



PARISH CONSULTATION WITH SMALL GROUPS SESSION 6 HANDOUT

Focus Area 3 (Sessions 5 & 6): Forming youth and young adults in and for a Church that is always young.

PRAYER

1. Mark 10: 46-52, The Blind Bartimaeus

They came to Jericho. As he was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a sizable crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind man, the son of Timaeus, sat by the roadside begging. On hearing that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, son of David, have pity on me."

And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he kept calling out all the more, "Son of David, have pity on me." Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." So they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take courage; get up, he is calling you."

He threw aside his cloak, sprang up, and came to Jesus. Jesus said to him in reply, "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man replied to him, "Master, I want to see." Jesus told him, "Go your way; your faith has saved you." Immediately he received his sight and followed him on the way.

2. The Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary, abridged. Responses listed in bold.

- Holy Mary, **pray for us.**
- Holy mother of God, **pray for us.**
- Mother most pure, **pray for us.**
- Mother of good counsel, **pray for us.**
- Mother of the Church, **pray for us.**
- Seat of wisdom, **pray for us.**
- Cause of our joy, **pray for us.**
- Ark of the covenant, **pray for us.**
- Morning star, **pray for us.**
- Comforter of the afflicted, **pray for us.**
- Help of Christians, **pray for us.**
- Queen of angels, **pray for us.**
- Queen of all saints, **pray for us.**
- Queen conceived without original sin, **pray for us.**
- Queen assumed into heaven, **pray for us.**
- Queen of the most holy Rosary, **pray for us.**
- Queen of peace, **pray for us.**
- Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world, **spare us, O Lord.**
- Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world, **graciously hear us, O Lord.**
- Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world, **have mercy on us.**
- Pray for us, O holy Mother of God, **that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.**

"The Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary " (abridged). Prayer Book of Favorite Litanies, compiled by Fr. Albert J. Herbert, S.M., Tan Books, 1985.

TOPIC 6A: YOUTH MINISTRY (grades 6-12)

1. The faith of our young people needs to grow and mature.

When our young people reach adolescence, they begin to “put aside” the explanations and ideas about God and the Catholic faith that worked for them when there were children. They seek answers about faith and morals that are intellectually convincing, matched with their lived experience, and come from credible sources.

2. Adolescence is a critical, but challenging time.

A 2018 study found that most people who fell away from the Church typically stopped identifying as Catholic when there were 13 years old! The study shows three challenges to our Christian worldview. (1) Young people develop a “scientific” worldview. Imagine if we could show young people, as Saint John Paul II taught, that “faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth,” (*Fides et Ratio*, 14 Sept. 1998) and introduce them to the invisible world. (2) Today’s culture embraces a widespread relativism, which denies objective moral truths. Imagine if we could show our young people that following the moral truths which Jesus and his Church proclaim lead to the fullness of life, while following the permissive moral teachings of modern culture leads to death. (3) The study shows a climate of poor catechesis and distrust of religious figures. Imagine if our young people had authentic religious believers who witnessed to the joy of following Jesus.

3. We can provide opportunities to encounter Jesus.

We can teach our children to enter into relationship with Jesus through a life of prayer. We can provide dynamic confirmation preparation. We can provide faith-building events and experiences. Encounters with Jesus at retreats, faith camps, youth days, and mission trips are pivotal experiences a young person draws upon as they mature. They allow young people to unplug and take quite time to hear God speak to their heart.

4. We can invite our youth into greater ownership of their faith.

Inviting youth to take on appropriate leadership roles in the parish helps them to grow in faith and inspires others. We can also involve youth in evangelization and service initiatives.

5. We can accompany young people as authentic witnesses.

St. Paul VI said, “Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses.” (*Evangelii Nuntiandi* 41). We can help our young people see the beauty of a relationship with Christ by witnessing to the difference that Jesus has made in our own lives. In addition, mentorship of youth is a helpful tool to help them integrate their faith into their lives. We can provide a welcoming and supportive space and opportunities for our young people to ask their difficult questions and seek the truth.

6. Let’s invest in our youth today!

TABLE DISCUSSION GUIDELINES

1. GENERAL GUIDELINES (read out loud by the table facilitator)

- My job as facilitator is simply to make sure everyone at the table has an opportunity to contribute, the time is shared amongst all table members, and the discussion stays on track. Table facilitators, as members of the small group, will be involved in the discussion and provide individual feedback. Table facilitators are not theologians or experts.
- For fruitful table discussions, please take into consideration that the Synod process is intended to recommend pastoral priorities for our Archdiocese that are both realistic (e.g., within the competence of the Archdiocese to implement) and consistent with the teachings of the Church.
- Please turn to the Discussion Questions & Feedback Forms for our two topics today.
 - If you feel comfortable doing so, please fill out the demographic information.
 - Table discussion questions are listed at the top. We are each invited to choose one or two of the questions on which to share.
 - Below that you will see some ideas for consideration. The ideas for consideration are provided to help us get started in our discussion and provide a framework to give feedback.
 - The bottom of the form is where we provide feedback. We are asked which of the ideas for consideration have worked for us individually, and which ideas the parish or Archdiocese should prioritize in the future. We can choose up to three ideas under each of these two sections. In the third section, we can each provide an idea of our own, up to 20 words.

2. RESPECTFUL DISCUSSION GUIDELINES (read out loud by the table scribe)

- Everyone's input is valued. We are here to listen to each other and to the promptings of the Holy Spirit with a disposition of the heart that we all have something to learn. As it says in 1 Thessalonians 5:11: "Therefore, encourage one another and build one another up, as indeed you do." We are not here to debate. Expect differing viewpoints and presume the good will of the other.
- People may share personal experiences. Please be sensitive to this vulnerability and do not share others' private information outside this group.
- Feedback forms do not have names. In addition, scribes have been asked to keep your responses confidential.

3. PROCESS FOR SHARING (read out loud by a table volunteer)

- To allow everyone an opportunity to share, we will proceed as follows:
 - The table facilitator will share first. After the facilitator is done, he or she invites another to share. You can invite anyone at the table, whether they are next to you or across from you. After that person has shared, they invite another. We will do this until everyone at the table has been asked to share.
 - All are encouraged to share but no one should feel pressured to speak. If you don't want to share, simply say "pass," and ask another to share.
 - We ask you to listen and not immediately respond to someone's sharing. After everyone has had an opportunity to share, the facilitator will initiate an open discussion of the question (time permitting).
- The facilitator will now read the discussion questions out loud and allow some quiet time to consider the questions and ideas for consideration. Then the facilitator will share first.

TOPIC 6B: YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY (ages 18-35)

During this time, Bishop Cozzens will share his personal testimony relating to each of the topics below.

1. Christ calls everyone to be part of the Church's mission.
2. Young adults need a personal encounter with Jesus to decide to follow him.
3. Young adults need community to sustain and form them.
4. We need to empower young adults to become the future leaders of our Church and our culture.