

Report for St. Ignatius Parish Pastoral Council

As You Are: Young Adult Ministry

September 2018

Source: Amanda Lee alee@stignatiussac.org

Summary & Role:

- To serve young adult Catholics ages 21-40, single, those discerning religious life, married, divorced, and married with children generally not yet of school age
- Mission: "To create a genuine home for young adults where they can grow spiritually, change lives, and serve God." We seek to make young adults feel welcome in the Catholic Church and to build community.
- YAs host a variety of events including a retreat, small fundraisers, and service projects

Leadership & participants:

- Amanda Lee is paid, part-time parish staff (20 hours/week, 15 of those in the office); her job as coordinator is to serve as liaison between the ministry and the parish. Part of the Catechetical Ministry so Fatima Avila-Ohlson is her boss
- In previous years, one person ran the whole show; now in 2nd year of building a leadership team. Team consists of about 5 young adults plus 2 adult mentors (Jane and Mark Van Brussel). Team meets monthly (no fixed meeting time) to discern needs of the ministry and the larger parish. New leaders are invited by the team after prayer and discernment.
- >300 participants, gained by word of mouth
 - Unlike other ministries, this one is regional, drawing participants from parishes all over the area. A magnet for young adults seeking Ignatian spirituality and a focus on their demographic. Goal is to welcome young adults to the Catholic Church in general
- Another unique aspect: close relationship and frequent consultation with Fr. Tri Dinh, SJ, visionary director of Christus Ministries in LA area. Fr. Dinh's ministry to welcome and create a home for young Catholics is statewide and he has a following that brings people to St. Ignatius YA events. He puts on their retreats and travels here often. He is NOT paid by St. Ignatius Parish.

Budget:

2017-2018 **\$12,450** (not including Amanda's salary)

2018-2019 **\$2,300** (general budget cuts because of capital campaign loan payments)

Communication:

- Primary communication with members is via a dedicated Facebook account run by Amanda and the leadership team
- Also use Instagram and their own email distribution list on Mailchimp
- For general interest events, YA Ministry uses the bulletin and some pulpit announcements
- Parish website

What we do well:

- Create a Catholic home for young adults that accepts everyone as they are
- Host a variety of events that tailor to our demographic (e.g., Java Jazz and Jesus, 2nd Sunday “Linger” event)
- Host small-scale and fun fundraisers for the parish

What we wish we could do / vision / struggles:

- Trying to make the leadership team and other young adults more visible at Mass as lectors, EMs, greeters, etc.
- Struggling to find more YAs willing to help with planning and events; trying to create more committees
- Be more family friendly, more LGBTQ friendly
- Our retreat is very expensive to put on; would like to find ways to offset the cost for retreatants so those with a desire but little money can attend
- Trying to find an easy way for young adults to make small donations electronically (“toss in a few bucks for an event”). Many don’t carry cash, many use Venmo but that doesn’t work for a nonprofit group
- Struggle to make the ministry financially sustainable especially after budget cut

What we need, what we ask of the Parish:

- Support our fundraisers
- Shift the culture of the parish to be more welcoming to young adults, young families, LGBTQ
- Help with publicity: creating flyers, videos that reach the youth, social media to promote outreach
- Donors/benefactors
- A priest with a specific dedication to Young Adult Ministry; Fr. Phil Ganir, SJ once served this role. Amanda says, “Many young adults yearn to speak with a priest. As a lay person, I don’t have the background.” She notes that Fr. Dave Ayotte in particular has been supportive but this is not his primary focus.