

## **Youth Ministry Specialization Courses (YMSC) Program Explanation**

The Youth Ministry Specialization Courses have been developed based upon the national standards and competencies for youth ministry leaders. The program can be taken at two levels: a basic or fundamental level, and an advanced or national level.

The program consists of four online courses each of which is made up of two parts: learning modules, A and B. In each course, the A learning module A will address fundamental or basic concepts for all youth ministry leaders seeking basic diocesan certification. The second part of the course, learning module B, has been developed to take a deeper, more advanced look at the course topic and help prepare people who want to get an advanced diocesan certification and/or national certification. By the end of the program, students who complete both learning modules A & B will develop a portfolio in order to apply for national certification.

Each course involves 3 or 6 weeks of active learning, depending on the level of certification that you seek. Following each learning module, students have one week to complete the portfolio assignment. The courses and learning module topics include:

### **Course One: Fostering the Vision of Youth Ministry**

Learning Module 1.A: En-Visioning Catholic Youth Ministry

Learning Module 1.B: Advancing the Vision of Catholic Youth Ministry

### **Course Two: Cultivating a Culture of Encounter for Adolescents through Evangelization, Catechesis, and Faith Community**

Learning Module 2.A: Fundamentals of Evangelization and Catechesis with Adolescents

Learning Module 2.B: Forming a Consequential Faith in Adolescents

### **Course Three: Connecting Adolescents to Faith**

Learning Module 3.A: Increasing Faith Engagement through Prayer, Sacraments, and Social Justice

Learning Module 3B: Outreach in Catholic Youth Ministry Through Pastoral Care and Social Media/ Technology

### **Course Four: Developing Leadership For Catholic Youth Ministry**

Learning Module 4.A: Organizing for Catholic Youth Ministry

Learning Module 4.B: Advanced Leadership Strategies with Youth and Adult Leaders

### **Post Course 4 Portfolio Development Module**

In this framework, the development of the final portfolio would be an optional learning module for those interested in national certification.

## Course One: Fostering the Vision of Youth Ministry

**Instructor:**

**Email Address:**

**Phone:**

**Course Dates:**

**Course One Description:** This course addresses the essential vision, research, and theory needed to understand the depth and the breadth of ministry to youth in the Catholic Church in the United States.

### Course One Outcomes for Both Modules 1.A & 1.B:

1. Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the history, vision, goals, themes, and components of Catholic youth ministry and/or *pastoral juvenil* as outlined in the U.S. bishops' pastoral plans and related church documents. (National Competency Standards: YML 1.0, 4.2.4, LEM 1.1, 2.1, 2.5, 2.6)
2. Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the developmental needs of youth and young adults within the contexts of popular, ethnic, and family cultures as appropriate to the faith community, which is being served. (National Standards YML 2.0, 4.1.5, 4.2.11, LEM 4.4)
3. Students will be able to utilize theories, models, processes, and methods of Catholic youth ministry and/or *pastoral juvenil* in the ministry setting. (National Standards YML 3.0, LEM 4.5 and 4.6)

### Course Learning Activities:

Each week of the course has a variety of learning activities that include reading, researching, interviewing, writing, developing, and viewing different course elements. Each week begins on Monday and ends the following Sunday.

**Weekly Discussions:** All students are required to participate in weekly discussions. Each student will be assigned a week in which they will be responsible for initiating the discussion by posting their responses to the questions for that week. Initial posts must be made no later than Wednesday afternoon. All students are then required to further the discussion by responding to the initial posts and adding their own ideas. Good discussion posts are concise and should connect to course material, but should not be limited to one-line comments. References to course materials should be cited in the post.

### Course Participation and Assessment:

50% Participation: Leading discussions in assigned weeks; participating weekly in discussions; participating in webinar(s)

50% Portfolio Assessment Items: All assessments are due one week following the last day of the learning module. Every assessment item should contain the name of the student and the assessment number.

## Course Calendar

Course Week	Dates
Orientation Week	This takes place one week prior to the course for new students.
<b>Learning Module 1.A: Fundamentals of Catholic Youth Ministry</b>	
1: Evolution of Catholic Youth Ministry	
2: En-Visioning Catholic Youth Ministry	
3: Realizing The Vision of Catholic Youth Ministry	
4: Portfolio Assessments Due at End of Week for Learning Module 1.A	
End of Course for Basic/Fundamental Level & A One Week Break for Advanced/National Certification Students	
<b>Learning Module 1.B: Advancing the Vision of Catholic Youth Ministry</b>	
5: Developing Intercultural Competence in Youth Ministry	
6: The State of Catholic Adolescents	
7: A Systems Approach to Advocating for Catholic Youth Ministry	
8: Portfolio Assessments Due at End of Week for Learning Module 1.B	

### **Orientation Week: Pre-Course Work Learning Activities:**

**READ COURSE PRIMER:** Primer Reading for ALL Students as course begins: *“Identifying the Essential Questions for Successful Ministry with Catholic Youth”* by Charlotte McCorquodale & Leigh E Sterten, in Volume 6, Number 2 of *The Journal of Youth Ministry*. (Uploaded to Class Site)

**REVIEW:** Course Overview/Syllabus and Calendar found on the course site under OVERVIEW.

**DEVELOP:** An Online Course Learning Plan & Learning Goals for this course. For each week of the course, identify where you will dedicate time to engage in the learning activities.

**DISCUSS:** Introductory Discussion Forum, all students must answer the following questions:

1. Introduce yourself and the ministry you do on behalf of the church.
2. After reviewing the course learning activities, which area are you most excited about learning?
3. What questions do you have about the course or the course site?

## **Learning Module 1.A: Fundamentals of Catholic Youth Ministry**

### **Week 1: Evolution of Catholic Youth Ministry**

**VIEW PRESENTATION 1.1:** Evolution of Catholic Youth Ministry in the United States by Charlotte McCorquodale, PhD

**READ COURSE READING 1.1:** Required for all students. "History of Catholic Youth Ministry" by John Roberto (Chapter 2 in *Leadership for Catholic Youth Ministry*, Thomas East, general editor)

**VIEW PRESENTATION 1.2:** Web link/presentation: Understanding Catholic Youth Ministry by Dr. Bob McCarty, Executive Director of the NFCYM

**DISCUSS FORUM 1.1:** Required of all students. The student(s) assigned to start the discussion must post their response(s) by Wednesday of the course week. All students are then required to share their thoughts on the question and the answer(s) of the student(s) (a total of 3 thoughtful posts are required.)

1. Reflecting on your own history in youth ministry, what is significant in your own personal history with youth ministry as a young person, young adult, or currently as a youth ministry leader?
2. Can you make a connection with the history of the church's experience in youth ministry?

**DEVELOP:** Write your ministerial autobiography (3 to 5 pages) describing the following: your call to ministry, a summary of your ministerial vision, your formation for ministry, leadership skills you bring to ministry, and the satisfactions and struggles that have been a part of your ministerial journey.

### **Week 2: En-Visioning Catholic Youth Ministry**

**WATCH:** The EnVision Series Goal Intro Videos for Catholic Youth Ministry with Youth and Adult from MTS and Region V Catholic Youth Ministry.

**Goal 1: Believing:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hI3Dm5rAWSQ>

**Goal 2: Belonging:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ninZ5sEUGSE>

**Goal 3: Becoming:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JjpqNK1a6Bk>

**INTERVIEW LEARNING ACTIVITY 1.1:** Email or call 3 or 4 people involved in your youth ministry program such as a parent, volunteer, pastor, youth leader, etc. and ask them to share with you what they think should be the vision or goals for youth ministry in your parish, school, or diocese. If you want use the attached questions used in the EnVision Goal videos or choose your own questions.

**READ COURSE READING 1.2:** Required for all students. “A Vision of Catholic Youth Ministry” by Greg “Dobie” Moser (Chapter 2 in *A Vision of Catholic Youth Ministry*, Robert McCarty, general editor)

**DISCUSS FORUM 1.2:** Required of all students. The student(s) assigned to start the discussion must post their response(s) by Wednesday of the course week. All students are then required to share their thoughts on the question and the answer of the student (a total of 3 thoughtful posts are required.)

1. What did the people you interviewed say about what the vision and goals should be?
2. What is the single most important element in a vision of youth ministry in your opinion? Why?

**WRITE & SHARE:** Articulate your vision of youth ministry in your setting by writing a vision that includes your goals. After it is written, send it to a few key stakeholders (volunteers, parents, youth leaders, etc.) and ask them to share what they think of it.

### **Week 3: Realizing the Vision for Catholic Youth Ministry**

**READ COURSE READING 1.3:** Required for all students. [Web Resource: \*Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry\*, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops](http://www.usccb.org/laity/youth/rtvcontents.shtml) (<http://www.usccb.org/laity/youth/rtvcontents.shtml>)

**WATCH:** Goal Overview Presentations by Frank Mercadante Published by Cultivation Ministries: These videos are unlisted on YouTube, you must have the link below to access them. Because of this we recommend that you download these videos to your computer. Because of copyrighted material you are asked not to share these links or videos with anyone else.

**Goal #1 Overview:** <http://youtu.be/6n-0rBzE4oo>

**Goal #2 Overview:** [http://youtu.be/zy5sPjy\\_h\\_g](http://youtu.be/zy5sPjy_h_g)

**Goal #3 Overview:** [http://youtu.be/D\\_W62EfhQjA](http://youtu.be/D_W62EfhQjA)

**READ COURSE READING 1.4:** Required for all students. “Theology and Catholic Youth Ministry” by Reverend Tom Dunne, SDB (Chapter 1 in *A Vision of Catholic Youth Ministry*, Robert McCarty, general editor)

**PARTICIPATE IN WEBINAR PRESENTATION 1.3:** Realizing the Vision of Youth Ministry Required of all students. This webinar will first discuss the questions below and then a panel of 2-3 experienced youth ministry leaders will comment and answer questions about how to more fully implement the vision of youth ministry.

1. Is there something you are not doing now that was explained in RTV, that you could implement to more fully bring that element of the vision into your youth ministry efforts? What is it?
2. What part of your personal vision was affirmed by reading the Bishop's Vision Statement? What was challenged?
3. How does theology inform your vision of youth ministry?

**REFLECT:** Compare and contrast your vision of Catholic Youth Ministry with the Bishop's vision articulated in *Renewing the Vision*.

**EVALUATE:** Your earlier vision of youth ministry, making sure that you have included references to the theological principles vision and/or rationale.

**IMPLEMENT (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY):** Use the En-Visioning Catholic Youth Ministry Resource to facilitate your parish through responding to the goals of *Renewing the Vision* in your parish community.

#### **Week 4: Portfolio Development for Learning Module 1.A:**

This week of the course is used to begin to develop the assessment items for your portfolio. If you have any questions about the assessments, please email the instructor during this week. This is also a break for National Certification Students and the end of course for Fundamental Level Students.

**Portfolio Development Directions:** Required of all students. All items should list proper referencing to any material quoted or referenced.

**ASSIGNMENT 1.A.1: MINISTERIAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY:** Write your ministerial autobiography (3 to 5 pages) describing the following: your call to ministry, a summary of your ministerial vision, your formation for ministry, leadership skills you bring to ministry, and the satisfactions and struggles that have been a part of your ministerial journey.

**ASSIGNMENT 1.A.2: VISION OF CATHOLIC YOUTH MINISTRY:** Present your vision of Catholic youth ministry in your ministry setting and the rationale you have for that vision. Include the following:

- a. A 1 page vision statement including your goals for Catholic youth ministry.
- b. A 1-2 pages rationale for your vision, evaluating in light of the ideas, readings, and strategies presented in this course. The evaluation and rationale of your vision should connect what you have learned in this course to your vision.

## **Learning Module 1.B: Advancing the Vision of Catholic Youth Ministry**

### **Week 5: Developing Intercultural Competence in Youth Ministry**

**READ COURSE READING 1.5:** Required for all students. “Ministry with Youth in a Culturally Diverse Church” by Alejandro Aguilera-Titus (Chapter 4 in *Leadership for Catholic Youth Ministry*, Thomas East, general editor)

**WATCH PRESENTATION 1.4:** “Intercultural Competence,” by Leigh Sterten.

**PARTICIPATE IN WEBINAR PRESENTATION 1.5:** Practical Strategies to Intercultural Competence in Youth Ministry. This webinar will gather diocesan and parish leaders to share about how they are realizing success in engaging a diverse population of youth people.

**READ COURSE READING 1.6:** Required for all students. “Youth Ministry: The Multicultural Dimension,” by Anne-Marie Yu-Phelps, Chapter 14 in *The Vision of Catholic Youth Ministry: Fundamentals, Theory, and Practice*, general editor Robert J. McCarty.

**READ COURSE READING 1.7:** Optional for all students. *Part Three Conclusions: First National Encounter for Hispanic Youth and Young Adult Ministry*, USCCB, pages 53-69.

**WEB RESEARCH LEARNING ACTIVITY 1.2:** Visit the websites on organizations and ministries serving diverse populations. The web-links for the search are provided in the links part of the course site.

**DISCUSS FORUM 1.4:** Required of all students. The student(s) assigned to start the discussion must post their response(s) by Wednesday of the course week. All students are then required to share their thoughts on the question and the answer of the student(s) (a total of 3 thoughtful posts are required.)

1. Describe the cultural diversity in your ministry setting. Is it reflective of the diversity of the broader church?
2. How does your parish or ministry setting respond to meeting the cultural needs of young people in today’s diverse world and church?
3. Following the three steps outlined in the case study in “Intercultural Competence,” offer a solution or solutions that reflect what you learned in the presentation.
4. Identify one or more of the nine steps from “Ministry with Youth in a Culturally Diverse Church” that you can either adopt in your setting or that helps you better understand intercultural competence.

### **Week 6: The State of Catholic Adolescents**

**INTERVIEW LEARNING ACTIVITY 1.2:** What do your teens say? Conduct interviews with one to three youth in your parish, via email, telephone, Facebook, and/or video, asking at least the following questions:

- What are two issues that affect many teens?

- How does being Catholic impact your daily life? What does being Catholic mean to you?
- How do you think your generation is different from the previous one, if at all?
- What is one thing you wish the church would do to help connect you to the Catholic faith?

**WEB RESEARCH LEARNING ACTIVITY 1.3:** Visit the websites on the State of Catholic Adolescents Today Folder under WWW Links part of the course site.

**READ COURSE READING 1.8:** Required for all students. “Becoming Christian-ish” (Chapter 1 in *Almost Christian* by Kenda Creasy Dean)

**READ COURSE READING 1.9:** “The Triumph of the ‘Cult of Nice’” (Chapter 2 in *Almost Christian* by Kenda Creasy Dean)

**READ COURSE READING 1.10:** Supplemental Readings for all students. “*The State of Catholic Adolescents*” by Sean Reynolds (Chapter 3 in *A Vision of Catholic Youth Ministry*, Robert McCarty, general editor)

**READ COURSE READING 1.10:** Supplemental Readings for all students. “Understanding Youth Today” by Cheryl Tholcke (Chapter 3 in *Leadership for Catholic Youth Ministry*, Thomas East, general editor)

**DISCUSS FORUM 1.5:** Required of all students. The student(s) assigned to start the discussion must post their response(s) by Wednesday of the course week. All students are then required to share their thoughts on the question and the answer(s) of the student(s) (a total of 3 thoughtful posts are required.)

1. Describe the significant differences between young people today and your own adolescence.
2. In light of the chapters from *Almost Christian* and the latest research on youth and religion, what are the implications for understanding and ministering with today’s young people? Please reference course readings in your explanation.

**Week 7: Realizing the Vision of Youth Ministry Through Systems Thinking and**

**Advocacy:** Engaging the church and the broader community in discerning the “signs of the times” in order to address the rights, responsibilities, and needs of youth, in light of the Gospel.

**INTERVIEW LEARNING ACTIVITY 1.4:** Mental Models About Youth. Using the resource provided, conduct interviews with three parishioners (or community members) you have not already interviewed in this course, in order to uncover some of the “mental models” they have about young people and their engagement in (parish) life. Report your findings in the discussion forum.



**READ COURSE READING 1.12:** “Connecting Youth with the Parish Community,” by John Roberto, Chapter 8 in *Leadership for Catholic Youth Ministry*, general editor Thomas East.

**READ COURSE READING 1.13:** Supplemental Readings for all students. “Youth Ministry: The Component of Advocacy,” by Maggie McCarty, Chapter 5 in *The Vision of Catholic Youth Ministry: Fundamentals, Theory, and Practice*, general editor Robert J. McCarty.

**PARTICIPATE IN WEBINAR PRESENTATION 1.5:** A Systems Thinking Approach to Youth Ministry. Required of all students. This webinar will discuss the questions below:

- What are the mental models regarding youth of the parishioners/members you interviewed? What does this tell you about the advocacy needs for youth in your ministry setting? (Attach a picture if you can find one that captures it; otherwise describe it in detail.)
- In what way are the gifts, talents, and energy of young people respected and utilized within your community?

**IMPLEMENT AND REFLECT:** Using the Systems Thinking Reflection Guide, answer each question as it pertains to you and your parish ministry.

**Week 8: Portfolio Development for Learning Module 2:** This week of the course is used to begin to develop the assessment items for your portfolio. If you have any questions about the assessments, please email the instructor during this week.

**Portfolio Development Directions:** Required of all students. All items should list proper referencing to any material quoted or referenced.

**ASSIGNMENT 1.B.1:** Write a paper addressing these three questions: How are the voices of young people honored and heard in your parish community; in the larger community? What has been your richest experience of working with others (collaborating) or on behalf of others (as their advocate)? What area(s) need strengthening in your advocacy efforts?

OR

**ASSIGNMENT 1.B.2:** Identify one or more of the nine steps from “Ministry with Youth in a Culturally Diverse Church” that you can either adopt in your setting or that helps you better understand intercultural competence.