

# SERVICE-BASED MINISTRY

## The 'Why':

Jesus calls us to demonstrate our faith by the way we care for our neighbours. He challenges us to let the light of our faith shine so brightly that our actions will draw people toward God. Jesus sets the example of service-based ministry by combining his teaching with actions that served the people in practical ways; such as healing their sicknesses and feeding them when they had no food. This is particularly appropriate for young people, who place a high priority on their immediate and practical needs. The best way to draw children and youth toward God is to demonstrate our love for them in action in the community, and inviting them to grow in faith by joining in the action.

Relevant

## The Practice:

- The parish focuses its time, talent and energy on serving the children and youth of the community in practical ways.
- The parish identifies groups in the community that already serve the needs of children and youth, and partners with these groups in order to strengthen their service.
- The teaching, study and ministry of the parish encourage faith in action toward all the 'neighbours' in the community, not just children/youth.
- The parish provides opportunities for children/youth to serve their communities' needs alongside the members of the parish.

## The Keys to Success:

- Manage your expectations. The Goal of Service-Based Ministry is to draw people to God through practical demonstrations of God's love. You plant that seed without knowing how, when, or where that plant will grow. Many people came to Jesus in the hope that he would serve a practical need, such as healing: some stayed to hear his teaching and grow in their faith, but some walked away once their practical needs had been met.
- Remember that action is a door into faith. Ensure that people who are attracted to your church by practical demonstrations of love have an opportunity to encounter the source of that love: God. This can be accomplished through events, workshops or study series at your church that are designed to be an introduction to the Christian faith.
- Remember that the Gospel is the source of love. Teach this by word and example, so that the acts of service never take precedence over the Gospel.

## The Plan for My Parish...

What are the needs of the children/youth in our community?

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How do these needs relate to the Gospel?

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Where is God already at work in the lives of children/youth in our community?

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How can we serve the needs of the children/youth of our community?

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How can we provide opportunities for children/youth build a relationship with God?

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How can we provide opportunities for children/youth to serve others?

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