

Unpacking
*Christus
Vivit*

2018
Synod *on*
Young
People,
the
Faith,
and
Vocationa
l
Discernme
nt

2016 – Pope Francis launches Synod Process

2017 – Preparatory Document and Questionnaire released

2018 – Pre-Synod Meeting, Working Document released, Actual Synod (Oct 3-28), and Final Document released

2019 – Christus Vivit released

(cf USCCB, "Synod 2018 on Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment", <http://www.usccb.org/about/bishops-and-dioceses/synod-of-bishops/synod-2018/index.cfm>)

Synod's Final Document

A Church That Listens



Understand the situatedness of young people and youth culture

Address digital environment, migration, and abuse

Connecting Life to the Gospel



•Seeing young people's life in light of Jesus'

→Accompaniment toward vocational discernment

Synodal Approach to Application



Apply at local level by the community as a whole

Be like missionaries

(cf "Final Document of the Synod of Bishops on Young People, Faith and Vocational Discernment",
<http://www.synod.va/content/synod2018/en/fede-discernimento-vocazione/final-document-of-the-synod-of-bishops-on-young-people--faith-an.html>)

Pastoral Framework

See/Observe
(Ch 1 - 3)

Understand young people in light of Scripture, the Church, and the World

Judge/Interpret
(Ch 4 - 6)

Understand young people's situations in light of the Gospel and to move them to be participatory in society

Act/Choose
(Ch 7 - 9)

Development of vocational youth and young adult ministries, helping the Church be more open to a process of listening, dialogue, and discernment

(cf USCCB, "Synod 2018 on Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment", [http://www.usccb.org/about/bishops-](http://www.usccb.org/about/bishops-synods/synods/synod-2018/young-people-the-faith-and-vocational-discernment)



Thesis

We must help young people be their "original" self, rather than a "photocopy", by helping them discern their vocation in light of God's gift of salvation.

The image of young people, their needs and dispositions, is used in part as an image for the Church and the direction it should take

Vocation



Vocation

Our personal vocations come from Christ
“We have to realize that [our vocation] is a calling from a friend, who is Jesus.” (287)

We are called to relationship with God

“The first thing God led to discern and discover is this: Jesus wants to be a friend to every young person...the first and most important vocation is the vocation we have received in Baptism.” (250, 267)

We are invited to see our lives in light of Christ's

invitation that God offers us is an invitation to be part of a love story interwoven with our personal stories...It has to do with finding our true selves in the light of God and letting our lives flourish and bear fruit.” (252, 257)

We are called to go out in mission

“The Lord calls us to share in his work of creation and to contribute to the common good by using the gifts we have received...I am a mission on this earth; that is the reason why I am here in this world.” (253-254)

What It Means To Be Young

"Youth" is better understood
as "youthfulness": a
disposition to openness,
vigor, dream, and taking on
challenges



"Youth is more than simply a period of
time; it is a state of mind" (34)



"In a word, true youth means having a
heart capable of loving, whereas
everything that separates us from
others makes the soul grow old." (13)

Assessing Scripture

Key Point



God continually called young people to be conduits of Divine action, culminating in Jesus' incarnation and youth

Jesus' youth serves as a model for how young people can become similar conduits

Action Items



Help young people:

- Be aware that they are part of a family
- Be open to the Holy Spirit's call and direction
- Engage in projects that impel them to encounter others

Assessing The Church



Key Point

The Church must regain credibility in order to hold relevance in young people's lives

We must be attuned to the tensions present in young people's lives in order to best offer them pastoral care

Action Items



- Listen to young people, appreciating their vision and criticisms
- Accept our own failures with humility
(scandal, poor presentation of teachings, passivity to young people)
- Take risks and reflect Jesus Christ

Assessin g Young People & Youth Culture

Key Point



Young People are sharers in responsibility in the Church and Society

We must be attuned to the tensions present in young people's lives in order to best offer them pastoral care.

Action Items



- Get to know young people, their questions, and situations
- Practice empathy and the ability to "be with"
- Understand how the image of youth is exploited in a throwaway culture so as to advocate for them

Activity

Profile who the young people in your ministry setting are:

- ☐ What are some of their characteristics?
- ☐ What questions do they have?
- ☐ What criticisms may they give?

Assessin g Ideologic al Colonizat ion



Key Point

Young people may be made to believe that they must adopt certain ideologies and cultures in order to be successful or accepted



Action Items

Help young people:

- Recognize the flaws in "fake advertising"
- Recognize their collective heritage and memory
- Engage in intergenerational relationships that give "roots"

Activity

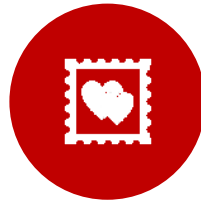
Based on the young people in your ministry setting:

- ☐ What messages do they receive or encounter on a regular basis?
- ☐ How do they learn, or construct, knowledge?

A Great Message for Young People



THE VERY FIRST TRUTH I
WOULD TELL EACH OF YOU IS
THIS: **“GOD LOVES YOU”** (CV
112)



THE SECOND GREAT TRUTH IS
THAT **CHRIST, OUT OF LOVE,
SACRIFICED HIMSELF
COMPLETELY IN ORDER TO SAVE
YOU.** (CV 118)



FINALLY, THERE IS A THIRD
TRUTH, INSEPARABLE FROM
THE SECOND: **CHRIST IS
ALIVE!** (CV 124)

Crafting Messages to Young People



You don't have to stay stuck where you are

"The same Christ who, by His cross, save us from our sins, today continues to save and redeem us by the power of his total self-surrender...And if you sin and stray from him, he will come to lift you up by the power of his cross...the worst fall, the one that can ruin our lives, is when we stay down and do not allow ourselves to be helped up." (119-120)

You are too important to give in to fakers

"Dear young people, you are priceless! You are not up for sale...do not let yourself be enslaved by forms of ideological colonization that puts ideas in your heads, with the result that you end up becoming slaves, addicts, failures in life " (122)

Crafting Messages to Young People

**If you want real change in your
life, then seek Christ**

"If in your heart you can learn to appreciate the beauty of this message, if you are willing to encounter the Lord, if you are willing to let him love you and save you, if you can make friends with him and start to talk to him, the living Christ, about the realities of your life, then you will have a profound experience capable of sustaining your entire Christian life." (129)

**Believing in God doesn't hold you
back,
it empowers you**

"The love of God and our relationship with the living Christ do not hold us back from dreaming; they do not require us to narrow our horizons. On the contrary, that love elevates us, encourages us and inspires us to a better and more beautiful



Crafting Messages to Young People

**What you fall in love with will
change your life**

"Do you need love? You will not find it in dissipation, using other people, or trying to be possessive or domineering. You will find it in a way that will make you genuinely happy. Are you seeking powerful emotions? You will not experience them by accumulating material objects, spending money, chasing desperately after the things of this world...what you are in love with, what seizes your imagination, will affect everything." (131-132)

**Don't let your anxiety tell you
what you are capable of**

"Keep following your hopes and dreams. But be careful about one temptation that can hold us back. It is anxiety...At the same time we should not be hesitant, afraid to take chances or make mistakes...Even if you make mistakes, you can always get up and start over, for no one has the right to rob you of hope." (142)

Crafting Messages to Young People



**If you want happiness, go after
it**

"Dear young people, make the most of these years of your youth. Don't observe life from a balcony. Don't confuse happiness with an armchair or live your life behind a screen...Take risks, even if it means making mistakes. Don't go through life anaesthetized or approach the world like tourists."
(143)

**Let God, not others, be your
mirror**

"Many young people are concerned about their bodies, trying to build up physical strength or improve their appearance. Others work to develop their talents and knowledge, so as to feel more sure of themselves...That is why you need to stay connected to Jesus...that means not cutting off dialogue, listening to him, sharing your life with



Activity

Based on part one:

- ☐ Which of these messages stand out or you believe young people in your ministry setting need to hear?

Based on part two:

- ☐ What obstacles may you face in communicating this message?
- ☐ What opportunities can you use to your advantage to share this message?

Assessin g Youth & Young Adult Ministrie s



Key Point


"Youth Ministry as has been significantly affected by social and cultural changes. Young people frequently fail to find in our usual programs a response to their concerns, their needs, their problems" (202)



Action Items

- Mobilize the entire community to evangelize young people
- Include young people in pastoral care to young people
- Be flexible in the kind of ministry you provide

Methods



“we should take into greater consideration those practices that have shown their value – the methods, language, and aims that have proved truly effective in bringing young people to Christ and the Church. It does not matter where they are coming from or what labels they have received, whether “conservative” or “liberal,” “traditional,” or “progressive.” What is important is that we make use of everything that has borne good fruit and effectively communicates the joy of the Gospel”

(205)



Activity

- ☐ How do you reach out to young people?
- ☐ What challenges do you face in reaching out to young people?

Outreach

How do we attract young people?

- ⑩ Does it include young people?
- ⑩ Does it use language that is relational, invitational, and awakens hope and desires?
- ⑩ Does it help young people have initial encounters with Christ?

Develop a "Popular" Youth Ministry

- ⑩ Broaden the places where youth ministry occurs, moving to places where real young people are active
- ⑩ Use different styles, schedules, pace and method
- ⑩ Listen to the sense of young people and give them freedom to create
- ⑩ Develop a Missionary culture, helping young people learn how to invite and accompany other young people
- ⑩ Make room for all kinds of young people; Do not be afraid of young people who may have "burdens" or "hurt"



Activity

- ☐ How do you help young people grow in a relationship with God once you are with them?
- ☐ How do you follow-up with young people after programs or experiences?
- ☐ What challenges do you face in of these instances?

Growth

How do we help young people mature after outreach?

- ⑩ After a powerful experience of God, do we follow-up with more than just "formation" meetings?
- ⑩ Do we help young people first understand their lives considering these experiences?

Develop a "Sticky" Youth Ministry

- ⑩ Engage in Kerygma before Didache
- ⑩ Create spaces where young people can wrestle with difficult questions and doubts and have deeper discussions
- ⑩ Help young people recognize what they experienced, so that they can choose to share them
 - ⑩ Events/Experiences should include a "pre", "during", and "post" component
- ⑩ Provide environments that are welcoming and create a "home" environment
- ⑩ Create continual occasions for renewing powerful experiences, such as:
 - ⑩ Testimonies, the use of music, adoration, reflection on Scripture, social networks, the building of community, service to others, and worship opportunities that speak to daily life

Discernment

Discernment is a perennial skill, or gift, that we must help young people develop through:

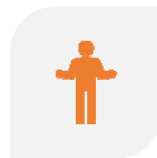
- Examining and forming conscience
 - Developing a habit of prayer
 - Practicing the virtue of prudence
-

Vocation discernment focuses on moving from the question of "Who am I?" to "For whom am I?"

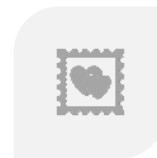
Two areas of focus for discernment in Christus Vivit:

- Forming a New Family/Relationships
- Working

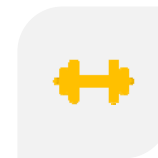
Questions for Discernment



DO I KNOW MYSELF,
QUITE APART FROM MY
ILLUSIONS AND
EMOTIONS?



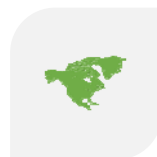
DO I KNOW WHAT
BRINGS JOY OR SORROW
TO MY HEART?



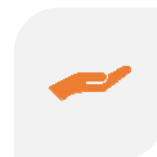
WHAT ARE MY
STRENGTHS AND
WEAKNESSES?



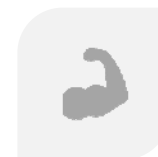
HOW CAN I SERVE
PEOPLE BETTER AND
PROVE MOST HELPFUL
TO OUR WORLD AND TO
THE CHURCH?



WHAT IS MY REAL PLACE
IN THIS WORLD?



WHAT CAN I OFFER TO
SOCIETY?



DO I HAVE THE ABILITIES
NEEDED TO OFFER THIS
KIND OF SERVICE?



COULD I DEVELOP THOSE
ABILITIES?

Accompaniment of Young People

"That is why youth ministry and the pastoral care of families should be coordinated and integrated, with the aim of ensuring a continuous and suitable accompaniment of the vocational process"



The family should be the first place of accompaniment



Youth Ministry must include ministry to parents and families



Ministries should strive to develop mentors and mentoring relationships to help accompany young people in discernment

Process of Accompaniment

Step 1

Sensitivity to
the
Individual

- ❑ How can I listen to someone and what they share about themselves?
- ❑ How can I make time for them, so they know they are being heard?

Step 2

Sensitivity to
Discernment

What is it that they are trying to tell me or realize that is happening in their life?

How do these things effect their emotions and thinking?

Step 3

Sensitivity to
Perceive What is
Driving the Other
Person

What is Driving the Other Person
What is their real intention?

Are they looking to superficial wishes, or to what is most pleasing to the Lord?



Activity

- ☐ What opportunities or spaces do you have to help young people discern?
- ☐ Who are individuals you can invite to become mentors to young people?