

How to use this document

1. Read through the entire document (or spend some time in front of the poster). Then pick three to four items per category per year. Discuss and complete only the pages for those items.
2. Then, for each indicator, think about how your faith community may already be meeting this benchmark. *Please note: it would be easy to simply go through the entire list and indicate that you are presently doing this or that and therefore, are effective. (If that is the case, congratulations, your parish should be thriving, financially sound, and overflowing on Sundays.) In any case, it will be helpful to look for ways to improve upon what you may consider great ministry (e.g., better communication, more outreach to families, a broader perspective with regard to the age of those you seek to serve, etc.)*
3. For those items you choose for the current year, list some ways to accomplishing this indicator. Think “big picture.” Think outside the box. Involve young people in your conversation. Keep your goals measurable and realistic. The suggestions we listed are only suggestions. Feel free to come up with your own ideas.
4. Plan a strategy for how you will accomplish your goals. Assign tasks. Set up a date and time to get together to evaluate your progress. Ongoing evaluation is key.
5. Meet at least once per year with your parish leaders to review your progress and to repeat the steps above for the following year.

A note about links

Rather than clutter the document with long hyperlinks that users would have to retype (growing more frustrated as the links get longer), we have added several pages to our website. Visit www.cdowcym.org/toolkit to see all indicators, relevant links, suggestions, and resources. So when the document says, “visit this link online” - just start with www.cdowcym.org/toolkit and then add the text at the bottom of each page (i.e., add “advocacy”, “discipleship”, etc. to see the links referenced on those pages). If the suggested link is short, we left it alone.





Choose Which Indicators You Would Like to Focus on Each Year.

	Engagement Indicators	YEAR ONE	YEAR TWO	YEAR THREE	YEAR FOUR
1	We Extend Friendly and Consistent Invitations to All Young People in the Parish				
2	We Assist Our Young People in Understanding Their Role in the Wider Faith Community				
3	We Encourage Young People to See the Parish as a Place of Opportunity for Service, Ministry, and Education				
4	We Invite Young People to Be Connected to the Diocesan Church				
5	We Celebrate Milestones in the Lives of Young People				
6	We Create and Maintain Intentional Pathways That Foster Inclusive Dialogue and Opportunity for Partnerships Between Parishes and School				
7	We Give Care to Minister Appropriately to Those from Different Cultures				
8	We Encourage Young People's Participation In All Our Parish's Liturgies, Being Careful Not to Relegate Them to a Separate Celebration				
9	We Give Young People Skills and Opportunities to Pray Together				
10	We Understand That Adult Leaders are Conduits to Ministry Opportunities for Young People, Not Gatekeepers				



For more information about these indicators, visit
www.CDOWCYM.org/TOOLKIT/ENGAGEMENT



We Extend Friendly and Consistent Invitations to All Young People in the Parish

Context: Today, the average age of a Roman Catholic sister in the United States is 74, The New York Times reports, and in many communities, it's well into the 80s. Ordained Catholic priests are a bit younger, with an average age of 63 – but that's up from 35 in 1970, and rising fast. Mainline Protestants such as the United Methodist Church are facing their own challenges, experiencing drops in vocations that keep pastors working longer into their later years.

But if the church is at the terminal end of the age spectrum, Silicon Valley, one of the most vibrant economic centers in our country, is at the other. At Facebook, the median employee age is 28, the Times reports, while at Google it's 29 and at AOL, 30. As Katie Bardaro, the lead economist at PayScale, told the Times, "The firms that are growing or innovating around new areas tend to have younger workers. Older companies that aren't changing with the times get older workers." She could have been talking about the church. Apparently, like attracts like; vitality attracts vitality. (Michael O'Loughlin: Make Room For Young People) (See online)

Goal: Effective and comprehensive pastoral ministry with young people calls for friendly and consistent invitations to be offered to all young people in the parish.

SUGGESTED IMPLEMENTATION:

- **Build a Database:** From existing parish records, build a database of all registered young people in the parish community. Make sure to be attentive to the various ways that you might be able to contact them and/or their parents. Continue to grow the database as new classes of young people are promoted into your determined age range as well as when young people join into your program. Remember that the answer to the question, "How many young people are involved in ministry?" is "All of them."
- **Communicate:** Develop a variety of approaches: snail mail, telephone calls, social networking to appeal to young people. In an effort to make sure that the parish is also aware, do not ignore conventional methods of parish bulletin or newsletter under the presumption that young people do not read these.
- **Creative:** Take an opportunity to view a magazine, a college recruitment brochure, or a TV show that is directed at young people. While maintaining a level of dignity and appropriateness, do attempt to make your invitations engaging and attractive
- **Engage young people:** Your best allies in developing creative and attractive invitations for young people might be young people themselves.
- **Get Personal:** Make sure that your leadership and those engaged in programming are intentional about inviting friends and others into ministry opportunities.

How are we already doing this?

Methods for Evaluation: Within the same calendar year as you attempt to address this concern, delegate individuals, both young and old, to ask:

- Can you name the last three intentional efforts that your leaders have made regarding invitation?
- Can you name the last five young people who have participated in ministry opportunities because of invitations received?

Our Goal for this year (_____):

How did we do?

Evaluation Date _____





We Encourage Young People to Look at the Ways in Which God May Be Calling Them to Serve His Church

Context: First articulated in A Vision of Youth Ministry, these ministry components describe the "essence" of ministry with young people and provide the Church with eight fundamental ways to minister effectively with them. Today, in light of our National Strategy on Vocations, we add vocational discernment to the "essence" of effective pastoral ministry. (Renewing the Vision) (See source online)

Goal: Effective and comprehensive pastoral ministry with young people recognizes that *An organization that is not capable of perpetuating itself has failed. An organization therefore has to provide today (those) who can run it tomorrow. It has to renew its human capital.* (Peter Drucker)

SUGGESTED IMPLEMENTATION:

- **Prayer Groups/Eucharistic Adoration:** Develop a group or a consistent time where people might gather to pray for vocations.
- **Chalice Program:** Many parishes have a Chalice that travels from family to family to encourage prayer and discernment for vocations. Does yours?
- **Discernment Programming:** Bring small groups together with a priest or a religious woman or man to discuss vocations and then explore the lifestyle. This might include a "nun run" visitation to convents or visits to seminaries
- **Invite Vocations Directors:** Hold a vocations night as part of your programming and invite vocations directors to participate as speakers and/or on a panel.
- **Sharing "The Call" Stories:** Create opportunities where young people might learn of other's callings as well as share and discern to where they believe they are being called.

How are we already doing this?

Methods for Evaluation: Within the same calendar year as you attempt to address this concern, delegate individuals, both young and old, to ask:

- Is it the perception of those involved in pastoral ministry with young people programming that we have increased our efforts regarding encouraging vocations?

Our Goal for this year (_____):

How did we do?

Evaluation Date _____





We Reach Out to Young People Intentionally, Not Accidentally

Context: *The goals of pastoral ministry with young people is to empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today; to draw young people to responsible participation in the life, mission, and work of the Catholic faith community; and to foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person. (Renewing the Vision) (See source online).*

Goal: Effective and comprehensive pastoral ministry with young people insists that our outreach to young people is meant to be intentional and not accidental.

SUGGESTED IMPLEMENTATION:

- **Through personal invitation:** We invite young people into discipleship, into participation in the parish community, and into personal growth through personal invitation. This comes from within the context of relationships built through the witness of Christian living and by accompaniment during liturgy, service, and other programming.
- **Through parents:** We invite young people into discipleship, into participation in the parish community, and into personal growth through personal invitation. This comes from within the context of the family as it offers the witness of Christian living within the domestic church of the home and by accompaniment during prayer, service, and other apostolic actions.
- **Through pastor / pastoral leadership:** We invite young people into discipleship, into participation in the parish community, and into personal growth through personal invitation. This comes from within the context of the parish community that welcomes young people into full and active participation in the Church relationships built through the witness of Christian living and by accompaniment during liturgy, service, and other multi-generational programming.
- **Through many forms of media:** We invite young people into discipleship, into participation in the parish community, and into personal growth through invitation into relationships with others through a wide variety of various media.

How are we already doing this?

Methods for Evaluation: Within the same calendar year as you attempt to address this concern, delegate individuals, both young and old, to ask:

- Do young people and adults understand how ministry programming reflects the goal of our pastoral ministry?

Our Goal for this year (_____):

How did we do?

Evaluation Date _____





We Ask Young People to Speak for Their Own Needs and Advocate for Their Peers

Context: Our vision of pastoral ministry with young people proposes an approach that attends to a wide spectrum needs and attuned to the distinct developmental, social, cultural, and religious needs as well. We remain focused on young people. Yet we recognize that the day has passed when one program or structure could respond to the needs of many. (Renewing the Vision)

Goal: Effective and comprehensive pastoral ministry with young people calls for a regular assessment of the needs of young people where young people are involved in this assessment. Any corresponding ministry to young people should be evaluated in light of the needs outlined in the assessment process.

SUGGESTED IMPLEMENTATIONS:

- **Focus Groups:** Consider gathering a focus group of “concerned parties” regarding the needs of young people in the parish community. This might involve pastoral leadership, core team members, and/or parents; but should certainly include young people. Make sure to ask the right questions. For suggestions, see links online.
- **Individual Interviews:** Develop questions that discern what is good and what needs improvement; specifically ask about the distinct developmental, social, cultural, and religious needs of young people. Discern the time obligations already placed on young people as well as the best methods for communication with them. Ensure a diverse sampling.
- **Survey:** Mindful of the statements above, develop your own survey. Examples can be found online.
- **Mindset:** Gather all key adults involved in your pastoral ministry with young people, including catechetical and worship efforts. Review with them the Beloit Mindset List which assists adult in avoiding “hardening of (cultural) references” when speaking with young people as well as offering a “globally reported and utilized guide to the intelligent if unprepared adolescent consciousness.” <http://www.beloit.edu/mindset/> After reviewing the most recent list, examine your parish’s present efforts. What might be changed to reflect the present mindset?
- **Confirmation Preparation:** Consider using the beginning or ending of preparation as a time for inviting young people to speak to their own needs within the parish community.
- **Next Steps:** Following one or all of the above, gather a group to analyze all of the data assembled and invite someone to assemble a report for the parish community, web-site, bulletin, and/or parish leadership.

How are we already doing this?

Methods for Evaluation: Within the same calendar year as you attempt to address this concern, delegate individuals, both young and old, to ask:

- What did the team learn regarding the needs of young people? What programs presently best serve their needs? What should be modified or eliminated in consideration of their needs?
- What methods were young people offered to express their needs? What parish based venues have young people been given to express their needs?

Our Goal for this year (_____):

How did we do?

Evaluation Date _____

