Final Report from the Task Force on Youth Ministry
New Energies Parish Transition Project
for the Archdiocese of Newark
March, 2011

Israel, remember this! The Lord, and the Lord alone, is our God. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. Never forget these commands that I am giving you today. Teach them to your children. Repeat them when you are at home and when you are away, when you are resting and when you are working.” (Deuteronomy 6:4-7)

The Youth Ministry Task Force wanted to be as accurate as possible in its reporting to Archbishop John J. Myers on the reality of youth ministry in the Archdiocese. The first survey sent in the winter of 2009 was an electronic survey sent to the 230 Pastors/Administrators. That survey only generated 32 responses.

After consultation with Bishop da Cunha, it was decided that a second, more detailed, data-centered survey be sent by mail to all Pastors/Administrators. This survey generated 125 respondents which gave us a better picture of the reality in the Archdiocese, as well as providing data for the following recommendations.

The Task Force on Youth Ministry recommends:

1. Youth Ministry is seen as a vital part of each parish of the Archdiocese. Each parish or cluster of parishes, if they choose to work together, should have personnel designated to work in this ministry. Each parish or cluster whether employing a full or part time Youth Minister, paying a stipend to an individual or team or working with volunteers should give the attention needed to this ministry.

2. That a directive comes from the Archbishop that each parish cluster have a viable organized youth ministry.

3. When a parish or cluster has a paid Youth Minister he/she needs to be on equal footing with the rest of the Pastoral Staff. Attendance at staff meetings is crucial to the success of and support for Youth Ministry programs. When possible, each parish's program should be given a budget by the Pastor/Administrator and the Youth Minister or Coordinator should have autonomy and decision-making authority regarding the budget appropriations for his/her program.

4. That a yearly enrichment day/afternoon/evening program for Youth Ministers be offered through the Archdiocesan Youth and Young Adult Office.
Report from the Task Force on Youth Ministry [continued]:

5. That the Archdiocesan Youth and Young Adult Office offer valuable and informative sessions to be held at parishes throughout each of the 4 counties served by the Archdiocese. It is highly recommended that Youth Ministers attend with their Pastors/Administrators or parochial vicar. There was an expressed desire in the surveys that more activities and resources be made available.

6. That a Youth Mass takes place once a month at a parish within the Archdiocese. This Mass would rotate among parishes in each of the 4 counties. The Archdiocesan Youth Center could act as a resource and will be available to provide liturgical planning assistance to the host/cluster/county.

The Task Force also believes that a strong youth ministry program can and should be a nurturing environment to foster vocations (priesthood, vowed consecrated life, marriage, and single life).

The Task Force has observed from this survey that Pastors/Administrators are doing the best they can with whatever time, talent and treasure is available to them. However, we feel as if more needs to be done to help create further support and development of Youth Ministry programs throughout the Archdiocese.

Submitted by:

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[Addendum - attached]

Report from the Task Force on Youth Ministry

Final Report revised by Rev. Timothy Graff and
Submitted to the Archdiocesan Implementation Team on March 15 and June 21, 2011
ADDENDUM

230 surveys were sent to all Pastors/Administrators in the Archdiocese. The following are the responses to each question on the survey:

Youth Ministry Survey for
New Energies Parish Transition Project
Archdiocese of Newark -- January, 2010

Survey Questions for Pastors:

1. How long have you been Pastor in your present parish?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Count</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 – 5 years</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 – 10</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 – 15</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>16 – 20</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>21 – 25</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>25 +</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tbody>
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Total 88

2. Which reality is yours?
   a) Full-time paid Coordinator of Youth Ministry 20
   b) Part-time paid Coordinator of Youth Ministry 32
   c) Volunteer Coordinator of Youth Ministry 40
   d) No Coordinator of Youth Ministry 21
   *Write in: Priest-coordinator 7*

3a. If you have no Coordinator of Youth Ministry, what is preventing you from hiring one?
   a) Financial considerations 35
   b) Lack of parish interest 8
   c) Don’t personally feel it is necessary 8

3b. If you do have a Coordinator of Youth Ministry, how long have they been employed at your parish?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Count</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 – 5 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 – 15</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 – 25</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>25 +</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Report from the Task Force on Youth Ministry [continued]:

4. In your parish, is Youth Ministry given equal consideration with other parish ministries, with regards to:
   a) Budget 61 Yes 32 No
   b) Spatial considerations 86 Yes 5 No
   c) Event planning 89 Yes 7 No
   d) Involvement of the pastor and parish staff 82 Yes 10 No
   e) Presence at staff meetings 2 Yes

5. Do youth play an active role in the life of your Parish:
   a) Liturgically
      1) Is there a strong youth presence at Mass?
      78 Yes 30 No
      2) Are there teenagers acting as liturgical ministers, such as lectors, cantors/musicans or ministers of hospitality?
      92 Yes 19 No
   b) If your parish has a Coordinator of Youth Ministry, please list three major activities held specifically for the youth of the parish:
      Most common answers:
      1) Regular meetings
      2) Stations of the Cross
      3) Youth Mass/Youth involvement Mass
      4) Social Trips/Activities
      5) Retreats
         • Weekend
         • One night
         • Day
         • Cardboard City – activities concerning the homeless
         • Confirmation
   c) Please list three non-youth specific activities that youth take part in at your parish:
      1) Parish picnics/Carnivals/Feasts
      2) Volunteer with Religious Educations programs
      3) Volunteer at soup kitchens, other service projects
      4) Music Ministry
      5) Advent/Lent Parish Prayer services (Living Stations)
   d) List three areas where you would like to see youth more involved in your parish:
      1) Mass
      2) Social Concerns
      3) Religious Education
      4) Outreach/Evangelization/Vocations/Parish Life Activities
Report from the Task Force on Youth Ministry [continued]:

6. How can the Archdiocese better serve your parish?
   a) Parish visits by diocesan staff to educate and advertise the events and services of the youth office?
      \[25 \text{ Yes} \quad 28 \text{ No} \quad 24 \text{ No answer}\]
   b) More county, deanery and regional events?
      \[70 \text{ Yes} \quad 29 \text{ No} \quad 18 \text{ No answer}\]
   c) Parish training in Youth Ministry?
      \[69 \text{ Yes} \quad 30 \text{ No} \quad 18 \text{ No answer}\]

7. In your parish community, do you envision youth ministry as:
   (circle one):
   a) \textbf{4} - Not necessary
   b) \textbf{3} - Teenagers regularly attending and being active in Mass
   c) \textbf{8} - A regular (monthly, bi-monthly, or weekly) gathering of the teenagers of the parish as well as teenagers regularly attending and being active in Mass
   d) \textbf{7} - A regular gathering of the teenagers of the parish, in addition to involving the youth in general parish activities, as well as teenagers regularly attending and being active in Mass
   e) \textbf{90} - A regular gathering of the teenagers of the parish, in addition to involving the youth in general parish activities, and supplementing that with spiritual, social, self-awareness and service activities specifically designed for youth, as well as teenagers regularly attending and being active in Mass
The Task Force’s Mission:

To recommend a plan of action to the parishes of the Archdiocese that could serve and connect the young adult population with their parish communities. The plan should be developed and implemented, in collaboration with the Office of Young Adult Ministry, the Archdiocese’s Young Adult Council, Parish Staffs and Young Adult leaders within the parishes. In light of the diverse cultures and parishes within the Archdiocese the plan would be developed and implemented, according each parish’s needs. The plan is intended to build up the Catholic community among the young adult population (ages 18-39) within the Archdiocese of Newark. We would like to preface that our suggestions are meant to work complementary to the many activities and events already existing under the leadership of the Office of Young Adult Ministry and the many involved in Young Adult ministry within our parishes, the various lay movements and ethnic ministries within the Archdiocese. The plan would be implemented by the Office of Young Adult Ministry.

Task Force Members:  (Listed on the last page of this report)

The Task Force recommends that Young Adult Ministry in the Archdiocese of Newark implement this plan.

Sons and Daughters of the Light: A Pastoral Plan for Ministry with Young Adults:
In 1997 the US Bishops’ Conference issued this document in order to guide the ministry of the US Church to Young Adults. The 4 goals given to us are as follows:

1. Connecting Young Adults with Jesus Christ: To foster personal and communal growth and education of young adults toward a relationship with Jesus Christ leading to Christian maturity.

2. Connecting Young Adults with the Church: To make contact with young adults and to invite and welcome them in the life and mission of the Christian Community, which proclaims Jesus Christ by preaching the Gospel.

3. Connecting Young Adults with the Mission of the Church in the World: To invite young adults, through healthy relationships, works and studies, to embrace the mission of Christ to promote the building of the Kingdom of God in the world today, thereby bringing about the transformation of society.

4. Connecting Young Adults with a Peer Community: To help young adults develop relationships with peers who share similar values and beliefs that strengthen and nurture their faith, thereby creating communities of support.
Report from the Task Force on Young Adult Ministry [continued]:

**Plan of Action Suggested by the Task Force for Beginning or Strengthening Young Adult Ministry at the Parish Level:**

While recognizing the desire of many parishes to establish a ministry to Young Adults and also seeing how many parishes are working with limited resources and reduced staffing we would propose the following plan for parishes or clusters of parishes. They are presented in a general way because they will need to be adapted to the rich tapestry of the many cultural, ethnic and pastoral realities that make up our Archdiocese.

**For each Parish or Cluster of Parishes:**

- **Form a Young Adult Ministry Core Team.** We suggest that the cluster appoint the Core Team and that they choose among themselves a Leader. The purpose of this Core Team is to assist the parish in its ministry and outreach to Young Adults within the parish. Young Adult Ministry is too much for one person to handle. It requires a considerable amount of time and talent. Sharing responsibility allows for a wider variety of gifts, talents, ideas, wisdom, energy and commitment. The most effective way to draw young adults into a parish life and demonstrate to the parish that there is a community of already active young adults. If the ministry is developed and executed by a team, the ministry will carry on despite the transient nature of young adulthood.

- **Steps to Developing the Team.** Your first step is to find young adults who may be interested in volunteering for this ministry. This can be done through personal contact, asking parish staff members whom they could recommend to help with this ministry. Seeing what young adults are already involved in existing ministries. See if there are potential leaders by seeing if you can find them involved with the Pastoral Council, Liturgical Ministries, Catechists, and teachers in the Parish School, RCIA programs or Pre-Cana. See if you find Young Adults who you may meet after Mass, at parish social events etc. Once potential team members are identified, make several personal invitations, in person, by email or by phone for them to participate in this ministry.

- **Training the Core Team.** The Office of Youth Ministry will conduct training sessions for the team. The Training will include the basic tenets of ministry with Young Adults, Leadership Development and Spiritual Formation. Training will take place at a schedule determined by the Team members.
Final Reports from the Task Force on Youth Ministry and Task Force on Young Adult Ministry

Report from the Task Force on Young Adult Ministry (continued):

- **Assess the needs of the young adults within the Parish cluster.** Part of the first tasks of the team is to do an assessment of the needs of Young Adults within the parishes. This can be done by done conversation with other Young Adults and seeing their impressions about and their experiences within the parish. Another helpful tool for “Assessing our Parish: What Are We Doing With Young Adults” (Appendix I) After an honest assessment of the parish ministry’s with Young Adults a plan with clear and concrete goals can be established by the Core Team. Invite Parish Staffs’ to reflect on “Hip Pocket Ideas” for Parish Ministry Leaders” from the Center for Ministry Development (Appendix II) to see how they are already and can better reach out to the Young Adults in their parishes.

- **Role of a Spiritual Director.** We suggest that the core team have a Spiritual Director/Moderator. (The Task Force believes this would be very beneficial. Groups that have a Spiritual Director usually tend to be more focused on the core mission). Preferably a Spiritual Director that is excited to support, guide and encourage the core team and has an understanding of the vision set forth.

**Communications of the Young Adult Core Teams:**

- Have the Young Adult Cluster Leaders keep in touch with each other, the Young Adult Council and the Young Adult Ministry Office and collaborate on larger events both in the parishes and the Youth Center in Kearny. Some of these events such would include Holy Ground, Young Adult service days, Theology on Tap, Spirit and Truth activities, retreats, concerts, and other activities sponsored by our Parishes and Ethnic ministries.

- Purchase (500-1000) copies of the Magnificat booklets to disperse at young adult events. This could be a shared expense between all the Parish clusters. As we all know, buying in bulk is very cost effective. You could even charge $1 a booklet.
Events Ideas that have been fruitful in recent years:

- Theology of the Body – there are so many creative ways of bringing this rich catechesis to young adults - whether it be through talks, seminars, conferences, book studies, etc.
- Scripture Studies – The Great Adventure - Bible Timeline, Little Rock Scripture Study.
- Volunteer Opportunities – soup kitchens, shelters, mission trips, social justice.
- Place reading material and CD’s in the back of the Church geared towards the Young Adult population – Example: Lighthouse Catholic Media, Our Sunday Visitor pamphlets.
- Men’s and Women’s Groups that help to nurture male and female spirituality.
- Catholic Mom’s (Faith Sharing) Groups.
- Book Club – Choose a spiritual book and organize a book study- either in a parish center or in people’s homes. (This is very popular now.)

Marketing Ideas:

- RSS feed – which is: Rich Site Summary or Really Simple Syndication as a method of pulling news from online publishers and posting it on your site, providing fresh content to your users. RSS Feeds are available in a wide range of categories and can be chosen to address the needs of any industry. [www.ideabankmarketing.com/resources/glossaries/interactive](http://www.ideabankmarketing.com/resources/glossaries/interactive) The Task Force suggested that the RSS feed is placed on the Archdiocesan Website/Young Adult Ministry.

- * Ask all the ministries who serve the young adult population to join in the collaboration and networking – For example: Campus Ministry could advertise all the Young Adult events that the clusters host. Campus Ministry could highlight events that the Clusters would like to open to the public - on the homepage. Perhaps have each cluster - set up a Google calendar that can be shared.

- Develop a website with all the resources that are available in our Archdiocese or even in our tri-state area.

- Parish Bulletin – ask each Young Adult cluster leader to advertise upcoming events in all the Parish bulletins within their cluster.
Report from the Task Force on Young Adult Ministry [continued]:

**Transitioning between the College Campus Ministry community and everyday life in the world (without Campus Ministry):**

When College graduates, who were once involved with Campus Ministry / Newman Club, complete their studies and move on, it’s very difficult for them to get reconnected again with a different Catholic community. They often look for a similar type of community that will nurture, provide fellowship, catechize and challenge them to live the Catholic faith courageously (while living in the world).

What happens often is – if they are still local, they come back to their campus ministry community, desiring the fellowship/community. The College Campus Minister usually welcomes them back and encourages them to take on more of a volunteer status, empowering them to give back what they have received through the years.

The Task Force suggests that there be a collaboration between the Office of Campus Ministry and the Office of Young Adult Ministry, in developing some sort of Exodus Program or transition phase that provides graduating students with direction in choosing a Parish, getting involved with their local Parish and tapping into all the Catholic resources within their geographic area.

This concludes the Young Adult Task Force report for the Fall of 2010. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to come together and serve the Archdiocese of Newark in this capacity. God bless you.

Submitted by:
Maureen Madigan
Jesse Mazzola
Brian Honsberger
Eni Honsberger
Michael Chladil
Kelly Chladil

Report from the Task Force on Young Adult Ministry
Submitted by Sr. Maureen Madigan for the Task Force

Final Reports revised by Rev. Timothy Graff and
Submitted to the Archdiocesan Implementation Team on March 15 and June 21, 2011
**Approved by Archbishop Myers on July 15, 2011**