

Guide to the Components of Comprehensive Youth Ministry

There are eight components of comprehensive youth ministry, as outlined in *Renewing the Vision*. These components give shape and direction to the Church's vision of how we effectively serve young people. These components are briefly described here:

Advocacy: *interpreting* the needs of youth and their families, especially the social problems facing them and *acting* with or on behalf of youth and their families for a change in the systems (policies, procedures, programs) which create or contribute to the social problems; *giving* young people a voice and *empowering* them to address the social problems that they face.

Catechesis: *sponsoring* youth toward maturity in Catholic Christian faith as a living reality through the kind of teaching and learning that emphasizes understanding, reflection, and transformation; *fostering* in youth a communal identity as Catholic Christians within the inter-generational community of faith and helping them to develop their own personal faith identity (*The Challenge of Adolescent Catechesis*).

Community Life: *creating* an environment which nurtures meaningful relationships among youth and between youth and adults characterized by Gospel values (e.g. acceptance of all people, trust, respect, cooperation, honesty, taking responsibility, willingness to serve); *helping* young people feel like a valued part of the church community; *providing* opportunities for social interaction and meaningful participation in the life of the church and civic community.

Evangelization: *proclaiming* through word and witness the Good News of the Gospel to youth who have not yet heard or seen it and inviting them into a relationship with Jesus Christ and the community of believers; *ongoing witness* of the faith community as it attempts to live out the Gospel with such authenticity that the faith of all the members is sustained and nourished. Evangelization is the energizing core of all the components of youth ministry (*The Challenge of Catholic Youth Evangelization*).

Justice, Peace, and Service: *guiding* young people in the development of a social consciousness and a commitment to a life of justice and service grounded in their faith in Jesus Christ, in the scriptures and in Catholic social teaching; *empowering* young people (and their families) to work for justice by concrete efforts to address the causes of human suffering, to serve those in need, to pursue peace, and to defend the life, dignity, and rights of all people; *infusing* the concepts of justice and peace into all youth ministry efforts.

Leadership Development/Enablement: *recruiting, training, and supporting* youth and adult leaders in youth ministry; *empowering* youth for leadership and ministry with their peers, in their schools, and in the church and civic community; *developing* a leadership team of youth and adults to organize and coordinate a ministry with youth; *partnering* with parents and families in promoting positive youth development and faith growth.

Pastoral Care/Guidance: *promoting* positive youth and family development through a variety of preventive strategies (e.g., developing life skills and parenting skills); *caring* for youth and families in crisis through support, counseling, and referral to appropriate community agencies; and *providing* guidance as youth face life decisions and make moral choices.

Prayer and Worship: assisting young people in deepening their relationship with Jesus through spiritual development and a personal prayer life; providing a variety of communal prayer and worship experiences with youth to deepen and celebrate their relationship with Jesus in a caring Christian community; involving young people in the sacramental life of the Church.