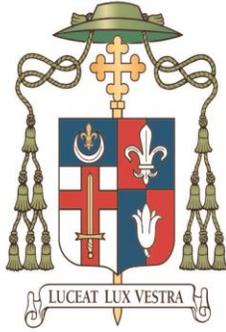




**YOUNG ADULT
MINISTRY: FROM
START TO SUCCESS**

WWW.COVDIO.ORG/CATECHESIS-FORMATION/YOUNG-ADULT-MINISTRY/

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus,

“In Sons and Daughters of the Light: A Pastoral Plan for Ministry with Young Adults” published in 1996, my brother bishops outlined three invitations and four goals for young adult ministry. The pastoral plan invited young adults to *holiness, community* and *service*. The four goals were framed in terms of connecting: *with Jesus, with the Church, with the mission of the Church in the world* and *with peers*.

This manual, *“Young Adult Ministry: from Start to Success”* builds upon the lived reality and experiences of our *Diocesan Young Adult Advisory Board* throughout the years of their existence. *Young Adult Ministry: from Start to Success* is designed to be a resource to enable all parishes across our diocese to become *“young adult user-friendly,”* and accomplish the goals set forth by the bishops.

Much research, reflecting, writing, rewriting, editing, and re-editing have gone into the production of this manual. These pages attempt to capture the reality of so many board members who have shared their experiences in young adult ministry.

It is my hope that *Young Adult Ministry: from Start to Success* becomes a valuable tool for all our diocesan parishes to use in strengthening their ministry to young adults. Without the giftedness of our young adults, our parishes would lack the energy and vitality and insight that make them the strong communities they are called to be.

As your bishop I am aware of your capability to love and serve. I invite you to continue to give of yourself, your time, your energies, and your talents for the good of others.

I will be praying that the Holy Spirit guides you and the Church as together we grow in our love of Jesus Christ.

Devotedly Yours in Christ Jesus

Most Reverend Roger J. Foy, D.D.
Bishop of Covington

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Definition and Goals of Young Adult Ministry:.....	5
Starting a Young Adult Ministry in your Parish:	5
Resources and Ideas:	9
Electronic Resources:.....	16
Closing Statement:	17

Introduction

Young Adult Ministry: From Start to Success is a manual created by the Diocese of Covington's Young Adult Advisory Board (YAAB) to function as a guide to create and sustain young adult ministries within the parishes of the Diocese. The YAAB consists of appointed individuals, lay, clergy and religious who serve as advisors to the Department of Catechesis and Faith Formation regarding best practices in young adult ministry. It is our mission to maintain, promote, and develop this ministry by deepening life in the Spirit, nurturing life in community, and empowering a life of service. In our efforts to accomplish these goals we utilized the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) guidelines and documents, especially *Sons and Daughters of the Light and Renewing the Vision*. With these resources we work to develop tools for the diocese, such as this manual.

“There are many opportunities to touch the lives of young adults, and they should be seen as moments for evangelizing outreach. Some of these may require a change in the way we approach evangelization so our outreach is more dynamic, taking the Church into the community where young adults gather rather than waiting for these men and women to come to us,” *Sons and Daughters of the Light and Renewing the Vision*. Due to a great need to strengthen young adult ministry in many of our parishes, we have created this guide in hopes that your parish will develop and maintain such a vital ministry to ensure that the needs of young adults are met.

Young adults desire to deepen their faith and see Christ working in their lives. However, they often fall short due to limited resources. This is clearly stated by Christopher J. Hood in *The Sons and Daughters of the Light and Renewing the Vision*, “In the next ten years, I will be making some of the biggest transitions of my life. I am not looking for a single’s group to meet that special someone. I am searching for community. I am searching for people to share my journey. . . I believe that the Church needs to actively reach out to young adults and give us the opportunity to find God at work in our lives. Our lives have become incredibly busy as we try to start careers, find jobs, and find ourselves. . . . My hope is that the Church would reach out to us—seek us out and open the door to participation. I am very aware of my need for God's forgiving love in my life. Yet it is so easy to put those needs on hold and focus on expectations that society has put on me. Having a community to share these struggles with would be a tremendous blessing.”

We are here to serve as a resource to you and your parish and are available to assist and support you as you begin this endeavor. To reach us, please email dioceseofcov13@gmail.com.

Definition and Goals of Young Adult Ministry

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) defines young adults as “young people ages 19-39 who are single or married, divorced or widowed, and in college, working, unemployed, incarcerated, or in the military.” As one can see, the USCCB defines a much diversified group of people and encourages parishes to carefully consider the various stages of life and circumstances in which young adults find themselves. When developing a young adult ministry within one’s parish, it is vital to have a full understanding of each subgroup and how to best meet their needs. This can be accomplished through effective communication, listening sessions and by forming a core leadership team, which is discussed later in this document.

The goals of Young Adult Ministry are parallel to those of other pertinent ministries within the parish. *Sons and Daughters of the Light and Renewing the Vision* identifies four main goals of young adult ministry: connecting young adults with Jesus Christ, connecting young adults with the Church, connecting young adults with the Mission of the Church in the world and connecting young adults with peer community. Although some challenges may arise in accomplishing these goals, we have highlighted below some key components to ensure a successful young adult ministry within your parish.

Starting a Young Adult Ministry in your Parish

Starting a Young Adult Ministry within your parish can seem like a daunting task. It is our hope that with this guide you will gain the confidence and resources necessary to begin and maintain a sustainable ministry. You may be thinking “Where do I begin?”, “Where do I find young adults?”, “How do I reach out to them?” etc. Young adults are everywhere. They are in your pews at church, working within your local communities, serving as volunteers and on social media. Now that we know where young adults are, how do we reach out to them? We do this through creating avenues of effective communication such as advertising events on social media, developing personal relationships with them, and through invitations to engage in various young adult activities.

Social Networking Websites

One of the most important aspects of Young Adult Ministry is being where your target people are. Many young adults do not check their personal email regularly, don't read their parish bulletin, may not be attending Mass on a regular basis, or be in the same location consistently. Therefore, they might not hear announcements at Mass. If you are trying to communicate with young adults, it is essential to be present on social media. This includes media like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, etc. We advise to start out with one or two social media accounts as this allows you to currently and accurately update your accounts without spreading yourself too thin. Each form of social media has its pros and cons.

Facebook

Most people are familiar with Facebook. It is one of the most popular forms of social media, and it is easy to use. With this program you can exchange messages, post information and photos, and share videos. You begin by creating a "user profile" or name for your group. Other Facebook users can "like" your page, and you will be considered "friends." Anything you post will automatically be sent to those who like your group. A benefit of Facebook is the ability for friends to share your events and posts. This allows a broader audience for your message, and a greater chance to evangelize and connect with young adults.

One of the features of Facebook is that you can create an event and invite people to attend. You list specific information about the event, such as the time and location of the event. People can respond if they choose, indicating if they plan to attend the event, cannot attend, or might attend.

Instagram and Twitter

Instagram and Twitter are two other forms of social media that are popular with a large number of young adults.

Instagram allows you to share images and videos. You cannot create an event on Instagram, but you can advertise events by using a promotional video, or images showing information about the event. Also, you can post a picture and add a description with a link that will take you to a site that has more information. With Instagram you can post photographs taken at an event while it is happening so people can see what is taking place.

With Twitter you can post messages, but there is a limit of 140 characters. However, it is possible to attach an image or video to your "Tweet". Primarily, your tweets are seen by those who "follow" you. It is also possible for users to search for a particular subject, and if your message is relevant they will see what you have written. Followers are also able to "retweet" your "tweet" to allow a broader audience.

Using hashtags in your Tweets, the "#" key on the keyboard can assist in spreading your message. The hashtag is before the key words you are using. For example, someone could search for a Mass for young adults. If you have a Mass for young adults in your parish, in your post you could include #YoungAdultMass, #Mass, or #YoungAdult.

Putting Social Media to Use

Once you have created your social media accounts, one of the key things to do is get people to like your Facebook page or follow your other accounts. One way to do this is to incorporate using social media into one of your events. For example, you could give the group a challenge that would include posting something to twitter using a certain hashtag. Your young adult committee should also do the challenge and use that hashtag. Before you choose a hashtag for your event you should do a search to make sure that it isn't being used by other groups. This helps avoid confusion, and makes it clear that the posts associated with that hashtag truly relate to your group.

When using social media it is very important to make sure that you keep it updated. You should post at least one thing on each social media site that you are a part of every one to two days. That can seem overwhelming, but to some extent that can just be sharing something that you find interesting or catchy. There are also resources that allow you to schedule future posts which is detailed on page 13 and 14 of this manual. With Facebook and Twitter sharing something from someone else is easy. Facebook has a "Share" button and on Twitter you can "Retweet". Instagram does not have a specific way to share someone's post. However, you can take a screenshot of the image and create a new post on your Instagram account and attach a personalized caption. Whichever social media you decide to utilize, be sure to stay current and up-to-date for best results.

Listening Sessions

Another question you may ask yourself is what do young adults need and how do I find out? A great solution is through listening sessions. Listening sessions are often held with 10-12 people and provides young adults the opportunity to express their needs, wants and desires when it comes to their faith, church and social lives. This also gives ministry leaders insight as to what the parish can realistically offer while staying within time, budget and space constraints.

Some questions to ask during a listening session are:

- Why do people your age need the Church?
- As you look back on your involvement with the Catholic Church, what has kept you engaged?
- What do you find to be the least-engaging aspect of our parish life for young adults? Why? How can we overcome this?
- Name three spiritual or faith-enhancing social and service activities that would engage young adults.
- What has stopped you from being more fully involved in your parish life?
- How can we, as parish leaders, get more young adults involved in parish life?

Core Leadership Team

A core leadership team is vital when preparing to begin a young adult ministry. This team should consist of individuals who are dedicated, passionate, organized and willing to give of their time and talents to this ministry. This core team is responsible for hosting and advertising events and formation, constructing policies and guidelines and continually assessing and adapting events and formation to meet the needs of the ministry. Ideally, this team would consist of 4 to 5 individuals with varying talents and knowledge to develop a dynamic leadership group.

As you can see, it can be challenging to begin a parish young adult ministry. However, with effective communication, proper advertisement, understanding the needs and desires of young adults and by establishing a core leadership team, young adult ministry is not only possible for your parish but can also reap rewards.

Resources and Ideas

In this section, you will find useful resources, templates and ideas to guide leaders in creating, advertising and planning for various young adult events. Please note that these are offered as helpful aids and are not the only types of events or forms of formation. We encourage leaders to continually assess the specific needs of their group and tailor meetings, events and formation to meet those needs.

Advertising for Young Adult Events

Create a flyer to post to social media sites

Flyers can be created using Microsoft PowerPoint, Publisher, Word or by using www.canva.com (which is detailed later in the document).

Essential details:

1. Event title
2. Date
3. Time
4. Location
5. Event description
6. Contact/RSVP information

Post flyer to social media sites

Advertise young adult ministry events as soon as possible, giving at least a two week notice. Also, send reminders as the events approach (i.e. 1 week, 2 days, day of, etc.).

Post to Facebook:

A flyer must be in JPG format. Sign into Facebook, click the photo/video link and upload the flyer. Next, add a caption and post to the page, which will share your flyer with all of the page's followers.

Post to Instagram:

The document must be saved to your phone's photo library. Once the flyer is saved, open Instagram and click the button at the bottom that looks like a camera. There you will see your photo library. Select the photo you want to post, click "Next" at the top right, add a caption and click share. A bonus option with Instagram is that it allows you to share posts with your other social media sites (i.e. Facebook and Twitter). After you have written your post, you can click on the Facebook and Twitter buttons which will then share your post on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter at one time.

Post to Twitter Using a Mobile Phone:

Tap on "What's happening?" at the bottom of your screen. Enter your 140-character message. When you're ready to post your message, tap **Tweet**. A notification will appear in the status bar on your device and will go away once the Tweet successfully sends.

Post to Twitter Using the Internet:

Sign in to your Twitter account. Type your Tweet into the box at the top of your Home timeline, or click the Tweet button in the top navigation bar. Your update must be 140 characters or less. Twitter counts the characters for you, and the number of remaining characters is shown as a number below the box. Click the Tweet button to post the Tweet to your profile. You will immediately see your Tweet in the timeline on your homepage.

Highlight events in *The Messenger* and Parish Bulletins:

This can be accomplished by sending a flyer or detailed information, stating how long you want to advertise for this particular event to catechesis@covdio.org.

Feel free to contact the Diocese of Covington YAAB if you have questions regarding advertising, dioceseofcov13@gmail.com.

Highlight events on the Diocesan Website:

To do this please email detailed event information to dioceseofcov13@gmail.com. Information will then be added to the master calendar posted on the diocesan website: <http://www.covdio.org/catechesis-formation/young-adult-ministry/>.

RESOURCES

Opening Prayers:

Laudate is a free mobile phone application that you can download from the app store.

http://www.prayerscapes.com/FilmPages/opening_prayer.html is a great web site for prayer.

Have volunteers start with their own opening prayer.

<http://www.immaculata.edu/sites/default/files/file/Administration/Mission%20and%20Ministry/Prayers-Before-Meetings-Booklet.pdf?1432080000024> a printable book with a multitude of opening prayers for various occasions.

Icebreakers:

<http://www.icebreakers.ws/>

https://insight.typepad.co.uk/40_icebreakers_for_small_groups.pdf

<http://icebreakerideas.com/best-icebreaker-games-adults/>

<http://www.thesource4ym.com/games/>

Discussion Topics

<http://www.lifeaftersunday.com/26-discussion-topics> - This website offers 26 discussion topics varying from assent to wonder and provides a downloadable issue related to each topic. Within the issue, you will find articles, how to live the topic in daily lives and reflection questions for your group.

<http://www.catholicculture.org/news/> - This website reports current events happening globally, allowing you and your group to have an open discussion of world happenings.

www.elementsofthecatholicmass.com - This website has two to three minute videos highlighting various aspects of the Mass with discussion questions to follow.

Specific Topics:

- Faithful Citizenship: <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/faithful-citizenship/adult-education-and-small-faith-community-sharing-on-the-topic-of-faithful-citizenship.cfm>
- Living Simply: <http://www.aucklandcatholic.org.nz/media/2015/10/Living-Simply.pdf>
- Marriage/Cohabitation: <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/marriage/love-and-life/index.cfm>
- Forgiveness: <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/catechesis/catechetical-sunday/sacramental-forgiveness/>
- Sex N Stuff: <http://www.catholic.org/featured/headline.php?ID=724>

Social Activity Ideas:

- Red's baseball game (or other local team such as the Florence Freedom)
- Going to see a movie (Potential moral/ethical analysis of movie together afterward)
- Bowling night
- Coffee shop
- Pizzeria
- Ice cream shop
- Wine/beer tasting (for 21 and up) This has the potential to be paired with a bible study ("Beer and Bible")
- Picnic in the park
- Ice cream sundae bar (with sauces, toppings, etc.) at someone's house
- Group canoeing
- Bonfire and s'mores
- Trivia contest at a local place (For example, The Pub in Crestview)
- Dinner at a local restaurant

Closing Prayers:

http://www.lords-prayer-words.com/times/closing_prayer.html is a good website for closing prayers

Invite volunteers to make up their own prayer. Remind people to thank God at all times, even when it does not seem that He is working.

<http://www.churchyear.net/prayer/meetingprayer.html> is another good site for prayers

<http://www.catholic.org/prayers/prayer.php?p=3396> helps to generate how to pray and prayer examples.

Additional Tools to Maintain Social Media Sites:

Hootsuite - www.hootsuite.com

A service that allows you to schedule social media posts in advance. For example, you can create all posts on Monday and have them scheduled to post or repost on each social media site throughout the week. This is a great tool and makes maintaining your social media accounts much easier.

Canva - www.canva.com

This site offers the capability to create graphics to post on your social media sites, such as profile pictures, banners, flyers, etc. This site is free to sign up, and offers a multitude of free backgrounds, layouts and pictures. There are also graphics that you can purchase if you choose. Once finished creating your project, you are then able to download it in a variety of formats to be used for printing banners and flyers or for posting on social media accounts.

If you have further questions concerning the use of social media to advertise for and enhance your Young Adult Ministry please contact the Young Adult Advisory Board, dioceseofcov13@gmail.com. We are happy to help you in any way we can.

Young Adult Mass Planning Sheet
Positions Needed

Lector: _____

Server*: _____

Greeters*: _____

Gift Presenters*: _____

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion:* _____

Musicians/Cantor*: _____

Music*: _____

Opening Song: _____

Responsorial Psalm: _____

Gospel Acclamation: _____

Preparation of the Gifts Hymn*: _____

Service Music (Mass of Renewal, Heritage Mass, Mass of Creation) _____

Communion Hymn: _____

Closing Hymn: _____

Readings: (or you can use daily readings)

1st Reading: _____

Gospel: _____

Intercessions: _____

*Optional

Electronic Resources

- **United States Conferences of Catholic Bishops**
<http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/who-we-teach/young-adults/>
- **Sons and Daughters of the Light and Renewing the Vision**
Books may be purchased or PDFs downloaded at <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/who-we-teach/young-adults/>
- **Catholic Answers**
A YouTube channel from creators of www.Catholic.com
- **Catholic News Service**
A YouTube channel about the involvement of the Church in the world
- **New Catholic Generation**
Comprised specifically by Catholic Teenagers
- **Catholic TV Network**
Watch Interviews, homilies, and reflections from Catholic TV.
- **Bishop Robert Barron**
www.Wordonfire.org this site has study programs, homilies, online videos, lectures, books and CD's
- **Bustedhalo.com**
A compilation of videos, podcasts and radio broadcasts discussing and emphasizing the Catholic faith and how to live the faith in our day to day lives.
- **praymorenovenas.com**
This site has a YouTube channel with the prayers and you can receive email alerts for prayers.
- **Fr. Mike Schmitz**
<http://bulldogcatholic.org/>
- **Sarah Swafford**
www.emotionalvirtue.com
- **Dynamic Catholic**
www.dynamiccatholic.com - Authored by Matthew Kelly featuring online book resources as well as advertisement for events near you

Closing Statement

In conclusion, we want to share a quote from Pope John Paul II's homily highlighting the importance of young adult involvement within our churches. "You, young people, are especially called to become missionaries of this New Evangelization, by daily witnessing to the Word that saves. You personally experience the anxieties of the present historical period, fraught with hope and doubt, in which it can at times be easy to lose the way that leads to the encounter with Christ. . . . The Church entrusts to young people the task of proclaiming to the world the joy which springs from having met Christ. Dear friends, allow yourselves to be drawn to Christ, accept his invitation to follow him. Go and preach the Good News that redeems; do it with happiness in your hearts and become communicators of hope in a world which is often tempted to despair, communicators of faith in a society which at times seems resigned to disbelief, communicators of love, in daily events that are often marked by a mentality of the most unbridled selfishness."

As you can see, we are all called to be witnesses of Christ and to be drawn closer in our relationship with God. By beginning and maintaining young adult ministry in your parish we are able to build a foundation of faith-filled young adults who can evangelize the good news of Christ.

By reading *Young Adult Ministry: From Start to Success* you have taken the first step in launching a young adult ministry in your parish. We are here to serve as a resource to you and are willing to assist you in any way we can. Contact us by email, dioceseofcov13@gmail.com.

Gracious and Loving God

Help these young men and women to be a light for the entire world to see,
In all the places they live and work. Let their light shine for all peoples:

For their families,

For their church communities,

For their cultures and societies,

For the economic and political systems,

For the whole world.

Coming into the room where the disciples were gathered after the resurrection,

"Jesus, your son, said: Peace be with you!" (Jn 20:21)

Make these men and women bearers of Christ's peace

"Blessed are the peacemakers,

Teach them the meaning of what was said on the mountain:

For they shall be called sons and daughters of God" (cf. Mt 5:9).

Send them, Father, as you sent your son:

To free their brothers and sisters from fear and sin.

We ask this of you, in Christ's name. Amen

Adapted from the Papal Homily for WYD 1995, Manila