

the “PATH TO LIFE”

A RESOURCE FOR
ALL THOSE WHO MINISTER
TO YOUNG ADULTS



Diocese of
Green Bay

Young pilgrims, Christ needs you to enlighten the world and to show it the “*Path to Life*” (*Ps 16*).

the
“PATH TO LIFE”
A YOUNG ADULT PRAYER

There are so many paths ahead of me, God.

Simple, complex, branched, straight, crooked.

Which path to take? Which one leads me to you?

Do you have a plan for me and my life?

Help me uncover this plan, God.

Help me understand, open my ears and heart to hear you.

“We do not exist for ourselves,” a monk wrote.

God, I find you best when I look for you in others.

You show yourself to me

when I serve, when I seek,

when I support, when I stop striving.

Show yourself to me God. Help me to be patient and to see you in all that I do

and all that I am.

That is the path you’ve laid out for me:

to give myself in service so I can be filled with you.

Give me strength to run that path with all that I have.

Amen

*Written by members of the young adult team,
Department of Education, Diocese of Green Bay*

THANK YOU!

THANK YOU TO THE MEMBERS OF THE
YOUNG ADULT TEAM WHO SO GRACIOUSLY GAVE OF THEIR TIME
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And.....

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BE PRESENT, BE WELCOMING, BE LOVING!



Do not say “Four months more and then the harvest”? I tell you, “Open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.” John 4:35

Young adults are seeking answers to the deepest questions at the heart of our spiritual journey. Many, having been given unclear or mixed messages from their parents or others in authority, are seeking clear and honest answers to their questions. If your parish can provide answers and dialogue with young adults in a way that is clear, charitable and open to dialogue, then you will have come a long way toward impacting this complex demographic.

Much has been written about how young adults are self-seeking and self-indulgent, but in my work with young adults, I find that many of them have a hunger to know the truth of the Church’s teaching. As one young adult expressed, “for so long, I have been subjected to someone’s interpretation of the Church’s teaching and I was really confused as to what the Church actually said. I wish someone would have told me unflinchingly the truth and let me make up my own mind from there.”

A wise friend of mine advocates the use of a phrase, “clarity with charity” when working with young adults. It is about presenting and witnessing to the truth of the Church’s teaching with charity and compassion. When discussing difficult subjects with young adults, it is far better to present the Church’s teaching on a subject in an open, charitable and compassionate manner. As the old saying goes, you will gain far more with honey than vinegar! We often mistakenly assume that our young people will be swept up in the tide of new-ageism, etc., but research indicates that Catholic young adults are moderately orthodox in their beliefs.

Our hope, as a young adult committee is that this resource will inspire you as a parish to reach out to young adults in a fresh and

open manner. The ideas contained in this booklet require little in the way of finances but they do require time and a willingness on the part of the parish staff to examine attitudes toward young adults. They also require a willingness to change those ideas, mind sets and parish processes that might be an obstacle to any adult - young or old - in joining the parish. If you have any suggestions or comments we would certainly welcome them.

In the Spring of 2011, members of the young adult team of the Diocese of Green Bay conducted interviews with young adults from across the diocese. The purpose of these interviews was to ascertain the thoughts of young adults regarding their faith, the parish, the Catholic Church, and their willingness to be involved in the Catholic Church. They were tasked with asking young adults of various ages, at different stages of their lives and faith the following five questions:

1. How do you feel about the Catholic Church?
2. How do you feel about your parish community?
3. Where do you prioritize your faith?
4. What would it take for you to be more involved in your parish?
5. How do you see yourself helping the Catholic Church?

Their thoughts regarding these five questions are interwoven throughout this booklet in order to help our parishes to understand the needs of young adults and the most helpful strategies in reaching out to them. We hope that their comments, thoughts and advice will inspire our parishes to be vibrant centers for young adults where ‘your talents, and those of other young adults, can enrich the Church and can be a sign of God’s presence in society’. 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

On behalf of the young adult committee and the Department of Education, it is a blessing to be able to serve the Diocese of Green Bay in this capacity.

Julianne Donlon Stanz

¹ U.S. Catholic Bishops, *Sons and Daughters of the Light: A Pastoral Plan for Ministry to Young Adults*, Preface. (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1996).

IDENTIFYING YOUNG ADULTS: Who are our young adults and Where are they?

The terms ‘adult’ and ‘young adult’ often are used interchangeably, but there are important distinctions to be made in terms of ministering to both groups. Traditionally, the title of young adult was given to those who graduated from high school and who had not yet entered the young married group. It is interesting to note that statistics bear out that young adults are getting married much later today than before.²

The United States Catholic Conference of Bishops in the young adult document, “Sons and Daughters of Light”, defines this complex group as follows: Young adulthood refers to people in their late teens, twenties and thirties; single, married, divorced, or widowed; and with or without children. They are present in every trade and profession. They live in many communities that make up our society - from rural areas to small towns to large metropolitan areas. They come from diverse cultural, ethnic, educational, vocational, social, political, and spiritual realities. This diversity is reflected in the large number of people from various nations coming to this country whose median age is in the early to mid-twenties.³

At the same time, the diverse needs of the two generations that now fall within the classification of young adulthood - Generation X (born 1964-1979) and the Millennial Generation (born post - 1980) - have caused a chasm in the focus of this ministry. With this in mind, no wonder it is so difficult to minister to young adults!

Many parishes struggle with the challenge of building young adult ‘programs’. They struggle to get young adults to gather for socials or service or prayer and are frustrated by the results. However, the goal of young adult ministry is not to form clubs or groups that gather. Such a group might be a result of developing young adult ministry programs around specific needs (young mother’s group, men’s bible study, Hispanic young adult ministry), but is not the end goal. The real target of young adult ministry is to integrate young adults into the life, mission, and work of the Catholic Church. To accomplish this, parishes must intentionally invite, welcome and integrate young adults into a wide variety of opportunities within the parish.

The Emerging Models of Pastoral Leadership project, a joint effort of six national Catholic associations funded by the Lilly Endowment, commissioned a survey of Catholic young adults and published the results in the summer of 2008. This survey outlined helpful strategies to engage and retain young adults. Some of the strategies outlined in this report are incorporated into this booklet, with suggestions from the young adult team and the young adult interviews that were conducted.

Please note - names of the interviewees below have been changed to protect their identity.



THE INTERVIEWEES

Brittany - 25 years old, unmarried, school teacher, living in De Pere

Donna O - 29 years old, married with one 18-month-old child, chemist, originally from Oshkosh now living in Green Bay

Henry - 25 years old, unmarried, works in IT in LaCrosse, although originally from Green Bay

Kevin - 25 years old, unmarried, software engineer, living in Manitowoc

Laura - 27 years old, single, analyst working in the Shawano/Clintonville area

Lynn T - 30 years old, married with two young children (ages 3 and less than a year), nurse, living in Green Bay

Natalie - 19 years old, originally from Shawano/Clintonville, now attends school in Madison

Samantha S - 25 years old, single, works in finance in Green Bay

Irene T - 23 years old, dating, recent college graduate, from Shawano

Karen C - 29 years old, nurse, originally from Lena, now lives in Little Suamico

Kimberly G - 25 years old, Ph.D. student, originally from Green Bay now living in Chicago

² According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census; www.census.gov. the average of married women in 2010 was 26 and for men 28. In 1960 it was age 22 for men and age 20 for women.

³ U.S. Catholic Bishops, *Sons and Daughters of the Light: A Pastoral Plan for Ministry to Young Adults*, Part 1. (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1996).

YOUNG ADULT ATTITUDES TOWARD THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, THEIR PARISH AND THEIR FAITH

Practical Principle:

Understand that involvement in the faith and in parish life varies considerably across the demographic of young adults.

Unfortunately, we can no longer assume that young adults will be voluntarily active in the life of the Church, but we must do all that we can to invite and evangelize them into the heart of the Gospel.

It is important to recognize that young adults are on a faith journey. Sometimes, this journey takes them further away from the Catholic faith and sometimes it will bring them closer. Walking with young adults in their faith journey and being present to them is time consuming but it is sure to pay rich dividends in many ways.

Young adults do have definite feelings on the parish and on the Church in general. Consider Natalie's positive comments regarding her parish: "My parish community is amazing. I'm thankful that they offer a number of Masses over the weekend. This way, I can always find one that works with my work schedule. The homilies are also uplifting and apply to our times". This is also echoed by Brittany who says that the parish "is a second family, I was raised by many members of that community and continue to benefit from that support, Father X in particular is amazing".

Other young adults feel a sense of alienation from the parish and the Catholic Church. Some young adults do not consider the Church as being relevant to their lives, as Kevin states: "I don't expect the parish-church to be extremely entertaining or able to reach some untouched part of my life. For me the church is what it is and I'm fine with that".

However, for others such as Samantha S., it is a clearly defined part of her life: "I prioritize my prayer life, and my sacramental life by keeping a regular prayer schedule (I have it in an Excel Document), and my regularly attending Mass and at least biweekly confession".

Finding ways to involve young adults in liturgy, education and evangelization efforts is key. Having a variety of Mass times is important to young adults who often work sporadic schedules. Karen C. acknowledges the difficulty of finding a new parish that "isn't too large, but still has a slightly later Mass time since I work nights". Gather a group of key young adults or those who are passionate about reaching young adults to begin dreaming about young adult ministry in the church. If there are not young adults available, ask the parents of young adults who might be willing to invest time and energy in ministry specifically for young adults. Start small, but in a very public way. Reach out personally to those whom you feel might have gifts to share. New ministries need lots of visibility. This is especially true with young adults since they're such a diverse group. Many are in school, living away from home, or living at home and working full-time. Simply keeping an accurate mailing list of this age group is an undertaking but a necessary step in order to determine the needs of the young adults of your parish.

"The many parishes that I have been a part of through my young adult life have treated me warmly and have given me a place that feels like home, wherever I lay my head at night. I hope that other young adults feel the same welcome and invitation as I have."



Rachel Gretzinger - Young Adult Team Member



Practical Principle:

Young adults emphasize personal experience

“I am spiritual, not religious”. I am sure that we have all heard someone say this! The term ‘spiritual tinkering’ is a particularly apt term for young adults coined by Robert Wuthnow who found that two-thirds of young adults in their 20s and 30s opt for personal experience as the best means to understand their faith. Only one fourth of those he surveyed indicated that Church doctrine was the best means to understand God.⁴ Young adults might place a high priority on their spiritual life and this may not be within the parameters of the Catholic Church. Kevin’s interview highlights this particular trend among young adults:

Interviewer: Where do you prioritize your faith?

Pretty highly. My faith is important to me. More so my religious beliefs and relationship with God than the official Catholic Church/faith.

Interviewer: What do you mean by that?

What’s important to me isn’t the Catholic Church per se...but more so my own personal faith (which is Catholic). I’d be more concerned if I became apathetic towards God than if I stopped going to Mass. To me, religion in general is much more a personal experience than most organized religions make it out to be. It’s not something that appeals to me that much, at least at this point in my life. I’m not very open about my faith or anything like that...I’m not interested in joining discussion groups or teaching others and if the parish were to offer strictly social events for young adults it’d still be tough because Church isn’t where I go to make friends.

Brittany also feels this tension: “I feel more strongly about my parish community than I do about the Catholic Church as a whole. There are some things that I do not agree with in regards to the Church but that does not change the fact that it is our faith and we feel strongly about 99 percent of what it is teaching and want our children to be brought up in the same way”.

Young adults often live, work, share meals, and vacation with other young adults. These groups may function as family or for ‘twenty- and thirty-somethings’ living far from home. Heard of the term ‘multi-parishional’? This is a very real phenomenon for many of our young adults who often will ‘shop’ for a parish and exhibit membership of the Catholic Church through many parishes, including being registered at more than one parish. Karen C. told our interviewer that “she belongs to X Parish, but was in the midst of Church shopping this Lenten season”. In terms of planning and executing ministry at the parish level, this ‘multi-parishional’ status presents some obstacles but it also presents opportunities for parishes to work collaboratively and regionally to reach young adults.

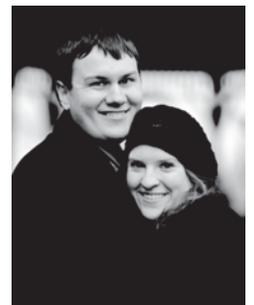
Practical Principle:

Help young adults to make faith a priority by providing balance in their lives.

“Long-term commitments can be challenging for young adults, but participating in short-term events will help to keep them involved and make faith a priority in their lives.”

Mindy Wegner - Young Adult Team Member and Husband

Time is the currency of our culture. Many of our young adults are balancing school, work and relationships which are time-consuming and rapidly changing. They are overscheduled and stressed. Their faith may or may not be their first priority. Consider the following statement from Irene T.: “At this point in my life, my faith is not at the top of my priority list. I want to explain that I am a full-time nursing student and attend school and live an hour and a half away from my home town, which does not leave me much free time. Many individuals at the same state in their life, as myself, put education and work above faith. For example, I pray at the very end of my day, in my bed right before I go to sleep at night. My faith comes last right



⁴ Wuthnow, Robert, “*After the Baby Boomer: How twenty and thirty somethings are shaping the future American religion*”, (Princeton, NJ: University Press, 2007) p133.

now when I have time for it. My main focus in my life is college and supporting myself by working.”

If our programs ask for year-long commitments (or even September to May commitments), we will succeed in reaching few individuals. “My largest obstacle to becoming more involved in my parish is the irregularity of my schedule. There are things I would like to do, but between work and travel, I am frequently unable to commit.” Laura

It is far better to focus on one-time events, week-long projects or short-term commitments in which individuals can participate or serve and then go on to the next adventure.

Practical Principle:

Encourage young adults to see the parish as a home

“Being in union with Jesus Christ means that we have a place among the communion of people which is the Church.



Father Benjamin Sember - Young Adult Team Member

Making a parish a ‘home’ to worship and pray is one of the key ways that we claim our place in the Church, and allow the Church to claim us as her children. Going to the same place week after week, we see the faithful witness of other Catholics, and they see our faithful witness and we support one another in faith. Often, the biggest obstacle to joining a parish is accepting the parish’s limitations, shortcomings, and imperfections. It much easier to visit than to belong; but just visiting means we don’t fully accept the Catholic Church as she is, every Sunday, with all her human imperfections. The decision to join a parish is the decision to commit to an imperfect reality, and this is ultimately an act of faith that God truly loves the Church, and loves each one of us, despite our imperfections.

THE IMPORTANCE OF WELCOMING AND INVITATION

“Don’t just smile and nod at us when you see us. Take the time to introduce yourself, shake our hands and get to know us a bit. Young adults want to be a part of a community where people know their names and take the time to say hello.”



Emma Janssen - Young Adult Team Member

Practical Principle:

Be present to young adults.



Where are the young adults of our communities? How can the Church make connections with young adults?

The answers to these questions are as diverse as the group that we are attempting to serve. The starting place for any young adult ministry is to acknowledge those young adults who are already in the midst of the parish community and be present to them. This is not just an issue for those in leadership positions in the parish but also for other young adults, as Samantha expresses: “Young adults want to be a part of a community where other young adults are present and visible. I love the Catholic Church, the beauty, the traditionalism, everything except maybe the lack of young people”.

Our first inclination when we look at young adult ministry is to claim that our parish doesn’t have any! However, this is not the case! Although young adults might not be attending Mass on Sundays regularly, they will be present at other opportunities such as marriage, baptism, soccer league, etc. If you do not seem to have any young adults in your parish (or they are not visible), it is time to sit down

with your registration and census information and figure out where they are and how to reach them. Being present to young adults and becoming a more ‘young adult friendly’ parish often takes an intentional and conscious focus to welcome, invite and integrate young adults into the life of the parish.

It is important to treat young adults as adults, not post-high school youth. For example, don’t list them under their parents’ names in the church directory and don’t assume that they know how to register at the parish. Give them their own listing, register them separately and give them their own envelopes or an opportunity to tithe. Another important point to remember is that most forms of ministry with young adults will be conducted by young adults themselves, in a peer-to-peer manner.⁵ This may take place at social events, at parish opportunities or at Mass.

Practical Principle:



Personal invitation is key.

“It goes back to the old phrase, “What is the worst they can say: ‘No’?” We have been overwhelmed by the positive responses we receive from Catholic young adults whom we invite personally to give of their time or talent. Extend an invitation, from concrete relationships, unlock the gifts of others and our Catholic faith will continue its rich growth.”



Carrie Miller - Young Adult Team Member and Family

Young adults often need to be personally invited in order to participate in the parish. If our Catholic parishes do not invite young adults to

opportunities, there are plenty of other denominational congregations that would willingly invite our young adults to their churches - and are doing so! It is not enough to put something in the bulletin or in an email and expect a response. Young adults are far more likely to respond and to remain engaged in the life of the parish if someone takes the time to reach out and mentor them.

“There is talent amongst the young people here, but the (Church) does not do a good job of engaging those young people. We need to be asked to do things. We need to be encouraged to help out, we need someone to recognize our strengths, we need holy priests who want to take the time to meet with us, etc. We cannot be treated the same way as the pre-Vatican II parishioners. We need other people our age to be doing things with us, we need more than one activity per month to do. Why has no one asked me to do anything, or provided an appealing opportunity for service at my own parish? I literally go to everything at my parish (that is not during the day) and go to many functions at five other parishes. It’s not like I hide myself from the Church community, etc.” Samantha S.

Practical Principle:

Be sincere in your welcoming.

Many young adults have shared with me that one of the greatest factors in their returning to a program at their local Church is the quality and sincerity of the welcome they received. Lynn believes that the Catholic Church is a tradition in her family - a part of her life. It’s something she feels she must have “in order to keep focus in life”. She belongs to a parish in Green Bay and thinks that it is a very large parish, “so big that it does not really have a welcoming feel.” She said that there are a few familiar faces, but her family does not know many people in the parish.

Donna O. thinks that the Catholic Church is ‘fine’. It is the faith she

⁵ Sons and Daughters of Light, pages 37-38

was raised in and she ‘believes in its teachings’. She stated that it was the ‘welcoming nature of the parish’ that encouraged her to join her parish. The obvious lack of young adult participation and visibility within the life of the parish were identified by the young adults surveyed as obstacles to encouraging more young adult involvement in the parish.

Consider the following statements:

“I feel that in my parish the emphasis is focused on the elderly. I also feel as if our parish is not very welcoming and is segregated. I have been to other parishes and felt more welcome there than in my own parish that I have belonged to for over twenty years.”
Irene T.

Interviewer: What would it take for you to be more involved in your parish?

“If the parish were more welcoming and related to the whole parish community. Every age group should feel valued in the parish and welcomed. I can be impartial on this because I am away at college and do not attend my home parish every week. I cannot be as involved as I would like to be.” Irene T.

“I enjoy my parish community because it is the community I grew up in, but if I was completely new to the area, I don’t think I would find it completely welcoming.” Laura

Welcoming young adults does not require any formal program. Being friendly, accessible, non-judgmental and open are the keys to successfully welcoming young adults into the parish community. During the marriage preparation process, for example, extend an invitation to the couple to attend a special welcome brunch. Follow up with the couple on the anniversary of their marriage and acknowledge them in Church each time you see them. Taking the time to reach out and connect with young adults through simple and thoughtful gestures will pay rich dividends. Be genuine, be sincere and please acknowledge and welcome those young adults who might already be in your midst. Be especially attentive on Easter, Christmas and Ash Wednesday - the times during the year when young adults are most likely to attend Mass and visit the parish.

Practical Principle:

Ministry to young adults is about relationships, not programs.

“Relationships are in many ways the nexus of young adult life. Young adults are looking for connections in their life to link them to a local and broader community. Successful young adult ministry includes natural ways for young adults to meet and develop friendships.”



Maggie Melchoir - Young Adult Team Member

A good balance of the social and spiritual is key to fulfilling the need for communion with Christ and communion with others. A parish that understands the importance of building relationships, being authentic, being sincere and wholly relational finds that young adults will respond to programs. Young adults are most interested in making connections with their peers and forming relationships and this can happen naturally when they are engaged in discussions about their faith.

A large part of a young adult’s life is centered on questions such as, “Who am I?” “What is my life’s purpose?” “Who am I to others?” and “What kind of person do I want to be in relationships which are important to me?”. Consider Natalie’s comment which affirms this: “faith is truly at the center of my life. When I don’t feel close to God, my life feels empty and nothing really seems to work. Yet, when I believe and put trust in God, things just seem to fall into place.”

All aspects of relationship-building are important to this age group. Orient programs and events to make connections between young adults and building relationships. Make sure that there is always informal time for participants to connect with one another before and after an event or activity. Remember that opportunities for new experiences and active participation will be far more attractive than passive forms of involvement.

INTEGRATING YOUNG ADULTS INTO THE LIFE OF THE PARISH

Practical Principle:

Be decisive at the parish and engage young adults in action-oriented events

Our culture rapidly shifts from one trend to the next. As such, young adults are people who respond quickly to action, are adept at multitasking and are comfortable with change. They enjoy fast-paced projects with lots of ‘moving parts’ and they tend to be action oriented. They would rather participate in service than talk about it.

If you decide to invite a young adult to a parish committee, make sure that your committee is action oriented. Young adults do not respond well to sitting around talking about ‘ministry’ and ‘making a difference’ in general terms. Long, drawn out meetings without a clear focus will ensure that your committee is a young adult free zone! As Kim C. notes, “lots of businesses, colleges, etc., have ‘service’ projects - young people hear this rhetoric elsewhere so doing it and in a specifically Catholic context makes the difference”.

Also, be sure, as a parish, that you model what you are talking about. Be warm, be inviting, be loving! Young adults are put off by those who are overly vocal negative or ‘pushy’ about their faith. They tend to be attracted to those who are vibrant, positive and ‘real’ about their faith and who will answer their questions honestly and in a loving manner.

Consider the following statement by Natalie: “ I could help the Church by letting my actions do the talking, rather than my words. People are often put off by those who are overly vocal about their faith. Yet, if you just act in a Christian manner, people see you as more accepting and are more drawn to you. I’ve had friends who were agnostic or atheist say they gained more respect for the Catholic faith because I did not judge them or try to change them”.

Practical Principle:

Focus on the family in order to grow your ministries



“I am away from my family fifty hours per week and do not have the desire to spend more time apart from them. Our mission at the Catholic Church is to help families to grow together. We need to journey with families from the beginning. I want my boys

“I could help the Church by letting my actions do the talking, rather than my words. People are often put off by those who are overly vocal about their faith. If you act in a Christian manner, people see you as more accepting and are more drawn to you.”

Natalie

(both under age 2) to learn about their faith, but it is challenging when we are given unkind looks because they are babbling at Mass. Offering programs to help families develop a family spirituality and a family prayer life can enliven the Church.”



Carrie Aimers - Young Adult Team Member and Family

The term ‘Young Adults’ is an umbrella term that encompasses the single, engaged, college student, professional, those with children and those without children. The lack of a clearly defined focus on the family in our parishes is an obstacle for many young adults who often prioritize time with their family over their faith life.

In terms of faith prioritization, Kristi says that she does not put her faith high enough on the list. “It’s not at the top, but it should be.” She does not regularly go to church. She would like to have more quiet moments to focus on her faith and on a daily basis would like to put it higher on the list. When asked what it would take for her to be more involved at her parish, she said she might be more involved “if they had more child-related or family-related activities or a more child friendly environment”. She thought that, if the parish were smaller, she and her family would know more people. She also thought that if her children were old enough to go to school there, it might be different - she might know more parishioners or be more involved.

Donna O. would be more drawn to participate in activities if they included her child. She said that she is already away from her family a lot and “doesn’t want to spend more time apart”. Though her parish offers childcare during certain programs, she is not interested in attending because she still is unable to interact with her child. When asked how and when she might participate in parish life, Donna stated that she sees herself once again participating in music ministry (playing her violin) once her daughter is old enough to sit by herself during Mass. It is even more challenging for her to participate because her husband is not Catholic, so she must bring her daughter to Church on her own. So, what is a parish to do for someone like Donna? Being present to Donna, being patient and supporting her as much as possible may be all that you can do.

Practical Principle:

Young adults have gifts to share - tap into them.

Discover the gifts and educational interests of the young adults in your parish and match those interests with tasks at the Church. For

example, if you have college-age students who are studying elementary education, ask them to work with Vacation Bible School or Sunday School as a way for them to build their experience working with children. If there are young adults interested in outdoor recreation, include them in youth camping ministries. Youth ministry offers an array of possibilities for young adults to try their hand at leadership and mentoring experiences. Many young adults are skilled with computers and would be more than willing to work with staff and volunteers in computer projects and training. Most young adults are still exploring life and the Church can provide them with service experiences that help them to uncover their vocational call. Kim C., offers this consideration for parishes: “It’s important for parishes not to approach vocations as just recruiting - but rather as a real dilemma most young adults are going through now or have gone through recently”.

Practical Principle:

Connect lifelong faith learning to lifelong faith living.

“We often forget just how important it is to inspire our young adults to learn more about their faith. Connecting ‘faith learning’ to ‘faith living’ is the key to motivating young adults to learn more about their faith.”



Julianne Donlon-Stanz - Young Adult Ministry Director & Family

Young adults are hungry for the truth. Instant answers in an online world often do not deliver in accuracy, content or fulfillment. Many young adults do not truly understand the richness and depth of the Catholic faith and have no idea how to explain or defend it. Henry acknowledges this in his comment, “I feel good about the Catholic Church, sometimes. I think the Catholic message is beautiful, but I had no idea what it was until I was in college and I have been a

Catholic all my life. That isn't good".

Study groups, small faith sharing communities and events centered in a friend's home are far likelier than a parish or a classroom to be the settings for formation. Karen C. states that getting more involved at her parish would involve more opportunities for small faith sharing, "I would be interested in some type of an accountability or small group of some kind that met during the day".

Young adults value opportunities to connect faith learning to faith living. Make sure that people can relate to the material presented. Don't shy away from engaging young adults in "heady," difficult or academic concepts. They are accustomed to complex terminology from school and work and they should be given the opportunity to learn a faith vocabulary that can meet the challenges of living in the 21st century.

Practical Principle:

Include young adults in the worship of the parish.

Be intentional about increasing the involvement and visibility of young adults in worship life. A common misconception is that there are no (or few) people in our parishes who are young adults. You can be sure that young adults are present - although perhaps not in the numbers we might like! They often are catechists, coaches, volunteers, on boards of education, involved in home-school liaison groups, etc. Encourage your pastor, youth minister, or worship and music coordinator to use the gifts of young adults in all of the regular aspects of worship life in your parish. Include them as readers, musicians, greeters, ushers and Eucharistic Ministers. Too often, young adults are overlooked when considering the liturgical needs of the parish.

Brittany comments that her family is "rather involved in our parish, being part of music ministry, singing for church each week - to be more involved we might need more hours in the day! Being part of the choir is an integral part of the worship and we also enjoy

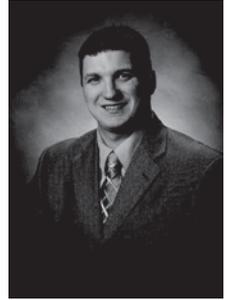
celebrating with our friends and encouraging them to attend Mass, which most do".

Practical Principle:

Use technology to your advantage.



"Over 50% of the world's population is under 30 years old. If Facebook were a country, it would be the third largest. Why are our parishes not online or utilizing social networking to enhance the life of the parish?"



Mike Frahm- Young Adult Team Member

The Church needs to find ways to connect with young adults. Technology is a key tool to reach them. Parishes need to have active, *updated* and attractive web sites. Some pastoral leaders are recording their homilies or classes as podcasts for young adults to listen to when they have time. This is a strategy that works in reaching out to young adults. If your parish does not have this capability, consider linking to other web sites that would offer engaging, accurate and interesting content.

Parishes that rely on the bulletin alone to promote their events are likely to find that young adults will remain unresponsive and detached from the parish. A continued concern is the fear of personally inviting people to events and programs because "we just don't do that around here".

Many young adults are seeking information about the faith through web sites such as Busted Halo (www.bustedhalo.com). Find someone in your Church who is 'into' computers and the internet and have him or her compile a list of email addresses of the young

adults in your parish. Some Churches have their own web page, which is put together by the young adults of their parish. A weekly or monthly update about the activities of their hometown church is a welcome addition to the 'email' box of students away from home. Some ministers write a daily/weekly devotion for young adults and send that to all 'email' recipients. Utilizing social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace also helps to connect in a non-threatening manner with young adults.

Laura had this to say when she was asked about how her parish could reach out to her: "Here's something else I thought about while I was thinking about young adults and parish interactions - I think parishes should think about implementing an email version of the weekly bulletin or at least emailing out the important weekly announcements. It wouldn't be hard because most parishes already put it up online, so a simple email could remind people to go read it". Laura.

ADVICE REGARDING OFFERING SPECIFIC PROGRAMMING FOR YOUNG ADULTS



Practical Principle:

Be sensitive to the timing of young adult events.

Many churches invite young people who are home for the summer (working long hours to earn as much money as possible for school) to weekly Bible study and discussion. These groups work best late at night, in the middle of the week, since weekends and weekdays usually are filled with work commitments.

Most young adults have lost the structure of school and sports which kept them connected to local friends. Planning a Christmas party over Christmas break, an activity after Thanksgiving Mass, or a spring reunion in May after most of the colleges are out for the year are prime opportunities for one-time events. The main attraction of these experiences is the chance to reconnect with peers. Try something which gathers together individuals who had a former connection with the Church. Examples of simple events are: Confirmation reunions, youth trip reunions, or Sunday afternoon softball games.

"I am raising my children in the Catholic faith and I see that as helping the Church."

Lynn

Practical Principle:

Offer opportunities for young adults to make a difference

Young adults have much to offer the Catholic Church. The passion to make a difference and build a storehouse of memories is appealing to the young adults in our churches. The themes of short-term commitments, actions, relationships and making a difference all fit into the area of service. Don't hesitate to discuss the concept of stewardship in a practical way with young adults. It is imperative that they feel that they can contribute their time, their talents and their treasure for the building up of the Kingdom of God. Consider how Lynn views service in the Catholic Church: "I see myself as helping the Church right now because I make monthly and annual contributions to the Church. I am also raising my children in the Catholic faith and I see that as helping the Church". As a parish, how could you broaden this concept of stewardship?

Short-term work projects which involve vocational skills, emergency response teams, food shelf replenishment, and serving food at a homeless shelter are examples of service which may appeal to this

age group. Matching skills and interests is the key is to finding projects that will involve young people.

Samantha S. believes that she has a lot to offer to the Church:

“I have lots of skills that could be extremely pertinent to the Church. I have great communication skills including written and verbal skills. I have experience in writing articles for bulletins, giving talks for churches, and teaching Sunday school students. I have a wide variety of business expertise and am pursuing an MBA in the fall. I am crafty and have made things and volunteered at parish picnics. At my previous parish, I had a display bulletin board on which I was in charge of creating informative displays about saints and liturgical customs. I was a Eucharistic Minister for four years in my previous Diocese. I have led Bible studies, and mentored young Catholics, and confirmandi. I have decent formation and degrees in business and Medieval Church History. I am generally a friendly person and know many families in my parish, I think I would be good at welcoming them to this area, as I have only lived here for a year.”

Samantha’s statement raises an important point: Instead of letting the same people do the same thing because “that’s what we have always done”, assign tasks to young adults who are truly passionate about a particular task.

Kevin also acknowledges that he could contribute to the life of his parish: “I’m good at helping logistically run things so I could offer that talent to the Church...helping setup and work events, doing tech stuff for Masses”.

Young adults seize opportunities that enable them to make a difference in the world. To put individuals in situations where their involvement really affects another person can be a powerful motivator for lifelong engagement at their parish. This is one of our greatest strengths as a Catholic Church: the ability to be able to put our faith into action in a direct and tangible way. Ensure that ample opportunities are given to perform ‘direct impact ministry’, i.e. that which directly impacts the life of another. Be sure to inform young adults when encouraging them to join the parish of the many benefits that joining the parish confers.

What are the benefits of joining your parish for a young person? If you cannot articulate a response to this question, then you can expect the following response from a young adult:

“Technically, I do not belong to my parish. I intend to join, but as a young person, there is simply very little benefit to joining a parish. I don’t have children to enroll in CCD or a spouse to marry there, etc. All registering would do is allow them to count me and to ask me for money. I would want some sort of direct benefit to becoming more involved at my parish, for example a young person’s group.

My parish is considered one of the youngest parishes in the area, but honestly, there are very few people my age who go there.”

Samantha



STRATEGIES FOR IDENTIFYING, REACHING OUT TO AND PLANNING FOR YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY



1. Identify and name young adults in your parish

Recognize the diversity of the young adult population and decide whom you want to reach. Consider the different needs and life stages of persons like these:

- A single college student
- A married couple, one or both in college
- A single employed person living alone
- A single employed person sharing a home with another person
- A single employed person living with relatives
- A married couple, both employed and without children
- A married couple with one or more children
- A single person with one or more children
- A single or married couple living with parents or grandparents

This list can be expanded. Which categories are the ones most likely to be reached by your parish?

Identify the young adults in your parish using:

Baptismal and Marriage records

Day School records

New members registration information

Religious Education/Sacramental records

Engaged Encounter records

Note: Be sure to get email address and date of birth

Work toward an attitude of openness on the part of everyone in your parish. Help people understand that younger and older adults may not feel the same way on certain issues.

2. Assess the Parish culture - is the parish 'young adult friendly'?

Find out how young they came to be involved in your church. Ask them what differences in attitude they see between themselves and older members of the congregation. Ask what new programs or opportunities should be offered for young adults.

Do a careful assessment of what it is like to visit your church. Ask some young adults who are not part of your church to be 'inspectors' for you. Have them visit your Masses and religious education programs and give you feedback. What are people saying about your parish? Does your parish have an attractive online presence? Does the parish utilize social networking? Would a young adult be attracted to the parish? What would attract a young adult to the parish? Are the restrooms for your church clean and pleasant? Will feel comfortable having their children use them? Would a single parent feel comfortable attending? Are classes prepared to welcome visitors? Are visitors helped to feel welcome without being put on the spot?

How are new members and especially new families welcomed? Is it obvious where to 'sign up' at the parish? How are people invited to 'sign up'? Do you offer a registration gift such as the Bible, gift basket, invitation to a meal, etc., plus information about the parish, or does your parish welcome new members by offering envelopes? After new member events, does the parish follow up with a phone call or personal visit to the member?

Does the parish offer a warm, welcoming space for young adult families to gather with their children during Mass and outside of Mass?

Does your parish have a ‘cry room’? What does it look like? Is it inviting, family-friendly and comfortable? Does the space accommodate nursing mothers or families with very young children? Does your parish offer a Children’s Liturgy program? Could you invite young adults to help with this?

Does the parish offer any events specifically for young adults? Are there any young adult groups in the parish? Are there events that young adults might be attracted to?

Are young adults actively recruited for volunteer roles in the parish? Does your parish rely on the bulletin to advertise for catechists, volunteers, etc., or do you use internet tools, too? Are young adults visible on any of the parish committees or leadership structures in the parish? How are members recruited for leadership roles? How are they invited to participate in the liturgical life of the parish?

What does your Sacramental Preparation program include? Are young adults given a book and simply required to turn up at meetings? Do you offer babysitting during meetings? Are opportunities for socialization and dialogue built in for young adults to minister to each other?

Does your Marriage Preparation program bring engaged couples together? Do you have FOCCUS couples who are young adults and also older adults? How does the parish affirm the newly married couple? Is their anniversary honored? Does your parish only acknowledge the ‘milestone’ anniversaries rather than the first year, for example?

3. Welcome, invite, include and integrate young adults into the heart of the Parish

Include young adults in leadership positions in the church. You need young adults on the church board or other top decision-making groups in your parish. Let them know that their opinions and perspectives are valued and important to the future of your church.

Form a special young adult task force with the goal of reaching more young adults. Members should include young adults, older adults and the pastor or another staff member with a special concern about young adult outreach. If you don’t have young adults who are active in your church, then ‘borrow’ some from the community for the purposes of this task force.

Some simple ideas include:

- Smile!
- Learn people’s names
- Welcome young families by offering “Jesus Loves You” stickers or little “Mass totes” of books, crayons, etc., to occupy small children during the Mass
- Include young adults in the ‘visible’ ministries such as welcoming, lecturing, ushering, etc.
- Follow up with a phone call or note after Marriage, Baptism or joining the parish
- Look at registration protocol and examine whether it is welcoming to young adults
- Once a month after Masses, have a space for people to register and to reach out to young adults
- Have registration forms in the back of Church to be taken and filled out at young adults’ convenience.

1. Identify and name young adults in your parish

Sometimes, (but not always) it is helpful to offer an alternative Mass, or use more contemporary elements in your existing service.

Some young adults and many teenagers do continue to complain of boredom in traditional worship services. The occasional use of approved contemporary music and a greater emphasis on welcoming young adults can help some young adults feel more comfortable at Mass. Yet others prefer a more traditional and reverential approach as Kim C. suggests: “I dislike when people try to ‘jazz up’ the liturgy. I think it’s going to be more effective if people understand what’s going on, the spirituality of the Mass rather than trying to make it entertaining”.

In terms of looking at you parish liturgy offer a variety of types of Masses if possible and faith sharing resources to help parishioners to understand the Mass. In evaluating your Mass however, please ensure that it always remain reverent, faithful and Holy.

Don’t neglect the homily as a powerful catechetical and spiritual formation tool. Kim C. had this to say about the homily: “How about homilies? Not necessarily ‘young adult’ themes, but tackling things like marriage, vocation, discernment, singleness, balancing work and life, just every now and then inviting the homily to address problems/decisions that young people face”.

Be family - focused. Provide opportunities for families to come together, to worship and to grow in faith together. Be sensitive to the timing of events and provide babysitting for special ‘adults only’ events.

Identify young adult leaders and their key strengths.

- Consider using a gift discernment study such as “Living Your Strengths”.
- Invite young adults to be on the parish council (at least two).
- Promote diocesan and local parish young adult events.
- Put the diocesan young adult newsletter, “Into the Light”, in the back of the Church or in the pews for the young adults.
- Host events centered around the interests of young adults combining substance and spirituality, and with opportunities such as:
 - Date Night
 - Wine and Cheese
 - Pizza with the Priest
 - Lenten Programs
 - Spirituality and Sushi
 - Hot Topic Nights
 - Tailgating
 - Etc.

Provide a Mentor. Pair new parish members who are young adults or young families with those who might complement them. Ensure that they have personal contact with a person on the parish staff and with a family or young adult in the parish. A noted characteristic of the young adult population is that when they encounter struggle, they tend to become disillusioned and ‘flee’.

A mentor could process these experiences and encourage them to dialogue with this struggle through the lens of their faith. The result would be increased support and encouragement for the young adults, but this process would also affirm the wisdom of older members of the parish and possibly reduce tensions that exist between the generations.



THE TOP FIVE MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT YOUNG ADULTS (according to the Diocesan Young Adult Team)

1. There are no young adults in our parish

Response: Yes, there are! They might not be present at Mass, visible at parish events or even formally registered in the parish. Often, they are found on the periphery of parish life - attending PTA meetings, enrolling their children in Religious Education or coaching baseball, for example, but they are connected to the parish in some fashion. Has your parish priest married any young adults? Baptized any of their children? If so, it is important to look at your census information and figure out who your young adults are so that you can target them effectively.

2. Young adults today are over-scheduled and too busy to volunteer or come to parish events. They won't give of their time or their treasure, so why invite them at all?

Response: Young adults want to be involved in their parish but they appreciate specific direction rather than vague statements about 'volunteering'. Often, they will come to events hesitantly, but they need an invitation and a personal invitation is always best.

3. Young adults only want 'feel-good' opportunities when it comes to faith.

Response: Young adults do want to be challenged in their faith and to dialogue with the world around them. However, if we are unwilling to provide a challenge and engage them, they tend to settle for the 'feel-good'. Our culture reaffirms and reinforces this 'feel-good' attitude. It is up to us as a Church to engage and challenge our young adults to follow and live the Gospel values.

4. Young adults are much too complex and complicated as a demographic. No one can effectively minister to them because we don't know what they want.

Response: Again, the focus should be on the person and not the program. All of the national research on young adults paints a clear picture as to what young adults want from the Church. The list includes belonging, a strong sense of community, spiritual direction, vibrant and prayerful liturgies, finding a community, shared similar values, an opportunity to meet other young adults, etc. Figure out which demographic(s) of young adults your parish is likely to

attract - single, married, married with children, etc., and offer opportunities to connect with those demographic(s).

5. Young adults are only interested in 'modern' and flashy worship

Response: Timeless and traditional practices usually are welcomed by young adults when carefully and thoughtfully planned, organized and well executed.

SOME SIMPLE DO'S AND DON'T'S FOR WORKING WITH YOUNG ADULTS

DO:

Talk about this booklet as a parish staff!

Let go of unhealthy misconceptions about young adults.

Trust that young adults can lead the parish.

Assume young adults want to be present.

Network with other parishes to reach young adults.

Schedule specific events for young adults (18-39) only.

Give young adults a chance to socialize with their peers.

Offer opportunities to grow in knowledge of the faith.

Be genuine when including them in parish events.

Offer flexibility in scheduling.

Offer incentives such as beverages, food or babysitting.

Provide opportunities/resources for families to grow in faith together.

Offer parenting tips and resources.

Talk with the pastor and parish council about being present to young adults.

Utilize technology.

Ensure that your registration process is 'young adult friendly'.

DON'T:

Assume one person can or should be responsible for reaching young adults.

Assume that you must implement all of these strategies - pick and choose which strategies will positively impact your parish.

Use young adults strictly for chaperoning and cleaning duties.

Assume they'll just register.

Assume they will volunteer on their own.

Mislead by marketing events 'young adult only' when others are invited.

Combine them with youth for ministry opportunities.

Offer overt 'match making' events for young adults.

A YOUNG ADULT PERSPECTIVE ON PARISH WEBSITES: “A DOZEN DO’S AND DON’TS”

“Thanks to the new communications media, the Lord can walk the streets of our cities and, stopping before the threshold of our homes and our hearts, say once more: ‘Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will enter his house and dine with him, and he with me.’” (Rev 3:20)

Pope Benedict XVI: *“The Priest and Pastoral Ministry in a Digital World: New Media at the Service of the Word.”*

The internet is fully integrated into our day to day lives. Having a website is expected for any business or church community. In fact, it is no longer adequate to merely have a website; you need to have a **useful** website. Young adults are in the habit of gathering information quickly online. If your parish’s web presence doesn’t answer their questions, they will go elsewhere.

DO:

- List your parish’s Mass and Confession times in a very visible place (ideally the front page) or access times by clicking ONE very prominent link. Keep things simple and uncluttered.
- Provide the main office phone number and street address in a prominent place on the front page. The address should be in text format so it can easily be copied and pasted into Google Maps or a GPS. If the address is part of an image, it isn’t helpful.
- Use a webmaster, web design service, or simple fill-in template (like Wordpress, for example). Unless you are very good with HTML and CSS coding, you run the risk of looking unprofessional if you try to make a website by yourself. Many of your parishioners may work in IT or web design. Ask for their assistance.
- Make sure the email addresses and phone numbers listed on the contact page are up-to-date and answer any email inquiries that come through the website.
- Have recent bulletins available on the website and /or a column of current parish events.
- If possible, (depending on your web hosting service), have a mobile version of your website. More and more people use smartphones to browse the internet on the go. You want to be available everywhere!

DON’T:

- Have too many names, categories or subcategories. If the site isn’t easy to navigate, people will leave.
- Use gimmicks in visual elements (like a flashing ‘Contact us!’ mailbox, for example). They are distracting and look unprofessional.
- Fill your site with ‘walls of text’. Unless the post is pastoral, (the weekly article, for example) or catechetical (explaining a sacramental process, for example) stick to bullet points, short sentences, and only essential facts. People are scanning for quick information. If they must read through too many paragraphs, they will lose interest and move on to another site.
- Play music in the background of the website. Nine times out of 10, it is annoying and might cause people to quickly leave your site.
- Link to other websites unless you are 100 percent sure that their content and creators are fully in alignment with the teachings of the Catholic Church. If you link to a website, you seem to be endorsing it. Make sure your links hold up under scrutiny. The USCCB would be great, whereas Suzi Q Catholic’s personal blog may not be.
- Use another person’s or parish’s photos or videos without crediting the source. Many free images are available from WikiCommons. Otherwise, be sure to have permission to use someone else’s work and cite that source. If you have photos of your parishioners, make sure that they have given you permission to use them. If there are photos of your youth, have express written permission from their parents/guardians and never include last names. Keeping our children safe is always Priority #1!



A word on domain names (i.e., the web address)

Domain names must walk the line between simplicity and uniqueness. There are hundreds of ‘St. Mary parishes’ in the world, so you’ll need to be a little more specific than www.stmary.com. However, if it is too long, complicated, or full of abbreviations, it won’t be helpful. www.smogcgbw.com or www.saintmaryofgreatcheesegreenbay.com won’t help people find you or remember you online.

If you already have a domain name, make sure to maintain it. If you decide to switch to a new address that is simpler or better, it is worth the cost to pay the fee to keep the old one active and automatically redirect visitors from the old site to the new one. Not only will this help people who haven’t updated their bookmarks, but it will prevent anyone else from buying your old domain name. Sometimes, companies buy old or unused church and school domain names and fill them with adult content; you definitely don’t want your parish name associated with that!

Now that your parish website is simple, professional, up-to-date and easy to use, the real work begins. The website is the gateway through which many people may find you. The relationships those people form at your parish, both with the Catholic community and with Jesus Christ, should be your prime focus. Keep your eyes on that goal!

St. Isadore of Seville, Patron of the internet, Pray for us!
- Maggie Melchior

“May the Lord make all of you enthusiastic heralds of the Gospel in the new ‘agora’ (place of assembly) which the current media are opening up.

Pope Benedict XVI



PRAYER TO WELCOME YOUNG ADULTS TO OUR CHURCH

Loving Father,

You ask us to go beyond where we are comfortable and safe. You ask of us a willingness to challenge, change, and grow in response to the demands of following You.

Expand our vision as we seek to intentionally recognize young adults in our midst and include them in our community.

We sometimes feel discouraged and frustrated. We work hard at what we do, care for our boats, tend our nets, and prepare for storms when the seas get rough, yet sometimes it seems our labors are in vain.

Grant that we may hear your voice and accept your direction and venture forth in obedience to your word.

Guide us, Lord, as we venture out into deep waters which might be less familiar, but where You call us to cast our nets. Guide us to the deep waters where the catch You have for us lies waiting, and strengthen our hands for the work it requires.

We pray this through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

RESOURCES

Books about young adults and working with young adults:

Boucher, Therese. *Evangelizing Unchurched Children: A Pocketbook for Catechists*.

Princeton NJ: www.catholic-evangelizer.com, 2008. 609-452-8594. Email: tmfboucher@comcast.net. Practical ways to reach out to evangelize unchurched children and their inactive Catholic families through faith stories, scripture, drama, sacraments and symbols exploring implications of the Church's General Directory for Catechists.

Carrol, Colleen. *The New Faithful: Why Young Adults are Embracing Christian Orthodoxy*.

Chicago, IL: Loyola Press, 2002. 3441 N. Ashland Ave. Chicago, IL 60657. (800) 621-1008, www.loyolabooks.org. Analysis of young adults who are finding Jesus Christ and a spiritual home in Evangelical and Catholic Christianity where orthodox teaching, tradition, evangelization, and social outreach are fostered.

Cusick, Fr. John and Katherine DeVries.

The Basic Guide to Young Adult Ministry.

Orbis Books, 2001. Box 308, Maryknoll, New York, 10545-0308, (800) 258-5838, www.orbisbooks.com. Proven program for ministering to and with young adults that is filled with sound principles and effective strategies.

Hayes, Mike.

Googling God: The Religious Landscape of People in their 20's and 30's.

Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2007. (800) 218-1903, www.paulistpress.com. Email: info@paulistpress.com. A how-to book on ministering to two distinct generations in the Catholic Church that includes a look at recent historical and technological changes and their effect on young adults.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Sons and Daughters of the Light: A Pastoral Plan for Ministry with Young Adults.

Washington, DC: USCCB, 1997. (800) 235-8722, www.usccb.org. Pastoral plan to encourage parishes and dioceses to recognize, support and motivate ministry with, by, and for young adults.

Smith, Christian.

Souls in Transition: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of Emerging Adults.

Oxford University Press, USA (September 14, 2009). Smith, a veteran sociologist of religion, and Snell, of the Center for the Study of Religion and Society at Notre Dame, draw on statistical samples and more than 200 in-depth interviews to craft a compelling portrait of college-age Americans. This generation, steeped in religious pluralism, gets high marks for inclusivity and diversity awareness but has troubling consumerist tendencies, consistently prioritizing material wealth and devaluing altruism. Although the book is heavy on survey data, tables and sociological typology, it's well-organized and seasoned with enough memorable interviews that readers will value it as much as specialists.

Young Adult Works: Binder Two - Evangelization and Outreach.

Center for Ministry Development, PO Box 699, Naugatuck, CT 06770, 203-723-1622, www.cmdnet.org. Email: joanweber@cmdnet.org.

Training and resources to equip teams of young adults, parish staffs and diocesan staffs for ministering.

Websites and Blog Spots:

The Vatican www.vatican.va
Papal encyclicals, official documents, news. The official site of the Catholic Church.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)
www.usccb.org
Official website of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

USCCB Young Adult Ministry Page
www.usccb.org/laity/ygadult/index2.shtml
Official page of the USCCB's young adult ministry section. Includes links and news to documents pertaining to young adults.

NCYAMA - The National Catholic Young Adult Ministry Association
www.ncyama.org
NCYAMA supports young adult ministers and young adults in a variety of ways. Subscribe to their free newsletter which contains ideas, resources and material pertinent to young adults.

The Diocese of Green Bay www.gbdioc.org
News and information from the Diocese of Green Bay

The Diocese of Green Bay's Young Adult Page
www.gbdioc.org/young-adults
Events, resources, news and information on young adult opportunities and groups from the Diocese of Green Bay. Sign up for our free young adult newsletter, 'Into the Light', written by young adults for young adults.

The Compass News www.thecompassnews.org
News, information, columns, photos, slide shows and calendar of events from the newspaper for the Diocese of Green Bay.

The New American Bible Online
www.usccb.org/nab/bible/index.shtml
Official Bible sanctioned by the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops.

Busted Halo www.bustedhalo.com
Very popular Paulist Fathers website aimed at those in their 20s and 30s seeking deeper meaning in their lives but who have had little to do with traditional religious institutions. Includes feature stories, reviews, interviews, faith guides, commentaries, and much more.

Sacred Space - Prayer & Meditation Online www.sacredspace.ie
Sacred Space is a prayer website which has achieved considerable fame since its foundation in 1999 by the Jesuit Communication Center in Ireland. The site is updated daily, guiding users through a 10-minute session of prayer centered on a passage of scripture.

Catholic Answers www.catholic.com
Featuring answers to questions on creation, scripture, salvation, and morals, Catholic Answers is one of the nation's largest lay-run apostolates of Catholic apologetics and evangelization. The site is dedicated to serving Christ by bringing the fullness of Catholic truth to the world.

Stuff Catholics Like! www.stuffcatholicslike.blogspot.com
This humorous blog aims to take a light-hearted look at Catholic things in a way that can be educational to Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

Spiritual Popcorn www.spiritualpopcorn.blogspot.com
An online discussion on the intersection of faith and film in popular culture today.

Conversion Diary www.concersiondiary.com
The diary of a former Atheist. Popular blog focusing on the story of one woman and her family's conversion from atheism to Catholicism.

Fallible Blogma www.fallibleblogma.com
Commentary by Matthew Warner, a Catholic blogger, speaker, musician and founder of FlockNote.com, on social and political issues.

Holy Priesthood www.brotherpriests.com
Blog by twin brother priests, Fathers Benjamin and Joel Sember of the Diocese of Green Bay.

Books likely to be attractive to young adults

Rediscovering Catholicism: Journeying Toward our Spirityal North Star - Matthew Kelly

Catholic Replies: Answers to over 800 of the most often asked questions about religious and moral issues - James J. Drummey

Surprised by the Truth: 11 Converts Give the Biblical and Historical Reasons for Becoming Catholic - Foreword by Scott Hahn

Why I am a Catholic - Gary Wills

The Essential Catholic Handbook - Cardinal Francis George

Catechism of the Catholic Church / United States Catholic Catechism for Adults - USCCB

Catholic Etiquette - Kay Lynn Isca

What Catholics Really Believe - Karl Keating

Catholicism for Dummies - John Trigilio, Jr. / Kenneth Brighenti

Why Do Catholics Do That? - Kevin Orlin Johnson

The New American Bible with the Revised Book of Psalms and the Revised New Testament - Confraternity of Christian Doctrine

A Shepherd Tends His Flock - Father John Girotti





Diocese of
Green Bay

For more information on young adult news and resources contact **Julianne Donlon-Stanz** in the Department of Education at (920) 272-8270 or jdonlon@gbdioc.org or check out www.gbdioc.org/young-adults