

Liturgical Guidelines for the Ministerial Participation of Youth and Millennials

This brief guideline is to assist every parish in our Archdiocese in the task of reaching out and encouraging the liturgical participation of the Youth and Millennials in our parishes. The upcoming Vatican Synod on the Youth 2018 is calling parish leadership to be especially attentive to this particular age and culture.

Every parish of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles is composed of many cultural groups:

- Various language groups or ethnic cultures
- Children
- Teenage Youth
- Millennials who are single
- Families with small children
- Elderly single people
- Elderly couples
- Persons with Disabilities
- Recent Immigrants
- Long time parishioners
- New Parishioners
- and the list could go on and on!

Parish leadership needs to always be aware of the composition of their membership, and regularly attend to, and be inclusive of all groups and individuals

People of any age feel welcome in a parish when they regularly see others like themselves at Mass.

This is especially the case for youth (born 1999-2003) and millennials (born 1984-1999). Here is a checklist for ensuring that parish liturgy is inclusive, and that parish leadership focuses time and energy in mentoring new life :

1. Every parish needs to ensure that youth and millennial age ministers are visible at all Masses in the following liturgical ministries:
 - Greeters
 - Ushers
 - Lectors
 - Eucharistic Ministers
 - Musicians
 - Altar Servers
2. Commitment to participation in the liturgical ministries does not happen with a general bulletin or Sunday announcement. It happens through PERSONAL INVITATION.
3. Regular and consistent communication with liturgical ministers strengthens their commitment. Inconsistent communication will diminish their willingness to participate.
4. To engage youth and millennials in the Mass requires the same attention to liturgical preparation as for any other age or culture.
5. **Recharge your ritual battery!** Every parish needs to be sure that the ritual actions and liturgical symbols of the Mass are expressive and engaging. This requires careful preparation by the parish liturgy committee and all liturgical ministers. Thorough preparation and communication with everyone involved, as well as rehearsal when necessary, need to be a priority. Here are a few simple suggestions:

- Assign people at the doors of the building to welcome the church as she gathers.
- Be sure that everything everyone says and does communicates: “All are welcome!”
- Hold the processional cross high and proudly so we can see and know and feel who it is that we follow.
- In the opening procession, walk slowly and prayerfully. Make your feet say: “Come, walk with me. Come and see.”
- Sing all the verses of the opening hymn.
- Trust the liturgy. Let the symbols speak on their own! Do not explain them. Just do them! Too many words makes the liturgy a lesson to be learned rather than a vision to be shared, or a journey of the heart.
- Be sure your parish lectors are proclaiming God’s word with strength and conviction, not just offering a public reading. Please be sure that all parish lectors have received Office for Worship basic training in their ministry, and participate in annual renewal sessions.
- Musicians need to be rehearsed and ready for each musical moment of the Mass. Please be sure that the musicians of your parish from each Mass have all the resources and training they need. Also, please be sure they are registered with the Office for Worship.
- Please be sure that assembly song is a priority for your musicians, your liturgy committee, you and all the leadership in your parish.
- Let the many moments in the liturgy that call for silence be still and meaningful moments.
- Please be sure that every detail of each Mass is carefully prepared and organized. Be sure that you have a parish liturgy committee to assist with this work. This group can manage the ministries and ensure that there are enough ministers to cover each Mass. Please be sure that the members of your committee are effectively prepared to serve in this ministry and regularly renewed spiritually.

Finally, what does the general leadership of your parish look like? Are the youth and millennial-aged members invited into leadership and decision-making positions on the Pastoral Council? **Liturgy committee**