

**Session 4: Vibrant Youth Ministry**

**Proposition Definition:** Develop at each parish (or collaboratively among parishes) a vibrant youth ministry where youth have the opportunity to encounter Jesus and be formed in the faith with Christ-centered faith sharing and fellowship.

- Include a small group ministry under the leadership of parents and other faith-filled adults who can serve as mentors, providing a safe place for youth to belong and to learn how to make wise decisions.
- Provide small group leader formation with support from the Archdiocese.
- Invite and equip adult, young adult and youth leaders who can serve as authentic and credible witnesses through parish-based youth events (e.g., weekly youth nights).

**Other Key Points:**

- Pope Francis, in his Apostolic Exhortation *Christus vivit*, states: “Young people need to have their freedom respected, yet they also need to be accompanied. The family should be the first place of accompaniment. Youth ministry can present the ideal of life in Christ as the process of building a house on rock (cf. Mt 7:24-25). For most young people, that house, their life, will be built on marriage and married love. That is why youth ministry and the pastoral care of families should be coordinated and integrated, with the aim of ensuring a continuous and suitable accompaniment of the vocational process. (CV 242).
- We must equip authentic and credible witnesses to serve our youth. If we can form parents, adults, young adults, and youth leaders to be true witnesses of holiness for our young people, many lives can be converted to Christ.
- We need the wisdom of parents and of those whose work the Holy Spirit has already richly blessed in small-group ministry to assist in making this approach more effective and more fruitful for youth.
- It is critical we work to deepen our youth’s encounter with Christ’s love so that they can proclaim that love in deed and in word to those whom the Holy Spirit is preparing to hear it and to receive it.
- Pope Saint John Paul II at World Youth Day in 1993: “This is no time to be ashamed of the Gospel. It is the time to preach it from the rooftops. Do not be afraid to break out of comfortable and routine modes of living, in order to take up the challenge of making Christ known in the modern metropolis.”

**Reflection Questions:**

1. What most touched you about the teaching?
2. How do you see the Church striking a balance between giving youth due freedom to explore their faith with guidance?
3. Where might the Lord be calling you to be more present to youth in your circle of influence?