

Diocese of Broken Bay
Framework for
Parish Youth Ministry



Inspiring Discipleship in Young People



Broken Bay Parish Youth Ministry **Strategies and Resources for Catholic Discipleship**

Message from the Diocesan Coordinator of Youth Ministry

Dear Youth Ministers, Parish Leaders and Clergy

This Framework for Parish Youth Ministry is designed to give parishes further assistance in developing steps of discipleship for the young people within the parish. It is important for each parish to start with this framework when designing the specific programs and activities that meet the needs of young people in that location.

This framework also provides a guide for parishes that supports both the Diocesan Pastoral Plan and the National Vision for Youth Ministry. There are references to both of these documents in this framework.

I encourage everyone in our parishes to be ministering to the needs of young people; this is a life giving and exciting ministry that we have committed to.

God Bless

Mark McDonald

Coordinator of Diocesan Youth Ministry

June 2008

Diocesan Youth Ministry Broken Bay

"Diocesan Youth Ministry exists to assist the Bishop of the Diocese of Broken Bay in his mission to nurture the spiritual life of the young people within the Diocese."

"Diocesan Youth Ministry is part of the Parish Support Unit, working collaboratively with members of the Unit to support parishes in Pastoral Care for Evangelisation."

"Diocesan Youth Ministry exists to assist the Coordinators of Parish Youth Ministry to fully incorporate young people into the life of the local church."

"Diocesan Youth Ministry exists to provide strategies and resources to empower Catholic Parishes to inspire discipleship in young people"

think discipleship steps not programs

moving youth ministry in the right direction

National Vision for Youth Ministry and the Diocese of Broken Bay

In 2008 the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference will work towards a National Vision for Youth Ministry. A National Vision document provides a vision for how the Catholic Church can respond to the needs of young people in Australia. The National Vision draws on the strengths and history of “Renewing the Vision”, a document which is the foundation of Catholic Youth Ministry in the United States of America for over 20 years.

The National Vision outlines three goals for responding to the young people of Australia:

- To empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in the world today.
- To draw young people into 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.

The Diocese of Broken Bay supports the National Vision for Youth Ministry as the response of the Catholic Church to the young people of Australia. For many years now, the Diocese of Broken Bay has placed Catholic Discipleship as the key focus of youth ministry, which fits appropriately with the goals of the National Vision for Youth Ministry.

The Diocese of Broken Bay will focus on Pastoral Care for Evangelisation as a Diocesan priority until 2010. Parishes should draw young people into this focus by using the Diocesan Pastoral Plan and the Framework that follows.

Agencies within Broken Bay that support young people

- Catholic Parishes offer an intergenerational community that supports the spiritual and liturgical life of youth and young adults.
- Catholic Schools Office, CSO is offering Religious Education and supporting school based youth ministry in Catholic Schools.
- Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, CCD is being a witness of the faith to the young people in state schools through Catechesis
- Centacare is supporting young people with specific needs
- Broken Bay Institute, BBI offer courses to youth ministry volunteers and staff.
- St Vincent De Paul Society provides assistance to families and youth while also offering mission and service opportunities for young adults.



DIOCESE OF BROKEN BAY



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Parish based youth ministry

Young people have an energy and enthusiasm for life that is contagious and can bring great life to the local parish community. The parish community is the basic expression of the local church and is an entry point for many young people into the Christian community. The parish community is a holistic environment from which a young person can develop in the faith. The parish community is an intergenerational community that allows everyone to share their gifts with young people as well as benefit from the gifts of young people.

Young people should feel welcome in the parish, nurtured in their faith and challenged to live out their relationship with Jesus in community with other believers.

- “A parish is a definite community of the Christian faithful established on a stable basis within a particular church; the pastoral care of the parish is entrusted to a pastor as its own shepherd under the authority of the diocesan bishop.” It is the place where all the faithful can be gathered together for the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist. The parish initiates the Christian people into the ordinary expression of the liturgical life: it gathers them together in this celebration; it teaches Christ's saving doctrine; it practices the charity of the Lord in good works and love (Catholic Catechism 2179)

As part of the universal church, the parish needs to play its part in the formation of young disciples. The parish should work collaboratively with other Catholic agencies so as to engage young people in the life of the local church.

The Journey of a maturing Disciple

The discipleship journey starts with evangelization, then young people receive Catechesis to deepen their understanding, then they are prepared for and sent out on Mission. Prayer and Worship, Fellowship and Pastoral Care are the underlying factors that support this journey.

As a Youth Ministry Leader, a Disciple Maker, ask yourself where is this young person on their discipleship journey? What goal would take them on the next step of this journey?



What is Discipleship? Making disciples of Jesus

A parish youth ministry will be developing disciples when young people are growing in their relationship with Jesus. Discipleship is a life long process that may begin at any age; a parish should seek to take each young person on the next steps of this journey.

For the beginning disciple, this journey in discipleship starts without an active relationship with Jesus, but just like Nathanael in John's Gospel, we trust that Jesus knows and loves all young people.

- Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked. "Come and see," said Philip. When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, "Here is a true Israelite, in whom there is nothing false." "How do you know me?" Nathanael asked. Jesus answered, "I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you." Then Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel." John 1:43-50
- Youth ministry is often about naming the God who is already present with young people

For the active member of a parish youth ministry the journey in discipleship is characterized by an inner search for deeper understanding about God, an outward expression of their relationship with Jesus, and a conviction to "go make disciple of all the nations."

- "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." Matthew 28:19

"All ministry with adolescents must be directed toward presenting young people with the Good News of Jesus Christ and inviting and challenging them to become his disciples. If we are to succeed, we must offer young people a spiritually challenging and world-shaping vision that meets their hunger for the chance to participate in a worthy adventure." (Renewing the Vision USCCB)

When a parish calls young people into discipleship, it should come from a community of people grounded in the Trinity. The community requires knowledge of Jesus through formation in the Scriptures and community life guided by the Holy Spirit. The Parish can offer formation to young people by raising up leaders and mentors to companion young people on this journey.

- "The disciple companion tries to help people become aware of God's presence in their lives and commit to becoming active disciples of Jesus Christ, because he is the way the truth and the life. The first task of the disciple maker is to listen rather than speak, to discern how God is already at work, rather than a canned speech." (Robert S. Rivers, 2005, p47-48, From maintenance to mission)

Philosophies that form our style of ministry:

1. Discipleship is a *series of steps* rather than programs or activity. A discipleship journey will require a variety of programs, activities, mentors and groups to deepen a person's relationship with Jesus.
2. Discipleship is about helping young people *be* the church, not just *go to* church. Disciple makers should be a witness to a life with Christ so that young people can learn to be active in their own journey.
3. Jesus said "I have come that you may have *life*, and have it to the full." John 10:10. We hope that young people experience the *hope, joy and passion* of following Jesus.
4. Disciple makers believe that Jesus loves *all* young people, the Holy Spirit resides *within* young people and the Father *created* every young person for a special purpose.
5. Our Christian Community will be *inspiring* and give *meaning* to the lives of young people. Young people are spiritual and they seek a personal relationship with God but they create a blended *spirituality* from a variety of sources.
6. *Pope John Paul II* – "As leaders in the field of the youth ministry, you will have to find ways of *involving* young people in projects and activities for formation, spirituality and service, giving them responsibility for themselves and their work, and taking care to avoid isolating them and their apostolate from the rest of the ecclesial community. Young people need to be able to see the practical *relevance* of their efforts to meet the real needs of people, especially the poor and neglected. They should also be able to see that their apostolate *belongs fully* to the Church's mission." *Pope John Paul II, Listen to the Word of Life, 1993*

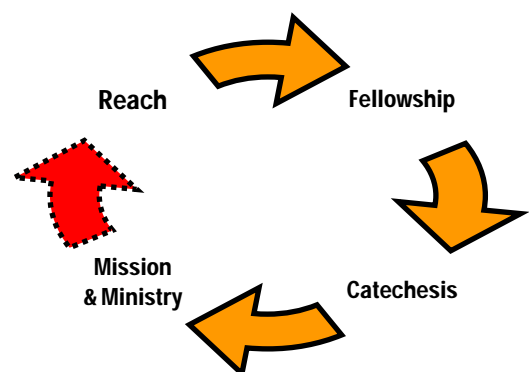
Young People, Children and Families

1. Young People – The focus of parish youth ministry will be young people in their teenage years until their early twenties. Each parish will have to make their own decision about the specific age range of each youth ministry program offered.
2. Children – parish youth ministry supports ministry with Children, creating links and points of transition between the two styles of ministry.
3. Families - All youth ministry should be family friendly. Youth ministry collaborates with family based programs as the parents are the primary faith educators in the lives of young people.

Cyclical Nature of Ministry

Youth ministry needs committed leaders to run the ministry, forming disciples. The biggest question in youth ministry is not "will young people come?" but "who will lead the youth ministry?"

Leadership development is not a program but a cyclical process. This process will grow and form young people who will then be sent out on ministry within the parish and within the youth ministry.



A Framework for Youth Ministry

This framework is not the complete package that a parish needs to run an effective parish youth ministry. The finer details of a youth ministry model or program will need to take into account the local situations of a particular parish. The five sections that follow form the driving principles behind any youth ministry program, event and activity. Each activity, event or program should help the parish live out at least one of these principles.

1. Evangelisation – begin with sharing the Good News with young people.

- 1.1. The starting point of any parish youth ministry is reaching out and welcoming new members. A parish introduces, or re-introduces young people to the saving power of a growing relationship with Jesus. Each member of a parish is encouraged to join this mission to “be my witness in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8. The call to be a witness in Jerusalem is a call to reintroduce Jesus to the local community of believers, their friends and family. The call to be a witness in Judea is a call to spread the Good News wider than the community of believers. The call to be a witness to the ends of the earth is recognition of the universal nature of the Church. This method of evangelisation is often called “going wide with the Gospel”. For a parish to truly be evangelising it needs to widen the horizons of the youth ministry to all young people in the area.
- 1.2. One practical method of evangelising is to equip young people with the skills to share their faith. “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,” 1 Peter 3:15. Young people need to extend a personal invitation to people they know to foster a relationship with Jesus.
- 1.3. The fruits of evangelisation are changed lives and a changed world—holiness and justice, spirituality and peace. The validity of our having accepted the Gospel does not only come from what we feel or what we know; it comes also from the way we serve others, especially the poorest, the most marginal, the most hurting, the most defenseless, and the least loved. An evangelisation that stays inside ourselves is not an evangelisation into the Good News of Jesus Christ. (Go and Make Disciples, n18 USCCB)
- 1.4. Three strategies to develop Discipleship through Evangelisation:
 - 1.4.1. Host a youth ministry activity that young people can bring a friend to.
 - 1.4.2. Provide catechists and Catholic schools with promotional material for the parish youth ministry, such as posters, handouts and newsletter items.
 - 1.4.3. teach young ministry leaders how to deliver a short faith testimony

How do we draw young people into a relationship with Jesus?

Evangelisation



2. **Catechesis – answering the questions young people have about their faith.**
 - 2.1. “The name of catechesis is given to the whole of the efforts within the Church to make disciples, to help people to believe that Jesus is the Son of God, so that believing they might have life in His name, and to educate and instruct them in this life and thus build up the Body of Christ.” (Catechesi Tradendae, n 1)
 - 2.2. In youth ministry, catechesis is a process that develops out of the relationship of the leader and the learner. Religious instruction may form part of a program that young people attend but in youth ministry catechesis must be more than teaching what the leaders want young people to know. Maturing disciples of Jesus will have many questions and they need forums to explore these questions, where their opinions are valued and they are challenged to grow in their understanding.
 - 2.3. Catechesis is an apprenticeship of the entire Christian life which promotes an authentic following of Christ, focused on his Person; it implies education in knowledge of the faith and in the life of faith, in such a manner that the entire person, at their deepest level, feels enriched by the word of God; it helps the disciple of Christ to transform in order to assume their baptismal responsibilities and to profess the faith from the "heart"; (General Directory of Catechesis n 67)
 - 2.4. Collaboration between parish and school based youth ministry in the area of Catechesis is essential. When planning the catechetical sessions for young people in the parish, consideration should be given to the age appropriate RE or SRE curriculum being taught in the schools that the young people attend during the week.
 - 2.5. Programs should link together over the lifespan of a young person in youth ministry to equip young people with the skills to nurture their own spiritual development.
 - 2.6. Three strategies to develop Discipleship through Catechesis:
 - 2.6.1. Host Q&A events to allow young people to ask the questions they have.
 - 2.6.2. provide a basic statement of belief on your online community or website.
 - 2.6.3. offer talks and presentations about the foundations of the Christian Faith.

The Journey of a maturing Disciple

As a Youth Ministry Leader, a Disciple Maker, ask yourself where is this young person on their discipleship journey? What goal would take them on the next step of this journey? What are the questions that young people ask about their faith, church and God? What formation can we offer to help young people grow in their understanding?



3. Mission – helping young people with the mission God has for them.

- 3.1. Mission is sending young people out for ministry and service as a sign of their maturing relationship with Jesus. Mission may take the form of a ministry to the wider parish community or becoming involved in a justice project or discerning their life's vocation or leadership development.
- 3.2. Mission may be an exit point of a parish youth ministry as a young person matures and is sent out on mission. This maybe a time when a young person grows up and they move into their adult phase of their discipleship journey. A parish youth ministry needs to form young people for mission so that when they leave the youth ministry they can be self directed followers of Jesus.
- 3.3. Mission based activities should form part of the parish youth ministry program to help young people discover their vocation, life purpose or mission. It is important to expose young people to a variety of ministry and service opportunities so they can find a place to service that they feel passionate about.
 - 3.3.1. The commitment of the laity to the work of evangelization is changing ecclesial life. Above all, there is a new awareness that *missionary activity is a matter for all Christians*, for all dioceses and parishes, Church institutions and associations. (Redemptoris missio, n 2)
- 3.4. Mission activities and programs can be coordinated with other agencies within the Diocese. Many charities and social justice agencies are looking for volunteers to help run their programs and young people are often willing to volunteer.
- 3.5. Three strategies to develop Discipleship through Mission:
 - 3.5.1. Hold vocation awareness events that connect young people with their God given purpose and offer them vocation discernment tools.
 - 3.5.2. Provide rosters for young people to serve in one area of church life, consider an area of service in the parish community that is outside the youth ministry. E.g. young people could join a roster for the welcome and hospitality team at one mass per month
 - 3.5.3. Encourage young people to make an appropriate personal financial commitment to the parish planned giving or charity agency of their choice, e.g. Project Compassion.



Areas of Mission

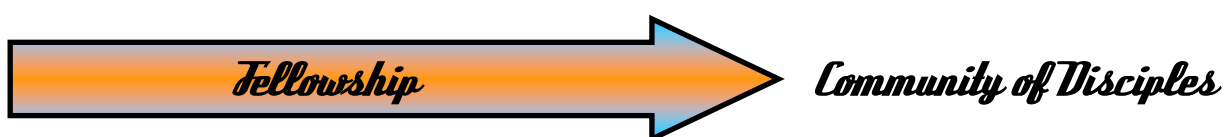
Youth Ministry
Parish Ministry
Vocations
Career & Work
Social Justice

4. Fellowship – connect young people with a community of believers.

- 4.1. Fellowship is incorporating God’s people into a parish where they can be known, cared for, held accountable and encouraged. A parish youth ministry is more than a safe place to “hang out and have fun”. Young people should experience a community of believers that loves them, challenges them and is life giving.
- 4.2. The role of fellowship in the discipleship journey goes beyond what is provided by social events. In order to encourage discipleship, it is necessary to have a Christian community which welcomes young people, forms them in the faith and allows time for them to develop friendships with other believers. “The accompaniment which a community gives to the initiated is eventually transformed into their being totally integrated by the same community”. (General Directory of Catechesis n 69)
- 4.3. Pastoral care is often associated with helping young people who are struggling but it is more than this. Pastoral Care is also about developing skills for the service of others in the community:
 - 4.3.1. Pastoral care develops the life skills of young people; guides young people in making important life decisions such as career and education choices, and in discerning their particular Christian vocation; fosters the link between spirituality and life experiences, particularly around the healthy integration of sexuality and spirituality; (Tu Kahikatea Standing Tall NZ Vision)
- 4.4. Fellowship “engages young people in the life, activities and ministries of the parish in meaningful and age appropriate ways; provides opportunities for the faith community to acknowledge, celebrate and value its young people; guides young people in understanding the importance of their role as members of the community.” (Tu Kahikatea Standing Tall NZ Vision)
- 4.5. Three strategies to develop Discipleship through Fellowship:
 - 4.5.1. Develop an online community for young people to access regular updates. E.g. start a facebook group or use a parish Cathnet page.
 - 4.5.2. engage adults to help in regular youth ministry activities as mentors
 - 4.5.3. Connect young people with a small group activity. E.g. offer small group Lenten program.

The journey of a maturing Disciple

As a Youth Ministry Leader, a Disciple Maker, ask yourself where can we connect this young person to help them on their discipleship journey? Who will challenge and nurture them? How can we connect young people to the community of Disciples at every step along the way?

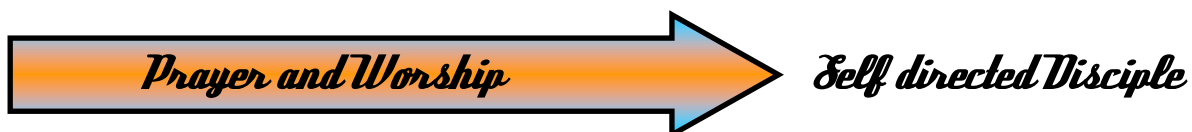


5. Prayer and Worship – continue to welcome young people at parish liturgies.

- 5.1. The Sunday Eucharist is the source and summit of parish community. A parish should welcome young people and draw them into the Sunday liturgies. Sunday liturgies that are engaging and relevant can be the beginning of a deeper prayer life for young people. Prayer and worship is more than what you do or services that you attend. Worship is celebrating God’s presence and honouring him with our lifestyles. The Eucharist celebration needs to be lived out in the rest of the week so that it honours God with our entire life, not just one hour a week.
- 5.2. Prayer and worship is a vital part of everything in the youth ministry rather than being an actual program. Each activity or event should include a method of prayer in such a way that young people incorporate prayer into their discipleship journey. Young people should be encouraged to participate in formal prayer experiences so that they are drawn into the community of believers. Leaders should also witness to the power of prayer through spontaneous prayer and sharing their own struggles with prayer. Young people should also be challenged to be responsible for their own prayer life with a mentor and tools that sustain their personal prayer life outside formal programs and events.
- 5.3. The mystery of faith requires that the faithful believe in it, that they celebrate it, and that they live from it in a vital and personal relationship with the living and true God. This relationship is prayer. Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2558
- 5.4. Prayer and worship is an integral part of youth ministry because it includes:
- authentic participation of young people in liturgy;
 - music and songs as well as dance, drama, symbols and other multi-media to express the vitality of young people
 - symbols, stories and rituals as well as communal and individual prayer;
 - participation in the liturgical ministries through music, reading, Eucharistic ministry, greeting, and serving.
- 5.5. Three strategies to develop Discipleship through Prayer and Worship:
- 5.5.1. provide young people with reading material on prayer or prayer booklets
- 5.5.2. develop regular prayer experiences at Church using contemporary music
- 5.5.3. teach young people the Lectio Divina format for bible reflection

The journey of a maturing Disciple

As a Youth Ministry Leader, a Disciple Maker, ask yourself how can we take this young person deeper on their discipleship journey? What would take them on the next step to be a self directed follower of Jesus? How can young people honour God with their lifestyle?





Broken Bay Parish Youth Ministry

Strategies and Resources for Catholic Discipleship

Please contact

Broken Bay Youth Ministry

At the Caroline Chisholm Centre, Pennant Hills
for more information on resources available

Phone: 02 9847 0472

or

browse the website for more information:
www.brokenbay.catholic.org.au/youth

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