

ROMAN CATHOLIC
DIOCESE
OF **CHARLESTON**

Toolkit for Parish Based Young Adult Ministry

Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry

Description

Audience

Young Adult ages 18-35.

Young Adulthood has a broad range of life stages, including, but not limited to, recent high school graduates, college students, and single professionals, and all the way through newly married couples and young parents.

Mission

To build strong communities of Young Adults who are in love with Jesus Christ and who are committed to serving Him in the Church and in the world.

Vision

To integrate Catholic young adults into parish life by nourishing them spiritually, engaging them socially, and building communities of service.

Philosophy

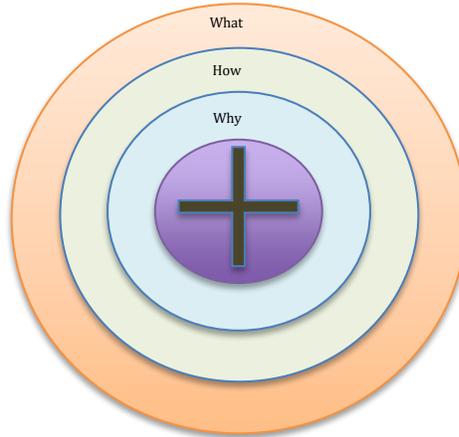
Young Adult Ministry seeks to connect young adults with: Jesus Christ, the Church as a welcoming Christian Community, the Mission of the Church in the World, and a Peer Community where Faith is nurtured and strengthened.

We believe with the words of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI that “being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction.” (Deus Caritas Est)

To realize the mission of holiness, we seek to work with the Holy Spirit in calling young adults into a relationship with Jesus Christ, by striving to nourish their hearts, minds and souls in providing them with the necessary resources and opportunities. The goals from these opportunities include: meaningful experiences of the liturgy, developing a deep prayer life, learning more about faith, and sharing individual God-given gifts with the Church.

From “Living as Missionary Disciples: A Resource for Evangelization” put forth by the USCCB: “Because the parish, through its pastor and members, is typically the first contact that Catholics have with the Church, it is ‘the responsibility of both pastors and laity to ensure that those doors are always open.’ ...It is in the parish that one becomes engaged with the church community, learns how to become a missionary disciple of Christ, is nurtured by Scripture, is nourished by the Sacraments, is catechized, and ultimately becomes a disciple of Christ. Successful evangelization and catechetical initiatives must be focused on the parish and parish life.”

In areas and parishes where it is difficult to find a concentration of young adults, regional groups will most likely be the place to begin before moving into parish ministry; however, a parish in the region should be willing to offer a location.



Based on Simon Sinek's Golden Circle

The core of the Church is the great commission of Christ. All missions stem from it.

What do young adults want?

- To be **nourished in faith**-To not feel spiritually stagnant due to lack of opportunity to grow and to be surrounded by people who both challenge and encourage them. Young adult ministry should provide a haven of support and accountability as well as various opportunities to engage in the sacraments and other forms of faith formation
 - Many young adults may not realize the need for spiritual growth and attempt to “fill” themselves in other ways, it is up to the Church to reach out to them.
- To feel included in a **community**- They want to be a part of something bigger than themselves, they want to go into Mass and be able to recognize and engage with the people around them from many generations. From something as simple as being able to say hello to someone they know on the way out, to as developed as knowing an older parishioner who serves as a mentor.
- To give back in **service** to the parish and community that feeds them and to give to those in need in one on one relational ministry. They do not want to feel like their time is being wasted and desire to be excited and educated on their involvement.

What the Young Adult Ministry Provides

Location and Interaction: A consistent place to gather, consistent guidance from YAM coordinators and priest, and intentionally organized time

Spiritual Formation through: The sacraments, different forms of prayer, adoration, opportunities for praise and worship, dynamic speakers

Social Gathering: A meal or chance to gather once a week offered separate from bible study and small groups

Service: Groups volunteers/ works in conjunction with Catholic Social Services or a parish based ministry at least once a quarter, members of group are involved in parish serving as lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, Sunday School Teachers, etc.

Young Adult Ministry is relational ministry. Period. Young Adults will go where they can form long lasting relationships.

Concerns of Young Adult Ministry:

Attendance

- Regular Mass attendance
- Participation in the sacraments
- Attendance in group meetings

Adults, particularly young adults, can be difficult to get to commit, because everyone prioritizes a *little* differently. First, we should always encourage young adults to prioritize time with God through prayer, weekly Mass, and the Sacraments, no matter what. When it comes to YAM events, making them aware they do not have to attend EVERY SINGLE ministry based event, but setting aside time once a week or when they are able to. Young Adult Ministry can help them grow and form friendships on their walk with Christ.

How to find young adults that don't go to church

It can seem like an impossible task to reach young adults who have no connection to a parish community. While they may not seem obviously visible, it is still the our job as missionary disciples to evangelize or re-evangelize. These young adults may be friends, family members, or acquaintances, and are more visible than we realize. We interact with them every single day and are called to step outside of our comfort zone, humbling ourselves, and invite them into community. Not “churchy” social and service activities are the most likely to draw in and retain this group.

Unifying and nourishing different life stages

-single, dating, engaged, married, married with children, widowed, and divorced, etc, makes for a difficult range to unify due to different needs and time constraints

People often use the excuse that they don't know what to do with young adults, because they do not understand them, or that it sounds too overwhelming to deal with such a wide age range. This is NOT a good excuse to ignore a whole sect of the population that the church is losing rapidly. Small groups are a good chance to meet the different needs of men, women, and the different life stages represented in young adulthood. Examples would be: men's and women's groups, young couple's, and young parents' studies. Chances are mentorship and companionship will flow naturally in these settings. If the ministry is more young parent heavy, the time they have available is 100% different than singles or even couples without children. That being said, these groups should still be brought together for periodic gatherings of fellowship. Adjust ministry scheduling to fit their needs, such as meeting every couple of weeks and offering speakers on topics that would be relevant to them.

Training and maintaining strong leaders

- Finding leaders that are willing to commit to the total mission of the ministry
-Cycling in new leaders before current leadership leaves

Young adults move, change jobs, and gain more responsibilities. Young Adults date and get married and have children. Young Adults age out of young adult ministry. There are a million reasons you lose a strong leader and there are cases where a leader drops with no warning or feels insufficiently equipped. This is where we try to combat that. The Office of Young Adult Ministry offers a Leadership Training once a year in August, to build comradery, offer practical skills, and provide spiritual nourishment. Additionally, leaders need to be aware of how much they can take on and understand the importance of saying “no” when they just can't handle anything else. It is better to say “no”, than to over extend and do something poorly. The steering committee should be aware that as their time to pass the torch is approaching, they should give the rest of the committee at least one month's notice,

in order to find and develop a replacement member. Entire ministries fail, because people get burned out and just stop. Don't let that happen to yours!

Maintaining consistency and growth

- Events and gatherings are no longer fitting the needs of the group
- Group is no longer meeting consistently or numbers have dropped
- Groups become cliquish and do not continue to reach out for new members

It is natural that we want to spend time with the people we see frequently and are most comfortable around. This is not inherently bad, as it leads to strong fellowship; however, we should still make strides to step outside of our comfort zone and get to know new or marginalized members of our community. As young adults grow, their needs and interests will change; therefore, the scope of the group will need to grow and develop to the needs as members mature, in addition to maintaining programming for younger members.

Not being "weird"

It is given that secular society will view Catholics as a little "different". There is a fine line between maintaining Church teachings while being socially competent and putting people off because they think you are a cult with a blood oath. This goes hand in hand with not being cliquish. It is important to remember that everyone is at a different point in the journey of his or her faith. When people ask questions, disagree, or do not understand Church teaching, we should do our best to meet them where they are, gently guiding them to reliable resources and in correct theology and Church teaching.

Communication

Communication is critical between the parish, the ministry, other parish groups, and the Diocese: we are all on the same team! It is important to maintain work within your own parish ministry, but reaching out to other groups builds comradery and the opportunity to troubleshoot and develop fresh ideas. If someone sends you an email, answer it! If someone calls you, call them back in a timely manner! If you say that you will do something or be somewhere, follow through! The key to good communication is to show basic courtesy.

Lack of organization, direction, and spiritual depth within the group

Natural flow and spontaneous get-togethers *should* and *will* occur as friendships develop, but the focus of the group on Christ can waiver when faith formations fall away to become solely a social gathering. The absolute core of YAM is to make the message of Christ known through various means and we should keep it that way!

A Young Adult who doesn't quite fit into Young Adult Ministry

There are instances when even though the young adult technically falls into the age range of being classified as a young adult, there may be a more appropriate ministry for him or her. This can vary case by case based on the availability of other ministries. These instances are usually very delicate, can lead to feelings of rejection by the Church and peer community, and should always be handled with the utmost grace. If a situation arises that the coordinators feel the young adult should be in another ministry, contact the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry for further guidance.

Case:

Other Ministry:

Aged 18 or above, but still in high school

Youth Ministry or Parish level YA Ministry, but not Diocesan wide YA events

College Student

Campus Ministry

Coping with traumatic life event such as death, divorce, etc

Grief Ministry/ Divorce Ministry/ Family Life Office

Categories of Young Adults

It is important to note that this is not an exhaustive list, and young adults might find themselves in multiple categories. But this list is to simply to show the breadth of life experiences these young adults bring to ministry.

The "Gap Generation"- 18-21

College Age (21-25)

Married Couples

Engaged Couples

Unmarried Singles

Divorced Singles

Widowed Singles

Single Parents

Parents with young children

Parents with Teenagers

Young Adults with learning and physical disabilities

Grieving young adults

Chronically ill/ Dying young adults

Young Adults with Chemical

Dependency Young Adults with Mental

Health Issues Imprisoned Young Adults

Poorly Educated Young Adults

Highly Educated Young Adults

Unchurched/Inactive Young Adults

Immigrants

Non-English Speaking Young Adults

Young Adults of various racial/ethnic

backgrounds

LGBT Young Adults

Unemployed Young Adults

Professional Young Adults

Young Adults in Personal/ Family Crisis

Roles within the Diocese

Associate Director of Young Adult Ministry: provides resources and support to individual young adult groups; Establish and assist in maintaining communications between young adult groups within the diocese; Provide opportunities to help young adults grow in holiness and build community at a diocesan level (Retreats, Mission trips, Conferences, Rallies, Day of Recollection, etc.) The Associate Director of Young Adult Ministry coordinates and supports activities of young adult groups by working in close communication with regional and parish young adult leaders. Additionally, the Associate Director of Young Adult Ministry serves as a spokesperson for the young adult community to the Diocese as well as serving as spokesperson for the Diocese to the young adult community.

Regional Coordinator for the Upstate: assists the Associate Director of Young Adult Ministry in implementing the Strategic Plan and supports the Spartanburg region, with a focus on relational ministry. The Regional Coordinator supports parishes in implementing and growing young adult ministries by meeting regularly with parish and young adult leaders and assists the Associate Director plan and promote young adult events.

Roles within the Parish

Young Adult Ministry Parish Coordinator: provides vision, implementation, and coordination for parish's efforts in ministry to young adults ages 18-35, with a focus on relational ministry. Interact with parish staff as fitting, in addition to interacting on deanery, Diocesan, and national level where appropriate. Provides ongoing opportunities for evangelization, faith formation, spiritual growth, in addition to social gatherings and service work on multiple community levels.

Parish Steering Committee Chairs: Young Adult volunteers from the parish that assist the pastor and Young Adult Parish Coordinator(s) to begin a parish young adult ministry. The Young Adult Coordinator and Steering Committee will work together to identify the needs and interests of the parish young adult community to develop events, studies, and small groups that will appeal to the broad range of young adults.

*Steering Committee may also be referred to as a Leadership Team as the young adult ministry becomes more established in the parish.

A more details about the job description are provided later in this book. (see pg. 43)

Parish Coordinators and Chairs must be:

- **Be faithful** to the teachings of the Church with continued growth in faith life
- **Competent, reliable, and willing to offer time and talent**
- **Hospitable, intentional, and communicative** to young adults, parishioners, and priests

The service of any unpaid coordinator or committee chair will be reviewed at the end of one year by the Associate Director of Young Adult Ministry, the Regional Coordinator, and the parish priests based on the following standards. At the end of one year, it will be determined whether the commitment will be renewed.

Committee Chair Tasks

The Young Adult Coordinator and Steering Committee will work together to identify the needs and interests of the parish young adult community to develop events, studies, and small groups that will appeal to the broad range of young adults. The following is a suggested distribution of roles for the Committee Chairs, but can be amended at the needs of the community and discretion of the pastor, Associate Director, or Parish Coordinator:

Social/Communications Chair

- Works with parish and regional group
- Plans social events for parish young adult group
- In charge of communications between ministry, parish, and advertising

Service Chair

- Works with parish and regional group
- Plans service opportunities for parish young adult group (at least 1x per month)
- Connects with other parish ministries and Catholic Charities

Young Married Chair

- Is the liaison within the parish for young married couples with and without children
- Works side by side with family and other marriage ministries
- Leads/ assists with planning of Young Married small groups

Study/Small Group Chair

- Collaborates with other chairs to draw in new members to studies, develop plans for studies that spiritually nourish the broad range of young adults
- Plans and organizes topics for Bible Studies
- Leads Young Adult Ministry Bible Study/ a small group
- Plans and organizes speakers for quarterly spiritual formation

Young Adult Events
Planning programming at your Parish

There should be a broad range of opportunities offered in addition to regularly scheduled meetings that will interest a variety of young adults, including, but not limited to:

- Spiritual formation in parish once a quarter
 - Speakers brought in to speak on relevant topics to young adults such as: Understanding Adoration, Why do Catholics do...?, LGBT and Catholicism, Catholics and Politics, etc.
- Set weekly studies/ small groups
 - These should be at the parish and geared toward where the young adults are: the first few should be on general topics such as prayer, Sunday's Gospel, etc. This gives coordinators the opportunity to get a feel for where the group is in their faith walk, what the group is interested in studying, and the chance to become more comfortable with one another
- Meeting with Regional Group once a month
 - Example: Adoration/ Praise and Worship followed by a dinner/ social and can overlap with the Regional Group Gathering
- Service outreach with parish/local/ Diocesan ministries
 - Aiding or leading service projects in the parish
 - Reaching out Regional Catholic Charities, prison ministries, food pantries, nursing homes, or other Ministries to volunteer regularly
- Attend Diocesan wide events: retreats, socials, World Youth Day
- Adoration
 - The Eucharist is the source and summit of Christian life and should be treated with the utmost reverence. Adoration must be coordinated with the priest and parish office, if it will be on site at the parish.
 - During planning, please include: Priest/ Person given permission to expose the Blessed Sacrament, Humeral Veil, Monstrance, The Blessed Sacrament, and an altar
- Social Events
 - Social events can bring in young adults that might not normally show up to other events, because they may seem less intimidating. In addition to providing opportunities for fellowship, they offer the chance for growth and promotion for other programming. These can include Holiday Parties, informal meals, or sporting events.
- More guidance for planning and facilitation provided later in this booklet.

Involvement in Parish Life

Every young adult group will be a little different based on age and relationship demographics. It can even differ on the area of the state you live in! Some groups may have a large number of musically gifted members or focus more on things like service or have intensive theological discussions. It is important to be keyed into the gifts and interests of the ministry while still keeping a balance of social, service, and spiritual growth and maintenance.

- **Personally invite** young adults to gatherings in and out of the parish
 - Personal invitation happens by:
 - reaching out to another young adult after Mass- Maybe this is someone you see every Sunday, but do not know his or her name. Reach out to them- you don't have to be creepy, simply walk up and introduce yourself, mention that you are part of the young adult ministry at the parish, and invite them to come to your regular meetings—it helps if you have a business card for the ministry on you to give offer contact information and provide them with the regular meeting times
 - bringing a friend or an acquaintance to a young adult ministry event
 - invite a young adult who is new to the parish to coffee to get to know them

- Make them aware of other parish events and gatherings- **announce parish events** in meetings and on social media.
 - Try to always have young adult representation at major events such as the parish picnic- plan a group that will attend together. People will often want to attend an event, but fear that they will be alone.

- **Encourage** young adults to sign up to **serve** the parish in a way that best fits their gifts
 - Parishes should make leadership opportunities available to young adults, in areas such as the parish council, music ministry, etc
 - Many parishes have a listing of ministries and there are many young adults with incredible talents they can share
 - Invite the leaders of other ministries to come and offer a short information session to your steering committee on what they do and share with them what the young adult ministry is doing

Advertising

The launch of the young adult ministry should be made public at least one month prior in various forums.

Mass Announcements

Mass Announcements should be spread out between multiple people, over multiple weekends, and include all of the weekends' Masses to reach the most people possible. Make sure the priests clear the ministry for announcements and let the presenters know when the announcement will be made. Send out reminders to the announcers the week of. Announcers should get to Mass about 5-10 minutes before it starts to let the priest know they are there and to give them a cue when to come up.

Mass Announcement Sign Up Example:

Name	Mass Day/Time
Jane Weber	Saturday, April 6, 5pm
Eric Shaver	Sunday, April 7, 8 am (Spanish Mass)
John Williams	Sunday, April 7, 11 am
Steph Libby	Saturday, April 13, 5pm
David Bernard	Sunday, April 14, 8 am (Spanish Mass)
Jane Weber	Sunday, April 14, 11 am

Mass Announcement Example:

Introduction: Good morning, my name is Jane Weber and I am the Coordinator for the new Young Adult Ministry at St. Bede. Our new Young Adult Ministry is very inclusive of a wide range of young adults ages 18-35, whether you are single, dating, newly married, or a young parent, all are welcome. This ministry is a place to deepen your faith and meet other young adults with common Catholic and Christian values.

Short Testimony: During my time at Xavier College, I formed important relationships through Catholic Campus Ministry and the local parish. It drove me to taking ownership of my faith. Being part of a Catholic community and developing my individual relationship with Christ is one of the most important parts of my life, but it is not always easy to find time with a job, family, and everything else. Forming connections with others Catholic young adults has helped me become more involved in the church and know that I am not alone as a young Catholic.

Meeting Information: Our newly formed Young Adult Ministry encourages anyone who falls under any of the identifiers within the 18-35 range. Join us for faith formation and fellowship as we strive to grow in our individual and communal relationships with Christ. We gather together in prayer at Mass on Tuesday evenings at 6:30pm followed by a topical discussion, small group, large group, or social event to grow in our faith understanding and community. Priests are available at 5:30 before Mass to hear Confessions as well.

If you can't make it on Tuesday nights, don't worry. We're in the process of planning some weekend events in the coming months, including some service projects to reach out to our broader community.

Personal Invitation: We invite all those interested in participating to stop by and talk to me/us in the back of the church after Mass to be added to our group list and receive information about upcoming events and answer any questions you may have

Church Website and Bulletin

Make sure all of the information is included, but keep it short and to the point.

Example:

St. Bede is launching a young adult ministry! Ages 18-35- Single, married or married with children, join us on Sunday, April 21 after the 11am Mass in the parish hall for a launching brunch. There is no cost and children are welcome. Want more information? Contact Jane Weber at stbedeYAM@gmail.com or (251)201-0060 .

Online Presence

Online Presence is more important than ever before with young adults. While it is NOT a substitution for personal invitation and face to face interactions, it is a helpful and necessary tool for making events known to more young adults. Once the young adult ministry is off the ground, make sure to get in contact with the person who runs the parish website for information on the ministry to be offered on a page with ministry listings.

Things to know:

- The theme and name should be consistent throughout every page and account
- Any account that is on social media is secure and regulated so that there is nothing profane, inappropriate or irrelevant on the account.
 - Anyone wanting to post an item that is not a coordinator for the account, is required to have permission from coordinator.
 - Social media pages should be consistently updated with current events, contact information, and have a link to the parish website, plus Mass and confession times are made easily accessible
- The young adult ministry should be present and easily accessible on the parish's accounts and website with meeting times and contact information.

For larger parishes or more developed groups:

If a separate young adult webpage has been approved by the parish, make Mass and Confession times, along with the church's and young adult ministries contact information easily accessible.

Mass Announcement Sample

If you are a young adult college aged, in your 20s or 30s, single, married, or new parents, and looking to deepen your faith and meet other people with common Catholic and Christian values, consider joining Name of Parish Young Adult Ministry.

Our newly formed Young Adult Ministry encourages anyone who answered yes to any of the above identifiers to join us for faith formation and fellowship as we strive to grow in our individual and communal relationships with Christ. We gather together at TIME, LOCATION, DATE STARTING.

If you can't make it on Tuesday nights, don't worry. We're in the process of planning some weekend events in the coming months, including some service projects to reach out to our broader community.

We invite all those interested in participating to join us for the brunch launch on Sunday, April 30th after the 11am Mass, and on Tuesday night, May 2 for our first gathering. We will be standing in the back of the church after Mass to answer questions and meet you!

You can also join the Facebook group, or message us with any questions you may have. We can add you to our contact lists, so you can start receiving information about our upcoming events. Thank you and we look forward to meeting you!

Sample Calendar April

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday		
	1	2	Study-7pm	2	3	4	5	
6	7	8	Study-7pm	9	10	11	12 Parish Service Event-10am-Noon	
Brunch after 10:30am Mass	13	14	15	Study-7pm	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	Study-7pm	23	24	Holy Hour/ Happy Hour-6pm	25	26
27	28	29	Study-7pm	30				

EVENTS

Weekly Study

Meeting in a comfortable parish room at the same time on the same day every week/ every other week.

Brunch after Mass

Excellent outreach and fellowship opportunity after Mass. Young Adults sit together at mass, have the priest announce it, and stand in the back of the church inviting young adults you see.

Holy Hour/ Happy Hour

Faith formative and social event, opportunity for people to have time in front of the Eucharist. Inclusive for young adults from multiple life stages.

Service Event

Young Adults assisting with another parish ministry such as landscaping parish grounds, hosting/ serving at a luncheon, parish prison ministry, etc.

Diocese of Charleston Young Adult Ministry Outreach Plan

Starting a Parish Young Adult Ministry

How Young Adult Ministries Begin:

- 1) Young Adult approaches priest
- 2) Priest approaches young adult or DRE
- 3) Associate Director of Young Adult Ministry approaches a parish

Priest and Potential Coordinator

Gathering a group

- a. Priest may be able to make recommendations of young adults who would serve well on a committee
 - i. If priest cannot make recommendations for young adults, Youth Ministers and Directors of Religious Education are a good resource
- b. Discuss what the priest is looking for in a young adult ministry and make potential coordinator aware of any history of prior young adult ministries that are dormant

Steps to Starting out:

Coordinator and Steering Committee Members (4-6) identified

- young adults may have stepped forward
- identified from leaders in congregation
- Contact potential steering committee members
- Should be young adults with a broad range of gifts and backgrounds

*If there not a Steering/Leadership Committee in place while launching a young adult ministry, the Associate Director of Young Adult Ministry will step in to assist the Parish Coordinator to help facilitate the start of a ministry.

Getting Started

Set location, time, date of launch and weekly meetings

Make announcements leading up to it sparking interest in the young adults, stand in the back of the church reaching out to young adults as they leave

Provide flyers

Group gathering-offer food and information (get contact info)

Make it lighthearted as to draw people in, but to showcase the opportunities for growth

Scout for leaders/ interest prior → already have someone to lead a bible study

Set first meeting for ministry within one week of launch

Tasks : If it is simply a coordinator in place, the Associate Director of Young Adult Ministry will help with planning until more young adults have joined in the parish ministry and are prepared to lead the group.

Coordinator/ Steering Committee Meeting: Sample Tasks and Agenda

- I. *Introductions*
 - a. Committee Members introduce themselves
- II. *Exchange of contact information between members*
 - a. Put into phones
 - b. Compiled into a file accessible to all members
- III. *Board Positions*
 - a. Each attendee given position description, board reviews and adds or removes based on parish needs/ size
 - b. Members determine which position they will hold
- IV. *Plan*
 - a. Date, Time, and Location of Launch (at least 1-2 months prior)
 - b. Who will:
 - i. Contact and make arrangements with launch location
 - ii. Create an email address
 - iii. Social Media accounts
(ask parish office about guidelines for this)
 - iv. Design invitations, flyers, business cards
 - v. Make the Mass announcements
Should be spread out between multiple people, over multiple Masses, over multiple weekends
 1. Have a sign up sheet and send out reminders to committee
 - c. Set a date to re-convene (should be within a two week time frame)

Launch

Time/ Location:

Set it at the parish after a Mass/ multiple Masses—people are already there, can drop in, and see where meetings will normally be held.

Someone should be standing outside of the exit of Mass to invite and direct people where to go the day of the launch.

Invite the priest to drop by!

Doing what?:

This is up to you, but free food will always draw people in! Think outside of the doughnut box (unless they are really spectacular doughnuts!). Brunch is popular, as are local specialties such as a low country boil.

Welcome Table at entrance with:

-Name tags

-Sharpies

-Sign-up sheet to contact people with later

-have people sign in as they are coming in!

Should include: name, email, number, marital status (this will help you get a gauge of the life stage of young adults you will work with), types of gatherings they are interested in attending

- Someone greeting young adults as they come in

Inside:

-Places to sit and socialize

-Flyers/Business Cards to hand out with meeting information

-Make announcement about when people get settled in about plans

-Coordinator is walking around mingling

Next page includes sample sheet of suggested contact information for young adults, Parish Coordinator, or other Committee Chairs.

Parish Contact Information

Parish Name:

Pastor and Parochial Vicar:

Contact phone # and Email:

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Parish Secretary/ Bulletin Editor + Phone # and Email:

Facilities Coordinator (if separate from parish secretary) + Phone # and Email:

Young Adult Ministry Coordinator Contact Information

Name:

Date of Birth:

Phone:

Email:

Position:

Young Adult Ministry Coordinator Contact Information

Name:

Date of Birth:

Phone:

Email:

Position:

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

Cara Lawley
Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry
901 Orange Grove Road
Charleston, SC 29407

Main: (843) 261-0445
Cell: (843)670-2586
Email: clawley@charlestdiocese.org

Running Your First Meeting (and all other meetings)

Your first meeting is going to be awkward. The more tense and nervous you seem, the more uncomfortable everyone else is going to be. Make it as warm and inviting as you possibly can.

Before, During, and After:

Your first night is going to be a little awkward and has potential to remain that way. That's ok if the first night it, but remaining awkward is not! Be prepared! Do not plan out an intense study your first night, even just starting out with something simple such as going over the coming Sunday's gospel reading OR a bible passage that you would like to theme the group around. Comfort levels and community develop over time, but take energy and effort on you as the leader. Knowing your group and their needs by asking directly and observing how they act will help guide you.

- Make it comfortable: make sure the set-up is conducive to discussion and make sure that you appear as comfortable as possible.
- Bring food- you don't have to do this for every single meeting until the end of time, but having chocolate chip cookies your first meeting or two helps break the ice and make everyone a little bit happier
- Greet people warmly, if you can remember their names or anything about them from the launch, use that! If you are visibly excited that people are there, they will recognize it and ease their nervousness.
- Start on-time, people are probably already tense, why make them angry?
- This also means that you do not keep people for hours on end and end on time. People are giving up their time to be there, be cognizant of that.
- The facilitator should be the one to open in prayer and thank people for coming
- Don't be afraid of silence. Give people a few moments to think, perhaps you have to start the discussion, then gently digress from there.
- Ask about topics and events they are interested in
- Go out for social time to get to know one another better
- Personally follow up with people after. If someone hasn't attended for a while, check in. If someone seems like they are having a rough day, check in. If someone announces exciting news, let them know it did not fall on deaf ears and follow up.

Goals and Expectations of Young Adult Ministry Diocese of Charleston



Purpose of Parish Based Ministry

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

3-pronged approach in:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Expectations for Young Adult Ministry

Faith Formation

Expectations for Studies and Small Groups:

Be prepared: Pray and Study

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

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

Be Hospitable: Create a welcoming setting

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Leadership

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

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

Prayer and the Sacraments

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

Commitments to prayer and reception of the Sacraments include:

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

Community Building

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

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

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

Discipleship

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

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

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

Service Projects

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

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

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

Social Events

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

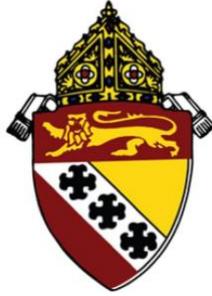
Examples:

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

Please contact Associate Director of Young Adult Ministry with questions:

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901 Orange Grove Road
Charleston, SC 29407

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Roman Catholic Diocese of Charleston Office of Young Adult Ministry

Guide for Planning and Organizing Events

Basics that you need to know:

- 1) **Always contact the parish for an event on parish property or if it could conflict with another parish event.** For example, if your study is starting a new book, the parish likely isn't concerned, but if your study wants to organize a service event or Adoration on parish grounds, the parish office should always be consulted first.
- 2) **Be prepared to answer logistical questions.** Have a date, time, and location in mind, but be prepared to adjust if you need to. The parish may want to know how many people are you expecting, where and how you are advertising, if there is a promotional flyer they can use, what you would like the priest or staff member to do, etc.
- 3) **Follow up, follow up, follow up!** If you called and spoke to the parish secretary, send a follow up email. If you sent them an email, give them a phone call. Parishes have a lot of moving parts and it makes everyone's life easier if things are in writing and you speak directly to a staff member about an event. The week of an event send a reminder email or make a phone call to confirm plans and see what the parish might need from you.
- 4) **Have a trusted, designated person to be at the event a little early.** People forget things. Doors don't get unlocked. Speakers don't show up. Always have one or two people on location ahead of time, just in case. Be prepared for things not to always go as planned, so have people who can remain calm and think on their feet to help you run things.
- 5) **Handwrite thank you notes, provide a stipend, offer a gift card or flowers.** If someone went above and beyond or took extra time to serve, acknowledge that. Going that extra step is excellent hospitality.

ABC's of Ministry Events

Adoration (Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament)

Always contact the parish ahead of time set up date, time, and location. Most parishes will ask if you would like Exposition and Benediction or if your group is fine with the Eucharist to remain in the tabernacle. Adoration occurs whether the Blessed Sacrament is exposed in the monstrance or in the tabernacle. It is Exposition and Benediction that involve action from a priest or a deacon, as well as possible handouts to guide participants. There are also circumstances where a priest can appoint a lay person to move the Eucharist from the tabernacle in the pyxe to the monstrance.

Confessions

If requesting a confession time outside of parish scheduled confession times for an event or retreat, always contact the priest directly to arrange the sacrament. Have multiple examination of conscience handouts available for people to look over.

- a) *For a regional event*, if you are bringing in priests from another parish, always clear this with the pastor of the hosting parish first. Regional events are often larger, for which the Diocese may be able to offer to pay priests a stipend.
- b) *For a parish only event*, the young adult ministry providing a gift card and thank you note is appropriate.

Mass

Mass should be organized through the parish office. You will need to coordinate lectors, servers, and extraordinary ministers with the priest ahead of time, as well as correct readings and prayer intentions. If the Mass will not be on site at a parish, know whether the priest will need a Mass kit and vestments, as well as knowing the set up for location ahead of time. You will need at least two flat surfaces for an altar and side table for supplies, as well as chair(s) for the clergy. If possible, provide a podium for lectors.

Retreats

Organizing a retreat takes a lot of time, energy, and planning. Put together a team to discuss budget, theme, location, expected turnout, schedule, and who will be involved (speakers, musicians, clergy, etc). Your parish youth minister or DRE are likely helpful resources, as well as your Diocesan Associate Director of Young Adult Ministry.

Service Projects (In or Outside of the Parish)

If the young adult ministry would like to complete a service project within the parish, contact the parish office to find out what projects might be available or need to be completed. If the young adult ministry would like to complete a service project outside of the parish, contact the organization with enough time in advance to make sure there are not any forms that must be completed first, if there are time slots that you have to sign up for, or if you must give them a guaranteed number of participants.

Speaker Series

Location, Time, and Dates must be determined, as well as competent and reliable speakers. Just because someone offers themselves as a speaker, does not mean they are the right fit for the topic. If you are bringing in a speaker that will be open to the parish or region, check with your parish to ensure the speaker is welcome in the parish.

Be aware that speakers also receive stipends or another form of compensation, such as a gift card or small gift, for their time and talent. Check with parish to see if they have a budget for young adults, if they do not, contact the Office of Young Adult Ministry to check on the budget for your parish or region.

Visiting Priest from another parish or the Bishop is visiting

A visiting priest or visit from the Bishop must be cleared through the pastor of the parish before the invitation is extended to the clergy who you would like to invite. Contact the parish office for clearance from the pastor as soon as you begin planning the event.

Further questions or concerns?

Contact *Cara Lawley, Associate Director of Young Adult Ministry*

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Roman Catholic Diocese of Charleston Office of Young Adult Ministry

Recruiting and Forming Young Adult Leadership

A unique aspect of young adult ministry is that it is a peer ministry and flourishes most when led by young adults; therefore, coordinators should be young adults. This does not necessarily mean choosing the oldest young adult with vast experience in catechesis or the young adult with the biggest personality. The best candidate will have an understanding of the importance of pastoral ministry, reaching out to not only the young adults at the heart of church life, but those on the margins, with a humble spirit of service to those around them.

Qualities to look for in leadership:

- **Faithful** to the teachings of the Church with continued growth in faith life
- **Competent, reliable, organized, and willing to offer time and talent**
- **Hospitable, intentional, and communicative** to young adults, parishioners, and priests

Forming Leadership

The Office of Young Adult Ministry offers 2 leadership trainings for incoming and current volunteer leaders. However, parishes should also form leaders over the course of a month before they launch a young adult ministry.

Areas to focus on in this formation should include:

Faith, Service, and Social: Understanding the Pillars of Young Adult Ministry
Practical Ministry: Planning, Organizing, Running Meetings, Communication
Prayer as the Foundation of Ministry
Evangelizing as a Lay Person
How to Run a Small Group

5 weeks before a ministry launches, the core leadership should be meeting together to get to know one another and taking an hour to learn about and discuss each of these topics.

Encouraged reading for leadership:

Becoming Human by Jean Vanier

Divine Renovation by Father James Mallon

Forming Intentional Disciples by Sherry Weddell

Rediscovering the Heart of a Disciple by Edward Sri

Basics of Small Groups and Studies

Acts 2:42

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of the bread and to prayers.

Essential Components:

Prayer- hearts are open and not just about intellectual pursuit, pray in the group for the Holy Spirit to bear fruit

Teaching- need to study in an ongoing way

Fellowship- Encourage one another and accept yourselves and one another as imperfect

Breaking of the Bread- through the Eucharist

Evangelization- the Good News is not just for you, it is meant to be shared

Outside of prayer, the single most important thing you will do for this ministry will be to build relationships with the people you are serving.

“Belonging is a school of love where we learn to open up to others and to the world around us, where each person, creature, and thing in our world is important and respected.”

Becoming Human, Jean Vanier

Interpersonal Skills for Facilitating a Group:

- Use “I statements” (statements that make it clear that this is YOU speaking and not the Church) when stating an opinion or sharing what you gathered from the reading or what someone else was saying.
- Ask Open Ended Questions
- It can be helpful summarize back to people what they just said to make sure you understand questions/ comments.
- Learn the language of the people of your group and how they share
- Don't always use the word “share” the vulnerability of the word can intimidate people, use “relate” or “explain”
- Use open and relaxed body language
- Listening is more important than 98% of what you are going to say

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

- Be friendly and use open body language, check in on groups members and encourage sharing from ALL members
- Ask open ended questions. Questions with "yes" or "no" answers do nothing to promote discussion.
- Disagreement will happen. Be prepared to handle it gracefully if it becomes tense, and if you don't know what Catholic teaching is on something, gently shut down the discussion and let people know that you will come prepared with an answer next week. Then consult with a priest, trusted spiritual advisor, and/or consult Church documents. If a priest is willing to come in and offer insight on the topic, it would be useful to invite him to the next gathering or ask him to offer a discussion on it at a later date.

Examples

Instead of: Did you like what we just read? *Ask:* What stuck out to you in this passage?

Instead of: Was Martha wrong to keep working while Jesus was in her home? *Ask:* How do you see yourself in both Martha and Mary?

- Active listening- Part of a small group facilitator's job is to guide discussion, but you cannot guide a discussion well without actively listening to what the members are saying.
 - As with any group, you are going to have a diversity of members. Some will be more than willing to share what they think, while others are going to be more reserved, it is a delicate dance to keep balance in participation.
 - *For the Chatty Cathy's:* if they are dominating conversation, you can a) Cut them off as they take a breath, echo back what they said, and ask someone else to respond to that b) Politely pull them aside, away from the group let them know that you appreciate what they have to share, but you want to make sure everyone has the opportunity to share.
 - *For the Silent Samuel's:* a) Ask for members who have not spoken yet to share b) If you feel it would not be too imposing to the person, direct a question toward them, giving time for them to think

Hospitality

Your hospitality is the first thing people are going to notice about this ministry. You set the example for your group. Not everyone is going to be willing to step outside of their comfort zone; however, not only should you exhibit hospitality, you should encourage it openly within the ministry.

Before the meeting:

Hospitality goes beyond what happens when people walk in. Hospitality starts before the meeting begins with how you let people know when and where the meeting is, by the tone you use inviting them in, and how easily accessible getting this information is.

Do all current and potential new members have easy access to information about studies and other events?

Are there young adults in the pews, friends of yours, co-workers who you feel the call to invite in, but are nervous about their response?

Is the church aware of young adult events so that they can advertise?

Are you inviting the pastor or priests to events?

During the meeting:

Do you greet everyone as they come in, particularly to those who are new?

Are you friendly or do you seem uncomfortable?

Do you reach out to everyone or do you only talk to people you know?

Do you go up and introduce yourself to new people and take the time to get to know them?

How do people in the ministry speak to one another?

Is it a competition about who knows the most or does everyone have equal opportunity to share and feel like they belong?

As a facilitator, when you see someone dominating the conversation and others trying to speak up, do you make sure they have the opportunity to share?

When people leave, do they feel like they have been welcomed into a community?

After the meeting:

Is everyone made aware of upcoming events with that information being easily accessible? If there were new people, did someone get their contact information?

Do you follow up with group members?

If someone was having a difficult night, do you follow up and check in?

Evangelizing as a Lay Person

Basics

- 1) It is the duty of every single Catholic, who is baptized and confirmed, not just priests and religious, to go outside of ourselves and reach out those around us.
- 2) You are the tool not the master builder. It is not you who is bringing about conversion. It is Christ through you.
- 3) Quality over quantity. Numbers come with quality interactions and events that fulfill and nurture people exactly where they are, not where you want them to be.

“Evangelization consists mostly of patience and disregards for the constraints of time.”
-Evangelii Gaudium 24

Christ is our guide in this. Think of the stories in the Gospels. He spent 3 years with the disciples. The Gospels tell stories of their relationships, but consider the numbers of untold stories. Of day to day life shared in meals eaten together, conversations had in travel and by the sea, community prayer, and the individual relationships they had with one another.

Hospitality and Personal Invitation: *The Call of the First Disciples*, Matthew 4:18-22, *The First Disciples*, John 1: 35-51, *The Wedding Feast at Cana*, John 2: 1-12

Form Relationship and Build Trust: *The Woman at the Well*, John 4:4-40, *Mary and Martha*, Luke 10: 38-42,

Evangelization: *The Sermon on the Mount*, Matthew 5:1-12, *The Feeding of the Five Thousand*, Matthew 14:13-21

Invitation to Discipleship: *The Commissioning of the Twelve*, Matthew 10: 5-15

Apostleship: *The Greatest in the Kingdom*, Luke 9: 46-48, *The Coming of the Spirit*, Acts 2:12

Evangelization is neither the first nor the end task of ministry. In fact, it is only part of the cycle of ministry. It begins with hospitality and personal invitation, from there we form relationship and build trust. It is through trust, where evangelization begins. Evangelization can look different for every single person we encounter. Some will be ready to jump right in, while others will be more hesitant. This is where relationship comes in. Learn where people are through getting to know them and meet them there, then move forward.

Facilitating a Small Group When Things are Getting Off Topic

Practicing ahead of time on how to handle with interruptions, distractions, and redirected conversations can help prevent you from being caught off-guard when uncomfortable situations are diverting the mission of the group.

Suggestions for practice,

Make it a game. During leadership formation, have everyone in the group take a turn acting as someone interrupting the group. Write specific interruptions down such

as: “Keeps talking about a recent break up”

“Shares too much about strong political views”

“Argues belligerently with another person during discussion”

“Doesn’t like a particular group of a people (culture, race, sexual orientation, etc)”

“Makes inappropriate comments to women/men in group”

If there are not enough people to make this a “game” or prefer a different method, make sure your leadership discusses and practices an action plan on how these things will be managed.

What do:

Keeps talking about an unrelated topic

There are people who are going to try and steer the group off topic sometimes.

-Designate a strong leader in the group who is not afraid to pipe up, acknowledge what that person is saying and suggest that the topic be addressed after the formal meeting during social time, then follow up with a question/comment that is back on topic

-Make sure to also follow up with the young adult at the end of the meeting to check in if you feel that they need to talk about, have questions about this particular topic

Is sharing too much about personal life

We are not robots and young adult ministry is about community. There are instances when sharing about our personal experience is appropriate; however, this has the potential to devolve quickly. Much like managing someone who is redirecting the conversation, follow the same guidelines and always follow up after.

-Designate a strong leader in the group who is not afraid to pipe up, acknowledge what that person is saying and suggest that the topic be addressed after the formal meeting during social time, then follow up with a question/comment that is back on topic

-Make sure to also follow up with the young adult at the end of the meeting to check in if you feel that they need to talk about, have questions about this particular topic

Hot button topic comes up and the conversation quickly devolves into complaining, attacking a group of people, becomes overly aggressive, or a heated theological debate

Young Adult Ministry should be a safe space for people to discuss the experience of being a young Catholic within the context of current events and prominent social issues. These topics should never be discussed with an “us versus them” mentality. We do not always know people’s past or present experiences. While we should uphold Catholic teaching, if we become too legalistic about doctrine or teaching, we ignore the story of the person sitting in front of us.

- If you know the topic of conversation for the night will be controversial and/ or sensitive, beginning the meeting by laying some ground rules for yourself, as the facilitator, and the group conversation, such as:
 - Not allowing an individual or couple to control the conversation
 - Not making accusations, not solely focusing on deficits, or capitalizing on the weakness of other groups of people
 - Making time for questions to be asked and making it clear that it is acceptable to not understand a topic
 - Allow room for theological and moral discussion, but make sure it is a) accurate and b) not the entire conversation

Has emotional outbursts

These are usually signs of an underlying issue and should be addressed with charity individually outside of the group setting. Use your discretion on whether this is an ongoing problem that needs to be addressed or a single instance.

- Talks too much and won’t let anyone else share
- Swears, distracts others, poor social awareness
- Sharing bad/ incorrect church teaching

Keep in mind:

- Young Adult Ministry provides community, but is not a counseling service and is not spiritual direction.
- Conversations that need to be redirected should be done gently, acknowledging that the group hears what the person is saying, but suggesting that certain topics would be better discussed outside of group.
- There are instances where things can be corrected with gentle humor or in a friendly way.

- Example: Group members swears a lot. Leader can say light heartedly, “Not sure how Jesus would feel with you using that word in His house”
 - Example: Someone is talking too much, talking about not study appropriate things, swearing, etc. it is acceptable to mention in a friendly way what you have personally noticed and that people in ministry might feel uncomfortable with what they are talking about, and you (personally) do not want them to become isolated because of it. Remember to use “I” language.
- If a topic of conversation that comes up that leadership is unsure of, there is nothing wrong, and is in fact preferable, to say that the conversation will be addressed again at the next meeting after the topic has been researched and consulted upon.

Someone who talks too much

There are always going to be people that might be on topic, but talk so frequently or for so long that they intimidate quieter group members and don't give others the chance to share. Things will always be a little unevenly spread on who talks and how much, but ministry is not Catechesis hour for one person to become the teacher. Most of us are not trained theological scholars. If they are, wonderful, but their brains should be picked for insight outside of the group or bring them in as a speaker on a topic that the group is interested in. Bible study is not a college lecture. It is for people to share the journey toward Christ together.

Please use your discretion on how to handle this based on the individual's temperament. Some do not realize they are manipulating conversation, while others do, and can become defensive.

-Contrary to what your parents taught you, it is occasionally ok to interrupt someone as they are taking a breath if they have been rambling too long. Thank them for their input, then say “Let's hear from somebody else” or pointedly ask one group member an open-ended question.

-If the person continues to manipulate conversation, it can be helpful to remind the group at the beginning of the next meeting that study is for community dialogue and you want everyone to have the opportunity to participate equally.

-If the message still does not get across, gently speak to the individual separately about giving others the chance to share.

Prayer as the Foundation of Ministry

“It is in the group that we discover what we have in common. It is as individuals that we discover a personal relationship with God. We must find a way to balance our two opposing impulses.”

Jean Vanier, *Becoming Human*

A ministry not built on a foundation of individual and community prayer is simply a club. In facilitating ministry, you will be constantly pouring out to others. The more time and energy you give, the more relationships you develop, the more you will begin to recognize your own failings, your own sinfulness, all of the places in your life that you need to work on, and the more you will want to hide all of those away from the rest of the world.

Resist the temptation to hide behind ministry, using the excuse that you are too busy, and give yourself over to prayer. Otherwise, sooner, rather than later you will find yourself burnt out and running on empty. Not only is this a disservice to yourself, it is a disservice to the ministry.

Practical Personal Suggestions:

- 1) Frequent reception of the sacraments: Confession 1x monthly, reception of the Eucharist whenever possible
- 2) Set a weekly holy hour if you have the access and commit to it, if not spend time in front of the Blessed Sacrament whenever possible
- 3) Commit to 15 minutes of quiet, personal prayer a day. No excuses. Make it as regular as brushing your teeth and eating.

Practical Suggestions for Ministry:

- 1) Pray at the beginning and end of every meeting. Whether it is a leadership team meeting, a study, a small group, whatever it is, open and close in prayer.
- 2) Set the example of praying out loud. Not everyone will be comfortable with this, but challenge members of your group to volunteer to lead.
- 3) As your group becomes more comfortable with one another, open up the floor for prayer intentions and intercessory prayer.
- 4) Don't be afraid to stop and pray with people. If you feel moved to pray with them and over them, don't reject that stirring of the Holy Spirit. It can be intimidating, but even asking them if you can say a Hail Mary over them can mean more than you expect.

Service

“Wherever there are people suffering, make it your task to serve them.”
-St John Paul II

A sign of a healthy community is one that goes outside of itself to serve the least in society. Service should never be a secondary thought to studies and social activities, but a core component of all that we do.

Components of Catholic Social Teaching

- 1) Dignity of the Human Person- each of us is precious: people are more important than things; and the measure of every institution is whether it threaten or enhances the life and dignity of the human person
- 2) Call to Community and the Common Good- Human person is sacred and social, marriage and family are central social institutions
- 3) Rights and Responsibilities- Fundamental right to life and right to those things required for human decency
- 4) Option for the Poor and the Vulnerable- Basic moral test is how our most vulnerable are faring in society
- 5) Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers- the economy must serve people, not the other way around
- 6) Solidarity- one human family, no room for globalization of “indifference”
- 7) Care for God’s Creation- requirement of our faith, called to protect people and our planet

Planning Service Events:

- Begin by looking for service ministries in your parish that need assistance and would fit into the schedule of the young adults
- In the beginning, it may take trying out some different service activities that are of interest to the young adults to find a few that the ministry will want to stick with.
- Find out what kind of service projects your group is interested in: are they looking for direct contact with people or service with more “grunt work”
- Contact the group or individual in charge of the service opportunities you would like to participate in and find out the needs, including:
 - What they need, how often and when there are opportunities, how many people can serve, will this be ongoing or a one-time need
- If you say that you will bring a certain number of people to an event/ commit that you will be there, show up. Honor your commitments. Particularly in your own parish.

Social

Social events should include a mixture of planned and unplanned outings both large and small. Make it a challenge for both the core members and group members to invite at least one new person for each event.

Warning: Social events have the potential to become closed off and “cliquey”. Make it a priority with leadership to set the example and encourage others to mingle with those who are new or they do not know well.

Examples:

- Going to dinner before or after study
- Potluck/ party for holidays
- Informal gatherings for community events
- Formally organized events at the parish and regional level with the purpose of social outreach in mind:
 - Bonfire
 - Holiday Party
 - Attending a local gathering
 - Dance lessons



Resources for Married Young Adults With and Without Children

Overview and Planning:

Young marrieds without children tend to still fit in with the single young adult crowd. For those who are already active, based on the 2018 Diocesan-wide Young Adult survey, young marrieds without children reported feeling fulfilled in their faith by young adult studies, especially if they are participating in other parish ministries that give back to the parish.

For young marrieds with children and those attempting to have children, the time available and family needs change drastically. Young parents frequently request childcare to be able to participate in parish events, as well as requesting programming that is developmentally appropriate for a young growing family.

While events may not be as frequent due to time constraints and energy levels, the support of the parish and other parents, especially more experienced parents, is still important. Both men and women report wanting more interaction with other mothers and fathers, within their own age bracket and older.

- *Speaker Series/ Parish Wide Events:*
 - Offering childcare for parents to be able to fully engage and participate
- *Discipleship of other young couples:*
 - Young marrieds with and without children can be encouraged and formed by older, mature leaders in the parish, such as deacons, to reach out and engage other couples in the parish to build individual relationships
- *Studies:*
 - In a home or comfortable space at the parish where children can be watched and play

Resources

Papal Documents for Families

Humanae Vitae from Pope Paul VI
Amoris Laetitia from Pope Francis

Books for individual reading and study

For engaged and newly weds

“Three to Get Married” by Venerable Fulton Sheen
“Joined by Grace: A Catholic Prayer Book for Engaged and Newly Wed Couples” by John and Teri Bosco

For all couples

“The Choice Wine: 7 Steps to a Superabundant Marriage” by Steven Bollman
“The Jeweler’s Shop: A Meditation on the Sacrament of Matrimony” by Karol Wojtyla
“Men, Women, and the Mystery of Love” by Dr. Edward Sri

For parents

“Six Sacred Rules for Families: A Spirituality for the Home” by Tom and Sue Muldoon
“Discovering God Together: The Catholic Guide to Raising Faithful Kids” by Dr. Greg and Lisa Popcack
“Getting Past Perfect: Finding Joy and Grace in the Messiness of Motherhood” by Kate Wicker

Online:

For all married couples

For parents

<p><i>Formed</i></p> <p>“Beloved: Finding Happiness in Your Marriage”</p> <p><i>“Married Saints and Blesseds Throughout the Centuries”</i> by Ferdinand Holbock</p>	<p><i>Formed</i></p> <p>“Count Your Blessings”</p> <p>“Protecting Innocence: Parenting, Your Kids, and the Internet”</p>
<p><i>For Your Marriage: A Resource from the USCCB</i></p> <p>Website stemming from the <i>National Pastoral Initiative for Marriage</i> with articles and guides for dating, engagement, newly-weds, and families.</p>	

Young Adult Leadership Expectations **A summary for Parish YA Coordinators**

A unique aspect of young adult ministry is that it is a peer ministry and flourishes most when led by young adults; therefore, coordinators should be young adults. This does not necessarily mean choosing the oldest young adult with vast experience in catechesis or the young adult with the biggest personality. The best candidate will have an understanding of the importance of pastoral ministry, reaching out to not only the young adults at the heart of church life, but those on the margins, with a humble spirit of service to those around them.

Qualities to look for in leadership:

- Faithful to the teachings of the Church with continued growth in faith life
- Competent, reliable, organized, and willing to offer time and talent
- Hospitable, intentional, and communicative to young adults, parishioners, and priests

Forming Leadership

The Office of Young Adult Ministry offers 2 leadership trainings for incoming and current volunteer leaders, as well as quarterly meetings with the Associate Director and other young adult leaders from other parishes.

Areas to focus on in this training should include:

Faith, Service, and Social: Understanding the Pillars of Young Adult Ministry
Practical Ministry: Planning, Organizing, Running Meetings, Communication
Prayer as the Foundation of Ministry
Evangelizing as a Lay Person
How to Run a Small Group

However, parishes should also form leaders over the course of a month before they launch a young adult ministry.

Parish Young Adult Leadership Teams or Committees should meet together regularly for planning and small group formation, preferably with their pastor.

Personal Expectations for Leaders:

- Daily: Commit to at least 15-20 minutes of personal prayer
- Weekly: Attend Sunday Masses and all Holy Days of Obligation
- Monthly: Confession
- Discipleship: Check-in with at least one member of the young adult ministry outside of regular group gatherings once a week.