

# TYPES OF MINISTRY

THERE ARE MANY TYPES OF CHILD AND YOUTH MINISTRY.

HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES TO HELP YOU CHOOSE WHAT IS BEST FOR YOUR PARISH...

## 1. FOUNDATION MINISTRY

**The Theory:** Some parishes need to take time to prepare their members before they begin a child/ youth ministry.

**The Practice:** The parish deliberately adopts a program of study that is intended to educate its members about children and youth, and to develop a sense of compassion that will eventually form the base of its ministry to children and youth.

**Best For:** Parishes that want to bridge the 'generation gap', but don't know how. Parishes that feel a need for child and youth ministry, but lack volunteers or resources. Parishes that have a history of frustration or apathy for child and youth ministry.

**For More Information:** see 'Foundation Ministry' in our Child& Youth Ministry Resources.

## 2. GROUP-BASED MINISTRY

**The Theory:** The spiritual, social and developmental needs of children and youth are distinct from adults. The best way to minister to them is through groups and events designed specifically for their age groups.

**The Practice:** This type of ministry is characterized by a 'Sunday School' or 'youth group' that meets regularly for a mix of recreation, spiritual development, worship services, mission, retreat or outreach events to draw people into the group.

**Best For:** Churches that have adequate facilities, budget and leadership base to support a group. Churches that are within an easy travel distance from schools and homes. Churches in communities that are not over-served with social or religious 'group-based' activities for children and youth.

**For More Information:** see 'Group-Based Ministry' in our Child&Youth Ministry Resources.

## 3. FAMILY-BASED MINISTRY

**The Theory:** The family unit is the strongest influence in the spiritual development of children and youth. The best way to minister to them is by ministering to the family as a whole.

**The Practice:** This type of ministry is characterized by events, groups and worship services designed for family participation. Key dates for outreach and ministry are Mother's Day, Father's Day, Family Day, Grandparents' Day and holidays.

**Best For:** Churches that have parents and grandparents as members. Churches in communities that are not already over-served with family-based social or religious programs.

**For More Information:** see 'Family-Based Ministry' in our Child&Youth Ministry Resources

### Find the Plan For Your Parish...

- Do this exercise at an Advisory Board meeting or call a special meeting. Invite your Deanery's Child & Youth Ministry Facilitator to the meeting.
- Invite each person to take a minute or two to share his/her experience of child & youth ministry
- Review the 6 types of child & youth ministry in this handout
- Invite each person to take a minute or two to share what type ministry he/she feels is most appropriate for the parish.
- Identify the type (or types) of child & youth ministry that generate the most interest in the group. Print and study the Information Sheet for that Type from our Child&Youth Ministry Resources.
- If the conversation generates consensus, ideas and energy – get planning! If there is no consensus, plan another meeting in order to give people time to study all the types in depth. Do one or two Foundation Ministry exercises in the meantime.

#### **4. ALL-AGES MINISTRY**

**The Theory:** The Body of Christ has members of all ages. The best way to minister to children and youth is to practice ministries that expect their full inclusion so that all ages learn and grow together.

**The Practice:** This type of ministry is characterized by worship, groups and events that are designed for participation by people of all ages. Youth are part of worship and ministry planning and leadership. Worship and ministry events are planned with elements that would engage people of every generation.

**Best For:** Churches that lack the resources or volunteer base to run a child/youth ministry separate from the worship service and other core ministries. Churches that are willing to adapt their current ministries for the sake of inclusion and renewal.

**For More Information:** see 'All-Ages Ministry' in our Child&Youth Ministry Resources

#### **5. ECUMENICAL MINISTRY**

**The Theory:** Churches can better serve the children and youth in their communities by working together to combine their strengths rather than engaging in competition. Demonstrating Christian cooperation is essential for evangelism and discipleship.

**The Practice:** Community churches work together to create their child and youth ministries. This type of ministry can reflect one or more of the other types of ministry – i.e. Ecumenical Group Ministry or an Ecumenical Family-Based Ministry.

**Best For:** Churches that already have strong ecumenical ties. Churches that perceive a need for a type of child/youth ministry but do not have a sufficient resource or volunteer base to host it alone.

**For More Information:** see 'Ecumenical Ministry' in our Child&Youth Ministry Resources

#### **6. SERVICE-BASED MINISTRY**

**The Theory:** The best way to introduce the gospel to children and youth is in action. Churches that demonstrate a commitment to loving and serving their neighbours will attract children and youth to learn about the God that inspires our love.

**The Practice:** This type of ministry encourages the Church to serve the children/youth in their community, and to provide opportunities for the teens to serve the community as well. A service-based youth ministry dedicates its time and money to supporting initiatives that respond to the needs of teens, such as after-school programs, public facilities for sports, a community 'teen centre', or free access to computers. A service-based youth ministry also creates opportunities for teens to serve their community by volunteering their time in Church programs such as soup kitchens or kids camps.

**Best For:** Churches in communities that have service opportunities. Churches that have members that are involved in community programs and leadership.

**For More Information:** see 'Service-Based Ministry' in our Child&Youth Ministry Resources

#### **TO ASSIST YOUR PARISH**

*The Diocese of Algoma has a staff of Child & Youth Ministry Facilitators who can work with your parish to plan your ministry (or develop your existing ministry), connect your parish with resources, and assist with volunteer recruitment and training. Contact your Deanery's Child & Youth Ministry Facilitator today.*