will need to notify those applicants not chosen for the position by letter.

Chapter 5

Ministry Supervision

It is important to note that the pastor should serve as the youth minister supervisor. As the supervisor, the pastor should have a clear understanding of what is and is not going on in the youth ministry program. This can be done by regular bi-monthly or monthly meetings with the pastor and youth minister.

A. Supervision

Supervision is the process whereby someone who is trained and experienced in pastoral ministry looks over and assists someone of lesser experience and/or responsibility. The process is based on a relationship of caring and concern, as well as honesty and openness. In supervision, the supervisor helps the employee identify strengths, weaknesses, abilities and areas needing growth or development. Through careful attention to both success and failure of the employee and his/her effective response to ministry, the supervisor helps the employee to improve performance and continue to develop appropriate ministry for the parish.

B. Use of Evaluation

One of the key essential tools in ministry supervision is the evaluation process. Evaluations are helpful in a variety of ways. The evaluation process can provide an index of the strengths and weaknesses of a minister, and an accountability to the duties of the job spelled out in the minister's job description. Some of the most important facets of the evaluation are the following:

- Evaluations should be done on a regular basis.
- Evaluations should be written.
- Evaluations should be done by both the supervisor and employee.
- Evaluations should include a dialogue about the evaluation between the employee and the supervisor.

The following materials contain tools that can assist with supervision and evaluation.

- Supervision Process – to assist the supervisor in regular supervision sessions
- Youth Minister Performance Appraisal – to assist the supervisor in evaluation of the youth minister
- Youth Minister Self-Assessment Guide – to assist the youth minister in competency evaluation
- Youth Minister Learning Plan – to assist the youth minister in developing strategies to improve or achieve competency in a particular area

C. Supervision Process

Effective supervision promotes communication and acts as a support for the minister in their ministry. Supervision helps others to exercise their gifts and talents in their particular ministry. The supervision process is helpful in that it affirms, challenges, and invites growth in the minister as they work in their own particular ministry.

The supervision process begins when the supervisor and minister come together to dialogue on the ministry of the youth minister as exercised in a particular parish. It may involve:

- Regular scheduled supervisory sessions in which the supervisor and minister discuss what has transpired in recent youth activities and what is planned for the future. It is a good idea to agree to a specific time such as weekly, monthly, or quarterly.
- Regular staff meetings which provide a structure for ongoing dialogue on relationships, expectations, and difficulties.
- Written documentation concerning the content of the supervision session.

D. Goals of Supervision

- To promote growth and new development through change in direction set forth by the supervisor through dialogue, learning contract, etc.
- To nurture and develop the professional qualities and competence necessary for a minister in today's world.
- To assist the minister in measuring the outcome of his/her ministry efforts.

E. Supervision Session

The supervisory session should be used as a time to reflect on the direction the particular ministry is taking. It should be a time to reflect on whether the youth minister is meeting the written job description duties as agreed upon at the time of hiring. It is a time to discuss the strategy and progress of the objectives and goals. It is a time to affirm the positive and encourage the areas that need development or improvement. Lastly, the session should contain written information and signatures that reflect any changes or agreements so as to give a history of what took place between the supervisor and youth minister.

Supervisory sessions do not hold the same weight as a performance review. The review should take place either every six months or once a year.

The following are the main issues discussed at a supervisory session: Review of the job description, progress of goals and objectives, long-range visions, areas of concern, problem-solving, status of current projects, parish structure and collaboration issues, personal support, re-sourcing, management and maintenance issues, and strategies for growth.

The following is a sample supervision session:

This supervision session is divided into two broad areas: Part I – General Responsibilities and Part II – Comprehensive Youth Ministry. Consider Part I and Part II to be equal weight when articulating

strengths and suggestions for improvements. (This appraisal may be adapted by the parish to reflect the particular job responsibilities of the parish's youth minister.)

Performance Scale: 0–No basis for judgment, 1–Unsatisfactory, 2–Needs Improvement, 3– Satisfactory, 4–Outstanding

Part I – General Responsibilities

Exercise of Christian Leadership:

- ___ The YM manifests a lifestyle of Christian leadership to the Christian community.
- ___ The YM ministers effectively, working with parish staff, within parish structures, and with the diocesan, regional, national, and global Church.

The YM maintains professional work habits:

- ___ Dependability
- ___ Cooperation/Flexibility
- ___ Professionalism
- ___ Priority Setting
- ___ Safety
- ___ Stewardship of Resources
- ___ Resourcefulness/Creativity
- ___ Constructive Initiative
- ___ Formal Communications
- ___ Organizational Awareness
- ___ Time Management
- ___ Integrity
- ___ Sound Judgment
- ___ Problem-Solving Skills

Part II – Comprehensive Youth Ministry

Adolescent Development:

- ___ The YM applies appropriate managerial principles of adolescent development with a program of youth ministry. He/she assesses and utilizes family, social, cultural, and global trends in developing a youth ministry program.

Ministry Management Skills:

- ___ The YM applies appropriate managerial principles and administrative skills to the coordination and accountability for parish youth ministry.
- ___ The YM has knowledge of and utilizes effective communication skills and ministry management skills. He/she recruits, trains, supervises, and dismisses volunteers, as well as coordinating training and programming.
- ___ The YM facilitates the planning, implementation, and evaluation of both long-range and short-range program goals in light of the specific needs and ethnic-cultural composition of the parish.

___ The YM shows knowledge about legal concerns and provides for the protection of youth and the integrity of programs.

Youth Ministry/General:

___ The YM articulates a vision of youth ministry, including its various components, dimensions, principles, and goals in light of the applicable documents and pastoral letters of the Church.

___ The YM infuses multicultural dimensions into all youth ministry programming.

___ The YM infuses a family perspective into all youth ministry programming.

___ The YM fulfills a commitment to ongoing professional formation.

Evangelization:

___ The YM assists people to understand and interpret their life and faith experiences in light of Scripture, the Church's tradition, and their culture.

___ The YM utilizes appropriate methodologies of spiritual development and catechesis within a program of youth ministry.

___ The YM extends to all youth an invitation to participate in the life of the Church through the development of outreach ministries.

___ The YM infuses evangelization techniques into all aspects of youth ministry.

Prayer and Worship:

___ The YM provides opportunities for participation in prayer, personal spiritual development, and communal worship, while maintaining sensitivity to the cultural practices of the faith community.

___ The YM infuses spiritual formation into all aspects of youth ministry programming.

Justice, Service and Pastoral Care:

___ The YM provides opportunities for youth to experience and participate in Christian service, with an emphasis in linking such opportunities to the fostering of peace and justice.

___ The YM develops systems to extend program opportunities to groups and individuals less likely to participate due to factors such as physical or developmental disabilities, educational disadvantages, language barriers, or social alienation.

___ The YM facilitates the development of the community among young people, their families, the parish, and the local community.

___ The YM makes appropriate referrals for youth and families that need professional counseling.

___ The YM works to sensitize the parish community to the critical needs and concerns of the youth.

Supervisor's Comments

When giving a performance review, it is important that the supervisor is both honest and clear in the evaluation. After the supervisor has read and studied the employee's own written review appraisal, the review should go as follows:

- Employee's Major Strength(s)
- Suggestions for Improvement

- Summary Comments by the Supervisor
- Response by Employee
- Youth Minister Improvement Plan
- Youth Minister Learning Plan
- Supervisor's Signature and Date
- Employee's Signature and Date

Youth Minister Questions for Self-Reflection:

1. What have you found encouraging about this years' experience in youth ministry?
2. What have you found discouraging about this years' experience in youth ministry?
3. In regards to your individual ministry, are you feeling? (Check all that apply)

- Supported
- Stifled
- Understood
- Frustrated
- Challenged
- Encouraged

4. How many hours per week (on average) do you work?

How do you divide your time?

- Administrative
- Planning
- Training
- Counseling
- Programming
- Teaching
- Other, please specify:

5. How often do you take time for personal growth, prayer, reflection, and recreation?

6. How are your personal strengths/weaknesses affecting your ministry?

Please rate the following on a scale of 1-10 with 1 being negative and 10 being positive:

- I feel that I am visible to the larger community.
- I feel like I have a good relationship with the staff.
- I feel like I communicate well with my core team/volunteers.
- I am satisfied with the working conditions.
- I feel like I have adequate resources and materials for my program.
- I feel supported in my ministry by my supervisor.

7. Regarding your job description, are all aspects fulfilled?

8. How is your role as a youth minister viewed by the rest of the staff?

9. What revisions would you make in your job description for the next year?

10. In what area of your ministry do you think you need to improve?

11. In what area of your ministry would you like additional training/education that would be of value for your ministry?

12. What are your goals for your ministry in the coming year? What are your long-term goals for yourself professionally?

Self-Directed Learning

Youth ministry has experienced tremendous change and growth in the past 10 years. Youth ministers can no longer rely on formation acquired when they first entered the field as adequate to keep pace with the ministry. Continuing education is essential. Ideally, ongoing formation should meet the unique learning needs of a youth minister. In order to develop a learning strategy best suited to previous formation, experiences and current job responsibilities, the youth minister must regularly assess his/her competency in an intentional way.

Self-assessment is the first step in developing a Learning Plan. Honest self-appraisal of one's competency level surfaces both strengths and learning gaps. Once the learning gaps have been identified, a self-directed learning plan is developed utilizing resources that will help the youth minister achieve competency in that particular area.

Learning Plans are established with the support and approval of the youth minister supervisors. The youth minister Learning Support Team (if applicable) can assist the youth minister in researching potential learning strategies. The team provides mutual support and resourcing. Both common and separate learning goals of the team members are pursued and learning is shared.

Chapter 6

Liability Guidelines and Policies

In these days, when recourse to courts to settle differences is occurring, youth ministers avoid an awareness of and compliance with the law at their own peril. Much more than that, however, their responsibility to youth, their parents, and their guardians is paramount. Youth ministry demands that church personnel, paid or volunteer, clearly communicate at all times with youth and parents/guardians regarding programming. They must carefully screen those who volunteer to minister to the youth, appropriately supervise all activities, and implement all the diocesan policies that govern the safety and care of the youth and the people who minister to them. Youth ministers must strive to model their leadership to that of Jesus and, as He was, be committed to care in every way for those young people in Catholic parishes.

The following guidelines and policies are not offered in order to limit youth leaders in their ministry or frighten pastors, pastoral councils, and parish staff. Instead, the following guidelines and policies are offered so that parishes and youth leaders will take the necessary precautionary measures in order to keep risk at a reasonable level. Hopefully, an increased sense of responsibility on the part of youth leaders will enhance their ministry to and with youth.

A. Overview of the Law

The following legal definitions and theories are most applicable to youth ministry.

Law of Agency

This legal principle governs who is responsible for the action of another and under what circumstances liability exists.

An employer (referred to as the principal) can be held responsible for the acts of an employee (called the agent) under the Law of Respondent Superior (“The employer must answer”) if two conditions are met:

- The one who acts is the agent of the employer; and
- The employer/agent’s wrongful acts are within the scope of his or her employment/ministry.

The issue is whether the questionable act was of the kind for which the employee/agent was hired to perform. Did it occur within the authorized time and space limits of the job, and was the act undertaken, at least in part, by the intent to serve the employer?

The employer, in this case, is the parish and, ultimately, the Diocese of Charleston. The agent is the youth minister. Under the law, even volunteers in the program can be considered as agents, as well as of the parish and/or diocese.

The youth leader does not need to be paid to be considered an agent. The issue is whether the parish has the right (expressed or not) of control over the person's work. That is, does the parish have the authority to hire and fire a youth minister and govern the manner in which work is done? The answer will always be "Yes," even for volunteer youth leaders.

The youth minister and volunteer worker, however, may still be held responsible for acts caused by his/her own negligence and intentional assaults.

The Law of Negligence

A person (or institution) is negligent for his/her actions if:

- There was a duty.
- The duty was breached.
- There was injury or damage.
- The injury or damage was caused by the breach of the duty.

For example, if the parish youth ministry program sponsored a swim party and the youth leader was reading a book while some youth were diving dangerously, the youth minister would be liable if a young person was seriously injured. In addition, the parish and diocese may also be held liable under the law of agency. Their duty was to supervise the event. The duty was breached, resulting in an injury. The injury was proximately caused by the breach of that duty.

In today's society, people sue people they do not know. Therefore, the call to be in relationship and to communicate with the youth and their parents/guardians is one that must be taken seriously. All youth leaders and volunteers should be aware that they are never immune from the possibility of injury or lawsuit. Despite all of their best efforts, precautions, training and planning, someone may get injured. The diocese has retained coverage that protects youth leaders and volunteers while acting within the scope of their ministry. It should offer them security as they go faithfully about their ministry. Recall though, as was said above, youth leaders and volunteers are liable for their own criminal or negligent acts. The following guidelines are not burdensome, and many are already standard operating procedures for diocesan employees and parishes of the diocese. Ultimately, as youth leaders develop an awareness and sensitivity to the guidelines and policies they will find them an aid and assurance in their ministry.

B. On Site Parish Youth Ministry

Ministry to and with youth, or any events/activities in which youth are involved as participants in the parish, youth ministry programming requires the following:

Supervision

All youth ministry programs, activities, events, and retreats, are to be adequately supervised and chaperoned. The Diocese of Charleston offers the following required chaperone ratio: A minimum of 2 chaperones at any gathering for the minimum amount of young people attending the gathering is required, no exceptions! Junior High Ministry requires a chaperone ratio of 1 adult for every 7 young people and High School Youth Ministry requires a chaperone of 1 adult for every 10 young people.

Chaperones of both genders should be available when both genders are present. Chaperones are defined as young adults who are a minimum of 21 years of age. Young adults between the ages of 18 (and out of high school) to 20 years of age who assist with youth ministry are not considered chaperones.

Supervision of youth ministry includes the following:

- Ensuring the safety of the young people while at a program or activity
- Assisting the Youth Leader with implementation of a program or activity
- Seeing that the guidelines for behavior and safety are followed
- Accountability for the young people before, during, and immediately after any youth function

Chaperones should be informed of their role and responsibilities for each distinct youth ministry program or activity, as it may be different, depending on the situation. The selection of appropriate adults to serve as drivers and chaperones is critical, and the importance of following diocesan policy cannot be overstated.

The youth minister should have clearly defined guidelines for participation by youth, as well as procedures for dealing with violations of those guidelines. These guidelines should be communicated to both parents and young people. Guidelines should be stated in writing. Parishes may consider asking parents and young people to sign a statement confirming that they have read the guidelines and agree to abide by them.

The diocese suggests that the following be part of any statement or guidelines regarding participation in youth ministry.

- Possession of alcohol, drugs, and tobacco products are not permitted at any youth ministry function. (This includes adults!) Anyone found in possession of these items will be sent home immediately and the police will be notified if required. If the function is held away from parish grounds, the parents will come and retrieve their son/daughter. In the event the function is a distance away from the parish, the young person will be sent home with the cost borne by the parents.
- No type of weapon is permitted at any youth ministry function. Persons carrying a weapon will be dismissed immediately to the custody of the police and the parents will be notified.
- Inappropriate behavior, including the use of offensive language and inappropriate attire, will not be tolerated.

Medical Care and Emergencies

Emergencies can happen to anyone at any time, requiring quick judgment and prompt action. It is highly suggested that emergency plans be in place for all possible problems. (Examples: Fire, flooding, hurricane, lost person, severe injury.) When traveling or attending a retreat center, it is important to note where the nearest medical help can be attained.

The youth minister or another designated adult should be able to administer emergency care at any youth program or event. (CPR and Basic First Aid Training are offered through local agencies such as the Red Cross.)

A general first aid kit should be available wherever youth gather and should be carried to all off-site events. Kits should be checked by a medical doctor or a certified registered nurse. The kit should also contain emergency contact numbers such as parish, pastor, parents, and nearest hospital facilities. The kit should be checked for completeness prior to any youth ministry event.

Arrival and Dismissal

Youth leaders are urged to remember that their responsibility to and for youth exists from the time of arrival to the time of departure. Generally, fifteen minutes prior to an event and fifteen to thirty minutes after an event give parents and/or youth ample time to make connections and meet deadlines.

Youth leaders are reminded that youth are never to be left alone on the parish premises. The youth leaders or another adult responsible for the program must remain with the youth until all youth have left. Two adults must share this responsibility.

If it is necessary for a young person to leave a program early, clearly state that notification from the parent or guardian is required. Do not dismiss a young person to the care of an adult who is not the parent or guardian without express permission.

Attendance

Keeping accurate records of attendance at scheduled parish youth programming will be helpful if there is ever a question of presence of a youth at a particular event, program, class, etc. Parents may believe youth, especially those who drive themselves, were at a particular event, when, in truth, they were not.

Youth present on the premises, but not at an activity when it begins, should be invited to come in or asked to leave the premises. Youth leaders who contact the parents of youth who are unexpectedly absent from events or youth nights will have a way both to communicate with parents and to encourage future participation by being both welcoming and showing concern.

C. Off Site Parish Youth Ministry

Every offsite event includes all onsite requirements, in addition to the following:

As part of a holistic, intentional, year-round youth ministry program in a parish, youth often participate in activities and events that take place away from the parish premises. These activities may be parish, deanery, or diocesan-sponsored. They also require us to be concerned for the safety and well-being of our youth.

Forms

Permission, Medical Release and Information, Waiver of Liability Forms

All youth and adults are required to complete and sign the "Permission to Treat/Medical Release Form and Waiver of Liability". (Please see Appendix A.) Additionally, youth participants also need express permission of their parent/guardian to participate in a particular event. It is possible to combine all of these into one form. (Please see Appendix A.) Legally, a "year-long" release form is

not acceptable. A separate release form must be completed and signed by the parent or guardian each time a young person attends an off-site event. (Suggestion to expedite and reduce parents' unwillingness to fill out forms: When you get your first set of forms back for an event, repopulate the forms on your computer and place a check box at the bottom noting whether there are any changes to this form. Then, when you send out the forms the next time, all the parents have to do is review the information, check off on the bottom if there are any changes and sign the form.)

Whenever a youth ministry program or activity takes the young people "off site," the youth leader must carry the release forms of the young people in attendance. While driving to and from a location, however, the drivers of each vehicle should have in their possession the forms for the people traveling in their vehicle. This policy is in case the group gets separated and an accident occurs. The adult driver would then have the necessary paperwork to have someone treated. Please remind the adults that parental release forms are to be kept confidential.

Site Selection

If you use private homes for off-site activities, the homeowners should be aware of the increased liability risks they incur. They should check with their homeowner's insurance agent to see if they are protected for church activities. Some policies cover such activities while others require an additional rider. If you are using a retreat center, you are strongly encouraged to see if there is health insurance available for purchase by your group.

Transportation

Please note that the South Carolina Transportation laws are currently changing. Contact the state police in your area to answer any specific questions that may apply.

Drivers and Insurance

All drivers must complete a volunteer screening as set forth by the Child Protection Office and Catholic Mutual, and undergo applicable background screening, if they will be driving for the parish youth ministry program. In addition, each driver must complete a Driver Information form that should be kept on file at the parish. (See Appendix B.)

- The insurance that a volunteer carries on their vehicle must meet the diocesan-recommended limits of \$100,000 per person and \$300,000 per occurrence.
- The insurance on a volunteer's car is considered **primary** in the event of an automobile accident.
- The medical insurance of the passengers in the car are considered secondary coverage.
- The diocese does not carry insurance to cover automobile accidents for drivers of privately owned vehicles. Therefore, it is essential that all drivers be checked to ensure that they are covered, and they know that they are primary in regards to coverage.

Passenger Vans

South Carolina state law requires drivers of buses to hold a commercial license. This is true whether the driver owns the van/bus or is driving a rental. There are no exceptions to this law.

Diocesan Van Passenger Policy

The following is the diocesan policy governing the purchasing, rental, and usage of 15-passenger vans. This policy became effective as of October 1, 1998.

- A 12-15 passenger van **cannot** be used to transport students, ages preschool to grade 12 to or from any school or parish function.
- “School or parish function” is defined as any function related to school or parish operations, including religious education programs.
- Seats cannot be removed from a 15-passenger van to reduce seating capacity.
- Nine-passenger vans (or smaller) *can* be used for parish or school functions as stipulated by federal law and diocesan policies.
- Special designed 15 passenger bus/ van made be used, however, it must be approved by Catholic Mutual.

Buses

When renting a bus for a trip, it is important that contract and insurance coverage be approved by the diocesan legal office and Catholic Mutual. It is very important to understand that the youth ministers know they are not allowed to enter into any type of contractual agreement without approval from the Diocesan legal office and Catholic Mutual. (It is important to note the difference of coverages for in-state use and out of state use for bus rentals. Please see the bus companies that have been used by the diocese in the Appendix C.)

Rental Vehicles

When renting vehicles for youth ministry activities, the insurance available through the rental company, which covers the vehicle in case of an accident, should be purchased. The drivers who are listed on the rental agreement are the only people eligible to drive that vehicle. Drivers must be at least 24 years of age.

Privately Owned Vehicles

The diocese has purposefully not issued a blanket prohibition against the use of privately owned vehicles because there will be locations, particularly in rural areas, which have neither parish vehicles nor access to commercial rentals. However, the diocese strongly recommends the use of privately owned vehicles be avoided whenever possible.

In those instances where there is no alternative except to use privately owned vehicles:

- Check the state proof of insurance card of the driver(s) to ensure that they have liability insurance. Those who do not have insurance should not be permitted to drive on parish business under any circumstances.
- Check the driver(s) license of those driving to ensure that there are no legal limitations (i.e., no night driving, correctional lenses required, etc.)
- If the youth minister is expected to use his/her own vehicle to transport young people to and from activities, the vehicle driver must have the 100/300 insurance policy.

- Whenever possible, teenagers *should not* be allowed to drive to any function or event without prior written consent from the parent/guardian. Also, no other person may ride with the said young person unless there is prior written consent from his/her parent/guardian.

Watercraft

U.S. Coast Guard regulations must be observed when using watercraft and such vessels should be used only for their intended purpose. No vessel shall carry more passengers than it is officially designed to carry. Check that the vessel has a current Certificate of Inspection and that it is operated by qualified personnel. Do not use uninsured watercraft.

When using any type of personal watercraft (i.e., jet ski), young people must wear certified life preservers and be instructed on the proper handling of the craft before using it. The Office of Youth Ministry suggests motorized craft (motor boats) should be driven by those 24 years of age or older, who are properly instructed in the use of such watercraft.

Water Activities

Water activities require special precautions. Whenever swimming, whether at a beach, lake, private or public pool, a certified lifeguard must be present and the correct ratio for youth and lifeguards must be maintained.

Physical Challenge Activities

There are some activities which offer a high degree of physical challenge for the participants, e.g. rope courses, obstacle courses, white water rafting, camping, sports, etc. Such activities are used to build a group cohesiveness and trust and to help form a positive self-image for the individual participants.

By the very fact that these activities are more physically challenging, they involve a greater risk. To ensure that the youth experience the activity at its best, provide the following:

- Must meet diocesan insurance requirements
- Licensed, certified instructors who, either as part of an organization or on their own, have a good safety record
- Proper safety equipment
- Match between the difficulty of the activity and the skill ability of the participants

D. Pastoral Care

The youth leaders and other adults often must respond to youth in crisis situations. Many of the situations that surface are simply the normal struggles of adolescent growth, but at times adults in youth ministry may be confronted with crisis issues which may be life threatening to the young person. The way in which they respond and what they say may have potential legal implications of which they should be aware.

Unless the adult is a licensed professional counselor, he/she should not describe him/herself as one verbally or in any written publicity material. His/her role in the area of pastoral care is to listen

compassionately and empathetically to the young person who is sharing his/her story, and help refer the young person to the right person/resource, e.g. pastor, counselor, etc. It is imperative that youth leaders have a plan and resources for students who may be seeking assistance for a crisis situation. It is also important that the youth minister develop a pastoral plan for not only crisis situations, but for issues that young people might be struggling with in everyday life.

Confidentiality

The type of information shared by young people in these situations gives rise to an expectation of confidentiality on their part. The confidentiality must be scrupulously honored, except under the following circumstances:

- There is a risk of danger to the youth or another person that is reasonably foreseeable by the adult, e.g., suicide threats.
- The story shared is one of child abuse, ranging from physical, mental, or providing of illegal substances to a minor.
- Must adhere and follow all diocesan safe environment requirements.

The Pastoral Care Environment

Relationships with young people require prudence.

- Do not meet with youth alone in isolated situations. Let someone know you are going to be in conference and advise them when the youth leaves. Leave your door open a little when meeting with youth in these situations.
- If, for whatever reason, an adult must drive a young person home, call the parents to seek their permission. Notify someone at the parish that you are doing so, informing them of the time you are leaving and reporting to them when you return. You must not be alone in a car with a youth.
- Be aware of your limitations, both in terms of education, training, and experience in this fragile area.
- Keep a list of community referral agencies/individuals available and provide youth referral assistance.
- Be aware of the signs which indicate a youth is in a crisis situation and make an immediate referral, informing the parent/guardian.
- Know what to do if a young person comes to you in crisis. Make sure you know to whom you must report and when. Make sure to keep your pastor in the loop.
- Seek continued enrichment and training in the area of pastoral care.

Sexual Abuse

You must follow all Safe Environment policies. The Catholic Church expects all in ministry to live chaste and moral lives, respecting in every way the gift of sexuality. Inappropriate sexual activity abuses the power and authority of the pastoral role of all who work for and serve the people of God.

Thus, sexual misconduct by church ministers (youth leaders) of the Diocese of Charleston is contrary to Christian morals and civil law and will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

The Diocese of Charleston has significant responsibility to ensure that positive steps are taken to identify those persons that have had prior personal experience in the sexual misconduct area.

Every person who has regular contact with young people (both employees and volunteers) must complete the following:

- Diocesan policies regarding any and all forms of background screening.
- Receive proper in-servicing (education) involving the parish and diocesan policies.
- Ensure proper documentation for state and diocesan regulations/policies has been checked and is on file.

Ensuring proper documentation state requirements and in-servicing must be made a condition of employment for all youth ministers, as well as for volunteers working with youth.

Reporting of Suspected Sexual Misconduct

If a youth minister suspects, either because of direct observation or through a report from another youth or adult, that any adult volunteer may have behaved inappropriately, he/she must immediately follow the diocesan policy on "Child Abuse and Student Abuse Prevention and Response." THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS! Every parish should ensure that they have a copy and all employees and volunteers have been in-serviced on how to make a report. All personnel who work with youth are considered mandatory reporters by the Bishop.

Chapter 7

Diocesan Policies for Youth Ministry

Each parish, especially those adults who are working with young people, should have a clear understanding of the youth ministry policies that are described in this chapter. Each year the parish leaders should review these policies with those adults working with youth in their particular parish. It would also be wise that the policies are updated in regards to any policies that pertain only to that particular parish:

Youth Ministry in the Parish

Policy #100

Each parish will have a vision and mission statement regarding the way they minister to, with, and for their young people, as outlined in the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops document "Renewing the Vision."

Youth Ministry Mandatory Policies

Policy #101

Each parish will have a clearly defined policy for participants and procedures for dealing with violations of these policies. These policies should be based on the mission statement of the parish, reflect the needs of the community, and be clearly stated in writing. Mandatory policies should include the following:

- a parent consent liability waiver is required for any and all offsite or overnight youth activities
- the purchase, possession, consumption or use of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs will not be tolerated
- any form of bullying will not be condoned
- youth must be dropped off and picked up at appropriate times
- youth will not be allowed to have possession or on their person any form of weapons (gun, knife, etc.)
- no minors are permitted to drive from parish facilities to off-site, parish-sponsored youth events unless written permission is granted by the parents (see addendum of forms)
- Every youth must know the appropriate rules and behavior during any youth ministry activity. A Code of Conduct acknowledgement form must be signed by both the youth and parent/guardian in order to attend youth group and or any activities.

Chaperone/Supervision

Policy #102

Parishes are responsible for providing adult supervision for young people while they are on parish grounds both before and after programs. The “two-adult rule” must be obeyed at all times, meaning that at least two adults must remain present until the last participant has left. Adults are defined as persons 21 years of age and older. Persons under the age of 21 may assist with youth programs if they are acting in the role of assistants or helpers, but should not have total responsibility for younger children.

- All chaperones must complete Diocesan Safe Environment requirements.
- All chaperones should view the “Youth Ministry: Everything Matters and Everyone has a Role” online training available at the Catholic Mutual website.
- Chaperone should be well in-serviced as to the role they are expected to carry out. This goes for regular youth nights and any type of activity or trip. Chaperones should be familiar and comfortable with the activity they will be overseeing, as well as tasks or duties assigned.
- All chaperones must fill out a code of conduct and must attend all required meetings in order to be a chaperone.
- All chaperones must fill out the required adult liability waiver.
- All chaperones should have a clear understanding of the do’s and don’ts that are required of them in order to serve.
- All chaperones must be morally fit to serve as a chaperone.

Corporal Punishment

Policy #103

Parishes will have a statement defining and forbidding corporal punishment. Corporal punishment includes hitting, pushing, shoving, and slapping. Parishes should develop consequences for inappropriate behavior and consequences should be explicitly spelled out before events take place. When disciplining, youth leaders should use the “two-deep approach,” meaning two adults should always be present.

Search and Seizure

Policy #104

Parishes will have a search and seizure policy in the event it is suspected that a young person is in possession of illegal drugs, alcohol, or weapons. The police will be summoned. This policy must be communicated to all participants and parents.

Student Accident Policy

Policy #105

All youth participants in any form of youth ministry must be enrolled in the student accident coverage provided by the Office of Youth Ministry. The coverage runs from August 1st through July 31st. (For more information and the coverage cost, please contact the Office of Youth Ministry.)

Appropriate Behavior for Youth

Policy #106

No minor should be provided or possess any alcoholic beverages, tobacco, drugs, or any other substance prohibited by law.

No youth should be permitted to alter their body in any way during a youth ministry event, e.g. body piercing, tattoos, shaved head, or colored hair.

Adults should monitor the internet usage, music, movies, and television programming at youth events for inappropriate language and behavior. Parents must be notified as to the title and rating of all movies. Movies should be G, PG, or PG-13 (youth 13 and over only). Appropriate R-rated movies, e.g., "The Passion of the Christ," must have signed parent permission, with pastor or supervisor approval. Music played by the ministry (DJ, youth nights) should not contain obscene language or lyrics. Content should be previewed prior to showing to youth.

Youth should understand the appropriate attire for each event. (Swimsuits, shorts, halter tops, explicit language on shirts or shorts is prohibited.)

Each parish is encouraged to formulate a policy regarding the use of language, jokes, and appropriate touching among males and females.

Appropriate Behavior of Adults

□ Policy # 107

- Adults will not consume alcoholic beverages during a youth event.
- Adults should not use any tobacco product in the presence of youth at any youth events.
- Adults will not use drugs or other substances prohibited by law.
- Adults should be living by the moral teachings of the Catholic Church. Any adult living with a boyfriend or girlfriend outside of marriage should not be permitted to work with youth.
- No paid or volunteer adult is allowed to date any youth who is of high school age or younger.
- Adult must use appropriate touch when affirming or consoling youth as directed by safe environment policies.
- All volunteers must be properly trained and in-serviced for their ministry.

Safe Environment Policies

All adults working or having regular contact with children under the age of 18 must have prior approval and Safe Environment screening before serving in any role in youth ministry. (For more information, contact your parish pastor or parish safety coordinator.)

Off-Site Activities

□ Policy #108

When sponsoring a youth activity away from parish premises, there must be one adult leader per eight older adolescents (ages 14-19) and one adult per six early adolescents (ages 10-14). If both female and male youth will be present at the event, there must be both female and male leaders. There must always be at least two adults when traveling. The pastor should have a copy of all travel plans and attendees.

Again, youth and parents should be made aware of the expectations, requirements and guidelines for overnight housing. Curfews should be explained and everyone should know in advance the results of breaking the curfew. Youth and their parents need to understand the expectations of any

damages by their youth to the hotel, cabin, or dorms, will be their responsibility. Furthermore, desired expectations should be explained regarding overall behavior and internet usage.

Cabins/Dorm Style Areas

On overnight events, there must be a minimum of two adult leaders of the same gender sleeping in a cabin/dorm-style room with the young people. It is highly recommended that the adults sleep nearest to the doors. **AT NO TIME MAY AN ADULT BE ALONE WITH A YOUTH IN A CABIN OR DORM ROOM.**

Sometimes, especially during work camps, youth are housed in school classrooms. Diocesan policy states that adults should not stay overnight in classrooms with young people. It is recommended that they stay in the classroom next to the youth. It is highly recommended that an adult sleep in the hallway to prevent any issues that can arise.

In hotel settings, youth should be housed with youth and adults housed with adults. Each youth is recommended to bring a sleeping bag when staying in a hotel where they will share a bed with another youth. If possible, put young ladies with adult lady chaperones on one floor, and young men along with adult male chaperones on another floor. If you are taking a large group, it is recommended to put adults on each end of the floor, and in the middle. Youth leaders should have a plan how they will check on youth through the night.

Parents are allowed to have **their children** stay with them in their hotel room. However, we recommend, if possible, that the youth stay with other youth.

Priests, deacons, sisters and seminarians must always be housed separate from youth and adults.

Attendance at Events

Policy #109

Attendance at events which take place away from parish grounds cannot be mandated, nor do young people have an inherent right to participate in such events.

Consent Form

Policy #110

A signed parent/guardian consent form and liability waiver must be submitted by each participant for each off-site or overnight event, e.g. overnight lock-in. Young people who do not turn in the completed forms cannot and will not be allowed to participate. Use only authorized permission slips.

Always give the parents advance notice and full information regarding the events in which their children/youth will be participating. Parents must give written permission anytime a youth will be leaving church property.

Emergency Action Plan

□ Policy #111

The youth minister will develop an emergency action plan covering the various emergencies which can arise during every event. Emergency action plans shall be developed for the following emergencies: Fire, lost participants, physical injury, sudden illness, drowning, hurricane, and tornadoes. The emergency action plans should be in written form and posted where it is readily accessible to adult team members. Sample action plan included.

First Aid

□ Policy #112

A doctor, registered nurse or someone certified in basic first aid and CPR should be present during all parish-sponsored overnight events.

Medication

□ Policy #113

Self-medication by youth is not allowed while on any church/school sponsored activity. It is mandatory that at least one (can be two if a large group is being served) adult on the trip be in charge and custody for all medications (prescription and over the counter) for all youth on the trip. This responsibility is detail-oriented and extremely important. The following steps should be taken:

- Parents need to provide a complete list of medications taken by their child. This should include what the medicine is for, number of pills that you were given, dosage information, dosage schedule (with or without food), any side effects or anything that is important to know about the medicine.
- For over the counter medication, they should provide the name of the medicine, dosage, and dosage schedule.
- A log should be created by the adult in charge that shows the name of the youth, dosage, dosage schedule and a place to sign off that the meds were administered according to time and day, and the number of pills taken.
- It is recommended that you do not administer shots of any kind. Youth needing this type of medication are fully trained in this process and you are only to observe their administration of the shot to verify the medication has been taken.
- If you have a child that is allergic to bee stings or suffers from food allergies, it is recommended that an epinephrine stick be near the youth at all times during the event/trip. If an adult is going to be with the youth at all times, then it is okay for them to hold onto it. It is important that all your adult chaperones have been trained on how to administer this device and feel comfortable in using it. In the case of severe allergic reaction, seconds are very important for a successful treatment.
- In case of an incident, an incident form must be filled out completely and as soon as possible after the accident/injury occurs. It is important to fill out the form while all the details, including conditions and witnesses are still fresh in your mind.

Swimming Event

Policy #114

When sponsoring a swimming event at either a camp facility, beach, or public or private pool, there must be a certified lifeguard present.

Risk

Policy #115

When providing activities for youth to participate in, the youth minister must be aware of the risk involved. Parents should be notified before any activity such as high ropes, white water rafting, rock climbing, water skiing, and any off-road activity. The youth minister should always, if possible, check out the location and vendors (licensing, insurance requirements, and any certification requirements) to assess the risk. If you are unsure on whether an activity is allowed, please contact Catholic Mutual to review potential risk.

Accident Report

Policy #116

Whenever a young person is injured, an accident report should be completed immediately. A copy should be retained in the parish file. (Forms should be reviewed by pastors prior to filing.) A second copy should be given to the guardians/parents of the injured youth. A third copy should be sent to the diocesan youth office/Catholic Mutual via e-mail as soon as possible.

Drivers

Policy #117

Drivers should be at least 21 years of age or older (24 years of age for rental vehicles), have a valid, non-probationary driver's license and no physical disability that could in any way impair his/her ability to drive a vehicle safely. Any driver with a DUI on record is not allowed to drive youth to events. All drivers must complete the diocesan driver information sheet, and review Catholic Mutual driving requirements. Each driver should take the online defensive driving course "Be Smart – Drive Safe" which is available at no cost and takes less than 20 minutes. The driver sheet form, along with a photocopy of his/her proof of insurance and driver's license should remain on file at the church. (Please see the volunteer screening policy and form regarding background checks for volunteer drivers.)

Driver Insurance Coverage

Policy #118

The driver, of any personal vehicle, who transports youth to and from an event, must be insured with the following minimum limits:

- \$100,000 per person/\$300,000 per occurrence
- The driver should be told in advance that their insurance would be primary if in an accident.
- The vehicle must have a valid, current registration and license plate.

Passenger Vans

Policy #119

No children under the age of 18 are permitted to be transported in 10-15 passenger vans. When using a passenger van/bus with a seating capacity of more than 16 persons, the driver must have a commercial driver's license.

Bus Transportation

Policy # 120

When renting a bus and driver, a copy of the bus company's liability form with the minimum insurance as directed by the diocesan legal department and Catholic Mutual, must be placed on file at the parish. (All bus contracts must go through Catholic Mutual and the diocesan legal team.)

Driver Responsibility

Policy #121

The "two-adult rule" must be used when youth are being transported to and from church related events.

Each driver should carry a copy of the parental release forms for each youth in their vehicle in case they become separated from the rest of the group. (Special care should be taken to instruct the drivers on the confidentiality of information contained on the parental release forms.)

Travel Plan

Policy #121

A travel plan for overnight trips containing important phone numbers, site location, travel route, etc., should be left with the person serving as the main contact at the church in the event of an emergency.

Youth Driving

Policy #122

Youth are strongly discouraged from driving to church-related events. However, since the Diocese of Charleston is a rural diocese, it may sometimes be necessary for youth to drive to events. This will only be allowed under the following guidelines:

1. The driver must have a written note from their parents/guardians giving permission for them to drive to and from the event.
2. If an additional youth will be riding with them, he/she must also have written permission from their parents/guardians.
3. The passenger will not be allowed to switch vehicles.

Child Abuse Policy

Policy #123

All parish personnel, compensated and volunteer, must be thoroughly in-serviced on their duties pertaining to the diocesan sexual abuse policy, as well as the State of South Carolina laws regarding child and sexual abuse. (All adults working with youth must successfully complete required diocesan training.)

If a youth worker suspects or is confronted with a case of abuse, the guidelines as outlined in the Diocesan Abuse Policy should be followed.

All adults working with youth are considered by the church as mandated reporters.

Code of Ethics

Policy #124

All adults must sign The Code of Ethics established by the diocese and child protection office, and it must be kept on file in your local youth office.

Confidentiality

Policy #125

All information regarding youth and adults must be stored in a locked and secure location (i.e. personal information gleaned from “conversation in which a youth confided personal information about themselves”).

Guidelines for Communication

Policy #126

All Communications with youth must satisfy the spirit of the Sexual Misconduct Policy.

*“The ethical behavior that we expect of church leaders and personnel in their interactions with minors must extend to all forms of communication, including the virtual/technological world.”
Examples are included but not limited to: Phone calls, texting, social media, gaming, and email.*

All communication with youth must have the ability to be supervised by another adult within youth ministry and or supervisors of the youth minister. A youth minister must have permission from the parent or guardian to communicate with their youth and how that communication will take place (group text, Flocknote, group email, Basecamp, etc.).

It is recommended by the diocesan youth office that every parish youth minister should be provided a parish cell phone and a parish computer for use. This way it will add a needed buffer, and will help keep separate the parish youth minister’s professional and personal life.

Communication between youth and youth ministry personnel should have timeline boundaries set and explained to the youth and parents - except for emergencies or crises (7:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m.) and not during school hours.

All parish youth ministry communication platform initialization (website, social media) must be approved by the pastor. Login and passwords must also be shared with the pastor or supervisor.

It is recommended that an adult should not be involved with any type of gaming with youth for the ministry. An adult may participate in gaming, but should be very careful in revealing ones identity so appropriate boundaries are in place.

Youth ministers must have the ability to monitor all communications between youth and youth ministry volunteers (phone, e-mail, text, social media, face to face). Any communication that cannot produce a record of the communication (i.e. snapchat), cannot be used.

Network Security Policy and Usage

Internet access to global electronic information resources on the World Wide Web is provided to clergy, religious, employees, volunteers and students to provide ease in obtaining data and technology to assist in their respective ministries, duties or studies.

Our technology systems, including but not limited to computer equipment, software, operating systems, storage media, network accounts providing electronic mail, browsing, file transfer protocol, are the property of the diocese and parish, and are to be used in support of the mission of the Catholic Church. Maintaining a safe, reliable, and secure system is a collaborative effort involving the participation and support of every individual who uses our information systems. It is the responsibility of every computer user to know and conform to these guidelines.

Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to outline the acceptable use of computer equipment. These rules are in place to protect both the members of our community and the diocese and parish. Inappropriate use exposes the diocese/parish to risks including virus attacks, compromise of network systems and services, and legal issues.

Scope

This policy applies to anyone using the diocesan/parish technology systems, including parishioners, youth, employees, contractors, consultants, volunteers, and other workers, as well as all personnel affiliated with third parties. This policy has specific provisions for students. The provisions which apply to students, likewise apply to all minors who take part in ministries for children and young adults. For clarification on how this policy applies to minors, the school principal or pastor is the primary point of contact.

General Use and Ownership

While the network administration desires to provide a reasonable level of privacy, users should be aware that the data they create on parish systems remains the property of the diocese and parish. Because of the need to protect our networks, management cannot guarantee the confidentiality of information stored on any network device and no rights of privacy exist.

All users are responsible for exercising good judgement regarding the reasonableness of personal use. Commercial use is prohibited. If there is any uncertainty, users should consult the administrator responsible for technology management.

The equipment, services and technology provided to access the web are the property of the diocese and parish. For security and network maintenance purposes, administrators may monitor equipment, systems, and network traffic at any time. The diocese reserves the right to audit networks and systems, monitor internet traffic, retrieve and read any data composed, sent, or received on a periodic basis to ensure compliance with this policy.

Unacceptable Use

The diocese/parish has taken the necessary actions to ensure the safety and security of our networks. Any individual who attempts to disable, defeat, or circumvent security measures is subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. The following are examples of actions and activities that are prohibited:

Violation of the rights of any person or company protected by copyright, trade secret, patent or other intellectual property, or similar laws or regulations.

Contracts

□ Policy #127

The Diocese of Charleston has certain regulations regarding the signing of contracts. As youth ministers, any contracts with which you are involved, need to receive approval through the pastor/administrator of your parish or principal of your school. The pastor, administrator, and/or principal should know the required process, associated spending limits and whether the contract requires diocesan review, approval and signature from an officer of the Diocese. (**All bus leases are reviewed by general counsel for the Diocese. Youth ministers are not empowered to sign any contracts on behalf of the parish or school.)

Work Camps

□ Policy #128

Work camps for youth provide an enriching experience in which young people live out what Catholic social teaching is all about. These opportunities often times make a huge impact on young people and change their lives. The Diocese of Charleston Youth Office recommends that young people have the opportunity to experience a work camp, either within the state, out of state within the U.S., or even internationally. However, it is important that the following is in place:

- All work camps, agendas, and travel arrangements should be screened by Catholic Mutual, especially if you are traveling internationally. All agendas and trip itineraries must be reviewed with the pastor and parents of the young people attending. All participants/parents must sign a code of conduct with a clear understanding of the trip's goals and stated rules. If possible, the youth leader should visit the mission site before bringing youth.

In State and Out of State (Within the U.S.)

Worksites and travel agendas must be reviewed by Catholic Mutual. At least one pastor, parents, and youth meeting must be held to review all the rules and expectations of the trip. The youth leader should review expectations of the chaperones, volunteers, and youth attending the trip. It is required that parents and youth must sign a letter of conduct. (Please note that trips like these cannot be required, and a youth does not necessarily have the right to attend such a trip.)

Travel

If using a bus for transporting your youth to a work camp, it is mandatory that the contract for the bus go before the diocesan legal department and Catholic Mutual. If you are flying, it is recommended to use a travel agency in case you experience any issues while traveling. If you are using personal vehicles, drivers must carry the correct liability insurance coverage, and must meet all requirements set by the Diocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection. If driving long distances, you must have at least two drivers per vehicle.

Work Camp/Mission

While the work camps and mission have their own guidelines, it is important to understand that the diocesan rules and guidelines must be adhered to, especially, in the areas of housing, supervision, transportation, safety, and age appropriate work.

It is very important that you use a reputable agency that understands the goals and safety requirements for your group. Every work camp or mission you go to must be fully vetted. It is important that you understand the work you will be doing, who you will be serving and what meals and accommodations for your group look like. The accommodations they offer must follow our diocesan policy. They will also need to provide updated safety precautions and rules that they require, along with clear expectations. It is imperative that your group is not split up where you will not have at least two of your own adults with your youth.

The work or care your group gives to the work camp or mission must be age and skill appropriate. This should be discussed before you travel. If possible, a visit to the mission or work camp before you bring young people is advisable. Make sure to ask the important questions: How long have you been doing this? What are the good things that are happening at your work camp/mission? What are some of the issues you are having? How are your workers vetted? Is it safe where we will be working? Who oversees the work and what is required? What does the transportation look like while we are at the mission? Are there cultural issues we need to be aware of? What will food, sleeping arrangements, and bathing look like? What do you do if a person is ill or injured at your work camp or mission? Do you have or is security required for your work camp/mission? If yes, why? Does your program understand that our young people cannot be separated from adults at any time?

Communication

It is recommended that you have a main contact person back home who can relay important information or general updates of the group that will be traveling. This person should have the contact information for everyone who has someone traveling with the group. It is recommended that young people carry their cell phones with them, but guidelines should be established of when they can use them and how long during the work camp/mission.

International Travel

If traveling outside of the U.S., it is important that all passports have at least a six month window from the end of your trip. A copy of all passports should always be carried by the leader of the group at all times. A plan should be in place in case a person loses his/her passport while overseas. It is important to know the closest U.S. consulate when overseas. It is also very important to contact the consulate, through the U.S. State Department website letting them know your travel plans. It is important to read the state department's travel advisories. You can check the website to see if there are any reports on the places you are traveling. Remember, safety of your group is paramount.

It wise to have currency of the money before you travel overseas. It will be important to review safety precautions for carrying and using credit cards and cash with your group.

Travel insurance is required by the diocese when traveling with young people overseas. No exceptions! It is important to have a plan if a young person gets ill or is injured. It is required to

have either a doctor, PA, or nurse along for an international trip. It is important that the youth leader has a first aid kit with them, and it should be checked out by a nurse, PA, or a doctor before they leave for the trip.

Transportation

When flying overseas, it is recommended your group is seated as a group. You don't want one of your students sitting by themselves with strangers. Ensure that they are at least paired up and that adults are in front and behind them as they get on and off of the plane. When moving through an international airport, it is important that you stay together as a group, especially through customs. Again, have an adult go before the group and an adult at the end of the group.

When using buses, vehicles, trains, or boats, you must ensure that they are safe for your group to travel. Usually, this is taken care of if you are using a travel agency. However, you are still responsible to ensure the safety of the transportation for your group.

Communication

It is recommended that you have a main contact person back home who can relay important information or a general update of the group traveling. This person should have the contact information for everyone who has someone traveling with the group. It is highly recommended that everyone have a cell phone when traveling overseas. However, this is not required, and it is important to understand the different types of plans that cell phone companies offer for overseas travel.

Travel Company

It is highly recommended that when going overseas you use a certified and established travel agency. This is recommended in case you have any emergencies or issues that arise for travel and/or housing for your group while overseas.

International Work camp Agencies/Missions

While work camps and mission groups serve a purpose in providing an opportunity for young people to experience different cultures, it is important to understand that they are also looking to make money from your group and/or also will be receiving a service from your group. It is very important that you use a reputable agency or mission agency that understands the goals and safety requirements for your group. Every work camp or mission you go to must be fully vetted. It is important that you understand the work you will be doing, who you will be serving, safety issues, meals and accommodations for your group. The accommodations they offer must follow our diocesan policy. They will also need to provide updated safety precautions and rules that they require and the group must follow. It is imperative that your group is not split up where you will not have at least two of your own adults with your youth.

The work or care your group gives to the work camp or mission must be age and skill appropriate. This should be discussed before you travel, and, if possible, visit the mission or work camp before you bring young people. Make sure to ask the important questions: How long have you been doing this? What are the good things that are happening at your work camp/mission? What are some of the issues you are having? Is it safe where we will be working? Who oversees the work and what is required? What does the transportation look like while we are at the mission? Are there cultural

issues we need to be aware of? What will food, sleeping arrangements, and bathing look like? Are there any shots or medicine required before we arrive? What do you do if a person is ill or injured at your work camp or mission? Do you have or is security required for your work camp/mission? If yes, why? Does your program understand that our young people cannot be separated from adults at any time?

Processing the Mission/Work camp

It is extremely important that young people have set aside time as a group to process when they arrive back home. It is important to talk about what they have seen, and how they might have been affected or changed by what they experienced while on the trip. This is a great time to reinforce our Catholic social teaching, and to discuss how they can live it out going forward. This is also a great opportunity to have youth share with the parish what they experienced and how it changed them. This a great way to promote your next trip, and also to show the parish how young people can make a huge impact in the world they live in.

Youth Ministry Budget

□ Policy #129

Every parish should have a budget (or account line items) for ministering to the young people of the parish.

Guidelines for Budgeting for Youth Ministers

Youth ministers need to prepare a yearly budget that is accurate and within the resources of the parish they serve. It is important for the youth minister to know that the operating budget runs from July 1st thru June 30th. It is extremely important that the youth minister build a good working relationship with the pastor, administrator, and/or business manager. The youth minister should work at putting together an accurate budget that reflects the needs of the parish youth program. The youth minister should ensure that they understand all the necessary requirements and documents that are needed to put together and follow a budget. The youth minister must work with the business manager in adhering to all necessary documentation for bills and ensure they are turned in on time. The youth minister must understand the guidelines set up by the diocese and parish regarding how all revenue is deposited by the ministry.

It is important that the youth minister ensures that they are professional when it comes to financial issues. This means that a youth minister should be responsible for handling all financial transactions, and be well-prepared when it comes to developing a budget, and following the allocated budget over the year. It is important that the youth minister works hard to wisely spend the parish (the people) monies allocated for the youth program. The youth minister should ensure that all rules and requirements set by the parish and diocese are strictly followed, and that they are beyond reproach when it comes to dealing with money.

Below are some basic parish financial questions that a youth minister should discuss and understand with the following people: Business Manager, Administrator and/or Pastor. (This should be reviewed every time there is a change in a pastor or financial personnel at the parish.)

1. Is there a working budget in place?
 - a. Who develops the working budget? What is needed in preparing the budget?

- b. When are new budgets due in and to whom? (timeline)
 - c. Who approves the budget?
 - d. Who do they check with on a regular basis that they are staying on budget through the year?
2. What is included in the budget?
 - a. Is fundraising allowed? If so, who do they need to get permission from to fundraise? Is fundraising part of income to budget or supplementary? How many fundraisers are they allowed to do?
 - b. Are registration fees part of income to budget or supplementary?
 3. What is the parish check request and contract policy?
 - a. What day of the week are check requests to be turned in?
 - b. Who on staff handles contracts that need to be signed?
 4. What are the parish purchasing policies?
 - a. Can the youth minister make purchases? Is there a limit in place where one would need to get permission?
 - b. How often or when are expense reports due? How are receipts to be turned in?
 - c. Does the church have a credit card?

Guidelines for Young People Serving in a Liturgical Role at Mass

□ Policy #130

By the very nature of one's own baptism we are called to live a life of virtue and to share and live out the Gospel with those around us. Young people are encouraged to serve in the different roles that are open for all laity to serve as prescribed by the church.

1. When young people are to serve in any liturgical role, they should have the same training as any lay adult would need to serve in that role. (Simply asking a youth to be a lector before mass without practicing and teaching them how to do it is irresponsible and should never be done.)
2. Young people should be treated like adults with the same responsibilities of training, practicing, showing up and being on time.
3. Areas where young people can serve are set by the local ordinary and pastor. The church and our own diocese dictates youth can serve as an altar server, lector, cantor, usher and extraordinary minister* provided they are trained and meet the appropriate age requirement to serve in that particular role.

**A young person may serve as an "extraordinary minister" if they are at least 16 years of age, in good standing in the church, and have been confirmed. Also, the young person must be approved by the pastor, and the pastor must submit their name to the bishop in order to be approved.*

Same Sex Attraction or Gender Identity Issues (Schools and Youth Ministry)

□ Policy #131

- 1. Pastoral Perspective:** Young people are typically challenged to define themselves in a number of ways. They begin to determine academic goals, vocational choices, recreational preferences, and the like as they develop friendships, date, ally themselves with various groups, take political stances, and form more mature religious commitments. In the midst of these processes of growing up, they are also developing their personalities and their sexual identities. Persons who minister to them - particularly pastors, youth ministers, teachers and principals - must be sensitive to the sometimes volatile ways in which youth self-identify while also guiding them in accordance with the wisdom of the Church.

We are aware that youth are very much influenced by media and current trends in society as they seek to find their place in the world. They are also very much affected by peer pressure—positively and negatively. In the midst of sometimes confusing and contradictory influences, young people require patience and compassion from those who minister to them.

- 2. Relationship with the Church Community:** The consistent teaching of the Church has been that feelings of attraction or uncertainty about gender identity are far different from action. We encourage young people dealing with same-sex attraction to remain in close relationship with the Church community, to frequent the sacraments, to take advantage of available spiritual direction, and to seek to live a chaste life.

The same can be said of those experiencing uncertainty about their gender identity. They should be advised that “sex change” treatments or surgeries are not permissible in the Catholic medical ethical tradition. The understanding of the Church is that a person’s gender is determined by what is noted on birth and baptismal certificates. Biological sex is the norm for determinations of group membership and facility use. Those experiencing gender identity issues should be advised to seek both pastoral and medical advice. We are aware that youth are not always discreet about self-disclosure, which can result in concerns among their peers and the parents of their peers. Therefore, we recommend these steps for parish and/or school groups.

- 3. Specific Policies for Young People Who Have Disclosed Feelings of Same-Sex Attraction (SSA):**

- A.** If a person discloses same-sex attraction to a parish leader or school employee or reveals such on social media, the situation calls for the exercise of prudence. The young person should be advised to seek reliable spiritual counsel.
- B.** The obligation to report to parents or others occurs if and when: 1) there is concern that a student is a suicide risk, 2) there is an indication that a student has been involved with pornography, 3) the student indicates that he or she has been initiated into homosexual activity by an adult - which, of course, requires reporting to DSS and the Office of Child and Youth Protection.

- C. In the case of overnight trips, the traditional practice with youth group, high school, pro-life and other similar trips is to house two or more students of the same gender in shared rooms. Students are told to bring their own sleeping bags. They may, in some cases, end up with four students in a room with two queen beds, but they sleep in their own sleeping bags and have the option of sleeping on the floor.

If concerns arise about a student who has identified himself or herself as experiencing SSA, young people and, as needed, their parents should be reminded that chaperones are on hand and are obligated to address and report any inappropriate behavior (whether related to drugs, alcohol, sex, fighting, or other) which is reported to them. There is also a possibility of assigning a student a room by himself or herself, if needed, but this should be handled sensitively so that the young person does not feel embarrassed, excluded or shunned.

4. Specific Policies for Young People Experiencing Gender Identity Issues:

- A. Biological sex is the determinant when single-sex groups are involved.
- B. Restrooms, locker rooms, showers, and other facilities that may be designated for a particular sex are to be used only by those who are of that biological sex. If this becomes an issue, in a school or parish setting, an accommodation may be made so that a student is permitted to use a single-stall bathroom, a unisex bathroom, or a faculty/employee restroom.
- C. In the case of overnight trips, young people are assigned rooms according to their biological sex. As above, when this creates tension for the young person or for others, it may be advisable to request a private room for a person experiencing gender identity issues. As in the case of SSA, this is to be handled with great sensitivity.

5. Attitudes Toward Adults with these Issues

Individuals with SSA who are, to our knowledge, living a chaste life are welcome to volunteer or serve in various capacities in Church life. As appropriate, they should be made aware of the existence of the “Courage Movement Ministry” in our diocese.

Those who are living with partners in an admittedly active sexual relationship or have entered into a same-sex marriage must be advised that they cannot take a role which is seen as representing the Church. If the parent of a child in a parish or diocesan school or youth group attends activities, programs, performances, etc., he or she and the partner should be treated with respect.

Given the growing need, the diocese seeks to develop resources which will assist people who have family members who consider themselves transgender or as experiencing SSA, as well as Catholics who have siblings, children, or parents who have entered into same-sex marriages or same-sex relationships or who have identified themselves as transgender.

6. Resources:

Catechism of the Catholic Church, articles 364, 1934-1936, 2207, 2210, 2223, 2297, 2333, 2357-2359, 2393, 2521-2523.

Episcopal Commission for Doctrine of the Canadian Conference of Bishops, "Pastoral Ministry to Young People with Same-Sex Attraction," June 2011.

Sacred Scripture, particularly Gen 1:26-31; Gen 2:18-25; 1 Cor 6:15, 19-20; 1 Cor 7:1-11; Heb 13:1-8.

Shaughnessy, Sister Mary Angela, SCN, J.D., Ph.D., and Michael L. Huggins, Ed.D., ARNP, FAANP, "Transgender, Sex and Gender: Legal and Medical Issues," *Momentum*, Winter 2016, pp. 48-51.

USCCB, "Ministry to Persons with a Homosexual Inclination: Guidelines for Pastoral Care," 14 November 2006.

USCCB, Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth, Subcommittee for the Promotion and Defense of Marriage, "'Gender Theory'/'Gender Ideology' Resource, 19 October 2015.

Policy adopted by Most Reverend Robert E. Guglielmone, Bishop of Charleston, upon recommendation of the Presbyteral Council, 26 January 2016; affirmed by Curia, 3 February 2016.

Chapter 8

Recommended Guidelines for Adolescent Retreats

The practice of providing intensive faith-growing experiences for adolescents through retreats in evening, day-long, overnight, and multi-day formats, has been one of the most vital and frequently utilized elements in the entire revitalized youth outreach and pastoral care process begun in recent decades, in U.S. parishes and Catholic Schools. Youth ministry in the diocese of Charleston has also long made use of retreats to evangelize and catechize young people. Because retreats are such an important process in the faith-growth of adolescents, it is vital that they are based on sound principles.

Studies and surveys show that young people have had the most intense conversion experiences while on retreats.

These guidelines are offered, not to predetermine the style and content of any adolescent retreat program, but to present principles to keep in mind when planning and implementing any parish retreat experience.

A. Theological Principles Guiding Youth Retreats

Youth retreats should be designed to foster a personal relationship with Jesus that leads to discipleship within the community of the Church. Retreats are a type of experience through which the Church exercises her pastoral ministry to youth by proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ, by fostering the formation of the Christian community, by providing opportunities for participants to reflect upon questions of faith and life experience in the light of the Gospel, and by challenging the youth to personal response of ministry.

The doctrinal content of youth retreats should be theologically consistent with the official teaching of the Catholic Church. Prayer, in its liturgical, communal, and personal forms, is an essential aspect of the retreat experience opening participants to ongoing conversion and deepening of faith. Retreats for youth should provide life-giving liturgical celebrations that are based on principles of good liturgy, are appropriate for the occasion, and are celebrated with sufficient time to allow full preparation and participation by the assembly.

B. Psychological Principles Guiding Youth Retreats

Retreats should provide the opportunity for participants to integrate their experience and thereby deepen their sense of belonging and meaning.

Retreat environments and experiences must be characterized by acceptance, growth, and freedom. It is never appropriate to manipulate either an experience or the environment in order to obtain a specific response (e.g., keeping kids up late in order to get an emotional response). Emotional manipulation is also inappropriate and youth must be assured that whatever emotions they experience at any given time during a retreat are valid and have no overtones or consequences.

Youth attending the retreat should be given diverse opportunities through which they may express themselves and feel safe doing so. The psychological well-being of participants is safeguarded by maintaining a good balance of recreation, reflection, structured activity, rest and diet.

Retreats for adolescents especially lend themselves to peer ministry. Not only does such an approach encourage the sharing of the Christian experience, but it also further encourages youth to exercise their baptismal call to witness Christ to one another.

Retreat experiences are only one aspect of a continuing faith formation process. Therefore, they are most, and perhaps only, effective within the context of a comprehensive youth ministry.

C. Catechetical Principles Guiding Youth Retreats

Human experience is the starting point for youth catechesis, joining the personal story of youth to the Christ story.

The content and design of youth retreats should be age appropriate and should be varied, i.e. the same type of retreats should not be repeated with the same group over and over.

Retreats lead young people to service (ministry) and actions for justice and peace. Retreats should lead young people to personalize their faith, not privatize it.

Discussion, group processes, small group sharing, and activities involving all youth participants should use the group dynamics appropriate for the activity, group, content, and goals of the retreat, and should be led by those familiar with these dynamics.

Storytelling, faith sharing, and personal witnessing, as well as time for private reflection and journaling should be respected as valuable elements in communicating the Gospel message.

The following are stages that people go thru in developing their personal faith:

- Experiencing life which enables youth to express their own life activity or their community, culture, etc., on the topic or learning experience?
- Reflecting together, which allows youth to engage their memory, reason and imagination.
- Discovering the faith story and vision of the Catholic Christian Community in response to the session at hand.
- Owning the faith, which provides youth with an opportunity to compare their own life experience and faith with that of the Catholic Christian Community.
- Responding in faith, which helps bring youth to a lived faith response, to a decision for action.”

(These are also the stages we use when explaining one’s sharing, leading a retreat, running a youth group, etc.)

D. Developmental Principles Guiding Youth Retreats

Early Adolescence

(Ages 10-15)

When planning retreat activities for younger adolescents, keep the following in mind:

- Physical Activity: Time to stretch, wiggle, exercise, relax, non-competitive/competitive games, and activities.
- Competence and Achievement: Provide new ways of thinking and doing; provide time with friendship groupings.
- Self-Definition: Provide time to absorb new ways of thinking and doing; provide time with friendship groupings.
- Creative Expression: Provide opportunities to express creatively new feelings, interests, and new abilities and thoughts through exposure to drama, role-playing, etc.
- Positive Social Interaction with Peers and Adults: Provide time with peers which allows for support, companionship, and challenge; retreat team members must be willing to share their own stories, experiences, views, values, and feelings.
- Structure and Clear Limits: Provide explicit boundaries, rules and limits, allowing participants some input in setting them.
- Meaningful Participation: Successful events are planned with, not for, young adolescents and provide opportunities for young people to develop a sense of responsibility.

Middle and Late Adolescence

(Ages 14-19)

When planning retreat programs, sessions, and experiences for older adolescents, keep in mind the following conditions necessary for healthy Christian faith growth in this age group. Provide opportunities to:

- Participate as full members of the faith community and society, experiencing a sense of belonging and mission.
- Gain knowledge and experience in making moral decisions based on the Gospel and tradition
- Form and experience positive relationships with peers and develop friendship-making and maintaining skills.
- Explore who they are and who they can become.
- Develop a social consciousness that is grounded in Scripture and the teachings of the Church by exploring, discussing, and acting on global and social justice and peace issues.
- Understand their sexual growth and develop healthy Christian values and attitudes regarding their own sexuality.
- Develop personal prayer lives by experiencing a variety of prayer forms and styles.
- Develop relationships with adult Catholic Christians who will share their own faith journeys and who will ask questions that encourage critical thinking and reflection.

Recommended Retreat Components

Physical –

- Adequate sleep
- Adequate recreation time

- Balanced diet
- Access to outdoors and nature, if possible

Spiritual –

- Eucharistic Liturgy (priority on a multi-day retreat)
- Reconciliation Service
 - ✓ Ensure there will be a necessary number of priests for reconciliation.
 - ✓ Consider presenting some catechesis on the sacrament over the retreat period.
- Communal and private prayer and reflection
 - ✓ Provide mentoring in these types of prayer.
- Praying with and using Scripture and other Catholic traditional prayer forms

Psychological/Social/Catechetical

- Balance of private time and group time
- Opportunity for pastoral care and guidance
- Reflection on human, personal, and communal experience
- Community building
- Opportunities for participation and involvement
- Creative activity and expression
- Input and presentations and follow-ups
- Discussion and sharing opportunities

Supportive Components

- Adequate and early program planning and design
- Adequate and early team preparation
- Orientation or preparation for parents/guardians and participants before the retreat
- Follow-up process (immediate and short-term) There is no need for an endless follow-up of an experience.
- Evaluation by team and participants

E. Concluding Comments

Besides being excellent evangelization and catechetical approaches, retreats are an integral component of any faith-formation ministry which, by definition, seeks the conversion of others. The main task in facilitating a retreat is to create the ambient, the milieu, and an environment where young people can experience the grace of conversion.

Conversion is experienced as a relationship with Jesus Christ and “is a gradual process that takes place within the community of the faithful. That is, it is not a private experience, but is uniquely communal and sacramental. It is a spiritual journey that is life-long and has a beginning, middle, and an end. It does not end with confirmation, for example.”

If the retreats effort centers on the collaboration with the Holy Spirit in the work of conversion, then the fruit of those efforts will be visible in the life of youth who experience the retreat.

See Appendix for All Necessary Diocesan Youth Ministry Forms