

# PART ONE

## Becoming a Youth Ministry Leader

### *So Now What Do I Do?*

You are about to embark on a journey with young people that will take you to new and exciting places. Here are just a few thoughts before you begin your journey.

- ➔ Youth ministry, as you will discover, is primarily an exercise in building relationships -- relationships that allow young people to know adults who care about them and who are willing to walk as fellow pilgrims on a life-long journey of faith. That means that you and your ability to relate to and share your faith with teens is more important than any program or event.
- ➔ Youth ministry is designed to give young people an opportunity to grow into a mature faith in surroundings that support that growth. Those surroundings, aside from their family, are primarily you and your fellow youth ministers. In helping teens grow to a mature faith there is a presumption that you are a person of mature and healthy faith. This means that it is just as important to take care of your own faith life as it is to nurture that of the youth with whom you work.
- ➔ Be comfortable challenging the teens that you work with. Share with them that faith is a gift freely given by God but it is our response to that gift that requires effort and commitment on our part. That effort is not always met with support by the world they live in. The Gospel is challenging and exciting! Communicate it to young people with interest, excitement, and challenge.
- ➔ Relationships are difficult to build if you are not present to the people with whom you are building the relationship. Therefore ***be there***. Being present in the lives of young people is essential to effective ministry with them. They need to learn to count on you. So it's important that you attend as many functions as you can, even if you don't have a specific role. Try to be involved in their life outside of church. Go to their games and concerts and plays. Stop by where they work just to say hi.