

Ponderings on ministry with and to young adults (18 –35, single and married)

- Build Catholic Identity in a Positive Way

To build a Catholic identity in a positive way promotes and supports individuals in their faith. Make a mark in the lives of young adults as they prepare and celebrate the sacramental moments. Weddings, funerals and Baptisms have great potential as avenues for outreach to young adults. Perhaps the parish could occasionally offer a blessing after Sunday Mass for expectant mothers or parents at the Baptismal font. (One may be found in the Book of Blessings on page 110.)



- Build Better Community

Is our parish building community with young adults? Skills that allow community members to welcome the stranger could include a smile and a simple saying of welcome. May we suggest to our community to begin sitting in the middle of the pew first? Joint service projects like Habitat for Humanity projects quickly break down barriers in order to build homes for the poor. Or what about celebrating a “welcome back” Christmas party for young adults returning from college?

If you or your parish community would like to learn more about Young Adult Ministry or how to connect with young adults, please contact Greg Coogan at gcoogan@buffalodiocese.org or 716-847-8789. We are here to help!

Visit our new department website at www.dobyouth.org for more resources on young adults including material to support those who are going away to college, preparing for marriage or making important life decisions.

Young Adult Ministry From the Field

Here are some ideas of strategies for outreach to young adults. Feel free to borrow and adapt these ideas, or contact the parish leader for networking purposes. Please share your latest and greatest ideas with us to be featured in “From the Field.”

Synergy (working together) Young Adult Ministry
St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Niagara Falls
Laurie Marshanke : 716-283-2715; laurieann311@hotmail.com

On Friday, January 22, the parish has invited young adults to a brain storming session to see what they are interested in doing. The parish will be including a bulletin announcement, plus they are creating a postcard mailing to young adults who have or are helping in the faith formation and youth ministry programs. The brainstorming session will encourage young adults to bring ideas for community life, justice & service, pastoral care, prayer & worship, evangelization, catechesis, advocacy, and leadership development.

Mardi Gras Party
St. Gregory the Great, Williamsville
Jennifer Gorczyński: 716-861-7195, youngadult@stgregs.org

Young adults wanted to take a day that is typically a “party” day and have fun with it, but also to take time to focus on why they were partying. They built community through fun activities like making masks, distributing beads and games. Those gathered also participated in a discussion on various pre-Lenten traditions from different cultures. The group also discussed a variety of Lenten traditions and practices. The evening concluded with a “Mardi Gras Prayer”. All in attendance were given a Lenten reflection booklet so prayer and faith-sharing could take place over the holy season.

Young Adult Ministry — *Key Resources*

BOOKS

- **Souls in Transition: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of Emerging Adults**
Christian Smith with Patricia Snell, Oxford University Press, 2009.
- **God on the Quad : How Religious Colleges and the Missionary Generation are Changing America**
Naomi Schaefer Riley, St. Martin's Press, 2005.
- **Personal Vocation: God Calls Everyone By Name**
Germain Grisez and Russell Shaw, Our Sunday Visitor, 2003.
- **God Moments: Why Faith Really Matters to a New Generation**
Jeremy Langford, Orbis Books, 2001.
- **Young Adult Catholics: Religion in a Culture of Choice**
Dean Hodge, William Dinges, Mary Johnson, and Juan L. Gonzales, Jr. University of Notre Dame, 2001.

WEB SITES

- ◆ **www.loyolapress.com/3-minute-retreats-daily-online-prayer.htm**
A site provided by Loyola Press, A Jesuit Ministry. It invites one to take a short prayer break right at your computer.
- ◆ **www.pray-as-you-go.org**
A Jesuit Media Initiative which provides resources on prayer and spirituality.
- ◆ **www.bc.edu/church21/**
A catalyst and resource for the renewal of the Catholic Church in the United States. There are four focal issues: Roles and Relationships in the Contemporary Church, Sexuality in Catholic Teaching and Catholic Community, **Handing on the Faith to Young People**, and the Catholic Intellectual Tradition.
- ◆ **www.americancatholic.org/Features/DailyQuestion/default.aspx**
Answers questions about the Catholic Church on a variety of topics such as the sacraments, morality, the Bible, and the Mass. Sponsored by the Franciscans.

Marked for Life



Ash Wednesday will be here before you know it. Mass and the distribution of ashes makes an impression on the young adult church. It was always an amazing day on a large secular college campus noticing the young adults who participated in services and who publicly marked themselves for faith. There's something about the richness of this day and Lent. Catholics get marked, get set, go! This day is an awesome day to connect or reconnect with the young adults. The young adult church needs to see our best efforts at connecting. Here are a few strategies to connect:

- Distribute a one page guide to current Lenten practices
- Lenten daily reflections that can be taken home and used for personal prayer
- Take home information on "What is Lent? - possibly a *Catholic Update*
- List or provide online resources including retreats, podcasting, and prayer opportunities
- Sign up lists for a variety of service opportunities including evening and weekend times
- Schedule and advertise a church building tour and be sure to include the different practices that your parish does during Lent (e.g. Removal of Holy Water from the fonts, cover statues)
- Homilies that engage listeners with real life examples of the scripture, prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and how this all intersects people's lives.