

BROMLEY DEANERY CATHOLIC YOUTH MINISTRY PROJECT

“Youth ministry is more than a program; it’s a relationship between the parish and its young members. At its heart, there is a pattern of listening, caring, responding and sharing” (Tom East: 2003)

Youth Ministry - Current issues for Bromley parishes

The transmission of faith and story is vital to the ongoing health of the Church, however parishes are experiencing real difficulties in sustaining the faith experience for young people post Holy Communion. Maintaining and developing good relationships with young people as they grow and mature is made even more difficult due to the lack of a Catholic secondary school in the Borough of Bromley.

Consultation with priests and parishioners in the Bromley deanery has revealed a growing need for tools and resources to enable them to:

- Communicate effectively and connect with our young people as they grow and mature.
- Listen to the experience of young people—learn to appreciate their reality, attend to their needs, questions and concerns.
- Develop appropriate skills to engage in conversation, learning together the language of faith and meaning that is authentic for our time and circumstances.

Working together as a deanery will enable the sharing of ideas and best practice and can provide the essential elements of challenge, momentum and continuity required to implement an effective youth ministry program.

Catholic Youth Ministry Project

Aim:

- To develop a deanery action plan for youth ministry, working with individual parishes within the deanery for the creation of a meaningful and sustainable strategy for youth faith formation.

Objectives:

- Engage a group of 30+ people to take part in the 3 year course which begins in 1st and 2nd March 2014 facilitated by Conforti Institute.
- Commitment to 9 weekends over 3 years and to meet periodically in between to share experiences
- Provide skills, practical tools and techniques to creatively engage in the ministry of young people, enabling the community to offer a “network of life giving and life changing relationships”.

Programme Outline

2014

Foundations for Youth Ministry Leadership

Principles of Youth Ministry Leadership

Skills for Christian Leadership

2015

Practices of Youth Ministry

Peace and Reconciliation:
The use of Conflict Transformation in Youth Ministry

Building the Collaborative Chaplaincy Model 1:
Facilitating the faith growth of the faith community through Pastoral Care.

2016

Building the Collaborative Chaplaincy Model 2:
Facilitating the faith growth of the faith community through Prayer and Worship

Building the Collaborative Chaplaincy Model 3:
Facilitating the faith growth of the faith community through Justice and Service.

Building the Collaborative Chaplaincy Model 4:
Facilitating the faith growth of the faith community through Evangelization and Catechesis.

The Programme.

The content of the course has been adapted from the Conforti Institute and the Centre of Ministry Developments' Youth Ministry Studies Programme, an internationally recognised programme developed from the American Bishops' Conference. For the past 30 years Catholic parishes and Dioceses have trusted CMD to provide a vision and practice for ministry that is rooted in church documents, Scripture and best practice research.

How will the project be run?

The Programme will be presented by the Conforti Institute team over 3 weekends per calendar year beginning 1st and 2nd March 2014. Bromley Deanery will be responsible for providing suitable accommodation for the programme as well as providing refreshments and lunch on both days.

Module times: Saturday 9.30am-4.30pm (Vigil Mass @ 5.00pm)
Sunday: 9.30am-4.30pm

The course coordinator, Susan Longhurst will meet with groups periodically between modules in order to:

- Monitor and evaluate the effects of the learning material
- Provide practical support to course participants.
- Encourage discussion, reflection and evaluation of key issues and their practical application within individual parishes

Progress and development

Nine parishes from Bromley deanery have joined the Catholic Youth Ministry Project and from these parishes, 39 individuals are currently participating on the course. Those taking part are:

- Inspired to help maintain and grow the spiritual faith of young people as they journey into adolescence.
- Interested in helping young people as they leave their junior school and embark on their secondary education.
- Teachers, university students, and first communion/confirmation catechists who want to move into older age faith programs.

Having successfully completed the first module, course participants have begun the process of formulating and developing a strategy for youth ministry in their parishes. Activities and events planned have been tailored to the needs and interests of young people in each area by utilising the tools and strategies taught by the Conforti Institute team, which have been devised as part of this modular youth ministry training programme.

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