YOUTH MINISTRY IN A FAMILY OF PARISHES

"Encounter/Grow/Witness" is the threefold process for evangelization that has proven its worth in our local Church and will be our paradigm as we go forward in unleashing the Gospel. Every person in the Archdiocese is called to encounter Jesus anew, to grow daily as his disciples, and to give witness to the power of his mercy" (Unleash the Gospel, Guidepost 9).

These words, inspired by the Holy Spirit, guide the Department of Evangelization and Missionary Discipleship in our efforts to assist the ministries of our families of parishes. The words are especially applicable to our ministry to and with young people. Because we understand that one size does not fit all, the team in the Office of Discipleship Formation has developed four models of youth ministry for consideration and discernment. Our hope is that these will assist you in serving the young Church and leading them into a deep and abiding relationship with Jesus Christ.

Fr. Mario Amore, *Director*

INTRODUCTION

The three goals of Renewing the Vision, the USCCB's document which sets the framework for Catholic youth ministry, are:

» "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 Catholic faith community.

» To foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person."

"Evangelization is the energizing core of all ministry with adolescents. All the relationships, ministry components, and programs of comprehensive ministry with adolescents must proclaim the Good News. They must invite young people into a deeper relationship with the Lord Jesus and empower them to live as his disciples."

Renewing the Vision also states that the parish community "...should be a place where [young people] feel welcome and ... have a sense of belonging and acceptance [with] a wide variety of opportunities to use their gifts and express their faith through meaningful roles." Youth ministry integrates adolescents and their families into the total life and mission of the church. This document calls for parishes to expand their vision of youth ministry. "Youth group ministry" can be an important part of a comprehensive youth ministry plan; however, it is part of a larger vision.

Youth ministry is about relationship, and pastoral care of teens is very important. Recent research shows that young people value authentic relationships now more than ever. The culture of youth ministry can never align around "efficiency" unless it is first aligned around relationship. You cannot "microwave" youth ministry. It is based on relationship and accompaniment, in person and even virtually in some cases, if necessary. These things take time, cost money, and it is an investment in the future of the parish. Effective youth ministry will involve the efforts of many people. (Romans 12:6-8)

FOP YOUTH MINISTRY FORMATS

These four youth ministry models focus on sharing resources and alignment of gifts which are important in the Archdiocese of Detroit's Family of Parishes model moving forward. They are creative and innovative. There is a designated person/team of people "on the ground" at each parish for the relational and accompaniment needs of young people at the parish level.

» Each of the Coordinators of Youth Ministry would be intentionally integrating teens into the life of each parish through service, as Liturgical Ministers, Catechists, etc.

» The numbers of Coordinators of Youth Ministry within each model are used as examples. This number could be adjusted, depending on the FOPs.

» Family of Parishes allows for an enhancement of youth ministry at the parish level, with accompaniment and relationship building at the core of a strategy to reach young people in the FOPs surrounding area.

» There is parish-level effort to reach out, cultivate relationships and bring young people into and through the attract, encounter, grow and witness model of evangelization.

» In these models, Coordinators of Youth Ministry within a FOPs have specialized areas, less of a "jack of all trades" approach, and less ministry duplication.

» Each campus has their own committed team of mature disciples focused on relationship building with teens.

1- CHARISM MODEL

» In this model, the Coordinators have ministry responsibilities based on their charisms and experience.

☐ CYM #1 works at parish A: Small group expert for all parishes – creating and overseeing small groups for girls, for boys, based on interests, Bible studies, lectionary-based catechesis groupings, teen leadership development, etc.

☐ CYM #2 works at parish B: Christian service outreach for teens, pastoral care of adolescents, setting up peer and adult mentors, evangelization/witness training,

intential formation for parents of adolescents, etc. for all parishes

- ☐ CYM #3 works at parish C: Larger group gatherings & activities, encounter opportunities, etc. for all parishes

2- ATTRACT, ENCOUNTER, GROW, WITNESS MODEL

» Similar to the Charism Model, however, the Coordinators have ministry responsibilities based on the Attract, Encounter, Grow and Witness paradigm. Creative and innovative ways would be created to move young people through the stages.

- ☐ CYM #1 works at parish A and serves the FOPs as Attract & Encounter Stages Team Leader: provides shallow entry activities, welcome and intentional invitations, adoration, small group ministry, service opportunities, etc. that all CYMs can offer at their parishes.

- ☐ CYM #2 works at parish B and serves the FOPs as the Grow Stage Team Leader: provides small group ministry, vocational discernment, catechesis, Bible studies etc. that all CYMs can offer at their parishes.

- ☐ CYM #3 works at parish C and serves the FOPs as the Witness Stage Team Leader: provides gifts discernment, leadership training, testimony and evangelization training and opportunities, service opportunities, outreach and works of mercy that all CYMs can offer at their parishes.

» To view a short course on the Detroit Model of Evangelization (Attract, Encounter, Grow, Witness) please visit learn.egwdetroit.org.

3- AGE GROUP MODEL

» Similar to the previous two models, however, the Coordinators have ministry responsibilities based on age. Creative and innovative ways would be created to move young people from middle school through high school.

- ☐ CYM #1 works at parish A and drives content for middle school youth ministry through all of the parishes.

- ☐ CYM #2 works at parish B and drives content for high school through all of the parishes.

- ☐ CYM #3 works part-time at parish C and implements what CYM #1 and #2 provide as content.

- ☐ CYM #4 is a volunteer, at a very close by parish D, providing relational ministry at their parish and encourages their young people to participate in gathered programs at parish B.

4- DIRECTOR/TEAM MODEL

» Structure: This utilizes one Director of Youth Ministry for the entire FOPs and a Coordinator of Youth Ministry at each parish.

» Includes:

   ▢ One FOP Administration Team: Director of Youth Ministry, Secretary, Communication, Finance, etc.

   » Provide content/curriculum, coordinate large events, leadership training, etc.

   » Utilizes teens and adults from each parish as collaborators

   » Or one Youth Minister from each parish sharing in the role of relationship building and overall administration (if administration is a gift of the Youth Minister)

   » One person cannot be solely accompanying and building relationships with teens from multiple parishes.

   ▢ Coordinator of Youth Ministry at each parish – Each parish has a physical person on the ground at each parish to evangelize individual youth and to coordinate others at the parish level to do the same.

      ▢ Invite, train, and set up mentors for youth to use their unique gifts in the various ministries of their parish.

      ▢ Integrate young people into small groups in their parish, moving along the encounter, grow and witness model.

      ▢ Foster relationships with teens, parents, and volunteers.

         » They are relationship builders. They accompany teenagers.

         » They equip parents and partner with them in ministry. Parents have the most contact hours with their kids during these important formational years.

      ▢ "Deliver" the content and "facilitate" the programming at the campus but do less to create that content and chart the course than the Administration Team.

      ▢ Attend larger gatherings (not at their own campus) and then attend their own campus on the weekend, etc.

      ▢ Be in the community surrounding their campus (local high school, community events, etc.) reaching out to young people.

      ▢ Worship at the parish

         » This helps with visibility, aids personal evangelization efforts, and assists in

an understanding of that parish's individual culture/identity.

>> This aids in integrating young people into the life of the parish (Masses, meaningful roles, specific parish opportunities, etc.)

>> Regardless of if they are a 10, 20 or 30+ hours per week Coordinator of Youth Ministry, there is a person at each site participating in the life of the community and building relationships with teens.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

>> Metrics could be set around relationship building to make sure the youth ministers are focused on relationship.

☐ Ex. How much time per week/month are they expected to be intentionally relational with teens (on campus, at their school, in the community, etc.?)

☐ Further examples: A Coordinator of Youth Ministry is expected to spend so many hours per week or month at the local high school during lunch or at extracurricular events building relationships with teens.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

>> What resources do the parishes in our family already have available for youth ministry?

>> What are the current gifts, talents, and charisms of our youth ministry team?

>> What characteristics (resources, geography, demographics) of our Family of Parishes should be considered before choosing a model for youth ministry?

>> Which of the above models makes the most sense for our parish in the short-term?

>> Is there a different model that could be an aspirational goal? Something our Family of Parishes should strive to grow into?

>> What will our Family of Parishes need to invest in to grow into our chosen model of youth ministry?

>> How will we know that we have implemented the right model of youth ministry in our family? What will be our indicators of success?

God our Father, be with us on our pilgrim journey of faith. Give us the grace and courage to step forward in faith and hope on the road ahead.

-Excerpt from the 2019 USA World Youth Day Prayer