

Executive Summary

Proposal: St. Isidore Parish Center for Youth Catechesis

This proposal begins by distinguishing between two terms – Youth Group and Youth Ministry. A Youth Group is a particular catechetical tool used to evangelize young people. Youth Ministry is a collection of catechetical approaches designed to serve all parish youth. This proposal addresses the needs of our parish Youth Ministry, not merely a Youth Group.

Physical Specifications

- The 5,500 SF space located in a secure building retail space at 78 Stratford Drive. The building has space for two tenants. The other space is currently occupied.
- The space would hold five catechetical formation rooms, office, recreation center, chapel, and large group meeting room.
- The catechetical formation rooms replicate the home learning environment preferred by our youth, while enabling the proper supervision of our catechetical programs now absent, and recommended as a “best-practice.”
- The space centralizes information, reinforces program promotion, and streamlines communication, which are frequently complicated by our current arrangement (meeting in homes and several on-site meeting rooms).

Program Proposal

- The Center for Youth Catechesis would open five days a week from 3:00 PM to 9:30 PM (Sun through Thurs), and be available for seminars and special meetings on Fri and Sat.
- The center would be open for research, preparation, and recreation from 3 to 6 PM.
- At 6 PM, the first session of every evening would begin, ending at 7:15 PM.
- Youth involved in the second session would arrive at 7:15, and students from both sessions will participate in evening prayer every night at 7:20 PM.
- The second session would begin at 7:45 PM and end at 9:00 PM.
- With 5 formation rooms, there would be 10 sessions available per night, 50 per week.

Security and Supervision

Every student entering the space will check-in and check-out using a bar-code scanning system, automatically issues a message to parents and creating a log of attendees.

The center will be monitored nightly with a ratio of 1 adult to every 4-8 youths.

Rationale

- We currently hold 40 classes for 350 students utilizing over 100 volunteers for Junior High and Confirmation formation in private homes. Supervision of these environments by our staff is compromised because of schedule and distance. Supervision is considered a “best-practice” for a safe environment (VIRTUS guidelines adopted by diocese).
- The scope of the project proposal is adequate. 80% of the spaces’ resource will be utilized to meet the current needs of our youth catechetical program, leaving room for 20% growth prospectus for programs involving students in grades 10, 11, and 12. We cannot begin to reach the number one parish goal of 300 youth participating voluntarily in youth ministry activities until we meet the needs of the 350 youth who are being underserved.
- All known successful youth formation programs have a “youth space.” The space maximizes the use of resources, streamlines communication, and builds a youth identity, echoing our Catholic belief that youth are created in the image of God and vital to our community, versus society which belittles youth as insignificant, useless, and lazy. To not have an adequate youth facility would equate to asking the choir to practice for Sunday Mass in homes without a piano, and to ask a basketball team to practice without a hoop.