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# Project--Disciple-A Model for Parish Youth Ministry

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PROJECT--DISCIPLE

A Model For Parish Youth Ministry

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A Research Paper Presented to the Faculty  
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,  
Department of Practical Theology  
in fulfillment of the  
requirements for elective  
P-200

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by

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## CHAPTER I

### WHERE ARE YOU IN YOUTH MINISTRY ?

#### Introduction: Objectives of the Study

The following story is true. Only the names of people and places have been changed. As the story unfolds, keep in mind two things. First of all, notice that what is being told is only symptomatic of a widespread problem in the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod. And secondly, be prepared to answer the following question: Where are you in youth ministry?

St. Matthew Lutheran Church was first established in 1853 when a staunch determined group of German immigrants came to America. Supported and nurtured through its long history by dedicated, hard-working people, the congregation grew steadily so that by the year 1974 it could boast of a total baptized membership of nearly 1500 souls, and sole ownership of its property and adequate structures covering one entire city block. According to the church records, a wide variety of ages comprise the total membership. But an even closer look reveals that the number of people who actually attend worship services and take an active part in the life of the church, is much lower and restricted to a few in the middle-aged and elderly categories. It is most

alarming to note that only thirty-five people in these groups take active leadership in the business affairs of the congregation. Where are the youth? Oh, there are small children who regularly attend the long-established Sunday School program, but the young teens and college-aged youth are obviously absent from the pews and social life of the congregation. On a given Sunday there may be one or two young people who come and sit with their parents and a small group of two or three which sits off to the side, but these are the only exceptions to the above general observation. Where are the youth at St. Matthew's? Why don't they come to church? Why don't they do more in the congregation? What has happened to the so-called "pepsi generation" that is supposed to "come alive?" Why aren't they here in church? Where are they? These are common, but very real questions in regard to youth today. And they are very serious questions which have been with the church for a long time.

Before some possible solutions are explored, there is more of the story to tell. At a typical voter's meeting, a young, well-dressed teacher in the parish school asks a question under the subject of new business: Why don't we start a youth program here at St. Matthew's? Several of the voters present puff quietly on their pipes, others begin asking some questions to understand the question, and

a few others seem to pay no attention at all, perhaps hoping that this new item of business will not jeopardize what appeared to be an early close to the evening's agenda. At any rate, there is some discussion on the proposed question of the energetic seventh grade teacher, Roy Smith. Many suggestions are given, all of which boil down to a formal resolution which crudely rendered means: Go ahead, Roy, you come up with a youth program! Little, if any, attention is given to the fact that Roy already carried a tremendous work load in the parish school. He was athletic director, chairman of the annual science fair, and supervisor of the church-sponsored neighborhood sports program. The main concern of the voters was that they act upon the business at hand, namely, that some provision be made for a youth program. Why? Because the church needs such a program, the youth need some way in which to develop into tomorrow's church leaders, the youth need something to call their own, and Roy Smith has expressed an interest in working out such a program. These are all valid considerations in the minds of the voters at St. Matthew's. How common are they in other congregations? Sadly enough, they are much too common and many youth programs get started in just this way for the same reasons. Money is allocated, and a volunteer is given the go-ahead to formulate a program, and suddenly there is something called "youth ministry." But is

this really youth ministry?

On the surface the story at this point may seem somewhat unrealistic, but it is true more often than not in many large congregations like St. Matthew. Even more significant is the conclusion to the story yet to be told. Remember the basic question: Where are you in youth ministry? It will serve as the primary focal point in the discussion to follow.

Roy Smith goes to work almost immediately, confident that God Himself had given him a mandate from which to go forward in developing a parish youth program. Filled with high hopes, Roy schedules the first Sunday night meeting for all high school youth in the congregation. When the time arrives, Roy is greeted by six young people out of a potential list of nearly one hundred youth. Two of them are brother and sister with nothing to do on a Sunday night<sup>4</sup> anyway, one is a boyfriend, and the other three have come because they've gone to Sunday School all their lives and do not want to miss a youth meeting at the church. Roy is nervous, but determined to "pull this thing off," and to make the most of the situation, presenting his own ideas for a successful youth program. In general the youth go along with Roy, but show no signs of enduring enthusiasm for the ideas presented. Several meetings are held subsequent to the first, but offer little or nothing that is of

real interest to the youth who come. Consequently, the group does not grow, the youth become disenchanted with "their" program, Roy Smith left to his own limited resources becomes very discouraged, and then the inevitable finally happens. Youth ministry at St. Matthew Lutheran Church dies before it ever receives a proper baptism.

And now the question: Where are you in youth ministry? In the situation described in the story, what would you do? How would you tackle the problem now facing the congregation at St. Matthew Lutheran? Where do you begin in youth ministry? What are you presently doing, what have you done in the past, and what might you do in the future if the problem compounded by Roy Smith's failure suddenly became your assignment? How would you build a youth program for a large congregation from scratch? One of the primary objectives of this study will be to provide you with one possible course of action in completing such a task. This study begins where the story above leaves off.

Why was the story told in the first place? The story is significant because it exposes some of the basic misconceptions with which many people operate in youth ministry. Just how typical the rational presented is for inaugurating parish youth programs, and just how universal the figure Roy Smith may be, can best be illustrated by a careful examination of some basic misconceptions. The

following notions, although seemingly harmless, are common throughout the church and can be very misleading: (1) Youth are the future of the church; (2) Youth need training now to be the church leaders of tomorrow; (3) Youth should have separate activities apart from the adult membership; (4) All youth must be involved or the program is a failure; (5) The church knows what is best for its youth; and (6) Youth ministry is the special task of the younger adult members of the congregation.<sup>1</sup> Each of these assumptions surfaced in one form or another in the introductory story. Now as you, the reader, begin to formulate some of your own ideas to answer the question: (Where are you in youth ministry?), you may discover that one or more of these misconceptions are part of your basic framework. If so, then they may need to be disregarded for the time being because none of them will appear in this study.

#### Limitations of the Study

Following a general overview, this paper will introduce in detail only the initial "discovery" phase of the dynamic, on-going parish youth program entitled: Project--Disciple. As a take-off on the Great Commission found in

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<sup>1</sup>Josephine Kelsey, "Starting From Scratch in Youth Ministry," Resource Magazine (June 1970), p. 2.

chapter twenty-eight of the Gospel according to St. Matthew, Project--Disciple could conceivably grow into a total parish program involving all age groups, but for the objectives of this study will focus only on guidelines specifically for youth ministry.

This study is written to assist youth leaders and adult counselors in working out models for ministry among young people in the parish. As this model develops it will become obvious that its practical application is limited to the parish medium, although many of the principles underlying its structure may indeed find adaptation elsewhere. To further aid the reader, a rather extensive bibliography is included also. With such an index of available resources, the creative youth leader or adult counselor will have an excellent platform from which to begin youth ministry.

#### A Place to Begin

Where are you in youth ministry? By now you, the reader, may have already worked out some answers and may already be working with some useful models. But several months ago the author was asking himself the same question in a rather demanding situation. The problem left by Roy Smith in the introductory story, was the assignment tackled by the author. This study is the answer he worked through by trial and by prayer in response to the urgent need for youth ministry.

Not too long after the author arrived at St. Matthew Lutheran Church, he heard the story of Roy Smith and others who had gone before him. After reading through the final chapters of St. Matthew, the author sat down for dinner. The words of the Lord Jesus Christ recorded in the last two verses of chapter twenty-eight kept coming to his mind: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations ... teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age." Then on a dinner napkin, the author sketched out some words for each letter in the word, disciple. The sketch looked something

like this: D iscovery  
I nvestment  
S ervant Support System  
C are/Action  
I nter-personal Relationships  
P rinciples  
L eadership  
E vangelism

This was the true beginning of Project--Disciple!

In the months that followed, the theoretical framework developed even further. The next chapter will define each of the letters in the word, disciple. And each concept will be formulated on the basis of four essential principles interwoven into Project--Disciple: (1) The youth are not special, they are part of the total church member-

ship; (2) The youth and adults are both members of the church now;<sup>2</sup> (3) The youth program in a particular situation must depend upon the specific needs of the youth;<sup>3</sup> and (4) Youth ministry is always in flux, it is never all worked out.<sup>4</sup> These four principles will remain constant, therefore, as Project--Disciple is explained further.

The command of Christ to go and make disciples is still very urgent. This is especially true in youth ministry today. Young people are waiting to hear God's good news of salvation in Jesus Christ in ways that are meaningful to them and in ways that enable them to respond to the call of discipleship according to their needs. The model for parish youth ministry entitled: Project--Disciple is only one way to get the message through to them.

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<sup>2</sup>Kelsey, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>Lee Hovel, "Starting From Scratch in Youth Ministry," Directions For Youth Ministry--1974 (packet), p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>Eldor Kaiser and Marty Steyer, "The Young in the Church Puzzle," The Gate, VI (Fall 1972), 3.

## CHAPTER II

### WHAT IS "PROJECT--DISCIPLE" ?

Project--Disciple is not a step-by-step program for youth ministry nor is it a rigid set of guidelines to be followed. Rather, it is a dynamic, on-going model designed to help youth leaders and adult counselors, sponsors, and teachers get themselves and others "moving" in the Spirit of Jesus Christ according to the Great Commission. Setting people in motion for Jesus Christ is the goal of Project--Disciple. This means not only daily contact with the Word of God, personal prayer, and total dedication of one's life to Christ; it also means hard work. It means "moving" for Jesus Christ in thought, word, and deed. It means living for Him in such a way that others see His Holy Spirit, His life, moving in you. The Lord Jesus Christ never said it would be easy to go and make disciples, but He did promise to always go with us until the end of this age (Matthew 28:19-20). And He said that He would send the Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth as we go and witness for Him (John 16:13). Hence, the art of making disciples for the Lord Jesus Christ is really the work of His Holy Spirit moving in us, motivating and encouraging us to tell others about our Lord and Savior. It is God who sets the Church in motion to witness for Him. And it is God who moves in

us to set others in motion, helping and showing them how to live their lives for Jesus Christ. This is what Project--Disciple is all about.

### Discovery

Discovery in the dynamic model: Project--Disciple is only one phase involved in the continuous motion. When a person encounters a new and challenging situation, he endeavors to discover the "where", "who", "why", "how", and "what" of the environment. This process occurs every time a new person attends a youth meeting, every time a group goes on a field trip, or when there are new things to learn in any situation. Discovery, therefore, is not limited to the initial phases of a youth program. It is an integral part of an on-going process in youth ministry. But a beginning must be made somewhere if the process is to be realized at all.

When starting from scratch, discovery will play a more dominant role in laying the necessary foundations of Project--Disciple. This point will become much more evident when discovery is discussed in greater detail along with practical application in the next chapter. Furthermore in the next chapter, the distinction between the respective responsibilities of the adult counselor, sponsor, and teacher in Project--Disciple will also become clearer as they are dis-

cussed in connection with the discovery phase. But for now the vital importance of discovery in the very beginning must be underscored.

Before any official gathering is even scheduled for the youth or by the youth themselves, some preliminary discovery is important to the success of such a meeting and those subsequent to it. There must be some information gathered about the youth and the adults willing to serve in youth ministry. First of all, a survey should be made to discover some answers to these questions: How many youth are there in the parish? And what are the various ages of the youth? Some church records provide such information, but in addition to this possible resource, there should be some personal contact made with the youth themselves to further understand how they feel about having some church-sponsored program of youth ministry. Also, what are their needs, their interests, and their ideas? As time goes on, more insights will become known in regard to questions like these to be sure. But before anything is even launched in youth ministry, there must be some indication of the number, ages, and interest of the parish youth.

The second thing to discover before any official meeting is planned, is the availability and willingness of parish adults to serve in youth ministry. Again, some answers to two basic questions are needed: How many adults will involve themselves with the youth? And who are these adults? After

some contact has been made with various adults who have expressed an interest, plan an informal meeting at the church to explain just exactly what it is to which they have been asked to commit themselves. Outline the respective responsibilities of the counselor, the sponsor, and the teacher in Project--Disciple. Explain each one carefully and answer any questions before asking for their commitment. After there is a clear understanding of the work involved, the time required for the task, and the necessary dedication to the Lord's ministry; then record the commitment of those adults able and willing to serve.

When some initial discovery has been accomplished in regard to the youth and their potential adult counselors, sponsors, and teachers; then the first official youth meeting may be planned. The discovery from this point on will become much more involved and exciting because not only are the challenges fantastic, but one never knows for sure what is going to happen when young people gather for fun, fellowship, and faith-sharing.

Discovery means getting acquainted with one another, learning new names and faces, taking notice of someone different, and it means getting out of one's selfish mold to share with others the uniqueness of God's redeeming love revealed in His Son Jesus Christ. Discovery means learning more about God, about others, and about one's self. Discovery

encourages each person to learn who he is, who others are, what talents he and others may have, what leadership abilities he and others may have, what faith he and others share, and how he and others may live their lives. Discovery is the beginning of the process: Project--Disciple. It is one possible way by which God's people may begin to share their faith and life with each other. Once the process begins and Christ's command to go and make disciples is taken seriously and joyfully, the Church is set in motion.

#### Investment

Investment is essential for building something that is discovered. As the youth in the church discover the corporate character of the body of Christ, they and the adults will learn that sometimes they can do things better as a group.<sup>1</sup> Hence, as each person invests his time, talents, and ideas in the group, the Church grows.

Investment means sharing those gifts which Christ has given to His people for the building up of His Church. Those who serve in youth ministry as counselors will need to invest much of their time just being with the youth and equipping them with resource ideas. As they live and learn with

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<sup>1</sup>Martin W. Steyer, editor, "Out Into The Sunshine," Resources For Youth Ministry, III (Spring 1971), 22.

youth, they will need to spend time acquainting themselves with available resources, share their ideas in smaller groups designed to plan activities, and be ever willing to give what they have learned by way of faith and life in Jesus Christ. In much the same way, those who are called upon to serve as sponsors or chaperons will need to invest their time and talents also. Their availability for transportation, supervision, and living witness to Christ by the way they live are very important. This is also true of those who serve the youth as teachers of God's Word. Investment means that counselors, sponsors, and teachers and the youth will all need to work together in building up the body of Christ.

#### Servant Support System

The concept of "servant," which is fulfilled in the scriptures by the life of Jesus, is not too familiar to most people. But it is the primary ingredient for making disciples in youth ministry. In fact, a good way to describe Project--Disciple would be to call it a "servant support system."

Basically, there are five areas where the servant concept can be built into Project--Disciple: (a) The youth in the context of the parish; (b) The counselors, sponsors, and teachers involved in youth ministry; (c) The parents

of the youth; (d) The available resources for youth work; and (e) The direction and scope of the total program.

Douglas Ross, the author of an in depth Bible study on the servant concept, writes: "Life must be lived with youth, not over them."<sup>2</sup> A clear understanding of this point is vital before any attempt is made to help the youth see their role in the total parish life. Many believe that the youth need special attention in the church from only a select group of adults. This notion is misleading because the youth are not special, they are only one part in the total parish life. Therefore, participation by both youth and adults in meaningful prayer, Bible study, worship, and other activities together is most important. If support groups can be encouraged among youth and adults, then the first step toward building a servant support system will have been made. People working with each other, serving one another, is the way the Church moves for Jesus Christ.<sup>3</sup>

A servant support system of youth and adults in the congregation working together is an excellent environment in which to discover one's identity as a Christian.<sup>4</sup> Both

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<sup>2</sup>"Youth Ministry Is ...", Directions For Youth Ministry--1974 (packet material), p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Steyer, "Out Into The Sunshine," p. 22.

<sup>4</sup>Martin W. Steyer, editor, "Identity and Ministry," Resources For Youth Ministry, IV (Fall 1972), 33.

age groups need each other to fully grow in the body of Christ. The youth need adult concern and guidance, and the adults who serve as counselors, sponsors, and teachers need support for their respective tasks. But these adults are not the only ones who are responsible for the youth work in the parish. They have specific assignments to be sure, but not in the sense that the rest of the congregation can forget about the youth. The support for youth ministry must come from the entire congregation, not just the adults who have agreed to work with the youth. One possible way to keep the communication channels and support system going would be to present periodic reports to the entire congregation about youth ministry being done.

When the parents of the youth support the youth program great things can happen! A beautiful, harmonious effort of parents, youth and adults working together and serving one another in the Spirit of Christ, will provide wonderful spiritual blessings for everyone in the servant support system.

The longevity of any youth program will depend to some extent on the availability of fresh new ideas from current resource material. Hence, a Youth Resource Library (YRL) should be set up to provide resource material from books, records, magazines, and cassettes. Why? Because the youth are media-orientated.<sup>5</sup> So, by keeping media resources

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<sup>5</sup>Steyer, "Identity and Ministry," p. 33.

available, new ways can be learned by which the youth and adults may serve one another in the parish.

The direction and scope of Project--Disciple is shaped by the various ways in which the servant concept is constructed. As new, creative, imaginative, and interesting plans are formulated; a servant support system with real direction and purpose will provide the best network from which youth and adults may grow and mature in the Church.

#### Care-Action

As youth and adults learn how to serve one another, they also grow in their love and concern for others. As they mature in their faith, supporting one another, they seek ways in which to put their God-given love and concern for others into action. This maturing process leads into the next phase of making disciples called: Care-Action.

What is care-action? The Walther League promoted the idea of "service projects" in its program to help youth recognize that being a disciple for Christ meant becoming a "servant" like Him.<sup>6</sup> Today this same concept is called care-action and includes three activities: (a) The care-visit; (b) The reflection; and (c) The response.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Eldor Kaiser and Marty Steyer, "The Young in the Church Puzzle," The Gate, VI (Fall 1972), 16.

<sup>7</sup>Lee Hovel, guest editor, "People Resource Power," Resources For Youth Ministry, V (Fall 1973), 19-20.

The first step in putting care for others into action involves making a care-visit.<sup>8</sup> In groups of not more than six, including both youth and adults, a care-visit may be made to the elderly in the congregation who are "shut-in," to people in nursing homes, hospitals, juvenile detention centers, jails, mental homes, schools, or other private residences. On a care-visit the first lesson to be learned is listen!<sup>9</sup> Allow those who are being visited to do most of the talking. Discover what they like to talk about, what they like to do best, what experiences have shaped their lives, and what is important to them. Listening is very difficult, but essential when making a care-visit.

After the care-visit the entire group should meet together as soon as possible, sit down, and spend some time in reflection on the care-visit. During this period some discussion of the care-visit, where it took place, and how it affected those in the group, should be encouraged. This reflection activity is not a time to analyze those who were visited, but rather an opportunity for the group to take a second look at itself and what it did in light of God's Word.<sup>10</sup> In order to facilitate discussion

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<sup>8</sup>Martin W. Steyer, editor, "Superservant," Resources For Youth Ministry, IV (Summer 1972), 30.

<sup>9</sup>Martin W. Steyer, editor, "Listen To The World," Resources For Youth Ministry, III (Summer 1971), 4.

<sup>10</sup>Steyer, "Superservant," p. 30.

the following guidelines might serve as one possible approach in reflection:

- a. What strong feelings did the people visited have about what is significant for them, and how they tune in to the world?
- b. What kind of experiences are they having that they enjoy; and that deaden, bore, or defeat them?
- c. What were they trying to accomplish today, and what crucial project do they hope to finish in their life over a period of time?
- d. What keeps them going, gives them a charge, or boosts their morale? What do they firmly believe in; whom do they feel also believes this?
- e. What feelings does the group have about the care-visit in terms of sympathy, fear, warmth, happiness, satisfaction, defensiveness, repulsion, or anything else? <sup>11</sup>

The third activity of care-action is the response.

Whatever the group decides corporately or individually to do, by all means, it should do. The action it takes will depend, of course, on the nature of the care-visit and the needs it discovered. The response will also be determined to a great extent on what was discovered in the reflection period. <sup>12</sup>

The care-action cycle of care-visit, reflection, and response may not always begin with the care-visit; but each activity is an integral part of the total concept and should always be included regardless of where the action begins. <sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Guidelines were adapted from notes taken in P-327 (Youth Ministry), seminary course taught by staff on the

## Interpersonal Relationships

The Rev. Charles Alspaugh writes in regard to youth ministry that "relationships grow one step at a time."<sup>14</sup> He continues to elaborate his general statement with the following words:

Being with youth--sharing experiences and working with them--letting them participate as full people (not half-child/half-adult freaks)--in short, it takes time, effort, and patience to establish relationships with people of any age. Youth are no exception.<sup>15</sup>

In Project--Disciple interpersonal relationships are constant, whether they are negative or positive. Whenever people gather together, they form images and receive impressions of one another both good and bad. And even though they may be invisible, relationships do develop when people interact. And it takes real determined effort to build relationships between people which are rooted in Christ's love and forgiveness. But this is the work which needs to be accomplished in parish youth work if the interpersonal relationships are to be Christ-centered rather than

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Board of Youth Ministry, The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, 1973.

<sup>12</sup>Steyer, "Superservant," p. 30.

<sup>13</sup>Hovel, "People Resource Power," pp. 19-20.

<sup>14</sup>Martin W. Steyer, editor, "The Rural Issue No. 1," Resources For Youth Ministry, V (Spring 1973), 16.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 17.

self-centered, social-centered, or otherwise.

Time, effort, and patience are essential elements to be sure, but a sharper focus on the Word of God is absolutely necessary in youth ministry if the relationships to be established grow in the Spirit of Christ. Here again, the need to listen to each other and to God's Word applies. One author says it this way:

To listen to God is to wrestle with Him, to let His Word meet us where we are, encounter us in our daily life, call us from old paths to new paths, challenge us to undertake tasks that often appear unpleasant and at times downright repulsive. <sup>16</sup>

### Principles

Any youth program in the parish will need to formulate for itself some guiding principles by which it will operate. What makes the youth group Christian? How will the youth group be organized? By what rules or guidelines will the youth group function in the congregation? These are very practical questions and only a few of many which will be asked when the youth are ready to organize themselves.

In Project--Disciple the governing principles are derived from the Word of God in the Great Commission. The call of Christ to be His disciple, His follower, and then to go

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<sup>16</sup>Steyer, "Listen To The World," p. 4.

make disciples of others according to the strengths, the gifts, and the guidance He provides; forms the nucleus of Project--Disciple. From this primary principle, the ministry among God's people--specifically, the youth in the parish--grows and matures. And as God Himself provides the necessary nurture with His Word and His Spirit, Christian love and concern for others result as basic motivations for youth ministry. Therefore, as the youth begin to organize, make plans, set goals, and establish ideals for themselves as a Christian group, they will need to be constantly reminded of their unique role in today's world as Christians. What the youth learn in their study of the Bible will need sound, everyday application so that they will follow Christian principles when they gather for fun, fellowship, and faith-sharing.

### Leadership

Once the youth establish themselves as a group they will choose their own leaders. Naturally, they will want to select those who are not only popular, but responsible to the group. When leaders have been chosen, there will need to be some way in which they can be encouraged to grow as good resource people. One way to equip those in leadership is to establish a Youth Resource Committee (YRC).

What is a Youth Resource Committee? Basically, it is

designed to train not only youth leaders, but also those who serve as adult counselors in youth ministry. The size of this smaller group will vary according to the number of youth leaders chosen to serve. But generally, six youth and six adults is a good number with which to work. This smaller group should meet at least once per month to share ideas, engage in long-range planning, develop and experience activities to be presented in the larger group, and be exposed to various kinds of media and resource material available for youth ministry.

#### Evangelism

Evangelism is really the beginning of Project--Disciple, not the end. Actually, evangelism is the call to be a disciple for Jesus Christ. From this point on a person lives, thinks, and acts as a disciple of Christ. As a person grows in Christ, he begins to really "move" for the Lord and witnesses for Christ just by the way he conducts himself in thought, word, and deed. This art of making disciples for Christ is accomplished by God the Holy Spirit who moves in His people to others. In youth ministry this means sharing the good news of salvation in ways that are both exciting and meaningful. It means being Christ's person among other people who may or may not have a personal relationship with Him. It means accepting the challenge to

become the kind of person the Lord Jesus Christ has called all His people in the Church to be. It means "moving" for Christ to set others in motion. Evangelism, therefore, is a way of life for each Christian in youth ministry. Evangelism in Project--Disciple is one part of a dynamic, continuous motion involving discovery, investment, servant support system, care-action, interpersonal relationships, principles, and leadership. Evangelism is the call of Christian discipleship in youth ministry.

## CHAPTER III

### WHAT IS "DISCOVERY" ?

In this chapter the reader will be afforded some practical tools for applying discovery in youth ministry. To further define discovery these tools should help the reader get started, plant the seeds, become acquainted, retreat for discovery, and keep moving in the art of making disciples for Jesus Christ. Again, while these tools may appear only to apply to the parish medium, their basic design and purpose could be adapted for use elsewhere with some modifications.

#### Get Started

Let's assume for the moment that you, the reader, have been assigned to build a youth program in your parish from scratch. This means there are no programs or ministries at all designed for the needs of young people in the church. Where do you begin? How will you find out who the youth are? How will you discover their needs, interests, and desires? And how do you know if they even care about having a program in the parish that is geared specifically for them? Now suppose there was a youth group. Then who would you select to counsel, to sponsor, and to teach the young people? How would you

enlist adults into youth ministry? This is a big assignment, but it is yours. So, where do you begin?

Before an extensive survey is made some basic questions will need to be formulated and written down for reference only (see TABLE 1). On the basis of these guiding questions begin the distribution of survey material in the church newsletter, the Sunday bulletin, and any other available publication media of the parish. Work to discover the needs and possibilities for a youth ministry in the church. Present only the conceptual framework, the purpose, and the Christian incentive for Project--Disciple in the survey material.

In the newsletter article present as broad a program as possible in a systematic and interesting way. Try to reach as many different people as possible in presenting the concepts of a proposed youth ministry (for example see TABLE 2). In the Sunday bulletin be more specific and ask for particular responses from the members of the congregation. Try to get some answers to the guiding questions so you will have some indication within a few months whether or not to proceed any further with Project--Disciple (for example see TABLES 3 and 4).

When the discovery survey has been conducted carefully and methodically, the results you receive should indicate one of two things: (a) The need for youth ministry

TABLE 1

**THE GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR A YOUTH MINISTRY SURVEY**

(\*--from material received in course P-327 by the staff of the Board of Youth Ministry, in 1973).

1. Who are the youth in your community?
2. What are their needs, interests, and abilities?
3. How are they involved in the life of your congregation?
4. How is your congregation serving their needs or ministering with them in the name of Jesus Christ?
5. What kinds of programs and activities can you develop to capture their interest and meet their needs?
6. What groups or structures are best suited for ministry with the young generation?
7. What resources are available to you and what others do you need?
8. What leadership is necessary?
9. How is leadership to be trained?

TABLE 2

## CHURCH NEWSLETTER ARTICLE

A Proposal For Youth Ministry

Where have all the young men and women gone? Time passes on, the Lord is on the move, but do the youth have an active role in our parish community? It is about time we shift gears into second and get moving to meet the needs of the total parish.

You have asked me to serve as Youth Director, but as one concerned member of our congregation, I feel it's time we all pitch in to do our part to minister to the needs of everyone. To implement a total community ministry here I can't do the job alone. What we need is not one, but many people like you to make total ministry work. You might be 37 or 73, but you can help since you are already a part of this parish.

Here is what I propose for a program designed to serve those who are youth and those who are young adults in our parish:

- 1-JUNIOR YOUTH 7th, 8th, & 9th  
(age 12 thru 15)
  - A. Bible class 9:30 AM Sunday
  - B. Youth Meeting 6:30 PM  
2nd & 4th Sunday nights
- 2-SENIOR YOUTH 10th, 11th, & 12  
(age 16 thru 19)
  - A. Bible class 9:30 AM Sunday
  - B. Youth Meeting 6:30 PM  
1st & 3rd Sunday nights
- 3-COLLEGE GROUP
  - A. Bible class 9:30 AM Sunday
  - B. Coffee House 9-12 Fri nite
- 4-YOUNG MARRIEDS (Couple's Club)
  - A. Men's Bible class 7PM Wed.  
Women's Bible class 9AM Wed.
  - B. Periodic activities  
throughout the year.

With regard to the Junior and Senior Youth, five important areas will be involved:

1. Business meeting
2. Topic night
3. Bible study night
4. Recreation night
5. Service projects

To make these plans a reality many people are needed. We need SPONSORS who are willing to chaperon at least once a month and provide transportation when needed for outings. We need COUNSELORS who will spend time listening, learning, and guiding the youth. And who are able to serve at least once per month on the Youth Resource Committee, designed to work like a filling station for resource ideas in youth ministry. We need people to serve as TEACHERS each week in the various Bible discussion groups.

We must take some definite action, confident that we are going to participate in total ministry in our parish. You are never too old to respond to the call of Christ to go and make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:19-20). The Great Commission is meant for all of us to act with a sense of urgency, as we answer the call of discipleship.

Will you pray for more power to do your part? Will you pray for those who will give their time, talents, and resources to build youth ministry in our parish? The need is great and so is the task.

Will you help?

TABLE 3

## THIS IS A BULLETIN INSERT

Before the foundation can be laid and the walls constructed, Survey Sam must go to work. With his keen eye, steady hand, and accurate instruments, he looks over the area for development. The future success of the blueprint design depends on his accuracy. Survey Sam is at it again, but this time his work is urgent. Will you take SURVEYOR 1 on the back of this insert seriously for a moment? We have 290 souls in this parish registered between ages 12-30. For us as a well-balanced Christian community serving the entire membership, we will need to add some more essential ingredients to the soup on the stove. We need to offer a durable, attractive program designed for the age groups included above.

Survey Sam is working hard. This time he has a plan and design. Will you RESPOND TO THE DESIGN outlined in SURVEYOR 1? You are not committing yourself, you are only responding openly to Survey Sam's questions.

## Definition of terms used in SURVEYOR 1 ...

- SPONSOR        --chaperon one Youth meeting per month.
- COUNSELOR    --serve as contact person, attend most Youth activities, and serve on Youth Resource Committee (YRC).
- TEACHER        --conduct Sunday morning Bible classes.
- YOUTH          --if you are in this age group, please indicate so with a check mark.
- COLLEGE        --if you are in this group, please indicate so with a check mark.
- MARRIEDS      --if you are married, under 30, please indicate so with a check mark.

The rest of the blanks should be self-evident as you read. Please give your name IN PRINT or be sure to write legibly.

Turn over this insert for Survey Sam's design and respond to SURVEYOR 1. Thank you very much.

TABLE 4

## SURVEYOR 1

THE DESIGN ...	YOUR RESPONSE ...
For <u>JUNIOR YOUTH</u> Grades <u>7, 8, and 9</u> Bible class each Sunday Youth meetings every 2nd & 4th Sunday nights	Sponsor _____ Counselor _____ Teacher _____ Youth _____ _____ (your name)
For <u>SENIOR YOUTH</u> Grades <u>10, 11, and 12</u> Bible class each Sunday Youth meetings every 1st & 3rd Sunday nights	Sponsor _____ Counselor _____ Teacher _____ Youth _____ _____ (your name)
For <u>COLLEGE YOUNG ADULTS</u> Bible class each Sunday Coffee House every Friday night at private residence, come anytime, 9-12	Sponsor _____ Teacher _____ Residence _____ College age _____ _____ (your name)
For <u>YOUNG MARRIEDS</u> Bible classes during the week Women in the morning Men in the evening Periodic activities planned	Co-ordinator _____ Teacher _____ Marrieds _____ Interested _____ _____ (your names)

Please check the above items which apply to you ...

A Check Mark means: This is my response;  
I want to know more about it;  
This is not a commitment;  
Thank you for thinking of me.

Please give YOUR RESPONSE on SURVEYOR 1 to any of the ushers, an elder, the pastor, the youth director, or leave it with someone in the church office.

THANK YOU

For helping in this survey !!

has been realized by enough members in the parish who will support the designs of Project--Disciple; or (b) The need for youth ministry is not evident in the parish and Project--Disciple should be re-evaluated.

### Plant The Seeds

Let's suppose for the purposes of this presentation that the results from the discovery survey are very positive and the possibilities for youth ministry in your parish look very promising. What will you, the reader, do now? Will you plan the first meeting for as soon as possible and be content to just let things happen? Or will you continue planting more seeds among the youth and adults to insure the growth of a steady, durable program. The latter of these two is most advisable. Sometime in the weeks before the decision is made to schedule<sup>4</sup> a meeting, continue talking to the youth, to the leaders in the congregation, to the pastor, and to those adults who have expressed a specific desire to serve as counselors, sponsors, or teachers during the survey.

Begin planting the seeds for Project--Disciple that will help youth ministry materialize in the parish. Organize a staff of adults who will serve on a regular basis. In an informal meeting at the church share with these adults the statistics you have gathered to show the need for youth

ministry (for example see TABLE 5). Then explain to them what the specific responsibilities are of one who serves as a youth counselor, youth sponsor, or youth teacher in the proposed program. Encourage them to ask questions and discuss each task so that there is no misunderstanding of the respective functions involved. After the adults understand the distinction between a counselor, sponsor, and teacher, then get a commitment from each of them for one specific responsibility in Project--Disciple (see TABLES 6,7, and 8).

When sharing the important role of the youth counselor, avoid any implication that this person is better or higher than the adults who serve as sponsors or teachers. Simply explain the tremendous task of the counselor who serves the youth as a resource person. This does not mean that the counselor will have an easy job, being able to sit back in<sup>4</sup> an easy chair of indifference and tell the youth what to do. Quite the contrary is true. The counselor will be asked to invest a great deal of time working with the young people, encouraging them, and helping them to grow as Christians.<sup>1</sup> This means that the adults who serve as youth counselors will be actively involved with the youth in a dynamic pro-

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<sup>1</sup>Martin Steyer, editor, "A Time To Live Resourcefully," Resources For Youth Ministry I (July 1969), 13-14.

TABLE 5

STATISTICS							
AGE	YF	SS	MF/MM	CY	AGE TOTAL	GROUP TOTAL	GRAND TOTAL
12		15			15		
13		11		1	12		
14	2	4		2	8		
15	2			15	17	52	
16	1	1		16	18		
17	3			14	17		
18	2		2	22	26		
19	2		2	19	23	84	
20	4		2	10	16		
21	2		4	7	13		
22	1		3 1	10	15		
23			5 4	5	14		
24	1		7 4	5	17		
25	3		3 3	3	12		
26	3		3	5	11		
27			5 7	3	15		
28			3 2	1	6		
29	1		4 2		7		
30			3 5	2	10	136	272
<p>Explanation...</p> <p>YF -- Youth Family mailing  SS -- Sunday School  MF -- Married females  MM -- Married males  CY -- Confirmed Youth</p> <p>Other notes...</p> <p>Ages 12-15 (JUNIOR YOUTH) -- 52  Ages 16-19 (SENIOR YOUTH) -- 84  Ages 20-30 (COLLEGE AND  YOUNG MARRIEDS) -- 136</p>							

TABLE 6

## YOUTH COUNSELOR

1. Serve on the Youth Resource Committee (YRC).
2. Attend as many youth meetings as possible; this may vary according to individual interest and need.
3. Serve as a contact person to the other staff members, the sponsors assigned to the meeting, and to the youth.
4. Be willing to go with small groups of youth (2-3) to make calls on prospective youth.

## Notes ...

You are a youth counselor, not a youth leader. You are to provide ways for the youth to help themselves and develop their own program for Christian growth. The youth will take the leadership, but in the process they will lean on you, their counselor, for support and guidance. Basically, your primary responsibilities with the youth will be:

- (a) Help the youth grow toward a greater awareness of themselves;
- (b) Help the youth develop an increased sensitivity to human needs on all levels;
- (c) Help the youth to appreciate corporate worship on Sunday mornings, in their own youth services and devotions, and wherever two or three are gathered together in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

TABLE 7

## YOUTH SPONSOR

1. Attend at least one youth meeting per month on a regular basis. (May be a husband and wife team or an individual).
2. Be willing to provide or secure suitable transportation for scheduled youth outings throughout the year.

## Notes ...

Basically, you are a youth chaperon; someone who is willing to watch on the sidelines, but who still must take complete responsibility for the action on the field.

Get to know the counselors. They will need your help to do their task. Your assistance will make the counselor's assignment much easier.

Become familiar with the total program as you attend youth meetings. The bare minimum is that you know what is planned for the evening's activities.

Get to know the youth, also. You may be able to relate to some who may be turned off to the counselor.

TABLE 8

## YOUTH TEACHER

1. Should have a sound faith in his/her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
2. Should understand the responsibility of a teacher of the Christian faith.
3. Know how to use available teaching materials.
4. Know as much as possible about his/her students.
5. Realize that what is taught is influenced by the teacher's own appreciation and understanding of the lesson.
6. Should have definite goals and objectives in mind for each lesson.
7. Should keep the curiosity and interest of the class. (Be flexible enough to use various teaching mediums; also, frequently use the question: "why?" in discussion and LISTEN to the youth).

## Notes ...

Teaching Sunday morning youth Bible class is the primary responsibility you will have. On occasion, you may be asked to lead a Bible study at an evening meeting. Your teaching of the scriptures can be positive and very constructive for Christian growth.

A Christian teacher will be successful as he/she begins each task with prayer, studies the scriptures, and responds by faith with the words: "Yes, Lord, I can do the task you have given me to do as You give me strength and power in Your Word."

The best lesson you will ever teach ... will be the one from which you have learned the most.

cess of Christians moving together. One author describes the process this way:

- (1) Christian people (including youth) are intended to be responders, creators, contributors, planners, doers, atomic piles of possibility in the Holy Spirit of God. . . .
- (2) Christian people (including youth), under the guidance of the Spirit, and with the secondary help of an encourager or counselor, can become stimulators to one another . . . in their ministry.
- (3) The role of the encourager is to "bring out" from the group shapes, directions, and ministry actions; it is not to "hand out" programs and then struggle to find motivations for the group.<sup>2</sup>

After you have a commitment from the adults, the next commitment needs to come from the youth themselves. It isn't easy to plant seeds among young people because so many things are happening to them all at once. But somehow, some way, try to get a commitment from enough of them to begin planning the first youth meeting. In small groups at private homes, in large groups at the church, or on a one-to-one basis, talk to the young people about Project--Disciple meeting their needs. Prepare a "scribble-dribble page" of some sort with some introductory remarks about the proposed youth ministry and give each youth a copy (see sample in TABLE 9). Encourage the youth to pass the word around that they are real, active, important members in the parish. Remind

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<sup>2</sup>

Steyer, "A Time To Live Resourcefully," p. 5.

TABLE 9

## SCRIBBLE-DRIBBLE PAGE

WHO will listen to you?

WHAT do you have to say?

WHY should you bother to speak?

WHERE do you fit in around here anyway?

HOW can you and I begin to communicate with each other?

Discovery--Investment--Servant Support System--Care/Action  
Interpersonal Relationships--Principles--Leadership--  
Evangelism ...

Are these just fancy far-out words ??

or:

Do they have meaning, purpose, and direction  
for your young life in Jesus Christ?

How do you spell Youth Ministry ... D-I-S-C-I-P-L-E ??

The count-down has begun ...

Lift-off has been scheduled for           (date)          .

FOR ALL JUNIOR YOUTH (grades 7, 8, and 9):

A once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for ...

- (1) a combined class in the study of the scriptures  
at 9:30 AM Sunday in ways meaningful to you !!
- (2) a youth meeting for fun, fellowship, and faith-  
sharing from 6:30-8:00 PM every 2nd & 4th Sun-  
day evenings of the month in the parish hall.

FOR ALL SENIOR YOUTH (grades 10, 11, and 12):

A not-to-be-passed-up chance for ...

- (1) a combined class in the study of the scriptures  
at 9:30 AM Sunday in ways meaningful to you !!
- (2) a youth meeting for fun, fellowship, and faith-  
sharing from 6:30-8:00 PM every 1st & 3rd Sun-  
day evenings of the month in the parish hall.

THIS IS NOT A ONE-SHOT DEAL !!

THE GREEN LIGHT IS DEFINITELY ON FOR YOU--TH.

YOU'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS BEFORE ...

them that Project--Disciple based on the Great Commission is not just another "fly-now-pay-later" youth program, but a dynamic, continuous life with Christ possible now in this Christian parish. Plant the seeds and set a target date for the first official youth meeting at the church.

### Become Acquainted

As the youth are exposed to each other and to God's Word, they will undoubtedly in one form or another ask themselves two basic questions: (1) Who are we? And also, (2) Whose are we? These questions need to be asked openly, freely, and honestly. Therefore, the activities that are planned should encourage the young people to become better acquainted with themselves, each other, and their Christian identity.

When presenting or discussing God's Word, young people enjoy sound teaching and a variety of methods. There are many teaching mediums which employ this combination of solid doctrine and flexible methodology (see samples in TABLES 10, 11, and 12). It would be most advisable for an adult serving as a youth teacher to become aware of the various teaching tools available.

During the first few months in which the youth gather for fun, fellowship, and faith-sharing, they will make a

TABLE 10

PAPER AND PENCIL TEACHING MEDIUM
----------------------------------

- |   |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Give each paper and pencil (or pen).</li> <li>2. Have each read silently the scripture text.</li> <li>3. Instruct each to write down at least 2 questions about what has been read.</li> <li>4. Gather the questions.</li> <li>5. Discuss.</li> </ol> |
|---|

TABLE 11

WORD ASSOCIATION TEACHING MEDIUM
----------------------------------

- |  |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Compose list of words related to the Bible text to be studied. For example, in Romans: law, sin, grace, justification, etc.</li> <li>2. Give each paper and pencil.</li> <li>3. Ask each to write down the first word which comes to mind when you read a word from list.</li> <li>4. When list through, record responses of all on chalk board. Discuss.</li> </ol> |
|--|

TABLE 12

A CLAY MODELING TEACHING MEDIUM
---------------------------------

- |  |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Give each some clay.</li> <li>2. Instruct each to mold something that best expresses himself today.</li> <li>3. Allow each to share his model of himself.</li> <li>4. Depending on the situation, these options:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Place a model of the lesson theme in the center of the table; have each place their models in relation to it.</li> <li>b. Allow each to take a turn in the center; have others place their models in relation to it--How they feel or would like to feel toward that person.</li> <li>c. For devotions, place a cross in the center; have each place their models expressing relationship to Christ.</li> </ol> </li> </ol> |
|--|

number of friendships among themselves and will be very excited about the youth meetings. This is an excellent time to employ discovery in recreational games and activities. Many resources are available and would serve this purpose well. It would be impossible to list all of them here, but those which have been listed on the following pages will provide good examples of recreation designed to help the youth become better acquainted. It's a good practice to always type out such activities on index cards for use at the meetings and for future reference (see samples in TABLES 13 through 21). Remember also, that when presenting recreational activities you must have not only a clear and correct understanding of how the game is to be played, but also a good idea about how the activity is geared to teach its specific aim. Then then recreation will foster a great deal of fun, fellowship, and Christian growth.

#### Retreat For Discovery

A well-planned retreat involving the youth and the adults in the actual planning and presentation of events, is one good way to speed up the discovery process. The youth (and the adults, too) enjoy spending a weekend away from home, school, and their parents. A retreat geared

TABLE 13

## ROLL CALL NO. 1

**Aim:** To take attendance without the group knowing it; to become better acquainted.

**Needed:** Paper pad and pencil.

**Instructions:**

Pass a pad and pencil person to person as they arrive. Instruct one by saying: Write down your name, a color, and then ask the next person to do the same.

Be sure that the person realizes it is his responsibility to find the next person. After all have signed, start the meeting.

**Variations ...**

Roll Call No. 2 -- sign name and the name of the person with whom you spend most of your time during the week.

Roll Call No. 3 -- sign name and the name of the person you think about the most.

TABLE 14

## HOW DO YOU LIKE YOUR NEIGHBOR ?

**Aim:** Mixer; to become better acquainted.

**Needed:** Group seated in circle.

**Instructions:**

Person in middle is "it" and there are no vacant chairs in circle. Number off. The one in center begins the action by going to one in circle and asking: How do you like your neighbor? If he answers: I like them fine; Then all must find a new seat. If he answers: I don't like them; then he chooses two new numbers and only his neighbors and the two who were called must find new seats. In the scramble, "it" tries to find a seat.

**Variations ...**

Begin with question: Who are your neighbors? If he is unable to identify them by name, he must trade with "it" in the center. If he is able to name them, then "it" asks: How do you like your neighbor? etc.

TABLE 15

## WHO AM I ??

**Aim:** Fellowship; become better acquainted.  
**Needed:** Stick-on patches for names; name cards.  
**Instructions:**

PART I ... Break into groups of five or six. "Famous person" activity. Stick on back of each the name of famous person or event. The person may ask questions to determine who he is or represents; the others in group, though, may not speak, but must act out his identity.  
 PART II ... Re-assemble into large group. "Another person" activity. Give each a card with someone else's name on it from the group. He is to "be that person." Task is to find who you have become without telling the wrong person who you are. Then stay with yourself.

TABLE 16

## WHAT AM I LIKE ?

**Aim:** Discovery of self, others, and Christ.  
**Needed:** nothing but creative people.  
**Instructions:**

PART I ... Group in circle. Ask each to go outside or somewhere in room and pick out an object that best describes or expresses something about their neighbor. Return; discuss.  
 PART II ... As above, but ask each to pick up an object that best expresses something about himself. Return and share.  
 PART III ... For devotions, as above, but ask each to pick up an object that best describes his relationship to Jesus Christ. Return and share. Close with prayer.

TABLE 17

## A GROUP DESIGN

**Aim:** Individual expression of viewpoint.

**Needed:** no materials.

**Instructions:**

Group into small clusters of three or four. Allow 15-20 minutes for each cluster to arrive at some design of the group which says something about how they see the group as a whole. All or some of the whole group may be asked by the cluster to form their people/model.

Cluster members need not be in the model if they choose to be excluded.

Start the sharing of models. Models may be also made of objects, clay, etc. (anything).

TABLE 18

## A DRAWING EXERCISE

**Aim:** Self-discovery; others' perception of same.

**Needed:** Two sheets of drawing paper; colors or magic markers.

**Instructions:**

Give each two pieces of drawing paper. Also give each a color or marker with which to draw. Allow 5-10 minutes for each drawing assignment. Share each portrait and allow each to explain and answer groups' questions about the artwork.

Assignment #1: Draw yourself (as you conceive of yourself to be right now).

Assignment #2: Draw someone else (as you may conceive of them to be right now; this person must be present in the group now).

Basic questions in discussion ...

What am I like?

What do you think I am like?

TABLE 19

## ELBOW LOCK

**Aim:** Discovery of self-priorities, others' also.

**Needed:** small groups of seven

**Instructions:**

Ask group of seven to lock elbows, back-facing the center of circle. When each has locked both elbows, give the following assignment: Think of a place in this room where YOU personally would like to take the rest of the group. (pause) Without changing your mind, begin when the signal is given.

Discuss the results of the struggle.

TABLE 20

## POCKET SCAVENGER HUNT

**Aim:** Fellowship

**Needed:** energetic youth, creative leader.

**Instructions:**

Form two equal teams. Leader reads aloud one item at a time in the "hunt." Each of the teams selects a captain who must present item called for. Object is to be the first team to present item called for.

**Suggested items ...** boy's black comb, girl's hair brush, bobby pin, boyfriend's picture, nail file, theater ticket stub, keys, etc.

TABLE 21

## CHALK CHARADES

**Aim:** Fellowship

**Needed:** Large chalk board, two pieces of chalk.

**Instructions:**

Form two equal teams. One from each team comes forward to "draw" the charade; take turns so each may have a chance. First team to guess the charade on the basis of the drawing made by its team member, wins.

**Suggested charades** (film titles, names, books, events in history, the Bible, etc.).

for discovery could accomplish in a short two or three days what otherwise could take as long as several months. As a "strategic withdrawal," a retreat for discovery could achieve the following goals:

- a. To deepen our relationship of sonship with the Father;
- b. To look at our lives from our Father's perspective; deliberately ushering in one by one the issues and questions of our lives for careful examination through reflection and meditation, and discussion and dialogue with others;
- c. In order to come back into the arena of our lives with a renewed sense of vocation and direction for living as disciples. <sup>3</sup>

A retreat for discovery would not only provide meaningful time for Christian growth, but would serve to answer some practical questions. What direction will the group wish to go in youth ministry? Who are some of the new people in the group? What are the priorities for ministry according to the needs of the group? As the youth express themselves in the group, these questions will need to be answered in terms of their needs, their interests, and their talents.

The "Discovery Retreat" is given in the following pages to provide you, the reader, with an example of what could be done (resource examples in TABLES 22-33).

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<sup>3</sup>"Retreat Planning Resource," Retreat Resource Packet--1974 (packet material), p. 4.

TABLE 22

## DISCOVERY RETREAT

Friday

6:30 Supper  
 7:30 Get acquainted activities  
 8:30 Youth ministry priorities  
 9:00 Evening devotions  
 9:15 Snacks and free time  
 11:15 Sleep is beautiful  
 11:30 Lights out

Saturday

7:45 The Morning Watch  
 8:00 Breakfast  
 9:00 A Learning Experience  
 10:30 A Discovery Exercise  
 11:00 Free time  
 12:00 Lunch  
 1:00 Simulation game  
 3:30 Free time for recreation  
 5:00 Supper  
 6:00 A Drama Presentation  
 6:30 Recreation  
 7:15 Film: "Don't Be Afraid" (CPH)  
 8:00 A Topic Expression  
 9:00 Evening devotions  
 9:15 Snacks and free time  
 11:15 Rest in peace  
 11:30 Lights out

Sunday

7:45 The Morning Watch  
 8:00 Breakfast  
 9:15 Worship Service  
 10:00 Open session  
 12:00 Return back to earth

TABLE 23

**COAT OF ARMS**

(\*--Lee Hovel, "Starting From Scratch in Youth Ministry," Directions For Youth Ministry--1974, p. 4.)

**Aim:** Discovery of self and others.  
**Needed:** Markers and poster paper.  
**Instructions:**  
 Draw a shield. Fill in each space in answer to following:  
 1. my greatest failure  
 2. my greatest success  
 3. three things I do well  
 4. my expectations of group  
 5. personal epitaph (3 words)  
 6. free space (the way I feel)  
 Share when finished. Post on walls.

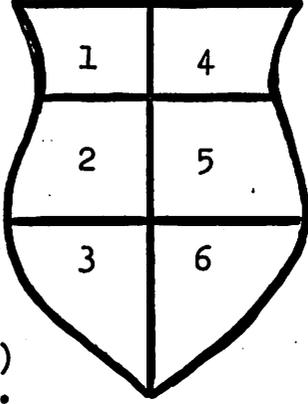


TABLE 24

**A TIME LINE**

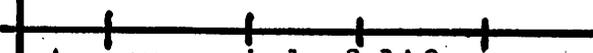
(\*--Lee Hovel, p. 4 as above)

**Aim:** Self-presentation to others in the youth group.  
**Needed:** Paper and markers for each person.  
**Instructions:**  
 Ask each to share the high and low points in his/her life by means of a time line sketch. Share in small groups of three or five with each other.

High point



Low point



Age or period of life  
 (grammar, high school, college, etc.)

TABLE 25

YOUTH MINISTRY PRIORITIES

(\*--Hovel, "Starting From Scratch in Youth Ministry, pp. 2-3).

My Expectations of this group:

Priority Ladder:

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| 1. To have a good time with one another, e.g., dances, parties, sports, etc.                       | 1.  |
| 2. To have an opportunity to serve and care for others, e.g., aged, mentally ill, prisoners, etc.  | 2.  |
| 3. To learn something about myself and how I relate to other people.                               | 3.  |
| 4. To study the Bible and see how it relates to my life.   | 4.  |
| 5. To learn more about the church so that I can be more active in it.                              | 5.  |
| 6. To study social issues, war, crime, poverty, etc. and see how they relate to my Christian life. | 6.  |
| 7. To experience caring and being cared for by each other in this group.                           | 7.  |
| 8. To learn more about the community and how I as a Christian can serve it.                        | 8.  |
| 9. To experience and develop new forms of worship, e.g., folk rock, etc.                           | 9.  |
| 10. To learn and experience witnessing my faith to others in this group and with other people.     | 10. |
| 11. -----  | 11. |

My Needs from this group:  
(List in order of importance)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Social acceptance
- \_\_\_\_\_ Intellectual discussion
- \_\_\_\_\_ Spiritual growth
- \_\_\_\_\_ Physical activity

TABLE 26

## THE MORNING WATCH

(\*--Martin Steyer, editor, "A Time To Live Properly,"  
Resources For Youth Ministry, I (January-April  
 1969), 101-102).

L: Leader      P: People      A: All together

- L: You, Lord, are opening my eyes;  
 P: Give us Your strength to speak of the wonder of Your works.  
 L: You, Lord, are brightening the sky, stirring a new day;  
 P: Renew us with fire.  
 A: Because You, Father, have given us back to Your creation, we wish to be men of our times. Because we seek to be more fully brothers in today's world, we desire to hear and to realize the daily revolution which is fulfilling Your creation. We believe You made us and remake us with patience and affection. We want to feel Your firm, unseen hand; that must bring fire, that must bring struggle, that must bring division, that must bring peace.  
 L: (Read a news bulletin, letter, magazine article)  
 This is the day the Lord has made, let us be glad and sound His praise!  
 P: You, Lord, make the morning sun to rise. You speak many words to us through our brothers and our teachers, through our work and our whole life. You give us from time to time a glimpse of Who You are and what You are calling us to be.  
 You are the Father Who loves us with passion,  
 You are the Son Who is truth and life,  
 You are the Spirit Who guides us to be true servants.  
 L: This Father has sent His Son, His strong Word, the complete expression of His love, to proclaim loud and clear the Kingdom of God, which is the fulfillment of our lives and of all humanity.  
 P: Because we desire to be hearers of Your word, and even more, doers of the word; bearing the full power of God, bearing the forgiveness of Jesus, bearing, for many, the proof and sign of God's love; we ask to hear again Your trumpet of history that still sounds loud this morning.
- The Scripture Reading                      The Psalm Reading
- L: (The final blessing) To you be all glory of the oncoming day through Christ, through our brothers in the bond of love, in the unity of the Spirit.  
 P: Amen!

TABLE 27

## A LEARNING EXPERIENCE--A DRAMA PRESENTATION

## Getting started ...

Share your ideas as well as your talent with one another. Your task is to present a drama to the group tonight. You will have at least 30 minutes in which to express whatever it is you want to dramatize. If more time is needed, then ask and ye shall receive.

You may elect to present a role play expressing some aspect of the retreat, the youth group, the counselors, the relationships that you see or would like to see ... or never want to see. You may choose any form of drama. You may be sarcastic, satiric, or even exaggerate to make your point.

It is your show.

God has given each of you tremendous talent ... in some cases tremendous egos, too. Use your gifts to His glory! Express yourselves.

The show must go on ... tonight at 6:00 PM is curtain time!

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NOTES ...

TABLE 28

## A LEARNING EXPERIENCE--RECREATION

Getting started ...

Share your ideas with one another. Your task is to plan group recreation games for tonight. You will have at least 45 minutes to present your program. Keep in mind that the best recreation usually has a purpose to it, e.g., discovery, relaxation, competition, etc. Plan whatever you want to present to the group.

Some questions to help ...

How many activity games should be planned?

Who will do the presenting?

What is each activity designed to do?

What will the group think of each activity?

What do we do if a game really "bombs out" ?

What are some good group games I have played before?

Put your heads together.

Put your hearts together in the love of Jesus Christ.

Because He is the Lord, He gives to us re-created lives.

Laughter is a sign of salvation.

What a great thing it is to have the joy in the Lord.

A Christian can really laugh because he knows his sins are forgiven!!

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NOTES ...

TABLE 29

## A LEARNING EXPERIENCE--A TOPIC EXPRESSION

Getting started ...

Share your ideas with one another. Your task is to plan a meaningful topic and present it to the group tonight. There is no established topic for you ... nor is the way in which you choose to present the topic fixed either. You may choose to expand on the questions raised in the film (from CPH): "Don't Be Afraid!" You may want to have a discussion panel on a current topic or issue. Perhaps you'd just like to sound-off on the frustrations, joys, sorrows, hang-ups, or whatever which youth experience at home, at school, at church, or anywhere.

Maybe you would like to plan a topic based on the retreat. Maybe you would like to present a topic on the people in the group, a people model, the group priorities, or any other thing of interest.

There are many topics, many directions, many choices for you to make. Choose one topic. You will have at least one hour to make your presentation.

OK ... you're on your own. God be with you.

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NOTES ...

TABLE 30

## A LEARNING EXPERIENCE--EVENING DEVOTIONS

## Getting started ...

Share your ideas with each other. Your task is to plan and lead the evening devotions for the group tonight at 9:00 PM. Decide how you will guide the group in worship by the Holy Spirit in the Love of Jesus Christ, giving glory to God.

## Some ideas to help ...

1. Pair off. Go to a private spot for 15 minutes. Share what Jesus means in your lives.
2. Group in circle. Light candle in center. Ask for spontaneous sharing of a favorite hymn, Bible verse, or a meaningful Christian experience.
3. Form prayer line hand-in-hand. Singing, the group follows the leader outside to a designated area for worship.
4. Ask each to choose any object from inside or outside the room. Re-assemble the group. One by one share what Christ means to you in terms of the object selected.
5. Gather 'round the camp fire. A confessional service; each one writes down on slip of paper his sins, then one by one comes forward and throws them into the flames. Forgiven, sing, pray, praise, and give thanks to God!
6. Praise God in song. Then a designated leader presents a small homily centered on the theme of the retreat.

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NOTES ...

TABLE 31

A DISCOVERY EXERCISE NO. 1

(\*--adapted from material received in course P-327 by the Board of Youth Ministry, 1973)

Instructions: Write each person's name in the spaces provided, read statement on left, place check mark in the box on right under the name of the person who was the closest to acting out the description. Discuss.

What did you do to help the group complete its task?

(names)

The one who contributed the most by ...

1. ENCOURAGING ... Being friendly, warm and responsive to others; accepting others and their contributions; regarding others by giving them an opportunity or recognition.						
2. EXPRESSING GROUP FEELINGS ... Sensing feeling, mood, relationships within the group; sharing his own feelings or impressions with the other members.						
3. HARMONIZING ... Attempting to reconcile disagreements; reducing tensions through "pouring oil on troubled waters"; getting people to explore their differences.						
4. COMPROMISING ... When his own idea or status was involved in a conflict; offering to compromise his own position; admitting error and disciplining himself to maintain group cohesion.						
5. GATE-KEEPING ... Attempting to keep communication channels open; facilitating the participation of others; suggesting procedures for sharing opportunity to discuss the group problems.						

TABLE 32

A DISCOVERY EXERCISE NO. 2

(\*--adapted from material received in course P-327 by the Board of Youth Ministry, 1973)

Instructions: Write each person's name in the spaces provided, read statement on left, place check mark in the box on right under the name of the person who was the closest to acting out the description. Discuss.

What did you do to help the group complete its task?

(names)

The one who contributed the most by ...

1. INITIATING ... Proposing tasks or goals; defining a group problem; suggesting a procedure or ideas for solving the problem.						
2. INFORMATION OR OPINION SEEKING ... Requesting facts; seeking relevant information about a group concern, asking for suggestions and ideas.						
3. INFORMATION OR OPINION GIVING ... Offering facts; providing relevant information to the group about its concern, by stating a belief, giving suggestions or ideas to the group.						
4. CLARIFYING OR ELABORATING ... Interpreting or reflecting ideas and suggestions; clearing up confusions; indicating alternatives and issues before the group; giving examples.						
5. SUMMARIZING ... Pulling together related ideas; restating suggestions after the group has discussed them; offering a decision or conclusion for the group to accept or reject.						

TABLE 33

## SIMULATION GAME

(\*--Lee Hovel, "Starting From Scratch in Youth Ministry," p. 6 and also found in: Martin W. Steyer, editor, "The Jesuspell," Resources For Youth Ministry, V (Winter 1973), 55-56.)

**Aim:** To provide the deep experience of being together and working together in a simulated situation of need.

**Instructions:**

Three basic rules must be understood by each before the game starts:

- (a) Your role is assigned to you for the entire game.
- (b) At all times the group must stay together!!
- (c) You receive a new directive at each destination.

Divide into groups of ten. Have directions for each group in envelope; give one slip to each in group.

Four slips say: "You cannot see for the rest of the game. You can speak but you cannot see." (use blindfold)

Four slips say: "You cannot speak for the rest of the game. You can see but you cannot speak from now on."

Two slips say: "You are an observer. Follow but do not assist the group in any way. Only observe. One exception... you may intervene only in a potentially dangerous situation. Things to watch for: How did your group work together, deal with leadership, organize, communicate, trust or mistrust?"

After each receives his role, give another envelope with the first directive. (Send groups to different locations)...

DIRECTIVE NO. 1: Your group is to proceed to \_\_\_\_\_.

Look for the next directive at that place.

DIRECTIVE NO. 2: You have been in a car wreck. Two members of your group have broken legs and must be carried. One person has been blinded. Your group is to proceed to \_\_\_\_\_. Look for the next directive in that place.

DIRECTIVE NO. 3: You have been mugged. Two more in the group have been blinded. One more has a broken leg. Proceed to \_\_\_\_\_.

(The Final Directive should have all groups return to separate rooms to discuss and process what happened).

**Additional notes:**

Directives can move groups up and down stairs, over small walls, barriers, and distances between 500-1000 ft. The processing at the end is very important; feelings, thoughts during game; observers should comment also.

The retreat resources listed are not exclusive, for there are countless tools which may be used. They are only a small sampling of the wide variety of materials available, but they do serve to illustrate the importance of putting together enough material for a meaningful week-end.

In summary, the purpose of a "Discovery Retreat" or any other retreat is to provide each person in the group with a renewed sense of belonging, a stronger faith in the Lord, and a better perspective on the world back home. One author puts it another way:

Retreats are not held simply to get away from it all. There is always a purpose for getting away, and that purpose or strategy must always involve coming back. Everything involved in getting away and all that is done while away find their focus in coming back.<sup>4</sup>

#### Keep Moving

As Project--Disciple moves beyond the initial discovery phase, it is important to keep moving. The youth, just like any other age group, will want to move on to new discoveries, new horizons, and new areas of interest. As they grow older and mature in faith, their questions will change, also. You, the reader, to be effective in

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<sup>4</sup>"Retreat Planning Resource," p. 4.

youth ministry will need to keep moving with the young people.

All in the body of Christ, regardless of age, are important and belong to the Lord.<sup>5</sup> The youth are no exception and they are not special members of the Church. For the Church is a living organism.<sup>6</sup> And as such it breathes, it lives, and most of all it moves for the Lord Jesus Christ. The youth as a part of the Church also move within it for the Lord.

Youth who are on the move for Christ, who care about who they are and whose they are, are truly alive members in the body of Christ. Keep moving with these youth as they grow and mature. Help them to deal with their problems, current issues, and daily troubles. As they seek new ways to express their love for Christ, encourage them to ask these process questions:

- a. What is happening?
- b. What is not happening?
- c. What would we like to have happen?
- d. What should we do?
- e. What happened when we did it?
- f. What shall we do next?<sup>7</sup>

Keep moving with the youth and together grow in Christ who has set you free to be in motion for Him, making disciples in His name.

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<sup>5</sup>Martin W. Steyer, editor, "Identity and Ministry," Resources For Youth Ministry, IV (Fall 1972), 30.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Steyer, "A Time To Live Resourcefully," p. 10.

## CHAPTER IV

### WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR ?

#### Youth Ministry Is ...

Now that you, the reader, have been exposed to one possible working model for parish youth ministry, maybe you are still wondering: What is youth ministry? Project--Disciple in and of itself certainly cannot be the answer because it is only a tool. It is designed to encourage the growth of a dynamic, on-going process that may involve from time to time discovery, investment, servant support system, care-action, interpersonal relationships, principles, leadership, and evangelism. The examples given in the discovery phase are also only tools to help youth leaders and adult counselors begin building youth ministry in the local parish according to the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20).

What, then, is youth ministry? On the surface it would appear that youth ministry in the local parish is nothing more than a social gathering of loud, excited, energetic teenagers and a handful of interested, young-minded, fun-loving adults. This is true on the surface, but actually youth ministry is more than an average social gathering. Youth ministry is a family affair, involving

all the members of Christ's Church. Ben Eggers perhaps gives the best definition when he writes:

God cares by sharing His life with people  
 people care by sharing their life  
 the parish provides a setting  
 that's ministry  
 that's youth ministry  
 that's parish youth ministry.<sup>1</sup>

Youth ministry, unlike a typical social gathering, involves everyone in a dynamic process of Christian activity. In Project--Disciple this Christian activity is four-fold. Youth ministry is:

- a. PERSONS CARING -- This means both youth and adults need one another; both belong in the Christian community; and as fellow believers in Christ, they care for one another because Christ cares for all of them.
- b. PERSONS LEARNING -- This means both youth and adults need to study God's Word in Bible studies, devotions, topic sessions, and in worship services which exhibit meaning and purpose for their Christian lives.
- c. LOVE LIVING -- This means both youth and adults witness the love of Jesus Christ to one another in thought, word, and deed; in so doing, both serve one another in the body of Christ; and both are equipped to live by the love of Christ each day.
- d. PERSONS PLANNING -- This means both youth and adults must plan their activities as a team, working together; both contribute God-given talents and time to build up the church in which both serve the Lord.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Rich Bimler, guest editor, "Carevisits," Resources For Youth Ministry, III (Winter 1971), 9.

<sup>2</sup>Concepts adapted from a "talking manual" prepared by C.B. Wismar and David Anderson, editors, Love Lives Here (Chicago: The Department of Christian Education, 1973).

## Youth On The Move

As youth and adults work together and use the tools of Project--Disciple, they will discover in their activities that the art of making disciples is more than just telling a story. Christian witnessing is a way of life.<sup>3</sup> It is the very life and Spirit which Christ has given to everyone in the Church. It is a way life for the youth and the adults in every parish.

Youth ministry is active, alive, and always changing. It is challenging, creative, and crucial. Are you ready to move? Are you willing to become involved with youth on the move for Jesus Christ? These questions must be asked before the action begins. If youth are to move in the Spirit of Christ and witness for Him, and if adults are to move in the same Spirit and witness for the same Lord; then both will need to remember whose they are and who they are as they go and make disciples for Christ. In youth ministry, both will need to remember that witnessing involves everything that they, as Christians, individually and corporately are, say, and do in their daily lives that may or may not lead others to Jesus Christ.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Martin W. Steyer, editor, "Witness and Ministry," Resources For Youth Ministry, V (Summer 1973), 17.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

Project--Disciple is one possible model for parish youth ministry. Discovery is the beginning of an on-going process of Christian living and witnessing. With these tools you, the reader, may develop a program of youth ministry in your parish. Perhaps the young people in your congregation are just waiting for some guidance and motivation. Perhaps they are, like most young people today, eager to learn and at the same time bothered by many unanswered questions. Hence, the need is very great for them to hear the Word of God in ways meaningful to them, and to express their Christian faith in equally creative, imaginative ways. Now, the only question remaining is addressed to you. What are you waiting for?

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