

Is ours a *comprehensive* youth ministry?

“This holistic and comprehensive model meets the needs of youth ministry for a new generation of youth and their families.”

~ John Roberto
 Founder, Center for Ministry Development

The model for youth ministry is evolving to meet the needs of today’s teen. Gone are the days when a “youth group” met and served the needs of all teens. In an increasingly hectic youth culture filled with outside influences, youth ministers, adult leaders, and the entire parish community are challenged to cultivate the God-given gifts of *each* teen in a parish, so that the teen may be inspired to give back to his/her communities and build the Kingdom of God.

3 **Goals of Youth Ministry***

- Youth Ministry empowers young people to become disciples of Jesus Christ who witness to their faith by living and working for justice, peace, and human dignity.
- Youth Ministry seeks to draw young people to responsible participation in the life, mission, and work of the faith community.
- Youth Ministry works to foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person.

As detailed in *Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry*, the U.S. Bishops’ Document on Youth Ministry, parishes are responsible for fostering the implementation of these elements of comprehensive youth ministry:



✓ Pastoral Care: Parish utilizes various strategies to provide guidance and support as youth face life decisions. Provides care for both youth and families through counseling and referral if necessary. Provides positive influence as youth face moral challenges.

✓ Advocacy: Interprets the needs of the teen and his/her family, and speaks and acts on their behalf. Community leads and empowers youth to address the prob-

lems (often social, political, cultural) they face.

✓ Evangelization: Empowers teens to be a witness to the Gospel message, and to proclaim the message in word and act to those in their communities who have not experienced it.

✓ Catechesis: Provides for growth in a teen’s faith identity. Fosters communal identity by teaching and witnessing an understanding of the Catholic Christian faith.

✓ Leadership Development: Parish community empowers youth to assume leadership roles in

their communities, including active participation in ministry. Parish also develops leadership gifts of parents and other parish adults to serve needs of youth.

✓ Prayer & Worship: Provides youth various communal prayer and liturgy to strengthen their relationship with Jesus. Encourages youth to actively participate in sacramental ministry in their parish community.

✓ Community Life: Allows for the growth of Christian community through social interaction and participation in the life of church and community.

✓ Justice & Service: Empowers youth to be a witness to the Church’s social teaching, defending the rights of all peoples, Calls upon youth to serve those in need.

Comprehensive Youth Ministry is... TO, WITH, BY, and FOR Youth.

It is the challenge of youth ministers, pastors, adult leaders, and the entire parish community to implement each of these components into a comprehensive model, creating youth ministry programs that are *to* youth, *with* youth, *by* youth, and *for* youth, and seeking to foster the development of the whole person.

* *Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry*. USCCB Publishing.