



POLICY

GUIDELINE

YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMS

YOUTH AND THE SUNDAY MASS

(Adapted from *Youth and Sunday Mass: Preparing Youth for Liturgy and Preparing the Liturgy Well*, Archdiocese of Cincinnati.)

“Liturgical actions are not private actions but celebrations of the Church itself, which is ‘the sacrament of unity,’ namely, a holy people assembled and ordered under the bishops...” (CIC cann. 837 §1)

The Sunday celebration of the Eucharist is an act of Christ and his Body, the Church. Anything that would divide the Body of Christ is contradictory to the Eucharist. A separate Sunday youth Mass deprives the parish community of the gifts of young people and deprives young people of inclusion in the broader, intergenerational, community of faith.

Special liturgies for youth run counter to what we believe about the Eucharist, the Church does not ordinarily provide special Masses on Sunday for any particular age or interest group,

All liturgies should welcome young people, as all people. If "youth-friendly" means appropriate music, a relevant homily understandable to all ages, and including young people in liturgical roles, then all will benefit.

However, if "youth-friendly" is taken to mean liturgies where the liturgical roles, music and homily are principally, or even exclusively, directed toward youth, the inclusive nature of the liturgy is lost.

Two very influential elements of the liturgy for youth are preaching and music. These two elements are in need of particular attention if we hope to provide an experience of worship that is meaningful for youth, as they exist within the Body of Christ.

It should be remembered that the youth are not the future of the Church. They are just as much the present as other generations are and should be welcomed as such.



100.40 (Cont'd)

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STRATEGIES FOR THOSE WHO WORK WITH YOUTH

- Be well formed in the liturgy and integrate its richness into your ministry.
- Attend workshops, study the liturgy, and deepen both your understanding and appreciation of it.
- Regularly include in your ministry prayer experiences and activities that help young people to connect to the symbols, actions, and signs of the liturgy.
- Lead young people in preparation for and reflection upon the liturgy, or find someone who can do this well.
- During youth meetings, or in intergenerational groups, lead young people in discussion and reflection that will help them to actively participate in the celebration of the Eucharist and connect the liturgy with their lives.
- Connect liturgy with life through comprehensive youth ministry.
- Integrate youth into the life and ministries of the faith community.

STRATEGIES FOR THOSE PREPARING THE LITURGY

- Prepare every celebration with the full assembly in mind, children, young people, and adults.
- Include youth in homily and liturgical preparation teams.
- Include youth in a variety of liturgical roles.