

Summary of Youth/Young Adult documents from USCCB as of July 2024

Renewing the Vision (1997), Sons and Daughters of the Light (1997), Listen-Teach-Send (2024), Christus Vivit (2019)

Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry – [RTV]

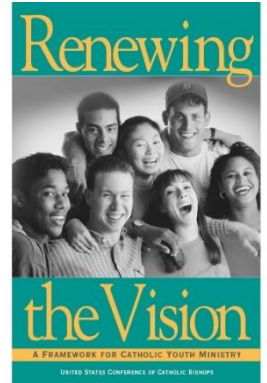
(Published by the USCCB in 1997 as a revision to the 1976, A Vision of Youth Ministry)

This document sets the stage for a comprehensive approach to ministering **by, to, for** and **with** the young people in our faith communities.

In the introduction of *Catholic Youth Ministry: The Essential Documents*, the editor states “This vision of youth ministry is broad and has numerous possibilities. In considering the possibilities, some people can become overwhelmed. The possibilities in the vision are not intended as a checklist of things that every parish is required to provide. Rather, the possibilities provide the big picture of what Catholic youth ministry can be.”

There are several areas of ministry to adolescents that are addressed by **RTV** . . .

The ministerial and pastoral needs of young people, relational needs, goal-centered, multidimensional, holistic and developmental needs, people centered and needs focused.



RTV also establishes a foundation from which to build comprehensive youth ministry in a parish, school or diocese. Beginning with **three 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 Catholic faith community.
- To foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person.

Seven themes of Comprehensive Youth Ministry –

- > Developmentally appropriate (programs and activities focused on age appropriate needs)
- > Adolescent development (younger 11-14, older 15-18)
- > Family Friendly (family as an important part of ministering to adolescents)
- > Intergenerational (include children, youth and adults of all ages)
- > Multicultural (cultural diversity awareness and appreciation)
- > Communitywide (schools, community, interfaith, ecumenical)
- > Leadership

Eight components of CYM - Advocacy, Catechesis, Evangelization, Pastoral Care, Prayer & Worship, Justice & Service, Community Life, Leadership development

Where does youth ministry happen? Those that have been in YM awhile like to say –

BY, TO, FOR & WITH youth as well as the Family, Parish and Community.

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Sons and Daughters of the Light: A Pastoral Plan for Ministry with Young Adults

(SDL) Three parts to this document-

- * Who are the Young Adults?
- * A Vision of Faith
- * A Plan for Ministry

1] WHO? - young adults are people in their late teens (18/19), twenties and thirties; single, married, divorced or widowed and with or without children . They are present in all walks of life, occupations, urban, suburban and rural areas. They are diverse in culture, ethnicity, education, social, political and spiritual realities. More than previous generations, the current generation of 20/30 something's feel the separation between those who have access to resources and those who don't because of poverty, lack of education and discrimination. Important needs of young adulthood –

- Developing a personal identity
- Developing a meaning of work
- * Developing personal relationships
- * Developing a spiritual life

2] Vision; A call to holiness, A call to community, A call to service.

A call to holiness - Making something worthwhile out of their lives, by reaching beyond one's self in service to families and other relationships; to work, communities and Church.

A call to community- Young adults desire to find and participate in communities that accept and welcome them, where beliefs and values are similar to their own.

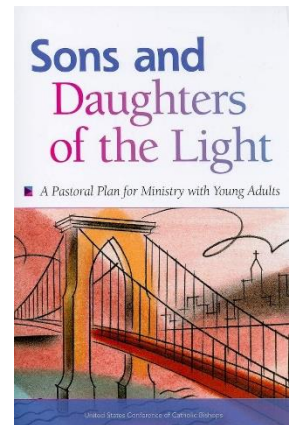
A call to service - young adults are enthusiastic about service to those in need, as a means to live out their faith and build up the reign of God on earth.

3] The Plan - There are twelve principles;

- * internalize beliefs and values within a supportive community
- * opportunities for relationships with peers and intergenerational/multicultural experiences
- * understand message of faith and tradition of Church when related to real life experiences
- * respond positively when invited to participate in planning activities for spiritual benefit of community
- * invite the Church to meet them where they are present, workplace, home, campus or civic community
- * want to be invited into life of the Church by collaboration on initiatives for the young adult community
- * need assistance to become spiritual people, in deepening relationship with God
- * want opportunities to ask questions and discover answers present in teaching and tradition of the Catholic Church
- * need to be engaged in peer ministry as well as family ministry
- * acknowledge, understand and respect cultural diversity of individuals and communities
- * facilitates and engages young adults in awareness and invitation to the work of justice, peace and compassion
- * make a commitment of necessary resources for evangelization, catechesis and pastoral care of young adults

Four Goals –

- 1- Connecting with Jesus Christ
- 2- Connecting with the Church
- 3-Connecting with the mission of the Church in the World
- 4- Connecting with peer community (other young adults)



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LISTEN, TEACH, SEND - A National Pastoral Framework for Ministries with Youth and with Young Adults

FRAMEWORK INTRODUCTION

Jesus himself drew near and walked with them. (Lk 24:15)

Christ is alive¹⁷ in the youth and young adults of the United States,¹⁸ as well as in the hearts of those who accompany them. Christ draws near to young people in order to *listen* to them, *teach* them, and *send* them forth, filled with the Holy Spirit to “be protagonists of the revolution of charity and service.”¹⁹ The Catholic Church is called to imitate Christ as she encounters and engages each new generation: to listen, teach, and send every young person in the name of Jesus.

In this, the Church renews her commitment to accompany and minister with youth and young adults. Effective ministries with young people must be dynamic movements inspired by the Holy Spirit, where all generations, cultures, and communities “journey together,”²⁰ advancing toward “experiencing a shared encounter with the living God.”²¹

We, as the Catholic bishops of the United States, offer this national pastoral framework as a summons to local faith communities across the country to renew their efforts with youth and young adults. This particular revitalization began with the Holy Father, who convened an international synod on young people²² from 2017 to 2018 and subsequently encouraged the entire Church through his apostolic exhortation, *Christus Vivit*, in 2019. We echo his words in that wonderful teaching, and now wish to address our pastors and our lay, ordained, and consecrated Catholic leaders, including parents and families, so that the Church might experience a rejuvenation of evangelization to and ministries with youth and young adults.

In global synod consultations, the People of God raised up the need for “a renewed focus on young people, their formation” and that “accompaniment (of the young) is an urgent need”²³ for dioceses/eparchies, parishes, campuses, movements, and apostolates. We recommit ourselves to this important effort, so that this moment “may be an opportune time for courageous spiritual renewal”²⁴ for the Church and our approach to young people. As we look at culture and the realities impacting the U.S., we feel this is the time for us to offer an urgent, prophetic, and pastoral response to ensure the Gospel is preached to younger generations and that the important work of ministry and accompaniment of youth and young adults be carried out faithfully and effectively in every Catholic community throughout our nation.

The overarching narrative for this message of renewal is grounded in the journey of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus with the risen Lord found in the Scriptures (Lk 24:13-35).

In *Christus Vivit*, Pope Francis recommends the Emmaus story as “a model for what happens”²⁵ in ministries with youth and young adults, as it points to “a process that is gradual, respectful, patient, hopeful, tireless, and compassionate”²⁶ and it always begins with the Lord:

Jesus walks with two disciples who did not grasp the meaning of all that happened to him and are leaving Jerusalem and the community behind. Wanting to accompany them, he joins them on the way. He asks them questions and listens patiently to their version of events, and in this way, he helps them *recognize* what they were experiencing. Then, with affection and power, he proclaims the word to them, leading them to *interpret* the events they had experienced in the light of the Scriptures. He accepts their invitation to stay with them as evening falls; he enters into their night. As they listen to him speak, their hearts burn within them and their minds are opened; they then recognize him in the breaking of the bread. They themselves *choose* to resume their journey at

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once in the opposite direction, to return to the community and to share the experience of their encounter with the risen Lord.²⁷

This threefold framework shows how a young person can *recognize* God at work in their lives, *interpret* their experiences in light of faith, and, as a result, discover and *choose* to follow their vocation and mission. A transformation, or *metanoia*,²⁸ can take place because Jesus first listens, teaches, and sends them. The Church, following Christ's example, is called to do the same: to *listen* to young people, to *teach* them the Gospel, and to *send* them forth into the world, alive in the Spirit. This "listen-teach-send" triptych is a framework to further develop concrete ministerial plans.

Just as "Jesus himself drew near and walked with them...while they were conversing and debating" (Lk 24:15), Christ draws near to us once more, as we ourselves continue to converse and discern the best practices and latest trends about young people. His constant and eternal presence, made manifest in the Word of God and the Eucharist, ceaselessly aids us as we embark upon a journey in the company of the young, with hopeful hearts. The Holy Spirit, the divine protagonist active in our world today, strengthens and moves us toward the Church's preeminent mission of evangelization, offering us motivation to move forward in hope.

So that this framework is not a theoretical ideal or the property of a select few professional ministers, we begin this summons in the home and with our loved ones, for "the family should be the first place of accompaniment."²⁹

The Church's pastoral ministries with youth, collegians, and young adults must be deliberate not only in partnering with parents, families, and family ministries, but truly integrating our work together "with the aim of ensuring a continuous and suitable accompaniment of the vocational process."³⁰ All of this is best done by starting with a simple encounter with one or a few youth or young adults within our families, social networks, or parishes, with a movement toward authentic listening, evangelization, and mission.

When speaking about "young people" in this framework, we are not imagining an abstract concept, group, or a data demographic; rather we have in mind the young women and men who we know or with whom we interact on a regular basis: sons and daughters, grandchildren, nieces and nephews, siblings, and cousins within our families, as well as friends, colleagues, co-workers, neighbors, and all the young people we meet in our daily routines. Each of them has a unique name, face, and identity: beloved by God and integral to the mission of the Church. Just as Jesus drew near to the disciples on the road, may we also draw near to them and, in imitation of Christ and by the grace of God, faithfully listen, teach, and send them forth on the journey ahead.

Footnotes :

¹⁷ Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit (CV)* (Washington DC: USCCB Publishing, 2019), no. 1-2.

¹⁸ In this document, the term "youth" connotes adolescents in their teenage years, while the term "young adults" is defined as women and men in their twenties and thirties, single and married, with or without children.

¹⁹ CV, no. 174. ; ²⁰ CV, no. 199. ; ²¹ CV, no. 204.

²² It is helpful for those from the United States to know there are English linguistic differences that exist in Vatican and other countries' documents and activities around "young people." For example, when Pope Francis references "youth" or "youth ministry" in *Christus Vivit*, it inclusively applies to adolescents, collegians, and "young adults," as it is translated from either "giovani" (Italian) or "jovenes" (Spanish), a broader age range than the U.S. concept of "youth" (which is often limited to the teenage years, whereas elsewhere, it may refer to those ages 16 to 35).

²³ Vatican Synod Office, *Working Document for the Continental Stage*, XVI Ordinary Synod, Sept. 2022, no. 35.

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24 John Paul II, "Message of the Holy Father to the youth of the world on the occasion of the 15th World Youth Day"
(Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana [LEV], June 29, 1999), no. 4.

25 CV, no. 236 ; 26 CV, no. 236. ; 27 CV, no. 237

28 "*metanoïn...* To go beyond our usual ways of thinking, beyond our habitual worldview," Pope Francis, Homily, Athens (December 5, 2021). Also important is the word "conversion" that is essential to effective ministry.

29 CV, no. 242 ; 30 CV, no. 242.

Christus Vivit -

Introduction and Overview

"Christ is alive!" As Pope Francis began his apostolic exhortation to and about youth and young adults with this joyful exclamation, he culminated a synodal process which engaged young people at every step, amplifying their voices and encouraging their presence and leadership. That landmark document, *Christus Vivit*, is rich in wisdom for all people of faith, but especially reads as a letter of love to young people and those who serve them. In response to the call to go forth proclaiming the risen Christ to and with all young people, the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry, in collaboration with United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) National Advisory Team on Young Adult Ministry within its Secretariat of Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth (LMFLY), has developed this study guide for Pope Francis' *Christus Vivit*, the 2019 apostolic exhortation following the XV Ordinary Synod of Bishops on "Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment," a process that took place from 2017 to 2018.

