

Youth Policy of Archdiocese of Cape Town

Vision

John 10:10 – That all ‘may have life and have it to the full.’

Through evangelisation, empowerment and formation, particularly in leadership, we strive to nurture vibrant youth ministry in our archdiocese which will offer all young people this ‘life in abundance’ which Christ promised to us through the implementation of the pastoral plan. There must be a significant paradigm shift to realise the vision of a youth-friendly church which values, empowers and fosters youth representation and leadership at all levels.

Youth ministry at parish level should be informed by thinking at deanery, archdiocesan and national level and parish youth will have a voice at parish, deanery, archdiocesan and national level through a dynamic two-way flow of influence. There should be effective communication and co-operation between all catholic organisations and movements who work with young people in the Archdiocese.

Definitions

- The South African Government defines youth as those from the ages of 14 – 35.
- Bearing in mind the differing socio-economic and cultural contexts, and the dynamic nature of youth work, this group are divided as follows
- YOUTH are those in secondary school or tertiary studies, or of a like age (Approximately 14 – 25)
- YOUNG ADULTS are those who are finishing tertiary studies and working (Approximately 21 – 35)
- Children who are in primary school are not considered youth, but those from grades 3 – 7 (approximately 9 – 13) will be known as JUNIOR YOUTH. These are primarily catered for by the Catechetical program of the Archdiocese

Structures

Archdiocese

Youth Chaplaincy

- The Youth Chaplaincy is made up of one or more persons appointed or approved by the Archbishop, including, but not limited to, one or more of the following:
 - Vicar for Youth
 - Youth Chaplain
 - Youth Worker
 - Youth Volunteers
- The Youth Chaplaincy is responsible to the Archbishop or his representative, who would usually be the Episcopal Vicar for Pastoral Development
- The primary role of the Youth Chaplaincy is to provide advice, support and resources for the building up of parish youth groups, in co-operation with the parish priest, youth leaders and other youth structures, and firmly based in Catholic spirituality.

- The Youth Chaplaincy will also facilitate the networking of catholic youth organisations and promote policy development and training/empowerment initiatives for young people in the Archdiocese
- This Youth Chaplaincy will also be responsible for the effective dissemination of information and for the marketing and promotion of events.

Archdiocesan Youth Council

- The Archdiocesan Youth Council (hereafter referred to as the AYC) is made up of the 8 Deanery Youth Council chairpersons or representatives
- The AYC meets 3 times a year before each APC meeting
- The AYC will elect office-bearers according to the procedure laid out in Appendix 1
- The function of the AYC is to facilitate communication and co-operation among the Deaneries, and to co-operate with the youth chaplaincy, in particular with regards to the planning and running of Archdiocesan youth events
- The Archbishop will be represented by one or more members of the Youth Chaplaincy, who do not have voting rights, but do have right of veto in exceptional circumstances

Deanery

Deanery Youth Council

- The Deanery Youth Council (hereafter referred to as the DYC) is made up of 2 youth representatives from every parish youth group in the deanery
- The Dean, in conjunction with the DPC is responsible for the establishment of the DYC.
- The DYC will meet at least 3 times each year before each Deanery Pastoral Council (hereafter referred to as the DPC) meeting
- The DYC will elect office-bearers according the procedure laid out in Appendix 1
- Should there not be a properly constituted DYC, it is the responsibility of the Dean, in consultation with parish priests of the deanery, to appoint a representative to the AYC
- The function of the DYC is to facilitate communication and co-operation among the parishes of the deanery.

Parish

- Every parish should aim to have a youth group and youth activities
- Every parish should have two representatives on the DYC
 - These representatives must fulfil the following requirements
 - Be active youth leaders in their parish
 - Be under the age of 35
 - Be appointed or approved by their parish priest
- There should also be youth representation at PPC level

Activities

We live in a disconnected world where we long for community. We need to give our young people a sense of belonging and value through:

Youth Spirituality

Formation in catholic spirituality must be at the core of all youth work. A concerted effort needs to be made to nurture God encounters through retreats, vigils, youth Masses, healing services, workshops on spiritual growth and understanding, on-going catechesis and faith formation. Parish communities need to work hard to provide more opportunities for the youth to be involved in the liturgy. A mentorship programme, should be encouraged

Faith and spirituality anchor us in life, give us resilience against the storms of life and make us compassionate.

Evangelisation

Faith needs to be a lived experience and so evangelisation is at the heart of all we do in youth ministry. It is hoped that effective youth-on-youth evangelisation will occur through sharing of ideas, resources and collaborative deanery initiatives.

Developing Catholic Youth Leadership

A concerted effort needs to be made to develop the leadership potential of our young people.

Service

In a world of rampant consumerism and individualism we need to be counter-cultural and nurture a spirit of volunteerism among our young people. We need to afford our young people service opportunities, within the faith community as well as the broader community. Collaboration with religious congregations, social development organisations and Church institutions could further this aim.

Friendship

A sense of communion and fellowship needs to be developed amongst the youth by providing opportunities for youth from different parishes and church communities to meet and interact with each other. The initiatives should be geared to appeal to various age groups within the Church.

APPENDIX 1 ELECTION PROCEDURES

- Every representative present at the election meeting has a vote (2 per parish for DYC elections, 1 per deanery for AYC elections)
- Nominations for Chair shall first be accepted
 - No limit on the number of people who may be nominated
 - The nominees must be present
 - The nominees must accept nomination
- The chairperson is elected by simple majority
 - Should there be a tie, the outcome shall be determined by lot
 - Should there not be a simple majority in the first round of voting, a second ballot shall be conducted between the two nominees with the highest number of votes from the first ballot
- The vice-chair will be the one with the 2nd highest number of votes
- After the chairperson and vice-chairperson have been elected, nominations shall be accepted for secretary following same procedure