

Youth Minister Formation

(The goal is to complete one trimester per school year.)

Who should take part in Youth Minister Formation?

- Volunteer or paid youth ministers who are new to the ministry.
- Youth ministers who have more experience but want or need an update.
- Those who are working in young adult catechesis.
- Others in the parish who are interested.

Clarification of terms

- Youth ministers have not always seen themselves as catechists or teachers. *Into the Fields* intentionally uses the language “catechist” to refer to anyone who is involved in passing on the faith.
- School teachers, youth ministers, members of the marriage or baptism prep teams, catechumenate team members, young adult ministers, campus ministers—all are really catechists in the true sense of the word.

Options for Youth Minister Formation

- **Saturday morning**
 - 9 AM to noon, with a light breakfast
 - once a month
 - ten months of the year (skip July and August)
- **One evening during the week**
 - from 6 PM to 9 PM, with a light supper
 - once per month
 - ten months of the year
- **August institute**
 - for those who can be present during the day
 - 5 days to complete one trimester

Getting started with Youth Minister Formation

- **Much of the work for organizing youth minister formation falls to the parish director of youth ministry, along with the pastor.**
- **At first, it seems as though more work will be on your desk, but in the end, with better prepared volunteers, your work will be reduced significantly.**
 - They will feel more confident.
 - Retention from year to year will increase.
 - You can count on trained ministers for more help.
 - They become a key part of your team.
 - They encourage others to obtain more formation.
 - The overall quality of your program increases.

■ **Step one: make the commitment!**

■ **Step two: call on us at 23rd to help you!**

■ **Step three: schedule formation in your calendar.**

- Choose the meeting schedule that works best in your parish. Most parish leaders will invite their youth ministers to one three-hour meeting per month, ten months in the year (skipping July and August).
- We tend to ask for too little, but most ministers are willing to do the work of preparation—and they want to!
- Many youth ministers and campus ministers dearly want training.
- You won't have every single volunteer involved, but if you wait until everyone is ready, you'll never accomplish this. Get started with whomever you have ready now.
- Invite religious ed catechists, catechumenate team members, marriage prep folks, baptism preparation folks, and others working in catechetical ministries to take part, too.
- Work closely with the school in your parish if you have one. Why not include all the teachers, catechists, youth ministers, and catechumenate team members in one formation process?
- Keep your pastor informed as you go!

■ **Step four: recruit your youth ministers one by one for this formation.**

- In fact, one three-hour training session per month is not asking very much.
- Budget to pay for the materials as a parish.
- Ask the youth ministers or others to pay for the CEUs from Loyola University New Orleans. For more on this, visit www.intothefields.org.
- Remember, YOU must be the first one to believe in this!

■ **Step five: order your materials.**

- For more on how to do this, visit the website.
- Be sure to order one catechist/teacher pack for each learner, plus a facilitator's guide for yourself.
- Other resources you may need can be found on the website as well.

■ **Step six: get started!**

- And enter a new, more vigorous period of catechesis for all ages and all stages in your parish!

