

Ministry Resources for Youth Leadership Development: An Overview

Ministry Resources for Youth Leadership Development offers faith communities program resources and strategies to develop youth as leaders within youth ministry programs and the parish. The manual includes four foundational sessions on Christian leadership, ten sessions and minisessions on leadership skills, and two minisessions to help prepare youth and adults for working together. The manual also offers strategies for using the activities, sessions, and minisessions to create daylong, weekend-long, and yearlong training programs for youth; for creating leadership roles within the parish; for inviting youth to leadership; and for working with the parents of youth leaders.

Manual Contents

Part A: Introductory Article

Part A of *Ministry Resources for Youth Leadership Development* explores the importance of training and mentoring youth as leaders, creating opportunities across the parish ministries for youth to be involved in leadership, and thinking broadly about who is a leader and what leadership entails.

Part B: Strategies

Part B of this manual consists of strategies that adult leaders in a parish can use to organize the activities, sessions, and minisessions from parts C and D into a leadership training program; find and create leadership positions for youth; invite young people into youth leadership roles; and support the parents of young leaders. Each strategy contains information to help leaders grow in their understanding of the issue, followed by practical ideas that can be implemented within the parish.

Chapter 2: Using This Manual to Develop Youth Leadership

- This strategy lists the sessions that can be used to build an understanding of leadership, the sessions that can be combined for strong skill building,

and the sessions that can help youth and adults learn how to work together effectively.

Chapter 3: Creating Parish Leadership Positions for Youth

- This chapter is designed to help adult leaders work within parish structures to create leadership opportunities for youth. Included are ways to help parish staff, organizations, and ministries understand the need for youth leadership. Also provided are resources to help parish ministries and organizations create leadership roles for youth, and suggestions for working with the community and schools to involve youth in leadership.

Chapter 4: Inviting Youth into Leadership

- This chapter looks at ways to invite youth into leadership roles and to form them as leaders. Included are ways to assess young people's interests in leadership roles and to share parish leadership opportunities with them.

Chapter 5: Strategies for Parents of Young Leaders

- This chapter contains ideas for reaching out to the parents of young leaders. Included are suggestions for communicating and meeting with them.

Part C: Leadership Sessions

The youth leadership development sessions include foundational sessions that provide a broad overview of leadership plus a look at scriptural images of leadership. They also include four sessions for training youth in essential leadership skills.

The sessions are about 60 minutes long and are sometimes accompanied by 15- to 30-minute session extensions. They are not sequential, so you may organize them to suit your situation.

Each session begins with a brief overview, a list of expected outcomes, and background reading that may include a list of scriptural connections and *Catholic Youth Bible* article connections. All articles are excerpted from the first edition of the *CYB*. The next element is a suggested schedule, which is to be used as a starting point and modified according to your circumstances. A checklist of required presentation steps includes all materials needed. A complete description of the session procedure is then provided, including all activities, session extensions, prayer experiences, and options and actions.

Study It

Each session can be expanded and customized to meet your schedule and the needs of your group. You may expand the sessions by using additional activities known as session extensions. Musical selections from *Spirit & Song* are provided for your reference. A Bible concordance will provide

additional citations if you want to add a more substantial scriptural component to a session, and music resources are available from a variety of publishers. Some sessions provide a list of media resources—such as print, video, and Internet—for more exploration. Family approaches provide follow-up suggestions for family learning, enrichment, celebration, prayer, and service.

Pray It: Prayer Experiences

Each session includes opportunities and suggestions for prayer focused on the session's theme. Prayer forms include guided meditation, shared prayer, music, silence, prayer by young people, reflective reading, and experiences created by the participants. The Pray It component gives the young people an opportunity to bring their insights and concerns to God in prayer. The time frame for prayer experiences varies from 5 to 20 minutes.

Live It: Options and Actions

This manual can be a springboard for connections with other youth ministry experiences. Therefore some of its sessions include additional strategies to support the learning process. Those activities can be used to extend the session, provide good follow-up for the Study It core sessions, and allow for age-appropriate assimilation of the material.

Chapter 6: Leadership Is Making a Difference for Good

- This session helps the young people discover that leadership means much more than just being the up-front person, that it means making a difference for good in the world.

Chapter 7: Jesus on Leadership

- This session explores Jesus as a model for leadership. The participants are invited to reflect on that example, explore the leadership qualities of Jesus, and discover ways that they can follow his example within their own lives.

Chapter 8: Unexpected Leaders of the Bible

- This session uses characters from the Bible to help the participants recognize different styles of leadership and the humanness of the people that God has called through the years.

Chapter 9: Naming and Claiming Gifts in Self and Others

- This session invites the participants to reflect on how God has called them, what gifts they have received, and how they can use those gifts to serve others.

Chapter 10: Communication Skills

- This session helps the participants understand the communication process, including the challenges of trying to communicate effectively.

Chapter 11: Leading Group Discussions

- This session provides the participants with an opportunity to reflect on the skills that make someone an effective group facilitator.

Chapter 12: Negotiating Skills

- This session teaches the participants the skills necessary for negotiating effectively and then allows them to practice those skills.

Chapter 13: Planning Skills

- This session helps the participants think about the steps involved in effective planning. It introduces a program planning process and provides practice on planning with others.

Part D: Minisessions

The minisessions in this section are designed to complement the more in-depth sessions in section C, and can also be used as shorter learning experiences. The sessions are 15 to 70 minutes long.

Chapter 14: Large-Group Communication

- This session teaches the participants how to capture a group's attention, give announcements, and share information in large-group formats.

Chapter 15: Attentive Listening Skills

- This session teaches the participants the importance of listening well using nonverbal attending skills.

Chapter 16: Reflective Listening Skills

- This session provides an overview of the skills necessary to listen reflectively to another person.

Chapter 17: Group Decision-Making Skills

- This session introduces a decision-making process.

Chapter 18: Effective Meeting Skills

- This session introduces the necessary elements of effective meetings, including the important roles of facilitator, timekeeper, and recorder.

Chapter 19: Giving a Witness Talk

- This session provides information and ideas to those who will be sharing their faith through a witness talk. The participants learn what to do to prepare a talk, and reflect on the importance of sharing their faith with others.

Chapter 20: Knowing Youth

- This session helps adults recognize their role in welcoming young people to an organization or ministry, and provides helpful hints for working with youth.

Chapter 21: Knowing Adults

- This session helps young people recognize their role in intergenerational groups and ministries, and open themselves to the ideas and gifts of adults.

Background Material in the Digital Download

The background piece, “Qualities of Effective Christian Leaders,” will help those who are leading chapter 7, “Jesus on Leadership,” or any of the leadership sessions. The article describes the qualities that make leaders more effective and the ways that Christians can pull from Jesus’ life and example to integrate leadership qualities into their own lives. The article is in the Digital Download that accompanies the manual so that you can easily distribute it to other leaders.