

PARISH YOUTH MINISTRY EVALUATION TOOL

The greater the availability of religiously grounded relationships, activities, programs, opportunities, and challenges for teenagers, the more likely teenagers are to be religiously engaged and invested. “Religious congregations that prioritize ministry to youth and support for their parents, invest in trained and skilled youth group leaders, and make a serious effort to engage and teach adolescents seem much more likely to draw youth into their religious lives and to foster religious and spiritual maturity in their young members” (Soul Searching Dr. Christian Smith 261-262). Scientific research has verified what many believed. Comprehensive youth ministry makes a significant difference, done in partnership with parents, in the context of a vibrant and welcoming faith community. Please use this parish youth ministry evaluation tool in order to assess and enliven the parish ministry with youth.

I. Coordinator of Youth Ministry

“...Analysis shows that the presence of a full-time youth minister in the congregation, compared to no designated youth minister at all, significantly increases those teens’ (who attend on their own without parents) attendance” (Soul Searching, Smith 113-114). However, the study found that only 21% of Catholic parishes employ full-time youth ministry leaders, compared with 30% for all denominations. The leading denominations with an institutional commitment to youth ministry and formation were the conservative Protestants, 44% of which have a full-time youth minister (51).

		Lowest	Highest
1.	The Parish/Cluster financially supports the Coor. of Youth Ministry. (CYM)		
a.	Salary commensurate with education and experience in accord with Diocesan guidelines	1	10
b.	Compensation given for conferences and professional growth	1	10
c.	Financial assistance for theology courses, if person is not degreed in theology	1	10
2.	The CYM:		
a.	Seeks to enhance personal knowledge of the Church’s doctrine and moral life	1	10
b.	Seeks opportunities for professional growth	1	10
c.	Seeks to enhance personal spiritual growth	1	10
d.	Maintains a balance in personal and professional life	1	10
3.	The CYM strives to recruit and retain competent and committed staff.	1	10
4.	The CYM provides and promotes learning opportunities for youth ministry leaders by:		
a.	Encouraging attendance at diocesan or regional events and conferences	1	10
b.	Collaborating with other pastoral leadership in addressing religious issues and concerns	1	10
c.	Providing inservices or resources for youth ministry skills	1	10
d.	Providing theological formation and understanding of Church teachings (e.g. in-services, speakers)	1	10
e.	Familiarizing youth ministry leaders with pertinent legal procedures	1	10

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|-----|--|--------------|
| 5. | The CYM is attentive to diverse cultures, languages, and family traditions. | 1.10 |
| 6. | The CYM has an in depth knowledge of the Vision of Youth Ministry as described in Renewing the Vision . | 1.10 |
| 7. | The CYM is made aware of and encouraged to seek diocesan certification. | 1.10 |
| 8. | The CYM has a written job description. | 1.10 |
| 9. | The CYM receives a yearly evaluation that includes: | |
| | a. A self-evaluation tool | 1.10 |
| | b. Affirmation of strengths | 1.10 |
| | c. Opportunity for goal setting | 1.10 |
| 10. | The CYM is invited to staff meetings held on a regular basis. | 1.10 |
| | How often: Weekly_____ Monthly_____ Other_____ | |

Parish Plan for Coordinator of Youth Ministry

1. What we are currently doing?

- a. List those areas that are rated 8 or higher.

- b. List those areas that are rated 5 or lower.

- c. Of those rated 5 or lower identify priorities for improvement.

- d. Discuss options for addressing these areas.

- e. Develop a five year plan with steps and concrete targets to reach these goals.

II. A FRAMEWORK FOR COMPREHENSIVE MINISTRY WITH ADOLESCENTS

In **Renewing the Vision**, the United States Catholic Bishops offer a framework for Catholic Youth Ministry. This vision does not provide a program model or a prescriptive method for developing ministry. Rather, it offers a framework, a structure that has room for a variety of parishes to develop youth ministry in a variety of ways. You may find **Renewing the Vision** at <http://www.sjym.org/compyouth.htm>.

A. DEFINITION OF CATHOLIC YOUTH MINISTRY

“Youth Ministry is the response of the Christian Community to the needs of young people and the sharing of the unique gifts of youth with the larger community” (RTV 1).

B. THREE GOALS OF CATHOLIC YOUTH MINISTRY

In **Renewing the Vision**, three goals serve as directions for ministry with youth.

1. Empowerment
“To empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today.” (RTV 9)
2. Participation
“To draw young people to responsible participation in the life, mission, and work of the Catholic faith community.” (RTV 11)
3. Growth
“To foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person.” (RTV 15)

Parish Plan for Goals of Youth Ministry

1. What we are currently doing

- a. List all programs for youth and determine which goals are addressed in these programs.
- b. Which goal is addressed most often?
- c. Which goal is addressed least often?
- d. Of the goal appearing the least often list priorities for improvement.
- e. Discuss options for addressing these areas.
- f. Develop a five year plan with steps and concrete targets to reach all three goals.

III. THEMES OF COMPREHENSIVE YOUTH MINISTRY

A. DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE

- | | | Lowest | Highest |
|----|---|---------------|----------------|
| 1. | Youth Ministry responds to the needs of youth in accord with their age and developmental level. | 1 | 10 |
| 2. | Adults who work with youth are made aware of the needs of adolescents. | 1 | 10 |

B. FAMILY FRIENDLY “The best social predictor, although not a guarantee, of what the religious and spiritual lives of youth *will* [emphasis added] look like is what the religious and spiritual lives of their parents *do* look like” (Smith 261). The single most important influence on the religious and spiritual lives of adolescents is their parents. Soul Searching, Dr. Christian Smith

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|----|--|-------------|----|
| 1. | Parents are engaged as partners in ministry with youth and are included in planning and evaluation of youth ministry efforts.
Describe: | 1 | 10 |
| 2. | Parents receive formation material that correlates with youth ministry formation.
Describe: | 1 | 10 |
| 3. | Opportunities are provided for parents and teens to come together.
Describe: | 1 | 10 |

C. INTERGENERATIONAL

- | | | | |
|----|--|-------------|----|
| 1. | Opportunities are provided for interaction among different generations.

Describe: | 1 | 10 |
|----|--|-------------|----|

D. MULTICULTURAL

- | | | | |
|----|--|-------------|----|
| 1. | Opportunities are provided for youth to grow in awareness of different cultures and ethnic backgrounds.

Describe: | 1 | 10 |
|----|--|-------------|----|

E. COMMUNITY-WIDE COLLABORATION

- | | | | |
|----|--|-------------|----|
| 1. | Youth Ministry staff work with other community organizations for the benefit of youth. | 1 | 10 |
|----|--|-------------|----|

Describe:

- | | | Lowest | Highest |
|----|---|---------------|----------------|
| 2. | There is interaction between the parish staff and the public school system. | 1..... | 10 |
| 3. | If there is a Catholic High School, parish ministry collaborates with the school in the formation of the youth. | 1..... | 10 |

Describe:

F. LEADERSHIP

- | | | | |
|----|--|--------|----|
| 1. | Youth ministry encourages individuals from the faith community to become involved. | 1..... | 10 |
| 2. | Youth ministry allows for the varying time commitments and talents of the greater community. | 1..... | 10 |

G. FLEXIBLE AND ADAPTABLE PROGRAMMING

- | | | | |
|----|--|--------|----|
| 1. | The busyness of people's schedules is taken into account in ministry planning. | 1..... | 10 |
|----|--|--------|----|

Parish Plan for Themes of Youth Ministry

1. What we are currently doing

- a. List those areas that are rated 8 or higher.

- b. List those areas that are rated 5 or lower.

- c. Of those rated 5 or lower identify priorities for improvement.

- d. Discuss options for addressing these areas.

- e. Develop a five year plan with steps and concrete targets to reach these goals.

IV. COMPONENTS OF COMPREHENSIVE YOUTH MINISTRY

The vast majority of U.S. teenagers are "...incredibly inarticulate about their faith, their religious beliefs and practices, and its meaning or place in their lives" (Smith 131). This was true even for teenagers who regularly attend church. Religion is in the background of their lives, unfocused and implicit, important but not a priority, valued but not invested in and praised but not describable (Soul Searching, Dr. Christian Smith 262). It is critical that we not only catechize our youth but we effectively evangelize them, leading them to a deeper love for God that will in turn ignite a desire to grow in the understanding of their faith. Ministry without effective evangelization is pointless. Without effective catechesis, and other aspects of effective ministry with teens, it serves as momentary spiritual entertainment which does not initiate or sustain conversion.

The components are advocacy, catechesis, community life, evangelization, justice and service, leadership development, pastoral care, and prayer and worship.

Reflection on several of the components has been integrated into other portions of this assessment. Remaining components are described below.

A. ADVOCACY

		Lowest	Highest
1.	Youth of the parish/cluster have the opportunity to evaluate the ministries that affect them.	1.....	10
2.	Youth are represented on other parish leadership and planning groups. Describe representation:	1.....	10
3.	There is a paid parish staff member who advocates For ministry with, to, by and for youth. Describe:	1.....	10

B. CATECHESIS

1.	Catechesis is offered for grades 9-12.	1.....	10
2.	Scope and sequence of Church teaching is understood and implemented.	1.....	10
3.	Catechetical knowledge translates into daily moral behavior.	1.....	10

Note: Other statements under Message (pp. 4-5 are pertinent to youth.

C. COMMUNITY LIFE

Lowest Highest

1. Opportunities for community building and maintenance are offered for youth. 1.....10

Describe:

2. Do youth group meetings occur? ___weekly, ___ monthly, ___other
If other, please explain.

3. Youth are given opportunities to socialize and build relationships with one another and adult leaders. 1.....10

4. Youth gatherings provide opportunities for:
- a. Prayer and worship 1.....10
 - b. Scripture reflection 1.....10
 - c. Icebreakers or mixers 1.....10
 - d. Asking questions and sharing faith 1.....10
 - e. Socialization and relationship building 1.....10

5. Opportunities to explore teen issues in the light of faith are provided. 1.....10

6. Opportunities for relationship building between youth and the parish community (service with other parish organizations, mentoring of youth in liturgical ministries, etc.) are provided. 1.....10

Describe:

D. EVANGELIZATION

1. Which of the following diocesan and national programs designed to ignite the faith of youth do your youth participate in (circle those program your youth attended in the last two years):

Middle School Rally High School Jamboree
NCYC Steubenville Other_____

2. Describe local programs your parish/area offers for youth (e.g. overnight retreats, food fasts, service trips, chastity programs, etc.)

E. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Lowest Highest

1. Opportunities are provided for youth to give witness talks. 110

2. Leadership formation opportunities are provided for youth. 110

- Basic Training Overnight Diocesan Youth Leadership Camp
- Liturgical Training in Parish Catechist In-Services
- Core Group Leadership Retreats Training for Parish Ministries
- Other _____

3. A Youth Ministry Team, made up of youth and adults, is in place. 110

4. Preparation or training is offered to adult and youth leaders to help them understand comprehensive youth ministry and how to share the good news through positive relationships with teens. 110

Describe:

F. PASTORAL CARE

1. Training is provided for peer ministry development. 110

- Listening Skills Relational Skills
- Conflict Management Skills Faith Sharing Skills
- Mentoring Skills Referral Skills
- Other _____

2. Training is offered for adult leaders so that they may respond to the needs of youth. 110

- Listening Skills Relational Skills
- Conflict Management Skills Faith Sharing Skills
- Mentoring Skills Referral Skills
- Other _____

3. Youth ministry personnel work with wider community agencies in providing direct aid to youth at risk. 110

Describe:

4. Ministerial opportunities are offered to strengthen the family and parent/teen relationships. 110

Describe:

5. Resources (e.g. discussions, materials) are provided for 110

youth that are relevant to issues in their lives.

G. PRAYER AND WORSHIP

	Lowest	Highest
1. Prayer is incorporated whenever youth or families gather.	1	10
2. Particular holy days/seasons of the Church year/saints days are:		
a. Acknowledged through prayer.	1	10
b. Used as catechetical opportunities	1	10
3. Youth ministry leaders are encouraged to make a space in their gathering space.	1	10
4. Parents are invited to participate in special prayer services throughout the year.	1	10
Describe:		
5. There are opportunities for students to plan prayer services and liturgy.	1	10
Describe:		
6. Inservice is provided for youth ministry leaders pertinent to:		
a. Liturgy planning	1	10
b. Forms of prayer	1	10
c. Available resources	1	10
7. Youth ministry leaders are given opportunities to develop prayer planning skills.	1	10
Describe:		
8. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated with the youth at least twice a year.	1	10

Comments and concerns over any part of Section G, Prayer and Worship:

H. SOCIAL JUSTICE & SERVICE

Lowest Highest

1. Social justice issues and addressed in the faith formation programs through:
- a. Education 1.....10
 - b. Service activities 1.....10
- Describe:
2. Outside resources are used in teaching social justice issues (e.g. speakers, videos, materials from particular groups). 1.....10
- List what you have found beneficial.
3. Youth have a voice in the planning of service opportunities through which their gifts can be utilized for the common good. 1.....10
- Describe:
4. Youth participate in:
- a. Visits to local nursing homes, retirement facilities, and homebound persons 1.....10
 - b. Assistance with the Confirmation program 1.....10
 - c. Group projects to benefit local or global ministry for the poor. 1.....10
 - d. Service trips with adults of the parish or family members. 1.....10
 - e. Parish programming for younger children as mentors or aids 1.....10
 - f. Other_____ 1.....10
5. It is evident the parish community encourages youth of the parish to do acts of loving service to:
- a. Family members 1.....10
 - b. Peers 1.....10
 - c. Others 1.....10
6. The faith formation program promotes family service activities. 1.....10

Comments or concerns over any part of Section H, Social Justice & Service:

Parish Plan for Components of Youth Ministry

1. What we are currently doing

- a. List those areas that are rated 8 or higher.

- b. List those areas that are rated 5 or lower.

- c. Of those rated 5 or lower identify priorities for improvement.

- d. Discuss options for addressing these areas.

- e. Develop a five year plan with steps and concrete targets to reach these goals.

PARISH YOUTH MINISTRY FIVE YEAR PLAN

Compile a summary of your five year plan from the previous sections and develop from those sections one comprehensive five year plan listing in order of priority and chronologically.

Develop a plan of ongoing re-evaluation of your success in reaching these goals and new insights to apply to your implementation of your plan. Schedule as precisely as possible months of the year in which meetings for assessment will be set.