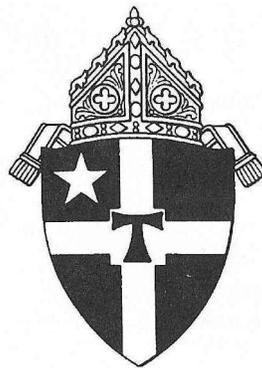




Policies and Procedures Manual

**Office of Youth Ministry
Archdiocese of San Antonio**

Youth is the heart of who we are
°2009



Chapter 1

A Vision For Catholic Youth Ministry

The great changes in society during the 1960's and the revitalization of the institutional Church following the Second Vatican Council, provided the context for the rethinking and articulation of effective youth work in the Catholic Church. Thus, in 1976 the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops published *A Vision of Youth Ministry*.¹ This document set the Church in the United States on the road toward what has been termed, "comprehensive youth ministry."

In 1997 that document was revisited and "expanded to address the call to personal discipleship, evangelization, and leadership."² *Renewing the Vision: a framework for Catholic Youth Ministry* builds on the tradition begun in 1976.

One of the foundations of the vision is the connection of youth ministry with the overall mission of the Church. While parishes must choose the methods, leaders and programs that

best match their particular resources and community, providing for ministry to youth is NOT optional or peripheral to parish life: it is integral and necessary that youth are attended to and included in the Church's threefold mission of community, message and service.

A second foundation centers Jesus as the model of the Church's ministry on behalf of adolescents. The gospel story of Jesus' encounter with the disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35) captures the dynamics of a ministry which is fundamentally relational and manifested by the actions of presence, listening, responding and empowering. Thus, this ministry is firmly rooted in the person and gospel of Jesus Christ, and it calls leaders to constantly invite young people to imitate Jesus' action of service to others, especially the forgotten in society.

A. Definition of Catholic Youth Ministry

The *Vision* document defines youth ministry as "... 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."³ For the purpose of these Guidelines, the terms "youth" or "adolescent" refers to two groups: early adolescence (ages 10/11-14/15) and late adolescence (ages 15/16-18/19).

B. Goals of Catholic Youth Ministry

Catholic Youth Ministry has three major goals:

- To empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today.
- To draw young people to responsible participation in the life, mission and work of the faith community. And;
- To foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person.

¹ Department of Education, *A Vision of Youth Ministry*, bi-lingual edition (Washington, D.C.: USCC, 1986).

² Department of Education, , (Washington, D.C.: USCC, 1997).

³ Department of Education, *A Vision of Youth Ministry*, bi-lingual edition (Washington, D.C.: USCC, 1986). p.6.

C. The Context of Catholic Youth Ministry in the Archdiocese of San Antonio

Ministry occurs within a given social, cultural and religious context or perspective. Each of these exerts an important influence on those being served and thus must be considered before designing the specific form of the ministry.

Within the Archdiocese of San Antonio there exists a diversity of racial, ethnic, financial and geographic perspectives, the knowledge of which will enhance the effectiveness of the parish's ministry to youth.

Family Perspective

The primacy of parents and guardians in the catechesis of their children must be recognized. As such, they must be partners on the team that forms the faith of youth. Further, the needs of families, parents and guardians must be considered when designing programmatic activities that are part of the parish ministry.

Cultural Perspective

South Central Texas is rich in its cultural and racial heritage: African-Americans, Asians, Hispanics and Europeans form the mosaic of the local Church. Each culture brings its own language, customs, special needs, value systems, leadership and relational patterns, as well as particular signs and symbols that carry faith for them. Catholic Youth Ministry seeks to affirm youth in their culture, minister to them within that context and promote the appreciation of all cultures through cross cultural experiences. In this way, parish youth ministries play an essential role in diminishing the evil of racism that has been so destructive in society.

Urban/Rural/Suburban Perspective

The Archdiocese of San Antonio is composed of twenty-three counties representing a wide variety of parish settings: rural cities bordering

Mexico; rural farming, ranching and petroleum producing towns; suburban communities surrounding San Antonio in Bexar county; suburban/rural towns in counties bordering Bexar; and urban and center city communities.

The following is a generalized description of characteristics for each of these settings.

- Parishes in **rural/small town settings** are characterized by smaller numbers, greater distances, fewer resources, and usually are family/community-centered and more closely knit. Catholic Youth Ministry in this setting should seek partnerships with other parish ministries, community events, school activities and other religious traditions in the community. Further, parishes are encouraged to plan youth activities with other Catholic parishes in their area and to avail themselves of Archdiocesan youth ministry services.
- Parishes in **suburban settings** generally serve a constituency that is large in numbers, more homogeneous, has adequate financial resources and possesses more options for youth. These parishes are encouraged to provide a wide variety of opportunities in varied formats, and to develop partnerships with other Catholic parishes in their area and with parishes that have fewer resources.
- Catholic parishes in **urban settings** are characterized by fewer financial resources, large numbers, critical youth and family needs, often violence, and a strong sense of parish identity. These parishes are encouraged to offer a place where youth are safe and are personally supported, positive activities and more attention to the social needs of youth. Partnerships with other Catholic parishes, youth serving agencies in the community and schools are strongly recommended.
- Catholic parishes in **center city settings** share some of the same characteristics of urban parishes; however, numbers of youth

tend to be smaller and these parishes serve both a geographically dispersed population as well as transient and tourist populations. These parishes are encouraged to offer outreach efforts and a greater focus on immediate, critical needs of youth as essential ingredients of their ministry.

Summarizing the urban, rural, suburban perspective, parishes need to: Know their community and neighborhood and program around those needs; avoid competition within the parish and with other youth serving agencies; and seek partnerships wherever possible.

Economic Perspective

Since Catholic parishes exist in many geographic settings, they also reflect the economic characteristics of the neighborhoods and communities they serve. Thus, there exists among the parishes of the Archdiocese of San Antonio a significant wealth disparity. Often parishes that have the greatest need for a viable youth ministry have the least resources and have to make a greater effort in order to provide services.

While being respectful of each parish community's individual rights, Catholic Youth Ministry in the Archdiocese of San Antonio challenges parish leaders to recognize a jointly shared responsibility to all Catholic youth, regardless of where they live.

Parishes are called to be communities of solidarity. Catholic social teaching more than anything else insists that we are one family; it calls us to overcome barriers of race, religion, ethnicity, gender, **economic status** (emphasis added), and nationality. We are one in Christ Jesus (cf. Gal 3:28)—beyond our difference and boundaries.⁴

Further, youth ministers are encouraged to provide and to avail themselves of opportunities where youth from different economic backgrounds can come together to develop relationships and appreciate their common faith tradition.

D. Components of Catholic Youth Ministry

Thus far the goals and contexts for Catholic Youth Ministry have been discussed—factors which provide a foundation and framework for the Church's ministry on behalf of adolescents in the Archdiocese of San Antonio. Now it is necessary to proceed to a more concrete level of what this means practically in parishes.

Renewing the Vision: A framework for Catholic Youth Ministry speaks of eight components which make up this ministry. These might be viewed as organizational sections that are part of a **Comprehensive Youth Ministry**. They can also be considered *opportunities* that are provided for youth as a response to needs.

The components for Catholic Youth Ministry are not separate programs. They are the essential ingredients that comprise a balanced program. Many programs touch upon more than one component, and all of the components are supportive of the goals for Catholic Youth Ministry. The following listing represents a brief explanation of components for effective youth ministry.

Advocacy

Advocacy in youth ministry is an ongoing and pervasive commitment to listening, interpreting and speaking for youth within the Church and

⁴National Catholic Conference of Bishops, *Communities of Salt and Light: Reflections on the Social Mission of the Parish* (Washington, D.C.: USCC, 1994), p. 10.

the larger community. This is especially true in areas of injustice toward or oppression of youth. It calls for adults to act with or on behalf of youth for a change in systems which create injustice, and it gives young people a voice which empowers them to address the social problems that they face.

Catechesis

Being in relationship with Jesus Christ and the faith community demands that systematic and ongoing formation and education be available to help youth understand the content of Catholic Christianity, its history and application to their lives. Traditionally, we have referred to this effort as "catechesis." Catechesis can be accomplished through classes which are age or interest appropriate and are offered in a variety of formats and time periods. Catechesis also occurs through other experiences such as retreats, liturgy, workshops, conferences, service and preparation for sacraments.

Community Life

Opportunities for creating community help young people to develop relationships among themselves and with caring adult leaders and the community as a whole. They are intended to help youth experience membership and acceptance in a vibrant, caring, and fun filled community of faith. These experiences may take the form of interactive games and ice-breakers, sharing meals together, participating in parish events, trips, dances and athletics.

Evangelization

The initial effort by the faith community as a whole to proclaim through word and witness the Good News of the Gospel to those who have not yet heard or seen it, and then to invite those persons into a relationship with Jesus Christ and the community of believers.”⁵

Socials, school campuses, malls, athletic events and the streets are some examples of points of contact for evangelization with youth.

Justice and Service

Opportunities for service and action on behalf of justice call youth to experience and appreciate the concrete application of the Gospel to the needs of others. While service projects such as cleaning parish grounds, visiting the sick or elderly, food and clothing drives and repairing homes are praiseworthy, the development of a Christian social consciousness as a thread throughout the lived experiences of youth must be the goal of this component.

Leadership development

Through an intentional concern for developing leadership, youth and adults are helped to recognize their gifts and talents, and they are offered training, guidance and support so that their gifts might be used for the benefit of youth ministry in the parish. Opportunities for formation in ministry, personal and spiritual development and skills training are essential for adults working with youth and for youth who have leadership potential. The individual minister and the parish community share the responsibility for ongoing formation.

Pastoral Care

Pastoral care is that effort which responds to the profound needs of modern youth for personal and spiritual direction, vocational guidance and reconciliation that heals the wounds of alienation. Being present with youth during times of crisis and stress, developing skills in communication and problem solving, listening, providing resources for timely intervention when there are suicide attempts, substance abuse, family problems and pregnancy, etc. are

⁵National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry, *The Challenge of Catholic Youth Evangelization: Called to be Witnesses and Storytellers* (New Rochelle: Don Bosco Multimedia, 1993), p.3.

ways which this component becomes real for youth.

Prayer and Worship

Opportunities for prayer and worship help youth to deepen and celebrate their relationship with God and to discern how this relationship influences the way they live with one another. Integrating prayer in all activities for youth, meaningful liturgies where they are ministers as well as celebrants, penitential services, retreats which are integral to the total ministry and guidance in personal prayer are but a few examples of the experiences which can be made available to youth.

E. Implementing A Comprehensive Catholic Youth Ministry

Implementing the goals and components of Catholic Youth Ministry has resulted in a great diversity of programs and processes in the parishes of the Archdiocese. At the same time, Catholic Youth Ministry has often been confused with a particular form of ministry; this has been especially true of "youth groups."

Youth groups have been a prevalent way of ministering to young people. However, recent experience has revealed the limitations of relying upon this form as the whole of parish youth ministry. Many parishes have discovered that a more comprehensive approach which focuses upon many different groupings based on need and interest can be more effective. Both approaches can be contrasted in the following way:⁶

Group Ministry starts with a group and asks others to join. The assumptions in this approach are that:

- youth needs are similar
- youth like to join groups

- youth are available at the same time
- one or a few adults can meet the needs of the group

Comprehensive Youth Ministry begins with a team of adults and youth that are formed for ministry. The assumptions in this approach are that:

- youth have different needs
- youth like to choose how to be involved
- youth have hectic schedules
- many people doing a little can get more accomplished
- young people benefit by having a variety of adults to relate to

Comprehensive Youth Ministry is the approach recommended by the Office of Youth Ministry, for these reasons: It reflects more accurately the reality of youth in today's society; It is effective both in terms of time and cost; It is the best use of human resources in the parish; and It is more consistent with ministry in the Catholic Church which seeks the transformation of humanity and the conversion of the wider culture.⁷

Whatever form Catholic Youth Ministry takes in a particular parish, it is important to keep in mind that effective implementation will require that:

- Programming is based on the needs of the parish and the neighborhood community in which the parish is located.
- A team of persons is responsible for implementing the various components of Catholic Youth Ministry.
- The parish community commits adequate financial resources to ensure the viability of the ministry.
- The pastor be active and visible in his

⁶ John Roberto, *Guides to Youth Ministry: Leadership*, unpublished (Naugatuck: Center for Youth Ministry Development, 1993), pp. 85-86.

⁷ Pope Paul VI, *On Evangelization in the Modern World* (Washington, D.C.: USCC, 1975), ¶20.

support of the efforts of the parish youth ministry team.

F. Concluding Comments

Renewing the Vision: A framework for Catholic Youth Ministry presents a challenge for all those concerned about young people. There is much to be learned and integrated into the way parishes do ministry with youth. There is also a need to unlearn some things and to embrace change in order to respond to new realities. A fundamental attitudinal change is to recognize that Catholic youth ministry is not a group that youth join. Rather, membership comes through baptism into the Christian community, and through membership in the human family. Thus, the invitation to participate is offered to all youth and all youth are welcome at all events, programs, etc. If parishes can broaden their vision of whom they serve, they will, indeed, model the inclusive servant leadership of Jesus in the Gospel.

Chapter 2

Leadership for Catholic Youth Ministry

Comprehensive Youth Ministry, as described in the previous section, requires the leadership of adults who are properly prepared with the knowledge and competencies to be effective in this important ministry of the Church. In speaking of lay people who “devote themselves permanently or temporarily to a service in the Church,” *The Revised Code of Canon Law* states that they, “are obligated to acquire the appropriate formation which is required to fulfill their function properly and carry it out conscientiously, zealously, and diligently.”¹

Cognizant of the serious responsibility to the youth of our Church, the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry has developed *Competency Based Standards for the Coordinator of Youth Ministry*.² While specifically intended for the role of “Coordinator” of this ministry, most of these standards also apply to all adults involved in ministry to and with youth.

A. Definition of Leadership Roles

The primary leadership for youth ministry resides with the parish faith community. Youth ministry is not to be centered in an individual, but happens most effectively when viewed as a process directed by a team of adults and youth who are facilitated by the parish Coordinator of Youth Ministries. The parish supports them as they take responsibility for developing ministry to, with, by, and for young people.

The Role of Coordinator of Youth Ministries

The Coordinator of Youth Ministries is the person in a supervisory position over other adults as well as youth, who is capable of designing, implementing, and coordinating a comprehensive youth ministry. This person may be full or part time, salaried or volunteer, but, in any case, is recognized and commissioned by the pastor, pastoral staff, and parish as the Coordinator of Youth Ministry (Hereafter, CYM).

The Role of the Youth Ministry Team

The Youth Ministry Team consists of those adults and youth who assist the CYM in the planning, implementation, and facilitation of comprehensive youth ministry in the parish.

In responding to the total young person, this team will make use of the complementary skills of catechists, liturgists, coaches, young adults, counselors, parents, family life ministers, teachers, etc. “Part of the vision of youth ministry is to present to youth the richness of the person of Christ, which perhaps exceeds the ability of one person to capture, but which might be effected by the collective and *collaborative* ministry of the many persons who make up the Church.”³

¹ Joseph A. Corider et al., eds., *Revised Code of Canon Law* (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), Canon 231 §1.

² Committee on Certification and Accreditation, *NFCYM Competency-Based Standards for the Coordinator of Youth Ministry* (Washington, D.C.: NFCYM, 1990).

³ Department of Education, *A Vision of Youth Ministry*, bi-lingual edition, (Washington, D.C.: USCC, 1986), p. 24.

The Role of Parents

A critical element in the success of any ministry to and with adolescents is the active inclusion and support of parents. The place of parents in parish youth ministry programming has been mentioned before in this document, but a final word about developing a family perspective in our ministry is warranted here.

The *Renewing the Vision* document states; “A family is our first community and the most basic way in which the Lord gathers us forms us, and acts in the world, (p.8). We believe that family life is sacred because family relationships confirm and deepen family members’ union with God and allow God’s Spirit to work through them.” (RTV p. 11-12).

The focus on the importance of family is reiterated by the USCCB: “The family shares in the life and mission of the Church by becoming a believing and evangelizing community, a community in dialogue with God, and a community at the service of humanity.”⁴

Quoting Pope John Paul II in a homily delivered in Perth, Australia, November 30, 1986, the bishops go on to say: “The family is the domestic church . . . The home is the Church in miniature. (Like the Church) the family is a community of faith and love. It educates and leads its members to their full human maturity and it serves the good of all along the road of life . . . The future of the world and of the Church pass by way of the family.”⁵

Remembering that parents are the prime educators of their children, the CYM should consider the following:

- consultation with parents when assessing needs for a parish youth ministry
- inclusion of a parent perspective on the core planning team
- informational materials updating parents on

programming and special events

- development of programming ideas that
 - ⇒ aid parents in improving their parenting skills
 - ⇒ facilitate parent/teen communication skills
 - ⇒ promote faith sharing and prayer at home, etc.

Ministry to and with youth in a parish setting demands a collaborative approach involving parents and families. CYMs are urged to listen to parents and to help them articulate what they want for their adolescents involving parents in programming that meets those needs.

B. Competency-Based Standards for the Coordinator of Youth Ministry

These standards present the CYM with a self-assessment tool which guides him or her in developing the proficiency which this ministry demands. The CYM will be committed to ongoing personal enrichment and learning. The particular cultural and geographic setting, as well as the context in which youth ministry is carried out and the size and location of the community, will require additional skills and/or modifications in these standards.

The Office of Youth Ministry for the Archdiocese of San Antonio makes available training on each of the competency levels. These trainings provide both initial training and in-service training, as well as ongoing enrichment. Training is also available for those seeking professional certification.

Our office suggests that the text of the *National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry Competency Based Standards for the Coordinator of Youth Ministry* publication be obtained for a more in-depth understanding of youth, and

⁴ National Catholic Conference of Catholic Bishops, *A Family Perspective In Church And Society: A Manual For All Pastoral Leaders*, (Washington, D.C.: USCC, 1988), p. 21.

⁵ Ibid.

continued personal, spiritual, and professional growth. Additionally, our staff is available to pastors, pastoral staffs, and councils in order to guide them in continued educational and spiritual maturity.

Person of the Minister

The minister has an “understanding of vocation, the work of the Gospel, mission and ministry of the Church as a personal and professional lifestyle.”⁶

The CYM is a person whose faith has been formed in the Catholic theological tradition and who strives to live a life guided by the Gospel, rooted by regular personal prayer, and lived out in the Catholic faith community.

Theology and Spirituality

The minister recognizes the need for “study, understanding, and application of Catholic theology as core to the vocation of ministry.”⁷ A CYM’s faith has been formed in the Catholic theological tradition; a CYM is knowledgeable in Sacred Scripture, Christology, Ecclesiology, Catholic Doctrine, Sacramental and Moral Theology, and Ecumenism.

Leadership and Administration

The CYM develops and manages structures and processes that enable youth, as well as adult co-ministers, in their personal growth, group interaction and development, aimed at effective integration of all dimensions of youth ministry.⁸

A CYM is an effective leader and administrator; skilled in communication, pastoral planning, budgeting, liability issues, and managing teams of volunteers.

Foundations of Youth Ministry

The CYM is familiar with “adolescent maturing

patterns, physical, sexual, intellectual, social and emotional behavior and attitudes.”⁹ He or she recognizes the impact of adolescent development on faith. Knowledge and competency are necessary in:

- adolescent development
- principles of Catholic youth ministry
- components of Catholic youth ministry
- family and multicultural perspective in youth ministry
- documents and resources in youth ministry

Cultural Applications

The *Competency-Based Standards* also develop cultural applications of the standards, realizing that the “application of the knowledge and competencies pointed to in these standards could look different in rural and urban settings, schools and retreat centers, scouting and athletics, and larger and smaller parishes. Likewise, the standards were designed to be broad enough to [embrace] cross cultural settings. It is strongly noted that those adults ministering to youth within a specific cultural background may require knowledge and skills beyond the basic foundation presented ...”¹⁰

Therefore, CYM’s ministering in rural, urban, African American, Asian, Hispanic military, Native American, etc., settings will require specialized knowledge and competencies to meet the needs of these young people. The Office of Youth Ministry strongly recommends and urges CYM’s to acquire the sensitivity, knowledge, and skills necessary for ministry in these settings.

⁶ Committee on Certification and Accreditation, *NFCYM Competency-Based Standards*, p. 1.

⁷ Committee on Certification and Accreditation, *NFCYM Competency-Based Standards*, p. 2.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 5, 7

⁹ *Hiring for Youth Ministry: A Process for Success*

¹⁰ Committee on Certification and Accreditation, *NFCYM Competency-Based Standards*, p. vi.

C. Code of Ethics for Youth Ministry

Leaders

The National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry, (NFCYM), developed and approved a Code of Ethics for use by all youth ministry leaders. *See Attachment 2-1.* This Code of Ethics should be used to educate those working with youth, their families, and church about acceptable behavior and ethical standards. A code of ethics is one of the ways sociologists (at least) decide whether or not a particular occupation is a formal profession or not. As Catholics, we have a natural code of ethics in the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes, and the precepts of the church. As lay ecclesial ministers serving as youth ministry leaders, our Code of Ethics formalizes our commitment to the young people, their families, and the church we serve. It is in the signing of this code that lay ecclesial ministers commit themselves to professionalism within their field and the church. They agree to conform their behavior to the Code while working with young people. The Office of Youth Ministry recommends that all youth ministry leaders sign a copy of this code which should be kept by the CYM.

D. Recommended Minimum Qualifications and Competencies for CYM

The *Competency-Based Standards* provide a comprehensive picture of the knowledge and competency needed for the role of CYM. Parishes are not always able, however, to find someone for the role of CYM who has such competencies and knowledge at the outset. Therefore, we offer the following minimum qualifications for use in discerning whether a person could be considered for the role of

CYM. Once so discerned, the pastor and pastoral council will require and provide for ongoing training for the CYM that will result in attaining the above mentioned competencies.

Personal Qualities

- commitment to Catholic Christianity evidenced by an active prayer life and participation in the sacramental life and mission of the Church
- genuine love for youth and a desire to advocate on their behalf
- demonstration of a balanced lifestyle and healthy adult relationships
- commitment to on-going professional training and spiritual development
- demonstration of age appropriate behavior and maturity.

It is appropriate, at this point, to address the issue of age. There is a tendency to consider young adults, usually between the ages of 20 - 22, for the role of CYM. (See *Chapter 3 Driving Age Requirements To Transport Youth.*) Considering the scope of responsibilities, the minimum education, experience, knowledge, and skills needed for the role, and the life tasks required for the transition from young adulthood to adulthood, it is strongly recommend that persons of more maturity be considered. Since it is difficult to assign a specific age to "maturity," those responsible for discerning and selecting the CYM are urged to utilize these Minimum Qualifications and Competencies as a basis for their decision.

Education and Experience

High School diploma required. A Bachelor's Degree in religious studies, theology, education, or related field relative

- to work with youth is preferred. A professional certificate in youth ministry studies is also preferable.
- Formation in Catholic Christianity evidenced by participation in classes, retreats, seminars, workshops, conferences, institutes, etc., must be documented.
- Two years minimum experience, volunteer or salaried, in youth ministry is required.

Competencies

- basic understanding of and ability to communicate and teach the Old and New Testament Scriptures; the life, mission, death, and resurrection of Jesus; foundations of Catholic faith and doctrine; and the sacramental and liturgical life of the Church
- basic understanding of Catholic moral principles and an ability to teach youth the process for moral decision making based on these principles
- basic understanding of and ability to relate the stages of adolescent development to adolescent faith formation
- basic understanding of and ability to facilitate a comprehensive youth ministry as described in the previous chapter
- basic understanding of the principles of Catholic Youth Ministry, including catechesis, and an ability to design programs and activities based on these principles which are appropriate to youth from a variety of cultural, economic, geographic, and educational contexts
- ability to communicate effectively with youth, adults, and mixed groups
- ability to recruit, train, and manage adult volunteers
- ability to collaborate effectively with leaders of other parish ministries, especially the Director/Coordinator of Religious Education

D. Considerations for Discerning and Selecting a CYM

Selecting a CYM need not be an overwhelming task. Parishes may avail themselves of the following help through the Office of Youth Ministry at any point in the process:

- assessment of needs
- development of a Job Description
- information on possible applicants
- initial and/or follow-up interviews of candidates

Developing a Job Description

Before a parish begins recruiting applicants for CYM (either volunteer or salaried), it must formulate a clear job description. This description of roles, qualifications, and expectations, allows search committees and pastors to discern more accurately what type of person will meet their needs in a CYM. Attaching a copy of the parish mission statement to the job description also ensures a closer match between person, ministry, and ministerial setting. Additionally, a job description provides applicants with enough information to decide whether or not the ministry desired by the parish is compatible with his or her expectations and abilities.

The job description should be developed by parish members who are familiar with both the parish community and its youth ministry goals. A representative group making up a search committee might include youth and adult leaders involved in catechesis, scouting, recreation and sports, liturgical ministries, retreats, service, etc.; parents; pastoral council members; parish staff; etc.

See Attachment 2-2 for Sample Job Descriptions.

Determining Salary and Benefits

The experience of the Church in the United States through the mid-1970's was that "ministry" in the Church was undertaken by vowed religious and diocesan priests. Belonging to a religious community or a diocese

made it possible to serve the people of God free from the worries and distractions of supporting oneself. The ministry of those men and women also made it possible for parishes, schools, and other institutions to provide services at a very low cost.

The resulting belief, conscious or unconscious, was that these same services could be provided by lay people at the same or slightly higher costs. Officially, the Church is clear about compensation for services. All people have the right to a “just wage”. After acknowledging the need for appropriate formation, *The Revised Code of Canon Law* states: “They (lay people) have a right to a decent remuneration suited to their condition; by such remuneration they should be able to provide decently for their own needs and for those of their family with due regard for the prescriptions of civil law; they likewise have a right that their pension, social security and health benefits be duly provided.”¹¹

Determining Compensation for Salaried CYMs

Determining an appropriate compensation package for a CYM is a negotiating process involving the prospective CYM and the employer which is marked by justice. As the Bishops of this country declare in their economic pastoral, “*All the moral principles that govern the just operation of any economic endeavor apply to the Church and its agencies and institutions; indeed the Church should be exemplary.*” (Emphasis theirs.)¹²

The Bishops further state, “. . . [Those who serve the Church . . . should receive a sufficient livelihood and the social benefits provided by responsible employers in our nation.”¹³

The following should be considered in determining compensation:

- job responsibilities as CYM
- additional responsibilities in another area of ministry; e.g., liturgy, young adult ministry, sacramental preparation, family ministry, etc
- supervisory responsibility; e.g., Will CYM supervise others? How many?
- academic education
- related professional training
- experience, either as a salaried worker or as a volunteer and scope of that experience
- Benefits
 - ⇒ Social Security
 - ⇒ pension plans
 - ⇒ medical and dental insurance
 - ⇒ Workman’s Compensation
 - ⇒ vacation, paid holidays, personal days, compensatory time
 - ⇒ in-service education, training, spiritual direction, etc
 - ⇒ mileage expense
 - ⇒ alternative compensations: in cases where the financial resources of the parish are limited, alternative compensation may be given; e.g., housing, vehicle use and upkeep, etc.

See Attachment 2-3 for Suggested Salary Schedule.

Determining Compensation for Volunteer CYMs

Parish leaders should be sensitive to the needs, time, and outside commitments of volunteer CYMs, and they should keep the principles of social justice ever before them as they negotiate with a volunteer CYM.

The following should be considered:

Training and formation in youth ministry should be financed by the parish either directly or through requests for grants or aid from other individuals, organizations, and programs. The volunteer CYM should not

¹¹ Joseph A. Corider et al., eds., *Revised Code of Canon Law*, Canon 231, §2. Cf. also, *The Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity*, ¶22.

¹² National Catholic Conference of Bishops, *Economic Justice for All: Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy* (Washington, D.C.: USCC, 1986), ¶347.

¹³ *Ibid.*, ¶351.

- need to contribute to his/her continuing education and formation.
- Opportunities for continuing education such as workshops, conferences, institutes, seminars, etc., should be supported by the parish.
- Administrative and program costs for the parish youth ministry are the responsibility of the parish, not the CYM.

The Hiring Process for Salaried CYM

Parishes are strongly encouraged to implement the following steps as part of the hiring process.

- *A Search Committee:* The establishment of a Search Committee is necessary for the coordination of the hiring process. Committee membership must include the pastor or his delegate as well as representatives from any group directly affected by the youth ministry program. Pastoral Council members, a teenager, parents of adolescents, other staff members, and someone familiar with personnel work are possible members of such a committee.
- *Announcing the Position:* It is important to let the community know that the parish is seeking a CYM. This is a time to educate the parish about the goals of a comprehensive youth ministry and the needs of the youth of the parish.
- *Advertising the Position:* There are a variety of methods that can be used to locate applicants: advertisements in Catholic newspapers and periodicals; use of organizations that match applicants to available positions; employment services in various state and national Catholic universities, etc.
- *Interviewing:* Once you have received resumes, notify applicants of their receipt, narrow candidates to two to five possibilities, and set up interview times of two to three hours. If candidates are from outside of the parish, attempt to have them participate in the liturgical life of the parish at a Sunday liturgy if possible. Determine in advance, for candidates coming from outside of the immediate geographic area, which expenses the parish will pay for; e.g., travel, lodging, etc. It is helpful to plan the interview questions ahead of time, and to be prepared to answer questions about the parish, existing youth ministry in the parish, the position advertised, etc.
- *Responding to Applicants:* The Search Committee meets as soon as possible following the interview sessions. Personal letters should be sent to each person interviewed indicating whether he or she will receive further consideration. The Committee may wish a further interview, may wish to extend a job offer, etc. This should all be done relatively quickly following the interviews in case further interviews are needed.
- *Letter of Employment:* A formal letter offering the position should be sent to the individual selected for hire. This letter should contain the following and be signed by the pastor and the newly hired CYM:
 - ⇒ job description
 - ⇒ salary and benefits
 - ⇒ starting date of employment
 - ⇒ term of employment
 - ⇒ method and timing of evaluations)
 - ⇒ terms of accountability

Prior to hiring, the prospective CYM should be made well aware of the liability guidelines and Archdiocesan policies contained in Chapter Three of this document, and should sign all

documentation required by the Archdiocese and the parish.

for the programs that minister to young people.

The Hiring Process for Volunteer CYM

Since not all CYM positions will be salaried, the above steps for salaried persons would also be helpful for volunteer positions. At the very minimum, prospective volunteer CYMs;

- should be interviewed
- should be familiar with liability guidelines and sign necessary archdiocesan documents; and
- should have a clear job description that includes the following and is signed by CYM and Pastor or his representative
 - ⇒ scope of ministry
 - ⇒ scope of responsibility
 - ⇒ benefits, including ongoing professional training
 - ⇒ method and timing of evaluations)
 - ⇒ scope of accountability
 - ⇒ additional job or parish requirements

E. Closing Comments

The scope of the ministry that has been described so far in these guidelines can seem overwhelming. At the same time, this direction for youth ministry can be accomplished in a variety of settings with different amounts of resources. However, the common factor for success in implementing comprehensive youth ministry is leadership, and that is why these guidelines have stressed the competencies and knowledge, as well as formation and training necessary for such an important ministry.

An additional important part of leadership is recognition: leadership for Catholic youth ministry in a parish should be commissioned and entrusted to the CYM by the parish community. Effective youth ministry requires that, even after leadership for youth ministry has been delegated to a CYM and a youth ministry team, the parish continue to take responsibility

Code of Ethics for Youth Ministry Leaders Revised February 2008

The National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry has developed the following code of ethics for youth ministry leaders. The National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry recommends that youth ministry leaders adopt this code by signing, dating, and placing it in their personnel file. This code of ethics is intended for youth ministry leaders regardless of employment status within the church. While this code may be used in conjunction with existing diocesan policies, protocols or codes, it is not intended to supersede them.

Professional Ethical Obligations

1. Ministerial Role

- a) Youth ministry leaders work collaboratively with the pastor (and/or other supervisors) and associates in ministry.
- b) Youth ministry leaders faithfully represent the teachings of the Catholic Church with integrity in word and action.
- c) Youth ministry leaders are competent and receive education and training commensurate with their role(s) and responsibilities (§ 231, Code of Canon Law).
- d) Youth ministry leaders respect the diversity of spiritualities in the faith community and will not make their personal form of spirituality normative.

2. Inclusion

- a) Youth ministry leaders recognize the dignity of each person and refrain from behaviors or words that are disrespectful of anyone or any group.
- b) Youth ministry leaders serve all people without regard to gender, creed, national origin, race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, marital status, socioeconomic status, immigration status, or political beliefs.
- c) Youth ministry leaders ensure that all persons have access to the resources, services, and opportunities they require with particular regard for persons with special needs or disabilities.

3. Accountability

- a) Youth ministry leaders are accountable to the pastor or other duly appointed representative, under the authority of the (arch)diocesan (arch)bishop.
- b) Youth ministry leaders are called to serve the faith community, carrying out their ministerial functions "...conscientiously, zealously, and diligently" (§ 231, Code of Canon Law).
- c) Youth ministry leaders exercise responsible stewardship of resources while holding themselves to the highest standards of integrity regarding the fiscal matters placed in their trust.

i This code of ethics pertains to lay ecclesial ministers serving as youth ministry leaders. These individuals may conduct ministry under a variety of titles, including but not limited to coordinator of youth ministry, director of youth ministry, parish youth minister, and/or campus minister. Some pastoral associates, parish coordinators, and catechetical leaders may also share responsibility for youth ministry and as such may be considered "lay ecclesial ministers serving as youth ministry leaders."

4. Confidentiality

- a) Youth ministry leaders respect confidentiality, yet are not held to confidentiality in the same way as ordained ministers and licensed, certified counselors.
- b) Youth ministry leaders adhere to civil and ecclesial law concerning the reporting of neglect, abuse or when physical harm could come to the person or to a third party.
- c) Youth ministry leaders support the rights and roles of parents while ministering to the needs and concerns of their children.

5. Conduct

- a) Youth ministry leaders know that they have considerable personal power because of their ministerial position. Therefore, they will sustain respectful ministerial relationships, avoiding manipulation and other abuses of power.
- b) Youth ministry leaders maintain appropriate professional boundaries (e.g., physical, sexual, spiritual, relational, and emotional). Romantic, dating, or sexual relationships between a youth ministry leader and any youth is inappropriate and unethical.
- c) Youth ministry leaders shall exhibit the highest ethical standards and personal integrity reflective of the Gospel and will avoid even the appearance of impropriety.
- d) Youth ministry leaders may not use alcohol while supervising youth; may never use illicit substances ; and, may never provide alcohol or illicit substances to youth.

6. Referrals and Intervention

- a) Youth ministry leaders know the signs of neglect and physical, sexual, and psychological abuse.
- b) Youth ministry leaders know their limitations with respect to paraprofessional counseling and make appropriate referrals.

7. Parish/Diocesan Policies

- a) Youth ministry leaders know of and comply with all applicable parish, organizational and/or diocesan policies with special attention to sexual misconduct, safe Environment, risk management, safety, transportation, parental permission, and medical emergency policies.

I have read and understand the above code of ethics and commit to uphold this code in my ministry.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

References

- Coriden, J., Green, T. & Heinstschel, D, Editors, (1985). The Code of Canon Law. A text and Commentary. The Canon Law Society of America. New York: Paulist Press.
- Gula, Richard, (1996), Ethics in Pastoral Ministry. New York: Paulist Press.
- National Association for Lay Ministry Standards Code of Ethics. Downloaded from the Internet on October 16, 2002 at www.nalm.org/standards.html.
- National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry's Organizational Code of Conduct. March 2000.
- NALM, NCCL, and NFCYM, (September 29, 2002). Common Competency Project Core Certification Standards and Competencies. Draft 3.

Appendix D

Sample Job Descriptions

Title: Coordinator of Youth Minister

Reports to Pastor

General Description

Responsible for developing a parish based pastoral ministry with youth, reaches out to all youth in the community, provides for formal catechesis, invites and enables youth to serve others. Develops close communication with and mutual support from families of youth and collaborates with other community and parish youth organizations.

Job Responsibilities

A. Program Development

- creates and develops core group and provides for it's enrichment
- develops leadership skills in youth and young adults
- develops a network for reaching out to youth, particularly to the alienated
- is available for and has set times for listening, advising, and referral
- plans, coordinates and implements weekend retreats and evenings of prayer reflection
- develops the kind of relationship with parents that are conducive to open communication between parents and youth
- provides opportunities for youth to hear and respond to the Gospel message
- assists in the preparation of liturgical celebrations for youth

B. Recruitment and Training of Leaders

- recruits, trains, assigns, and evaluates the youth leaders. Coordinates participation in diocesan-sponsored training programs
- serves as an advisor and support to youth leaders
- monitors the efforts of volunteer leaders and evaluates progress
- makes special efforts to gain the endorsement, support, and involvement of all adults, especially parents and parish organizations
- defines the responsibilities of each adult leader/advisor
- publicizes and offers education programs and support systems for volunteer leaders

C. Administration

- initiates ways of gathering data on the needs, interests, attitudes, and beliefs of youth and young adults
- plans, organizes, and implements programs/experiences that provide a holistic approach in meeting the needs/interests of youth and young adults
- submits annual financial report and budget; administers budget throughout the year
- maintains necessary office and program records, including a log of activities and time
- consultation with parents when assessing needs for a parish youth ministry
- determines effective means for publicizing and promoting programs and experiences
- submits periodic reports to the pastor detailing programs in youth ministry

- initiates procedures for evaluating all aspects of the parish's ministry to youth

D. Communication

- keeps the parish faith community informed of youth ministry activities and goals.
- advises, communicates and cooperates with other parish and diocesan organizations
- works with youth ministry team on goals and programmatic ideas for meeting needs
- participates in parish governing structures to insure greater participation of youth in parish life and to facilitate communication and decision-making
- supervises and coordinates scheduling of youth events and activities
- keeps informed through attendance of diocesan, regional, and national conferences, regular reading, and membership in professional associations
- is aware of community agencies and resources that interface with youth
- Sets annual goals and objectives for each Junior/Senior High program as requested

Necessary Qualifications

- active member of a Roman Catholic parish faith community
- bachelor's degree in a related field
- youth ministry experience in a Catholic parish

Title: Coordinator of Youth Minister

Reports To Pastor

Primary Objective

- empowers young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today
- works to foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person
- Seeks to draw young people to responsible participation in the life, mission, and work of the faith community

Areas of Major Responsibility

Relative Ministry

- creates opportunities to interact with youth and sometimes parents in small group and on one-to-one basis
- attends special school events and sports functions and visits schools when possible
- makes home visits as time allows
- is available for emergency and crisis counseling and/or referral for youth and parents as the needs arises
- serves as a referral resource to the broad community in response to ministry needs
- models Catholic life style
- acts as an advocate on behalf of youth before the church and the community

Program Coordination

- administers, directs, and coordinates the Confirmation Program
- conducts the 9th grade sexuality program
- coordinates and/or design retreats
- coordinates peer ministry program for Senior High youth
- coordinates, supervises and plans liturgical opportunities involving youth participation
- recruits, trains, and supervises catechists and helpers for Junior and Senior High levels
- evaluates, develops, and implements Junior and Senior High faith formation program
- sets goals and objectives for Junior and Senior High programs for the coming year
- attends bimonthly staff meetings
- acts as advisor to youth board
- coordinates scheduled youth social activities

Personal Growth

- participates in annual retreat and spiritual direction
- is a member and participant in the professional youth network and/or peer support group

ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. PAUL-MINNEAPOLIS

The sample Job descriptions for Youth Ministers are from the *Parish Job Description Manual*, published by the National Association of Church Personnel Administrators, 100 E. Eighth St., Cincinnati, OH. Used with permission. The *Parish Job Description Manual* also contains sample job descriptions for more than sixty parish positions and is available for purchase by contacting NAPCA at (513)421-3134 or nacpa@nacpa.org.

Permission is granted by the NFCYM to reproduce this handout.

Title: Coordinator of Middle and High School Ministry

Accountability: The coordinator is a member of the parish staff who reports directly to the pastor.

General Responsibilities

The coordinator of youth ministry provides vision and coordination of the parish's efforts in ministry to young people from 6th through 12th grades. This includes AYM-high sessions and AYM middle school sessions (both bi-weekly gatherings), monthly activities and Confirmation.

Parish Staff Member

- attend regular staff meetings and participate in staff planning
- communicate to staff about youth ministry activities and seek staff input in planning youth ministry activities
- be a resource person to parish staff on issues related to youth and youth ministry
- serve as the liaison with the pastor, parish staff and the parish council

Parish Youth Ministry

The parish youth ministry program integrates adolescent catechesis into a comprehensive youth ministry. The CYM will be responsible to:

- facilitate the youth ministry leadership team, which plans, implements, and evaluates the youth ministry program
- serve on the youth ministry commission, an oversight group that provides vision, direction, support, and advocacy ministry with youth
- coordinate the recruitment, training, support, and evaluation of volunteers in the youth ministry program
- provide resources (print, video, diocesan events) for effective programming
- provide appropriate training for the adults and young people in leadership positions
- foster involvement of teens in the life of the parish, including serving on parish committees and being involved in parish activities
- coordinate the outreach to and evangelization of all young people in our parish and the confirmation program
- provide appropriate services and programs for parents and adolescents
- advocate for the "vision of youth ministry" and youth ministry program's mission statement to the parish
- serve as the liaison with the diocesan office of youth ministry and their programs, services, and resources
- participate in the diocesan association of professional youth ministers

Relationships

- Pastor-immediate supervisor
- Parish Staff-close cooperation and communication and seek staff involvement and input when appropriate
- Parish Council-attend regular meetings and provide a youth ministry report
- Parish Committees-communicate and collaborate with appropriate committees, i.e., liturgy, social justice, etc.
- Youth Ministry Commission-close support and involvement
- Parents and Parishioners-regular communication and seek input as appropriate
- Diocesan Offices-regular communications, adherence to archdiocesan policies, participation in diocesan professional organizations

Program Objectives

Goals: The parish youth ministry program is based on the USCCB document, *Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry*. The goals of youth ministry are to: 1. Call young people to be disciples of Jesus Christ; 2. Draw young people into the life, work, and mission of the faith community; 3. Foster the total personal and spiritual growth of young people.

Objectives: Specifically, the parish youth ministry program has the following objectives. To:

- Enable young people to hear the good news of Jesus Christ
- Connect young people with the life of the parish community and to make the more visible in parish life
- Connect young people with caring, believing adult role models
- Provide young people with service opportunities
- Provide a safe environment and a place where young people share and grow together in faith, learning more about being Catholic
- Develop an intentional outreach to uninvolved and unchurched youth
- Involve young people in prayer and worship
- Enable our young people to become happy, healthy and holy adults

Salary Package

The parish will provide compensation commensurate with education and experience, based on archdiocesan salary guidelines, plus health care, pension and disability. Exact terms will be negotiated with the pastor.

**BASIC PARISH JOB CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM
2003-2004 Pay Ranges**

EXEMPT OR MINISTRY STAFF POSITIONS

	<u>JOB CLASSIFICATION LEVEL</u>				
	E-1	E2	E3	E4	E5
ANNUAL RATES (12 month year, 40 hour week)					
Minimum	22,792	25,983	29,621	33,768	38,495
Midpoint	27,329	31,155	35,517	40,489	46,157
Maximum	31,866	36,327	41,413	47,210	53,819
HOURLY RATES (Based on 40 hour week)*					
Minimum	10.96	12.49	14.24	16.23	18.51
Midpoint	13.14	14.98	17.08	19.47	22.19
Maximum	15.32	17.46	19.91	22.70	25.87

* These rates do not apply to Musicians contracting with Parishes to perform specific services.
See Attached schedule.

NON-EXEMPT OR SUPPORT STAFF POSITIONS

	<u>JOB CLASSIFICATION LEVEL</u>				
	Student Help	N-2	N-3	N-4	N-5
HOURLY RATES					
Minimum	5.15	9.00	10.17	11.50	13.00
Midpoint	6.06	10.59	11.97	13.53	15.29
Maximum	6.97	12.18	13.77	15.56	17.58
ANNUAL RATES (12 month year, 40 hour week)					
Minimum		18,720	21,154	23,920	27,040
Midpoint		22,027	24,898	28,142	31,803
Maximum		25,334	28,642	32,365	36,566

Chapter 3

Liability Guidelines

In these days, when recourse to courts of law to settle differences is quite common, youth ministers avoid an awareness of and compliance with the law at their own peril. Much more than that, however, their responsibility to youth and to their parents, conservators, and guardians is paramount. Youth ministry demands that church personnel, paid or volunteer, clearly communicate at all times with youth and their parents/guardians regarding programming; that they carefully screen those volunteers who minister in the program; that they appropriately supervise all activities; and that they implement Archdiocesan policies regarding the proper maintenance of facilities in order to prevent accidental injury. Youth ministers must strive to model their leadership on that of Jesus, and, as He was, be committed to care in every way for those young people in Catholic parishes. The following guidelines and Archdiocesan policies are presented to help the Coordinator of Youth Ministries and others involved with ministry to youth in the prudent planning of their programs.

Overview of the Law

The following legal theories are most particularly applicable to youth ministry.

Law of Agency

This legal principle determines who is responsible for the actions of another and under what circumstances liability exists.

An employer (called the *principal*) can be held responsible for the acts of an employee (called the *agent*) under the law if two conditions are met:

1. The one who acts is the employee/agent of the employer; and

2. The employee/agent's wrongful acts are within the scope of his or her employment/ministry.

The issue is whether the questionable act was of the kind for which the employee/agent was hired/engaged; did the act occur within the authorized time and space limits of the job, and was the act undertaken, at least in part, with the intent to serve the employer?

The **employer**, in this case, is the parish and, ultimately, the Archdiocese. The **agent** is the CYM. Under the law, even unpaid staff and volunteers in the Youth Ministry or Faith Formation program can be considered as agents of the CYM as well as of the parish and/or Archdiocese.

The CYM does not need to be paid to be considered an agent. The issue is whether the parish has the right (expressed or not) of control over the person's work. That is, does the parish have the authority to hire and fire a CYM and govern the manner in which work is done? The answer will always be, "Yes," even for volunteer CYMs.

The CYM, however, may still be held responsible for acts caused by his/her own negligence or intentional assault.

For example: The parish youth are out on a planned caroling expedition at Christmas time: At a stop light, everyone gets out of their cars and runs around them (including, or not including the CYM) in a game of "Fire Drill." One of the young people is hit by a car and injured. The CYM is personally liable because of negligence. The parish is liable, because the CYM is the agent of the parish and is acting within the scope of his/her employment (caroling as part of the YM programming), regardless of whether or not the parish would ever condone this action on the part of the CYM. Ultimately, the Archdiocese is responsible.

The Law of Negligence

A person (or institution) is negligent for his/her/its actions if:

- There was a duty to the victim.

- The duty was breached.
- There was injury or damage.
- The injury or damage was caused by the breach of the duty.

For example: If the parish youth ministry sponsored a swim party and the CYM was reading a book while some youth were diving dangerously and a young person was seriously injured, the youth minister would be liable (as well as the parish and Archdiocese because of the law of agency.) There was a duty to supervise the event; the duty was breached; there was an injury; and the injury was proximately caused by the breach of that duty.

The above information (admittedly limited) and the following guidelines are not offered in order to limit CYMs in their ministry or to frighten pastors, pastoral councils, and parish staff. Instead, the following guidelines are offered so that parishes and CYMs will take necessary precautionary measures in order to keep risk at a reasonable level. Hopefully, an increased sense of responsibility on the part of CYMs will enhance their ministry to and with youth.

All CYMs and their volunteers should be aware that they are never immune from the possibility of moral and legal liability. Despite all their best efforts, precautions, training and planning, someone may suffer emotional and physical harm. Recall, though, as was said above, that CYMs and volunteers are liable for their own criminal or intentional acts. The following guidelines are not burdensome, and many are already standard operating procedure for Archdiocesan employees and parishes of the Archdiocese. Ultimately, as CYMs develop an awareness and sensitivity to the content of the guidelines and policies, they will find them an aid and an assurance in their ministry.

On Site Parish Youth Ministry Permissions, Waivers, Medical Release Forms

These forms are not only a protection for the

ministry, but they are also a sign of the Church's care and concern for the youth in parishes. While giving parents and legal guardians a sense of security about the safety of their children, they also provide valuable information in an emergency situation. There should be a set of these forms on file for every minor who is active in any youth ministry programming, including religious education. It is imperative that when collecting these forms that the parent / legal guardians are the actual individuals who are signing these official documents. These forms should be updated and/or renewed every year.

The annual kickoff for youth ministry programming is one time when these forms may be distributed, signed, and returned with a minimum of work. They also may be included in any information mailed prior to the beginning of a new year's programming. Another opportune moment for obtaining these forms is at the time of Religious Education registration. There should be an understanding that youth are not registered for any programming or classes until these forms are on file:

*Parent Permission and Liability Waiver
(Attachment 3-1)*

**Medical Consent to Treat (Attachment 3-2)*

If a parish wishes to continue to use their own forms, it is essential to review these recommended forms to see that all necessary information is included.

If there is a claim or incident, then file a copy of all affected individuals' liability and medical consent forms along with the incident report in a special file such as "Incidents 2009-2010". If there is a doubt please call Risk Management at 431-3465.

Attendance

Keeping accurate records of attendance at scheduled parish youth programs will be helpful if there is ever a question of presence of youth at a particular event, program, class, etc. Parents may believe that their child is attending a particular event when they are not. This is a more common problem with youth who drive

themselves to parish events.

Youth present on the premises but not at an activity when it begins, should be invited to come in or asked to leave. CYMs who contact the parents of youth unexpectedly absent from events or classes will have a way both to link up with parents and to encourage future participation by being welcoming and showing concern.

Arrival and Dismissal

CYMs are urged to remember their responsibility to and for youth exists between the time of arrival and the time of departure. When publicizing an event, clearly state the arrival and departure times. Generally, fifteen minutes prior to an event and fifteen to thirty minutes after an event give parents and/or youth ample time to make connections and meet deadlines.

CYMs are reminded that youth are never to be left alone on the parish premises: Two adults responsible for the program must remain with the youth until all youth have left.

If it is necessary for a young person to leave a program early, clearly state that notification from the parent or guardian is required. Do not dismiss a young person to the care of an adult who is not the parent or guardian without express permission.

Off Site Parish Youth Ministry

As part of a holistic, intentional, year-round youth ministry in a parish, youth often participate in activities and events that take place away from the parish premises. These activities may be parish, deanery, or Archdiocesan sponsored, and also require us to be concerned for the safety and well-being of our youth.

Permission, Medical Release and Information, Waiver of Liability Forms

A signed Permission to Treat/Medical Release Form and Waiver of Liability must be on file for every minor and adult for on-site parish

activities. Minor participants also need this same form duplicated and tailored with specifics of an off-site event. This form will be carried by the CYM as a permission for a specific program.

Site Selection

If you use private homes for off site activities, the home owners should be aware of the increased liability risk they incur. They should check with their homeowner's insurance agent to see if they are protected for church group activities. Some policies cover such activities while others require an additional rider. We strongly discourage any religious education classes at personal homes on a regular basis. When determining how many adults are needed for supervision, keep in mind that spouses are considered as one person and another adult will be needed for the two person minimum supervision requirement.

Transportation

Transportation to off site activities requires compliance with Archdiocesan transportation and drivers policies and guidelines.

Drivers under the age of 18 are prohibited from transporting themselves to an outside event.

Drivers between the ages of 18 and 25 may transport themselves and other adults, but no minors.

The use of drivers under the age of 25 to operate Archdiocesan vehicles (those owned by the parish, institution or Archdiocese) is prohibited.

Archdiocesan Approved Driver's List

All drivers of Archdiocesan vehicles (including parish, school, or rental vehicles) whether they are clergy, lay employees or volunteers, must apply for and be included in the Archdiocesan Approved Driver's List by the Archdiocesan Risk Management Office before they may operate these vehicles.

This policy allows the Archdiocese to obtain

a TX Motor Vehicle report on each operator of diocesan vehicles. Those with unacceptable driving records will not be permitted to operate Archdiocesan vehicles.

Procedure for becoming an Approved Driver

Applicants must fill in their name and Texas driver license number on the form attached here as *Attachments 3-3 and 3-4*. Copy the sheet as needed for additional applications. Mail or fax the sheets to:

The Pastoral Center
Risk Management Office
2718 W. Woodlawn Ave.
San Antonio, TX 78228
Fax: 210-431-7742

**Faxing is the preferred means. **

Driver Approval will require payment of an administrative service charge of \$8.00 per name, made payable to the *Archdiocesan Self-Insurance Fund* and sent along with the additional names.

Although this policy may create an administrative burden for you and/or the pastor, the small cost of the program in money and time would be a small fraction of our potential liability if we permitted someone with a bad driving record to operate one of our vehicles and injure an innocent party. Additionally, our care and concern for our youth calls us to protect their safety always and in any way possible.

Privately Owned Vehicles Used for Parish Purposes

Many locations do not have vehicles sufficiently large to accommodate groups going on parish functions; e.g., taking youth to Sea World or to a nursing home for a service project. In some cases, parishioners provide the necessary transportation using their own cars.

The Archdiocese strongly discourages use of privately owned vehicles for parish transportation needs, for a number of reasons. The drivers may not have become Approved Drivers (*see above*) and their driving record is

unknown. Their own auto insurance is primary and, if they have an at fault accident on a parish trip, it may result in an increase in their personal premiums or a cancellation of their policy. The Archdiocese may become excess to their coverage and, if they have minimum state required insurance, the Archdiocese could end up with a significant liability exposure over which it has no control.

Instead of using privately owned vehicles, the Archdiocesan Risk Management Office *recommends* that the parish consider renting a suitable vehicle, or borrowing a vehicle from another Archdiocesan entity, and having an Approved Driver with the appropriate Texas license to operate the vehicle.

The Archdiocese has purposefully not issued a blanket prohibition against the use of privately owned vehicles because there will be some locations, particularly in rural areas, which have neither Archdiocesan vehicles, nor access to commercial rentals. However, the Archdiocese strongly recommends the use of privately owned vehicles (*including that of the CYM*) be avoided whenever possible.

In those instances where privately owned vehicles are used:

- *All volunteer drivers must complete a Volunteer Driver Information Form (See Attachment 3-4). Each volunteer driver must provide a copy of a valid state driver's license and a copy of their current vehicle liability insurance.
- *Those that do not have insurance or a valid driver's license must not be permitted to drive on parish business under any circumstances.
- *If the CYM is expected to use his or her own vehicle to transport young people to and from activities, the Office of Youth Ministry suggests strongly that s/he should carry increased insurance coverage to limit his/her risk. The parish should consider this additional cost of insurance coverage in the compensation of the CYM.

Outdoor Activities

Outdoor activities such as group camping, hiking, trips to lakes or beaches, or other such programming elements offer youth opportunities to form healthy friendships, experience Christian community, experience the beauty of God's creation, and become empowered to make choices for a healthy lifestyle.

When planning such activities, increase the adult to youth ratio, to compensate for the greater need for supervision and possible emergencies by engaging one adult to every five young people. (See *Attachment 3-5, Supervision Ratio*).

Water Activities

Water activities require special precautions. Whenever swimming, whether at a beach, lake, private or public pool, engage a certified lifeguard to be present.

When using any type of water craft, young people must wear certified life preservers and be instructed on the proper handling of the craft before using it. ***Supervision is needed.*** Motorized craft must be driven by those 25 years of age or older who are properly instructed in the use of such water craft.

Physical Challenge Activities

There are some activities which offer a high degree of physical challenge for the participants; e.g., ropes courses, obstacle courses, white water rafting, rappelling, etc. Such activities are used to build group cohesiveness and trust and to help form a positive self image for the individual participants.

By the very fact that these activities are more physically challenging, they involve a greater risk of personal injury. In order to manage the risk and ensure that the youth experience the activity at its best, the CYM must provide the following:

- licensed, certified instructors who, either as part of an organization or on their own, have a good safety record.

- proper safety equipment.
- a match between the difficulty of the activity and the skill ability of the participants.
- training for adult sponsors/volunteers particular to this type of activity.

Procedures for Accidents, Illnesses, and Injuries

All necessary forms should be in the possession of the CYM at all times. Additionally, in the case of off site activities, copies of these forms should be left at the parish office for the duration of the activity.

Each parish youth ministry should have a well stocked and easily accessible **first aid kit**. (*Attachment 3-6*) It is recommended that one or two adults on the youth ministry team are trained in rudimentary first aid and CPR. If a young person complains of minor discomfort, Tylenol, cough drops, etc. may be given if there is a signed medical release form on file. Do not dispense aspirin to anyone under the age of eighteen. Prescription medicine is not to be dispensed without the written consent of parents or guardians. The directions for administering the medication should also be in writing. In cases where youth will need to take medication during youth ministry activities, that student or their parent must inform the CYM. The CYM will make necessary arrangements for the student to take the medicine at the required time since some prescription medications have complex schedules for patients to follow and haphazard administering of them can be exceedingly dangerous. The CYM should include this information in any permission or medical treatment form.

If a more serious injury occurs or the young person complains of serious discomfort, the adult supervising the activity, if other than the CYM, should notify the CYM immediately. The parent or guardian is also to be notified immediately. If there is any question regarding the seriousness of the injury or discomfort, the young person is to be taken immediately to an

emergency medical care facility. The medical release/permission to treat form should also be taken.

In the case of any accident, injury, or sickness, an Incident Report Form (*See Attachment 3-7*) is to be filled out within twenty-four hours. The Incident Report as well as the participant's Permission and Liability Waiver and Medical Consent and Permission to Treat forms must be kept in your files for an indefinite period until the Risk Management Office authorizes you to dispose of these records. If it becomes necessary, it may have to be sent to the Archdiocesan Risk Management Office. Giving a copy of the file to the pastor also keeps him informed. If there is an accident, do not admit any liability or negligence, or make any promises of payment or insurance coverage to the parties involved. Politely refer them to the pastor, or the Archdiocesan Risk Management Office. Take the necessary precautions to ensure that no other youth will be injured in the same way.

Supervision and Supervisors

Youth ministers must be committed to screening carefully those volunteers who minister with them, and to supervising appropriately all activities. The parents/guardians of the youth have entrusted the CYM and the Youth Ministry team with great responsibility and that trust should not be violated. In light of this commitment, then, let the standard be to provide reasonable and prudent supervision at all events that is equal to or exceeds the supervision reasonable parents would give their own children. For your benefit, we have provided an Adult Leadership / Youth Ratio Guide (*See Attachment 3-5*).

Behavioral Guidelines

Parish youth ministries should have clear and consistent behavior guidelines which specify the expected behavior of both adults and young people at all activities. These guidelines should

be publicized in all promotional material for activities and programs. Guidelines should be orally reviewed with participants several times a year, or as the need arises. They should be made part of the orientation for new participants, whether youth or adults. The following is a set of basic guidelines that should form the foundation of a more detailed list tailored for an individual parish.

- Full participation on the part of youth and adults is expected at all activities.
- Those using mood altering drugs or alcohol, or suspected of being under the influence of either will not be allowed to participate and will be subject to pre-determined disciplinary action.
- Alcohol should never be served at any event where young people under the age of twenty-one are present; whether these are on or off site activities.
- There is no leeway for adult sponsors: Even if youth are not actually present with them, they may not consume alcohol at an off site activity.
- Respect for all participants in a program or activity is expected: No verbal or physical harassment will be tolerated.
- Possession of any type of weapon subjects a person to pre-determined disciplinary action, including the notification of legal authorities.
- Excluding a youth from an activity or event is inappropriate: The community building component of youth ministry encourages inclusivity and relationships that are open.
- Inappropriate sexual activity cannot be allowed and must be addressed.

Individual parishes and CYM's will add to this list as appropriate. Violation of guidelines should carry with it sufficient disciplinary action to bring about youth and their parents/guardians in discussion, consequences, and personal growth.

Adult Leadership

Adults involved in parish youth ministry need to be easily identified as leaders in the Christian community and to manifest their own personal belief in the Gospel through their lifestyle. That lifestyle should be one that is consistent with Gospel values and the mission of the Church. As followers of Jesus and mentors of the young, they should model respect for their own dignity and the dignity of the youth they encounter in their ministry.

Responsible leadership calls for:

- behavior in a fashion appropriate for the activity the adults are engaged in
- touch that is modestly appropriate for the time and situation: No youth is to be touched in any fashion if s/he declares his/her unwillingness to be touched.
- comments that are free from sexual, sexist and racist overtones
- language that is uplifting and free from obscenities
- conformity to the same behavioral guidelines set for the youth

The CYM is responsible for the selection, training, and supervision of the other adults involved in various roles in total youth ministry. The CYM should invite other adults into youth ministry roles only when the above attitudes and behaviors have been demonstrated

The CYM should formulate a job description for the adults for each activity that specifies the responsibilities and roles needed for the task. Leadership on the part of the CYM would require pointing out breaches of the expected behaviors and responsibilities. It is unacceptable to allow adults to remain within the youth ministry program who are not willing to or who do not follow the expected behaviors and responsibilities.

Sexual Misconduct

The Catholic Church expects its personnel to live chaste and moral lives, respecting in every

way the gift of sexuality. Inappropriate sexual activity abuses the power and authority of the pastoral role of all who work for and serve the people of God. Thus, sexual misconduct by church personnel of the Archdiocese of San Antonio is contrary to Christian morals and civil law. It is obviously outside the scope of the duties of church ministry and employment for all personnel of the archdiocese, its parishes, schools and other agencies, and will not under any circumstances be tolerated.

All adults ministering to minors must comply with the policy on sexual misconduct of the Archdiocese of San Antonio and Office of Victim Assistance and Safe Environment (OVASE) policies procedures and trainings, which currently include: OVASE training every three years, Criminal Background Check form (every three years), and the Sexual Misconduct Video. Copies of the Archdiocesan Policy are on file at your parish, the OVASE Office, the Office of Youth Ministry, and the Archdiocesan Business Office.

Reporting of Suspected Sexual Misconduct

All personnel of the Archdiocese, its parishes, schools, and other agencies must comply with all applicable church, federal, state and local laws regarding incidents of actual, alleged or suspected sexual misconduct, and with the procedures outlined in this document. State law requires every adult to report child abuse directly to proper authorities (see next section).

If the CYM suspects either because of direct observation or through a report from another youth or adult, that an adult volunteer has committed sexual misconduct, s/he must immediately report the suspected misconduct to the **Office of Victim Assistance and Safe Environment (OVASE)** at (210) 734-7786 or (877) 700-1888.

Child Abuse

Unfortunately, many of our young people have experienced the trauma of physical abuse and neglect and/or sexual abuse. Youth ministers may learn of such situations directly from a young person or see the signs of such abuse because the relationship with the young person built up over time. Not only do they have a moral obligation to report such abuse, or suspected abuse, but they have a legal obligation to do so.

Section 34.01 of the Texas Family Code requires the following:

A Person having cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare may have been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect by a person responsible for the child's care, custody, or welfare *shall report* . . .

Section 34.02 requires that the report be made to:

- any local or state law enforcement agency;
- the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (Hotline: 1-800-252-5400) or online at: <https://reportabuse.ws> ;
- the state agency that operates, licenses, certifies, or registers the facility in which the alleged abuse occurred; or
- the agency designated by the court to be responsible for the protection of children (the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services).

Any agency can provide guidance and support through the process of reporting concerns or questions.

Section 34.03 (a) provides immunity from liability, civil or criminal, for the person reporting as long as s/he makes the report in good faith and without malice [Section 34.03 (b).]

The Texas Family Code, Section 11.01 (1), defines "child" or "minor" as

“ . . . a person under 18 years of age who is not and has not been married or who has not had his disabilities of minority removed for general purposes.”

Pastoral Care

The CYM, and other adult leaders, often must respond to youth in crisis situations. Many of the situations that surface are simply the normal struggles of adolescent growth, but at times adults in youth ministry may be confronted with crisis issues which may be life threatening to the young person (See Confidentiality). The way in which they respond and what they say may have potential legal implications of which they should be aware.

Unless the adult is a licensed professional counselor, s/he should not describe him/herself as one, verbally or in any written publicity materials. His/her role in the area of pastoral care is to listen compassionately and empathically to the young person who is sharing his/her story.

Confidentiality

The type of information shared by young people in these situations gives rise to an expectation of confidentiality on their part. That confidentiality must be scrupulously honored except in the following circumstances:

- there is a risk of danger to the youth or another person that is reasonably foreseeable by the adult; e.g., suicide threats, past violent criminal acts; or the story shared is one of child abuse. (See above.)

The Pastoral Care Environment

Relationships with young persons require prudence. Do not meet with youth alone in isolated situations: Let someone know about a one on one meeting and advise them when the youth leaves. Leave the door open a little when meeting with youth in these situations.

If, for whatever reason, an adult must drive a young person home:

- Two unrelated adults must accompany the student in the car.
- Parents must be called to advise and ask their permission.
- Notify someone at the parish, informing them of the time you are leaving and reporting to them when you return.

Be aware of your limitations both in terms of education, training, and experience in this fragile

area and:

1. Keep a list of community referral agencies/individuals available and provide youth with referral assistance.
2. Be aware of the signs which indicate a youth is in a crisis situation and make an immediate referral and inform the parents/guardians.
3. Seek continued enrichment and training in the area of pastoral care.

Concluding Comments

What has been presented in this chapter are guidelines and policies meant to assist adults in youth ministry in some very difficult situations. They are not meant to place an undue burden on the ministry. Much of what has been stated is based on solid common sense, and will, with practice, become second nature to the CYM and his/her adult volunteers.

PARENTAL/GUARDIAN PERMISSION AND LIABILITY WAIVER

Child's Name: _____

Birth Date: _____ Sex: _____

Parent/Guardian's Name: _____

Home Address: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: () _____ Business Phone: () _____

Event: A brief description of the Event is as follows: _____

Parish/School/Group: _____

Date(s) of Event: _____

On Site Telephone Number for Emergencies: _____

Destination: _____

Individual in Charge: _____

Estimated Time of Departure and Return: _____

Mode of Transportation to and from Event: _____

I, the undersigned parent or legal guardian of the child named above, do hereby grant permission and consent for said child to participate in the Event named above, which includes without limitation, the necessary transportation to and from the Event.

I further consent to the use, reproduction, editing, publication and/or broadcast by the Parish/School/Group named above and/or the Archdiocese of San Antonio, of any and all photographs, video recordings and audio recordings of my child taken at the Event, without compensation to me or my child. All negatives, prints, and recorded images shall constitute the property of the Archdiocese of San Antonio.

The Event will take place under the guidance and direction of employees and/or volunteers from the Parish/School/Group named above. However, as parent or legal guardian, I remain legally responsible for any actions taken by said child and will assume the expense of any property damage caused by my child.

I DO HEREBY AGREE TO RELEASE, HOLD HARMLESS AND INDEMNIFY THE PARISH/SCHOOL/GROUP NAMED ABOVE, THE ARCHDIOCESE OF SAN ANTONIO, AND THEIR CLERGY, EMPLOYEES, VOLUNTEERS, AGENTS AND REPRESENTATIVES, FROM ANY AND ALL CLAIMS, SUITS, LIABILITY, DEMANDS OR CAUSES OF ACTION, INCLUDING, WITHOUT LIMITATION, THOSE INVOLVING PERSONAL INJURY, DEATH, OR PROPERTY DAMAGE, THAT MAY ARISE FROM OR IN CONNECTION WITH MY CHILD PARTICIPATING IN THE EVENT NAMED ABOVE EXCEPT FOR THOSE CLAIMS CAUSED BY GROSS NEGLIGENCE OR WILLFUL MISCONDUCT.

Signature *Date*

MEDICAL CONSENT AND PERMISSION TO TREAT

Event: _____ **Date(s) of Event:** _____

Child's Name: _____

Birth Date: _____ **Sex:** _____

Parent/Guardian's Name: _____

Home Address: _____ **Zip:** _____

Home Phone: () _____ **Business Phone:** () _____

Cell Phone: () _____

Alternate Contact:

Name: _____ **Relationship:** _____

Home Phone: () _____ **Business Phone:** () _____

Cell Phone: () _____

(Please include a photocopy of your Insurance Card, front and back)

Insurance Carrier: _____ **Policy Number:** _____

My child is taking medication and will bring all medication with him/her and it will be clearly labeled. ___Yes ___No

My child is taking the following medication(s) and directions for taking this medication, including dosage, frequency and storage are as follows:

Name of medication(s) _____ Directions _____

Name of medication(s) _____ Directions _____

I hereby grant permission for non-prescription medication (such as cough drops, cough syrup, Tylenol, etc.) to be given to my child if necessary. ___Yes ___No

My child is allergic to the following:

My child's immunizations are current and up to date. ___Yes ___No.

My child has the following limitations: _____

My child experiences homesickness, emotional reactions to new situations, sleepwalking, fainting, bedwetting, etc.

___Yes ___No. Please explain:

IF MY CHILD REQUIRES EMERGENCY MEDICAL OR DENTAL ATTENTION WHILE ATTENDING THE EVENT, I UNDERSTAND THAT AN ADULT SPONSOR OF THE EVENT WILL ATTEMPT TO CONTACT ME. IN THE EVENT THAT I CANNOT BE CONTACTED, I CONSENT TO ANY EMERGENCY MEDICAL ATTENTION DEEMED APPROPRIATE BY AN ADULT SPONSOR OF THE EVENT. IN THE EVENT THAT TREATMENT IS CALLED FOR, WHICH THE MEDICAL PROVIDER REFUSES TO ADMINISTER WITHOUT MY CONSENT, I HEREBY AUTHORIZE AN ADULT SPONSOR OF THE EVENT TO GIVE SUCH CONSENT FOR ME IF I CANNOT BE CONTACTED IMMEDIATELY OR, BECAUSE OF AN EMERGENCY, THERE IS NO TIME OR OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE CONTACT. IN THE EVENT THAT IT IS NECESSARY FOR THAT PERSON TO GIVE CONSENT, I AGREE TO HOLD SUCH PERSON FREE AND HARMLESS OF ANY LIABILITY FOR DAMAGES ARISING FROM GIVING SUCH CONSENT.

Signature

Date



**ARCHDIOCESE OF SAN ANTONIO
OFFICE OF RISK MANAGEMENT
2718 WEST WOODLAWN AVENUE
SAN ANTONIO, TX 78228
(210) 431-3465
(210) 431-7742 FAX**

**AUTHORIZATION AND RELEASE FORM FOR DRIVING
RECORD SEARCHES**

I do hereby release and authorize the Archdiocese of San Antonio and the Claims/Risk Management Office to perform a **driving record search**.

Name as it appears on Drivers License: _____
Last Middle First

Current Address: _____
City State Zip

Drivers License Number _____ Birth Date _____

Parish Employee/Job Title: _____

Position/Volunteer _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name of Parish or Agency: _____



**ARCHDIOCESE OF SAN ANTONIO
OFFICE OF RISK MANAGEMENT
2718 WEST WOODLAWN AVENUE
SAN ANTONIO, TX 78228
(210) 431-3465
(210) 431-7742 FAX**

VOLUNTEER DRIVER INFORMATION FORM

This form is intended for all drivers who use their personal vehicle for church and school business. Please answer all the questions listed below. The completed form, along with a copy of the individual's driver's license and insurance card, must be kept on file at your location and will be requested by the Risk Management Office, in the event of an accident.

Have you been charged with a moving violation within the last three years?

Yes _____

If **yes**, please list date, location, and type of violation.

Have you been involved in a motor vehicle accident within the last three years? Yes _____ If yes, give dates and locations of accidents and who was at fault.

Have you been arrested or charged with driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs within the last three years? Yes _____

If **yes**, please list date, location and explanation of charge.

If any of the above questions are answered with a **"YES"**, contact the Risk Management Office before allowing the individual to drive.

PLEASE PRINT:

NAME: _____ **PARISH:** _____

CITY: _____ **DATE:** _____

SIGNATURE: _____ **TXDL#:** _____

Adult Leadership/Youth Ratio Guide Various Activities

This guide is provided to help OYM's plan appropriate supervision and mentoring of youth while engaging in various activities. These ratios will assist in having a safe and productive activity.

Definition of Terms used.

Adult Leader or Adult Leadership: This person is at least 21 years of age (25 years if a driver); understands the responsibilities of mentoring and guiding youth, and is committed to maintaining a safe and religious environment during the activity. This person must have completed all Archdiocesan training required to supervise youth.

Guide: A strongly recommended set of conditions in which to provide adequate supervision and mentoring of youth engaged in specific activities of youth ministry.

High School Youth: Youth that have completed the eighth grade and have yet to graduate from high school.

Middle School: Youth that have completed the fifth grade and have not yet completed the eighth grade.

Other definition: such as Off-Site, On-site, etc.: Consult the Glossary of Terms and Definitions included in the Introduction or various Chapters of this policy manual.

Activity	Adult Leadership	Youth
High School		
On-Site Classroom Activity	1	15
On-Site Large Group Activity	1	10
On-Site Physical Activity (Games, etc.)	1	10
On-Site Overnight Activity (Lock-In, etc.)-Less than 30 youth	1	10
On-Site Overnight Activity (Lock-In, etc.) More than 30 youth	1	8
Off-Site Day Retreat	1	10
Off-Site Overnight (1 or 2 Nights)	1	10
Off-Site Day Activity (Youth Gathering, Super Youth Spec- tacular, Helping at Food Kitchen, Distributing Christ- mas Gifts, Helping with Under The Bridge Ministry, etc.)	1	10
	1 When delivering actual gifts or in cars to specific homes	5 When delivering actual gifts or in cars to specific homes
Off-Site Overnight Retreat (3 or more nights)	1	8

Adult Leadership/Youth Ratio Guide Various Activities

Off-Site Water Activity (Either part of or independent of retreat)	1	5
Off-Site Swimming Activity (Swimming Pool with Life Guard)	1	10
Off-Site Swimming Activity (Swimming Pool with <i>No Life Guard</i>)	<i>Activity Prohibited</i>	
Middle School		
On-Site Classroom Activity	1	10
On-Site Large Group Activity	1	10
On-Site Physical Activity (Games, etc.)	1	5
On-Site Overnight Activity (Lock-In, etc.)-Less than 30 youth	1	5
On-Site Overnight Activity (Lock-In, etc.) More than 30 youth	<i>Activity is Not Recommended</i>	
Off-Site Day Retreat	1	7
Off-Site Overnight (1 or 2 Nights)	1	5
Off-Site Overnight Retreat (3 or more Nights)	<i>Activity is Not Recommended</i>	
Off-Site Day Activity (Youth Gathering, Super Youth Spectacular, Helping at Food Kitchen, Distributing Christmas Gifts, Helping with Under The Bridge Ministry, etc.)	1	5
	1 When delivering actual gifts or in cars to specific homes	5 When delivering actual gifts or in cars to specific homes
Off-Site Water Activity (Either part of or independent of retreat)	<i>Activity is Not Recommended</i>	
Off-Site Swimming Activity (Swimming Pool with Life Guard)	<i>Activity is Not Recommended</i>	
Off-Site Swimming Activity (Swimming Pool with <i>No Life Guard</i>)	<i>Activity Prohibited</i>	

Anatomy of a First Aid Kit

A well-stocked first aid kit is a handy thing to have. To be prepared for emergencies, keep a first aid kit in your home and in your car. Carry a first aid kit with you or know where you can find one. Find out the location of first aid kits where you work. First aid kits come in many shapes and sizes. You can purchase one from the RedCross.org store or your local American Red Cross chapter. Your local drug store may sell them.

You may also make your own. Some kits are designed for specific activities, such as hiking, camping, or boating. Whether you buy a first aid kit or put one together, make sure it has all the items you may need. Include any personal items such as medications and emergency phone numbers or other items your health-care provider may suggest. Check the kit regularly. Make sure the flashlight batteries work. Check expiration dates and replace any used or out-of-date contents. The Red Cross recommends that all first aid kits for a family of four include the following:

- 2 absorbent compress dressings (5 x 9 inches)
- 25 adhesive bandages (assorted sizes)
- 1 adhesive cloth tape (10 yards x 1 inch)
- 5 antibiotic ointment packets (approximately 1 gram)
- 5 antiseptic wipe packets
- 2 packets of aspirin (81 mg each)
- 1 blanket (space blanket)
- 1 breathing barrier (with one-way valve)
- 1 instant cold compress
- 2 pair of non-latex gloves (size: large)
- 2 hydrocortisone ointment packets (approximately 1 gram each)
- Scissors
- 1 roller bandage (3 inches wide)
- 1 roller bandage (4 inches wide)
- 5 sterile gauze pads (3 x 3 inches)
- 5 sterile gauze pads (4 x 4 inches)
- Oral thermometer (non-mercury/non-glass)
- 2 triangular bandages
- Tweezers
- First aid instruction booklet

INCIDENT REPORT OF ILLNESS OR INJURY

Name of Participant: _____

Parish/School/Group: _____

Activity/Event: _____

Date of Activity/Event: _____

Location of Activity/Event: _____

Type of Illness or Injury: _____

Please detail circumstances of the injury or illness: (Who, What, Where, When, How)

Action Taken: _____

By Whom Was the Action Taken: _____

Was a parent/guardian notified? (If yes, give particulars of time, date, and content of notification.)

Yes

No

Name of person making this report: (Please Print) _____

Position: _____

Signature

Date

Directions: Complete form ASAP then make 3 copies: 1 copy for Youth Ministry permanent file, 1 copy for Parish Admin/Pastor, 1 copy faxed to the Office of Risk Management at (210) 431-7742

Chapter 4

Recommended Guidelines for Adolescent Retreats

Youth ministries here in the Archdiocese have long made use of retreats to evangelize and catechize young people. Because retreats are such an important process in the faith-growth of adolescents, it is vital that they are based on sound principles. A youth retreat experience can be that “moment in time” which calls young people into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and his Church. Retreat experiences are vehicles to meet the goals and themes set forth in *Renewing the Vision*. (See Chapter 1).

These guidelines are offered, not to pre-determine the style of an adolescent retreat program, but to present guidelines for the content and principles to keep in mind when planning and implementing a parish retreat experience. These principles apply to parish-based retreats as well as to retreats facilitated by parish or other retreat teams anywhere in the Archdiocese. Youth retreats are a part of a comprehensive youth ministry

program, therefore the coordinator of youth ministry in the parish must be intimately involved in the planning and implementation of these retreats.

Fully incorporated into these guidelines are the Liability Guidelines offered in Chapter Three. While young people are in our care, we have a great responsibility for their safety and well-being. Retreats present occasions during which the diocese, parish, and individuals can be found to be liable in any of the categories mentioned in the previous chapter.

A. Theological Principles Guiding Retreats

Youth retreats should be designed to:

- develop in youth a personal relationship with Jesus
- remove youth from ordinary distractions of daily life
- lead to discipleship within the church community.

A **retreat experience** should include all of the following:

- proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ,
- foster the formation of a Catholic Christian community
- provide opportunities for participants to reflect upon questions of faith and life experience in the light of the Gospel
- challenge retreatants to a personal response of service

All **theological content** of youth retreats must be:

- theologically consistent with the official teaching of the Catholic Church
 - use scripture from Catholic Bible translations
-

Prayer, in all its forms, is an essential aspect of the retreat experience, opening participants to ongoing conversion and deepening of faith.

Liturgy, if included, must be based on:

- principles of good liturgy (see Roman Missal and the General Instruction on the Roman Missal for direction)
- appropriate for the occasion
- celebrated with sufficient time to allow full preparation and participation by the assembly (*i.e.* appropriate Mass readings for the day, proper Eucharistic vessels, planning attention to honor Eucharistic fast)

B. Psychological Principles Guiding Retreats

Retreats provide the opportunity for participants to integrate their life experience and deepen their sense of belonging and meaning. Retreat experiences are most effective within the context of a comprehensive youth ministry program.

Retreat environments and experiences must be characterized by acceptance, growth, and freedom. Emotional manipulation is inappropriate and youth must be assured that whatever emotions they experience at any given time during a retreat are valid and have no moral overtones or consequences. Retreatants should be given diverse opportunities through which they may express themselves and feel safe in doing so. (See Chapter 3 Confidentiality statement)

The psychological well-being of participants is safeguarded by maintaining a good balance of recreation, reflection, structured activity, rest and diet.

The primary role of adults on youth retreats is to be a witness of our Catholic faith; however, due the nature of the retreat environment, psychological and spiritual issues may surface.

Unless an adult leader is a licensed psychological counselor/therapist or certified spiritual director, they should listen attentively, empathize, but refrain from offering therapeutic advice.

Peer ministry during adolescent retreats is essential. This approach encourages sharing the Catholic faith experience, and allows youth to exercise their baptismal call and witness to Christ. However, this approach must be well planned and monitored by adult leaders, *i.e.* preview and critique retreat talks, discussion questions, and ice breakers.

C. Catechetical Principles Guiding Youth Retreats

Human experience is the starting point for youth catechesis, joining the personal story of youth to the Christ story.

The content and design of youth retreats should be age appropriate and should be varied; *i.e.*, the same type of retreat should not be repeated with the same group over and over. Retreats with catechetical themes are as important as those with evangelization themes. It is recommended that retreat planners choose faith themes from the *Challenge of Adolescent Catechesis: Maturing in Faith*.³

Retreats should lead young people to service and actions for justice and peace. "Discussion, group processes, small group sharing, and activities involving all youth participants should use the group dynamics appropriate for the activity, group, content, and goals of the retreat and should be led by those familiar with these dynamics."

Storytelling, faith sharing, and personal witnessing, as well as time for private reflection and journaling should be respected as valuable elements in communicating the Gospel message.

The dynamic catechesis unique to retreats can be enhanced by the use of a model of

³ *The Challenge of Adolescent Catechesis: Maturing in Faith* (Washington D.C.: NFCYM, 1986), pp. 12-15.

planning from the work of Dr. Thomas Groome.⁴ This planning process is especially helpful in setting up retreat sessions and the methods used to present topics. The following are steps to take in implementing an idea.

- Start with a focusing activity that brings the attention of youth to bear on the theme of the session.
- Movement One: Experiencing Life: this step allows students to bring their own life experience to the topic.
- Movement Two: Reflecting Together which allows youth to tell their life story, discuss how they are influenced in their choices and what consequences might be.
- Movement Three: Discovering the Faith Story: This part of the session presents the story and vision of the Catholic Christian community in response to the topics at hand.
- Movement Four: Owning the Faith which provides youth with an opportunity to evaluate their own life experience with the challenge of the faith and practices of the Catholic Christian community.
- Movement Five: Responding in Faith which helps bring youth to a lived faith response, to a decision for action.

D. Developmental Principles Guiding Youth Retreats

Early Adolescence⁵ (10/11 - 14/15)

When planning retreat activities for younger adolescents, keep the following in mind:

- Physical Activity: Include time to stretch, wiggle, exercise, relax; non-competitive games and activities.
- Competence and Achievement: Provide opportunities where they can succeed and

be affirmed.

- Self-Definition: Provide time to absorb new ways of thinking and doing; provide time with friendship groupings.
- Creative Expression: Provide opportunities to express creatively new feelings, interests, abilities, thoughts; expose to drama, role playing, etc.
- Positive Social Interactions with Peers and Adults: Provide time with peers that allows for support, companionship, and challenge; retreat team members must be willing to share their own stories, experiences, views, values and feelings.
- Structure and Clear Limits: Provide explicit boundaries, rules and limits, allowing participants some input in setting them.
- Meaningful Participation: Successful events are planned with, not for, young adolescents; provide opportunities wherein they may develop a sense of responsibility.

Middle and Late Adolescence (14/15-18/19)

When planning retreat programs, sessions, experiences for older adolescents keep in mind the following conditions necessary for healthy Christian faith growth in this age group.⁶ Provide opportunities to:

- participate as full members of the faith community and society, experiencing a sense of belonging and mission.
- gain knowledge and experience in making moral decisions based on the Gospel and Tradition.

form and experience positive relationships

⁴ Thomas H. Groome, *Christian Religious Education* (New York: Harper & Row, 1981), especially Chapters 9 & 10 for more information. Also more information on the use of Shared Christian Praxis can be found in many faith formation and youth ministry resources; e.g., Reynolds R. Ekstrom and John Roberto, *Access Guide to Evangelization*, eds., (New Rochelle: Don Bosco Multimedia, 1989)

⁵ Gayle Dorman, *3:00 to 6:00 P.M.: Planning Programs for Young Adolescents* (Chapel Hill: Center for Early Adolescence, 1985), Module 2: "About Early Adolescence, 7 Developmental Needs of Early Adolescents."

- with peers and develop friendship-making and maintenance skills
- explore who they are and who they can become
- develop a social consciousness that is grounded in Scripture and the teachings of the Church by exploring, discussing, and acting on global and social justice and peace issues
- understand their sexual growth and develop healthy Christian values and attitude regarding their own sexuality
- develop personal prayer lives by experiencing a variety of prayer forms and styles
- develop relationships with adult Catholic Christians who will share their own faith journeys and who will ask questions that encourage critical thinking and reflection

Recommended Retreat Components⁷

Physical

- adequate sleep
- adequate recreation time
- balanced diet
- access to outdoors and nature, if possible

Spiritual

- Eucharistic Liturgy (priority on a multiday retreat)
- Reconciliation Service
 - ⇒ if in keeping with retreat design
 - ⇒ consider presenting some catechesis on the sacrament over the retreat period
- Communal and private prayer and reflection
 - ⇒ provide mentoring in these types of prayer
- Praying with Scripture

Psychological/Social/Catechetical

- balance of private time and group time
- opportunity for pastoral care and guidance
- reflection on human, personal, communal experience
- community building
- opportunities for participation and involvement
- creative activity and expression
- input and presentations and follow ups
- discussion and sharing opportunities

Supportive Components

- early program planning and design
- team preparation (minimum 8 weeks)
- orientation or preparation for parents/guardians and participants before the retreat
- follow-up process:
 - a. reunion event to reflect on experience
 - b. integrate youth into comprehensive youth ministry program.
- evaluation by team and participants

E. Concluding Comments

Retreats are an integral component of any comprehensive youth ministry program. The main task in facilitating a retreat is to create a setting where young people can experience the grace of conversion. It is the task of youth ministry to create the environment wherein this conversion experience can be nurtured and developed in a faith filled Catholic community.

⁶ Roberto, John. *Network Paper No. 26: Principles for Ministry With Youth*. Don Bosco Multimedia: New Rochelle, N.Y. 1989, pp. 4-5.

⁷ Duggan, Robert. *Retreats*. "Conversion: The Underlying Dynamic," p. 90.

These Guidelines represent a concrete source of affirmation and support on the part of our Church leadership that this ministry is so important that it must be considered within a framework that is comprehensive in its approach and solidly based in the Gospel from which we have our mandate to, "Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations; baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe the commandments I gave you. And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time." Mt 28:18-20.

A Postscript

The history of youth ministry in this country and in this archdiocese has been blessed by the work of a great number of men and women, clergy and lay. These pioneers in youth ministry have developed for us a vision of youth ministry that is holistic, systematic, and clearly in tune with the mission of Jesus and his Church.

The increasing opportunities for professional training in youth ministry, the sense of calling and training dedicated men and women to work to and with youth, has caused the Church to take youth ministry seriously. A hallmark of the full acceptance of youth ministry as a vital ministry of the Church will be administrative support and leadership on the part of the archdiocese and the parish that "involves spiritual, emotional, and financial backing."¹

May these Guidelines enable you to bring that message of discipleship to young people and affirm you in the ministry to which you have been called.

¹ Department of Education, A Vision of Youth Ministry, bi-lingual edition (Washington, D.C.: USCC, 1986).