

Questions to Ask in Evaluating a Youth Ministry Program

(Based on Total Youth Ministry as defined in “Renewing the Vision” - A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry, published by the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops.)

- 1) A Youth Minister: must be an advocate for the young people of the parish
 - a. How are the high school teens of your parish recognized ?
 - i. Do you have a Senior recognition night?
 - ii. Is there a bulletin board to recognize achievement of teens in your parish?
 - iii. Does you parish give any awards to outstanding teens?
 - b. What role do teens play in the mission of the parish?
 - c. How are the gifts, talents and energy of young people utilized within your parish?
- 2) A Youth Minister: Must fill the role as a Lead Catechist to the young people of the parish
 - a. Do you recognize that faith is a lifelong commitment and are you involved in ongoing education?
 - i. Participation in Archdiocesan workshops / networking
 - ii. Participation in National conferences
 - iii. Ongoing education in the Catholic teachings
 - b. Is your Religious Education for teenagers, age and developmentally appropriate?
 - i. Provide a Sunday night (or as Parish deems appropriate) program that has an educational component as its central focus
 - ii. Provide bible study / prayer group / etc, for teens that want to go deeper in their faith
 - iii. Provide retreat / spiritual days of reflection for teens and the adults
 - iv. Provide opportunities for teens to join in Archdiocesan or National Conferences, retreats, or events
 - c. Do you have opportunities for real life application of Catholic teaching and faith by action?
 - d. Do you invite young people to explore the possibility of a personal call to ministry?
- 3) Youth Ministry should build an environment of love, support, appreciation for diversity and judicious acceptance that models Catholic principles; develops meaningful relationships; and nurtures Catholic Faith
 - a. How do you identify the teens in your parish?
 - i. What percentage of teens is involved in parish activities?
 - ii. What percentage is involved in the Youth Ministry program?
 - b. How does your parish welcome young people in?
 - c. What outreach is done for youth that do not come to the Youth Ministry program?
 - i. Are school visits made?

- ii. Is the Youth Minister attending outside activities and building relationships with teens? (This must always be done in a way that one is supportive of youth, but keeps the role of leader / minister, not friend)
 - iii. How are families invited into the Youth Ministry program?
 - iv. Is outreach done to the Catholic school youth?
- 4) Evangelization is the energizing core of all ministry with adolescents
 - a. How is the Youth Minister and Core team witnessing to the youth and parish?
 - b. How are young people challenged to witness to each other?
 - c. How are the following elements of evangelization incorporated into your Youth Ministry program
 - i. Witness
 - ii. Outreach
 - iii. Proclamation
 - iv. Invitation
 - v. Conversion
 - vi. Discipleship
- 5) Our faith calls us to work for justice, to serve those in need; to pursue peace and to defend life, dignity and the rights of all our sisters and brothers
 - a. What service opportunities are your teens involved in?
 - b. How are young people moved from service opportunities to discovering a call to justice?
 - c. How do service opportunities develop assets, skills and faith of the young person by promoting gospel values?
- 6) Youth Ministry : Leadership Development
 - a. How are young people being called forth to leadership?
 - b. How are Youth Ministry core members being mentored and developed as leaders?
 - i. Do your teens take part in either the Christian Leadership Institute sponsored by the Archdiocese or the Notre Dame Leadership Institute sponsored by Life Teen?
 - ii. Does your Youth Minister or core team take part in the Youth Ministry Institute (Methodology training) or Catechist Certification program?
 - iii. How are leaders recruited and trained in your parish?
- 7) How are the Pastoral needs of the teens in your parish met?
 - a. Are teens being taught to develop life skills?
 - b. How are your families nurtured and guided in light of the difficult times teens live in today?
 - c. What support services are offered to teens and their families?
 - d. How does your Youth Minister and core team collaborate with the wider community? (Both the parish and beyond)
- 8) Prayer and Worship celebrates and deepens young people's relationship with Jesus Christ through the bestowal of grace. Communal prayer and liturgical experiences.

- a. How do young people participate in liturgy at your parish?
 - i. How many youth attend your youth Mass?
 - ii. How is this Mass promoted to youth?
 - iii. What roles do youth fill during this Mass?
 - iv. Do youth actively participate in the youth Mass?
- b. What additional prayer experiences are young people involved in?
 - i. Do youth attend XLT in your parish?
 - ii. Do youth participate in Archdiocesan events?