

Youth Ministry Awareness Week

(every 9-15 December)

Backgrounder

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines-Episcopal Commission on Youth (CBCP-ECY) declared the week prior to National Youth Day (16 December) as YOUTH MINISTRY AWARENESS WEEK. This declaration was proposed by the National Youth Coordinating Council 2003, and approved by the ECY during its meeting last July 2003: "That youth ministry awareness be launched extensively in the regions, dioceses and youth organizations: during the week prior to the celebration of National Youth Day (16 December), the regional councils prepare an effective program promoting youth ministry." (NYCC2003)

The Church in the Philippines, in all her levels, is enjoined to celebrate the presence of young people through National Youth Day every December 16, and to be aware of the ministry among young people through Youth Ministry Awareness Week, the week prior to December 16, which is December 9-15.

The Regional Youth Coordinating Councils have the significant role of spearheading the observance of this week within their regions. With their preparation and coordination, the RYCCs work with the dioceses, parishes, schools, communities, various movements and organizations within their region, and especially with their partner-youth ministry offices and youth ministers for an extensive, creative, and dynamic celebration. This weeklong program promoting youth ministry would then culminate with a local celebration of National Youth Day.

As a way of celebrating Youth Ministry Awareness Week, the ECY is proposing the following prayer to be recited as Post-Communion Prayer within this week's Masses, especially within the Sunday Mass of this week. Parishes, schools, communities, various movements and organizations, and individuals are also enjoined to use this prayer during the period of Youth Ministry Awareness Week.

The youth ministry offices of the regions, and of the dioceses and youth organizations may adapt this prayer to suit their local contexts.

Youth Ministry Awareness Week

PRAYER

Loving Father, God ever-alive,
You look at the young with love and concern.
Throughout the ages, you trust and choose them
to participate in your saving work.
You sent Your Son, Jesus Christ, to save us and show us the path to life
He was like us: He also became young
He was like You: He also loved and trusted the young.
Even when He left after fulfilling His mission,
He still abides with us through His Spirit,
Who empowers and animates Your Church,
Who continues to love and trust the young.

We, Your Church, strive to be Your face in the world today,
and as You love and trust the young,
so do we profess our own love and trust for them.
Enable us to enter their world, to dialogue with them, and to journey with them
as Your Son did when He joined two of His disciples on the road to Emmaus,
when He listened and then challenged them, when He stayed on with them.

May our observance and celebration of Youth Ministry Awareness Week
make us mindful of our own participation
in the Church's ministry among young people:

As clergy, may we be their shepherds according to Christ who is our Truth
As consecrated persons, may we be their beacons towards Christ who is our Life
As elder lay people, may we be their companions along Christ who is our Way

Those among us who are youth ministers: may we persevere in our commitment
to share in the divine and ecclesial ministry
of forming the young unto the image of Christ,
and those among us who are young people: may we recognize our unique call
to proclaim Christ, the Good News, to our fellow youth
by first responding to the universal vocation of Christians:
to listen to Christ, and to commit to follow in His ways.

All these we ask as a community of disciples of Your Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ,
in the Spirit who brings forth all that is good,
and with Mary, Mother of the Church and model of all young people.
Amen.

All you young saints in God's company, pray for us.