**Core Four session 3—What is Youth Ministry?**

**Narrative**

**Opening Slide with title:**

“We talked on our first session about our Franciscan Youth and Young Adult Mission, what our responsibility is, and how our mission relates to our call as Baptized Catholics and Professed Secular Franciscans. Our second session’s title was “What is YouFra?” In that session we discussed the important steps toward YouFra, but we also talked about what fraternities can do to build relationships and be witnesses to young people, even if they aren’t in a position to promote an actual YouFra, yet. Tonight’s program will focus on the question, “What is Youth Ministry,” and the fourth session will move into “What is Young Adult Ministry?”

**Slide One (questions for sharing)**

Let’s begin by taking a moment to think about a particular person in your life that you had a deep relationship with when you were a young person under 18 years. How did that person influence you the most? What do you feel you gained most from that person’s presence in your life?

(Invite several to share in a few words.)

(Read quote at the bottom of the slide.) In other words, you may be more important in a child’s life than you realize.

**Slide Two (Who are Our Youth)**

(Read slide)

Explain why we distinguish between youth and young adults in the U.S.

1. Strict rules about working with that age
2. Most parishes already have strong youth ministry programs
3. Our Churches often have nothing for young adults.
4. Our young adults have very different life circumstances and needs compared to other countries. We’ll talk more about that on our fourth session.

**Slide Three (What is Youth Ministry)**

(read slide)

There are a few key concepts in this paragraph.

1. “Youth ministry is the response of the Christian community to the needs of the youth.” What does that mean? We have an opportunity as Secular Franciscans to pay attention to what is needed in our environment. It doesn’t do any good to simply copy what someone else is doing—the young people you come in contact with might not need that. Ask questions. Observe. Be creative in responding to a need you see.
2. “Youth ministry is the sharing of the unique gifts of youth with the larger community.” I’m not talking about just putting chairs away! When you begin to know and build relationships with our younger Catholics, you will be in a position to invite them to share their gifts with us. (share an example if you have one.)

**Slide Four (What is Youth Ministry cont.)**

(read slide)

**Slide Five (Goals)**

(read slide)

Goals are from the Bishops’ *Renewing the Vision* youth ministry framework that we spoke about earlier. But we also have guidelines from CIOFS—they also promote the goals of human and Christian growth, adding Franciscan growth to the YouFra expectations. You’ll notice those categories in the Stages of Formation document that you can find on the national website.

**Slide Six (Components)**

(read slide)

In a regular youth ministry comprehensive program, a youth director is expected to include all eight components in their program in some way. Don’t panic when you see this list. Of course, if the YouFra becomes your only program, then obviously it will be way more time consuming and the expectations will be more important. But another way to look at this list might be to single out an area in which you think you can offer something. We’re going to come back to this list later on.

**Slide Seven (Elements)**

(read slide)

I rather like this concept. Instead of stressing over eight components…think of this list as a guide for anything you do with young people. If you decide to do a prayer service, have you considered what they can learn? How the prayer touches their heart? What they might be prompted to do or act upon in response to the prayer? Or what if you decide to offer a game night or a justice and peace activity for the youth group? You can ask the same questions to determine the effectiveness of your event.

**Slide Eight (Themes)**

(read slide, one at a time.)

The “themes” are another consideration in your planning and a way to judge your event. (Read quote from Renewing the Vision for each “theme.”)

* **Developmentally appropriate.** Growth in faith is a life-long journey, and different youth and the group as a whole will be in a unique place depending on their environment, background, assets etc.
* **Family Friendly.** Variety of approaches that meet the needs of families. Support the “domestic church.”
* **Intergenerational.** Providing opportunities for church involvement and developing relationships with the older congregation, provides young people with rich resources and a sense of belonging.
* **Multicultural.** Growing up in rich diversity. Not a “melting pot” anymore, but instead a “multihued tapestry.”
* **Community wide collaboration.** Not us by ourselves. Instead, all working together. Engaging in community collaboration can help us reach the marginalized and more vulnerable young people.
* **Leadership.** Present to youth the richness of the body of Christ. Utilize, network, invite other leaders. Encourage and empower the community to share their gifts.
* **Flexible and adaptable programming.** Meet the needs of more than one kind of family. Structures and family needs. Balance.

**Slide Nine (What do we mean by “Flexible Programing?”)**

We’ll spend a few extra minutes on this last theme. (Read the slide) Explain again that you aren’t going to do all these things. But looking at the list might inspire you. Perhaps you are better working one on one, or in a small group. Maybe you enjoy helping plan a retreat for a big group. Or, would your fraternity rather plan a multigenerational or family event or an activity for a specific age group?

**Slide 10 (A New Approach)**

(read slide, then move right on to slide 11)

**Slide 11 (Guiding Image—Emmaus Method)**

**(read slide after the explanation below)**

What do we mean by the Emmaus method? Remind them of the story of Emmaus. (Pilgrims on their journey; didn’t recognize Jesus; Jesus listened and answered their questions; they came to an understanding when he broke bread with them.)

Explain how this story fits into the method we promote with our youth. We need to avoid the old style of teacher versus student…we’re in charge and know everything; you listen and take tests to determined if you’ve learned! Instead, we talk a lot about walking with youth; listening to their stories and us sharing ours; let hearts change, learning unfold, and a desire to live a gospel life naturally occur.

**Slides 12 and 13**

These final quotes are from the new document which is a framework for ministry with youth and young adults that our bishops just came out with a few months ago called *Listen, Teach, Send*. (read slides)

**Discussion question**

Before we close, let’s go back to Slide 7. Think for a minute about yourself, or even your fraternity. What do you believe would be one area you might have some expertise in? Use your imagination—this isn’t written in gold, and we’re not keeping track of what you say. What is one activity, in one area that you might be inspired to pursue? (Share, a few minutes each)

**Closing**

Finish by saying good-bye and thank you. “Blessings on your work with our young people. And now we’ll close with a prayer.”

**Slide 14 (Closing Prayer)** Click on the picture and the Peace Prayer is recited.(Or replace with another picture or prayer if desired)