

# Vision of Youth Ministry

Youth Ministry is the response of the Christian Community to the needs of young people and their families fostering their development as Catholic Christians and drawing them into responsible participation in the life, mission and ministry of the Church.

*“Youth Ministry is the response of the Christian Community to the needs of young people and their families...”*

#### ADDRESSING THEIR NEEDS:

- Parish Youth Ministry is ideally coordinated by a Youth Commission. Their role is to assist the whole parish respond to the needs of its young people by assessing and prioritizing needs, planning ministry responses and recruiting and supporting volunteers.
- Where possible a full or part Coordinator of Youth Ministry is hired to collaborate with the youth commission in coordinating the parish's pastoral response to the needs of youth and families. Together they lead the parish in fulfilling the vision of youth ministry.
- Youth Ministry must be based on the actual needs of the young people, not solely on what adults believe the needs are.

*“...fostering their development as Catholic Christians...”*

#### FOSTER THEIR FAITH:

The fundamental aim of youth ministry is to foster faith and encourage a fullness of human development, not just to run popular programs and activities. Even though parish programs and activities have value in themselves, they are most importantly the means of putting young people in relationship with positive adult and peer faith role models.

*“...and drawing them into responsible participation in the life, mission and ministry of the Church.”*

#### INVOLVE THEM IN THE CHURCH:

Youth Ministry is not just TO youth, but WITH, FOR and BY youth:

- Ministry TO Youth: programs and activities offered to youth by adults and peers of the community
- Ministry WITH Youth: young people becoming involved with adults and peers in the various ministries of the church
- Ministry FOR Youth: adults identifying the needs and concerns of youth and advocating on their behalf
- Ministry BY Youth: young people ministering to others

By including a variety of programs, groups, events and services, Youth Ministry efforts seek to include all young people of the parish. Special concern should be given to assuring that all young people between the Grade five and the end of high school are included even if they do not have the habit of Sunday Eucharist. Parishes can effectively accomplish this through a balance of gathered and non-gathered programming.

This vision cannot be realized by family, school, community or parish alone. Research now shows that the answer is found in unity and collaboration between the HOME, the SCHOOL, the COMMUNITY and the PARISH.

