

YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

HOLY. ENGAGED. ALIVE.



Diocese of
Green Bay

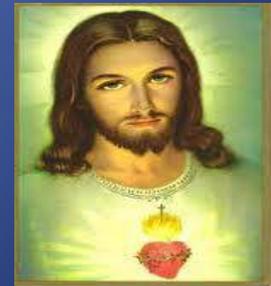
Young Adult Ministry Leader Training

Session 1

The Principles of YA Ministry

The Department of New Evangelization:
Inspiring and Equipping Parishes to Form Disciples
in the New Evangelization of our Lord Jesus Christ,
through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

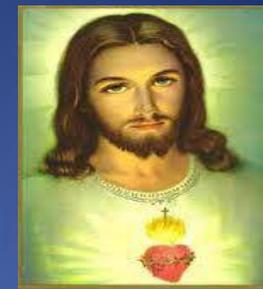
Made possible through the generosity of the Bishop's Appeal



and rescued us from our
for his steadfast love
who gives food to all
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How Shall We Sing the Lord's
137 By the waters of
there we sat down
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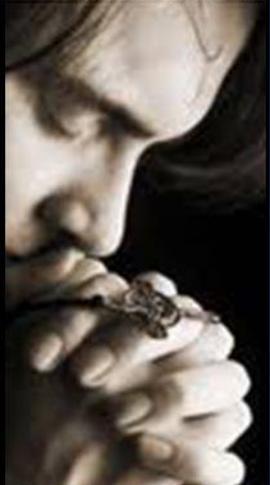


Prayer



- “My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think that I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road though I may know nothing about it. Therefore will I trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.” –Thomas Merton

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Introductions



- Name
- Parish/Community and Location
- State of Young Adult Ministry at your parish or community (example: is none, exploring it, just beginning, struggling, thriving, etc)
- Your involvement in YAM
- What you hope to gain from this workshop

The Encounter with Jesus = Joy

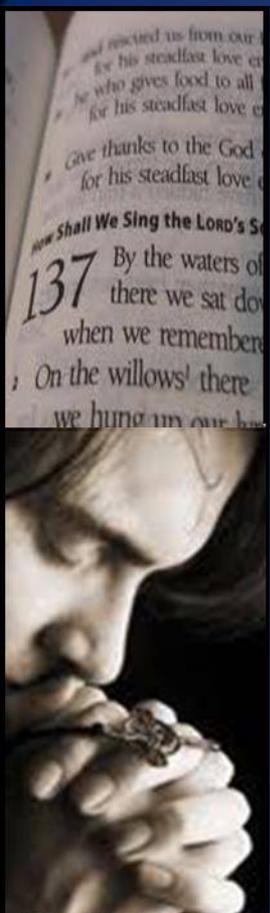


Catholic News Agency

1 hour ago

“Every encounter with Jesus changes our lives. Every encounter with Jesus fills us with joy.” - Pope Francis

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The Encounter with Christ

The Rich Young Man Luke 18:18-30

18. An official asked him this question, “Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

19. Jesus answered him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. 20. You know the commandments, ‘You shall not commit adultery; you shall not kill; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; honor your father and your mother.’”

21. And he replied, “All of these I have observed from my youth.” 22. When Jesus heard this he said to him, “There is still one thing left for you: sell all that you have and distribute it to the poor, and you will have a treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

23. But when he heard this he became quite sad, for he was very rich.



Luke 18:18-30 cont'd.

- 24. Jesus looked at him [now sad] and said, “How hard is it for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God! 25. For it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.” 26. Those who heard this said, “Then who can be saved?”
- 27. And he said, “What is impossible for human beings is possible for God.”
- 28. Then Peter said, “We have given up our possessions and followed you.”
- 29. He said to them, “Amen, I say to you, there is no one who has given up house or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God 30. who will not receive [back] an overabundant return in this present age and eternal life in the age to come.”



Luke 18:18-30 Questions

What is the cost of following Christ?

What is the standard of being “good” that the Lord calls us too? (cf. Luke 18: 19).

What had the young official put in place of God?

What do young adults tend to put in place of God?

How does Jesus feel when the young man walks away from His invitation?

Do our hearts burn with that same sadness when someone walks away (i.e. Bl. Mother Teresa of Calcutta)?

What is the result for the disciple who follows Christ unreservedly?



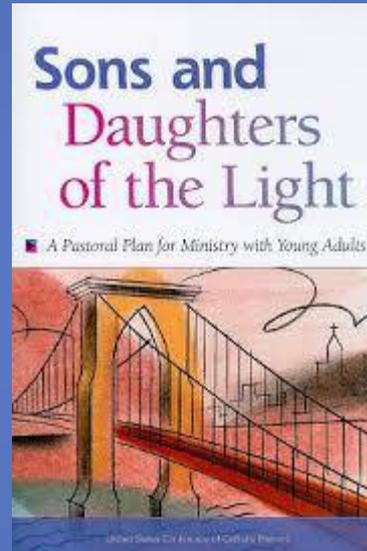
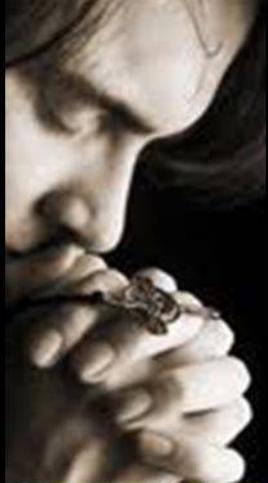
Pope Francis

• I invite all Christians everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them.”

– *-Evangelii Gadium, The Joy of the Gospel*



Sons and Daughters of the Light



- Pastoral Letter from the USCCB
– Nov. 12th, 1996

To YA from the Bishops

- We know that your talents, and those of other young adults, can enrich the Church and can be a sign of God's presence in society. We invite you to share them with us and to become part of a welcoming community for other young adults as well. Not too long ago our Holy Father spoke of your importance to the life of the Church: "The Church needs your energies, your enthusiasm, your ideals, in order to make the Gospel of life penetrate the fabric of society, transforming people's hearts and the structures of society in order to create a civilization of true justice and love."¹



Why Issue this Plan?

- 1. To state firmly that we, as members of the church, must actively invite and welcome young adults into the life of the Church. This does not mean placing special emphasis on one generation but having a vision of Church rooted in God's invitation to all generations.
- 2. To describe briefly the life situation of young adults so the Church can respond effectively to their needs and concerns.
- 3. To develop a comprehensive and workable plan of action for ministering with people in their late teens, twenties, and thirties based on the four goals of connecting young adults with Jesus Christ, the Church, the mission of the Church in the world, and a community of their peers.



Why does the Church have a Ministry specifically for Young Adults?

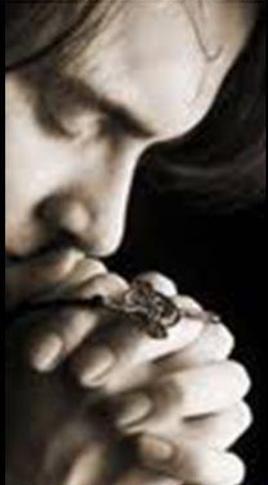
- To continuously engage YAs across life stages, providing a “home” for YAs in the Church
- To form young adults in the faith as adults and to help develop mature spiritual lives
 - Establish an adult relationship with the Lord
- To walk with young adults during such an important decision-making period in life
- To benefit from the rich gifts & talents of YAs



Why does the Church have a Ministry specifically for Young Adults?

Social dynamics have changed over time

- New trends for schooling, career, and family
- Past: Cath. school – marriage – baptism – school
- Fewer in Cath. schools (youth ministry began)
- Marriage delayed, or not in Church, or not at all
- Couples having children later, not always baptized
- Gaps created between milestones, some missing
- No longer continuous life engagement by Church



Development of YAM

- 1977 – Archdiocese of Chicago forms Office for YAM
- 1979 – Official recognition of YA stage by USCCB*
- 1981 – First “Theology on Tap” held in Chicago area
- 1986 – First World Youth Day held in Rome by JPII
- 1993 – World Youth Day held in Denver with JPII
- 1996 – USCCB completes Pastoral Plan for YAM
- 2001 – *The Basic Guide to YAM* book (Chicago)
- 2010 – USCCB pastoral plan - revised edition
- 2010 – USCCB companion book (ed. by CMD staff)

* United States Catholic Conference, *Sharing the Light of Faith: National Catechetical Directory for Catholics of the United States*, (Washington, DC: USCC, 1979), no. 227 – young adults are “for all practical purposes a newly identified population in U.S. society”





Common Misconceptions about Young Adult Ministry

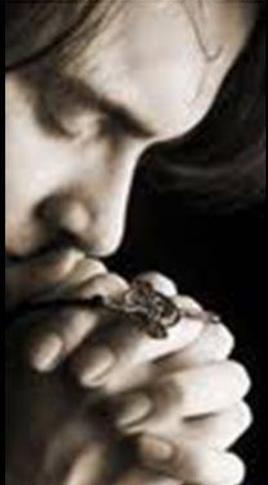
- Youth Ministry
- Singles Group
- Social Club

Confusion Over Two Items:

- 1) Who are “young adults”?
- 2) What is “ministry” with young adults?

Who are Young Adults?

- USCCB Definition:
 - Men and Women in their Late Teens, 20s & 30s
 - Single, Married, Divorced, or Widowed
 - With or Without Children
- “Young Adults” is ultimately an age range
 - Includes every state of life within the age range
 - Age range can vary among cultures/ethnic groups
 - Upper end is not as well defined as the lower end



Defining Young Adults

The Church defines “young adults” as:
“people in their late teens, twenties, and thirties; single, married, divorced, or widowed; and with or without children.”

From: Sons and Daughters of the Light, USCCB Nov. 12th, 1996

Includes:

College students

Young Professionals

Single

Married

Young Families

Established families

CCD Families

Catholic school families

Widowed

Divorced



A Demographic Snapshot

- From: Souls in Transition: The Religious & Spiritual Lives of Emerging Adults by Christian Smith with Patricia Snell.

Focused on 18-23 year olds

Characteristics

- Wounded (Pain, Life, Drugs, Relationships)
- Searching
- “It’s the way it is”
- Not “anti-religious”, religion is simply not relevant to them
- Feelings are their guide
- Parents have a huge role



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Why Catholic?

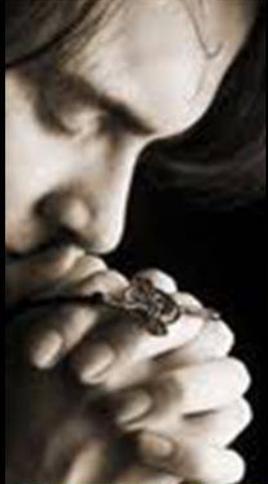
2 Typical Answers:

- The Catholic Faith is True
- Someone's Example



Does the Bishops' definition of "young adult" match how you tend to think of this group?

If not, what are the differences?



Developmental Stage of YAs

- USCCB Tasks of Young Adulthood
 - 1. Developing a Personal Identity (faith ownership)
 - 2. Developing Relationships (family, friends, spouse)
 - 3. Developing a Meaning of Work (vocation, gifts)
 - “What do you do?”
 - Work as function or work as fulfillment?
 - 4. Developing a Spiritual Life (inner life, morality)
- Sociologists use terms like “Emerging Adults” to identify the transition into adulthood
 - “Full Adulthood” = finish school, stable career job, financial independence, and new family formation



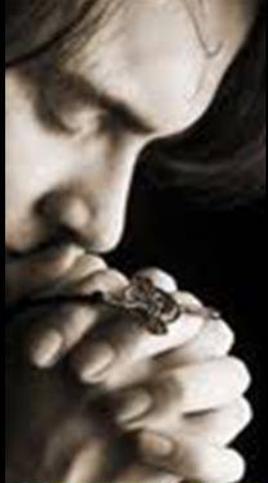
Busy Young Adults

- Life stage transitions are often primary focus
 - Completing school
 - Establishing career
 - Relationships: dating, engagement, and marriage
 - Family: pregnancy, birth, & raising young children
- Church activities must be relevant enough for young adults to make the time to participate
 - Faith activities must dialog vs. compete with life



Mobile Young Adults

- Move into and out of town regularly
 - Graduate/begin school, new/loss of job, marriage
- Often little integration into a parish community
 - Convenience mentality for Mass times & locations
 - Do not register at or commit to one parish
 - Arrive at Mass just in time or slightly late, slip into the back, and leave immediately afterward
 - Do not know many others at their parish
 - Can be an “unseen” part of the congregation



A Vision of Faith for YA

- “What can the Church offer to fulfill the spiritual hunger of young adults?
 - The Church can offer them a vision of life based on a faith that calls each of them to (1)holiness, (2)community, and (3)service.”





12 Principles of YA Ministry

- 1. Young adults internalize their beliefs and values within a supportive community and live their vocation in the world.
- 2. Young adults seek opportunities for relationships with their peers and experiences that are intergenerational and multicultural.
- 3. Young adults understand both the message of faith and the traditions of the Church when these are communicated through words, symbols, and activities that relate to life experiences.
- 4. Young adults respond positively when the Church invites their participation and engages them in the planning of activities for the spiritual life of the community.

Principles of YA Ministry Cont'd.

- 5. The Church meets young adults where they are present: the workplace, the home, the campus, and the civic community.
- 6. Effective ministry invites young adults into the life of the Church and collaborates with them to identify specific initiatives for the young adult community.
- 7. Effective ministry assists young adults to become spiritual people, thereby developing a holistic and healthy understanding of life and deepening one's relationship with God.
- 8. Effective ministry provides young adults with constructive opportunities to ask questions and to discover answers present in the teaching and tradition of the Catholic Church.



12 Principles of YA Ministry Cont'd.

- 9. Effective ministry with young adults engages them in peer ministry, as well as family ministry.
- 10. Effective ministry acknowledges, understands, respects, and celebrates the cultural diversity of individuals and communities.
- 11. Effective ministry facilitates and engages young adults in an awareness of and an invitation to the work of justice, peace, and compassion.
- 12. Effective ministry includes the commitment of necessary resources for the evangelization, catechesis, and pastoral care of young adults.



What is Ministry with Young Adults?

If ministries or activities are not relevant to young adults, they simply will not come.

Dual Approach for Engaging Young Adults:

1. Ensuring that existing church ministries are designed for young adult participation
2. Reaching out to and engaging more young adults through new ministry efforts

Note: Focus on parish, can adapt to other communities



Making Existing Ministry Young Adult Friendly/Responsive

- Take into account young adult characteristics:
 - Interests and Needs at this Developmental Stage
 - Ex) relevant topics, quality events, social time
 - Diversity of Life Stages (college, working, parents)
 - Ex) event time, cost, childcare
 - Busy & Mobile can create Lack of Commitment
 - Ex) walk-up registration, self-contained, avoid homework
- **Do not** try to force YAs to fit another mold
 - Getting frustrated/angry at YAs is not helpful





“How can we get young adults to come to our events?”

- **Reverse the Thinking:**

“How can our events attract more young adults?”

- **Avoid Thinking:**

“But that’s the way we’ve always done this.”



Why do you think more young adults are not involved in ministries at parishes?

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“The parish doesn’t offer anything for me.”

- What is this person really looking for?
 - Usually, a peer community
 - If no one else their age is present, it’s not for them
 - If it’s for their parents, then it’s not for them
 - From experience, assume events aren’t for them
- Only a limited number of young adults will participate in church activities without peers



Engaging More Young Adults

- Form a young adult community
 - Place to fit in & own place within the Church
 - Meet and get to know other Catholic YAs
 - Community to invite & welcome more YAs into
 - Relevant activities shaped by the YAs themselves
- Integrate with the rest of the Church
 - Balance time between only peers & with parish
 - Participate in parish events with peers/friends
 - Help parish events be responsive to young adults



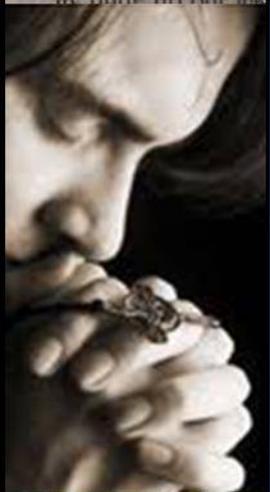
JOY & Sharing Your Prayer

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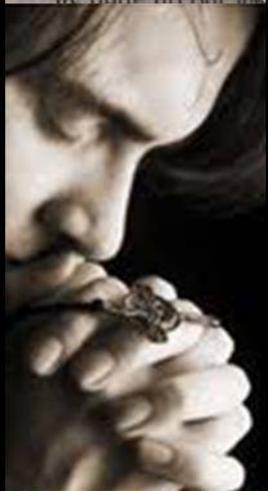
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Questions?



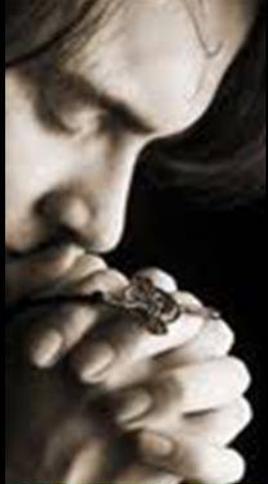
Homework

- Review Sons and Daughters of the Light
- Complete the Parish YA Ministry Worksheet.



Handouts

- Sons and Daughters of the Light
- Various Program Fliers/Materials



Radiating Christ

“It is for you to radiate the Gospel. When they see you let them discover Jesus Christ!”

- [Radiating Christ](#) by Raoul Plus, S.J.



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Contact Information

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