

TEN FUNDRAISING IDEAS FOR CHILD & YOUTH MINISTRY

1. Pie Sale: The weekend before Thanksgiving, our youth group takes orders for pies (pumpkin, pecan, creamy peanut butter, rhubarb). We get donations for the ingredients and spend two days making homemade crusts and baking pies. Since the ingredients are all donated, this event is 100 percent profit. We have a large grocery chain reclaim center in our town that generally donates several hundred pounds of flour, sugar, spices, and other ingredients. For any other ingredients we need, we ask for donations.

2. Community Auction: We raised \$1,500 in an afternoon by auctioning off items that community businesses were glad to give us. Our youth went around to the businesses with fliers explaining what the mission trip was all about. Businesses were so generous! They donated things like a weekend stay at a bed-and-breakfast, yards of bark mulch were delivered—many businesses donated. It was great. We advertised the auction, held it in the town hall, and people had fun bidding! We got two adults who everyone in the community knows to be the auctioneers, and the kids were runners with the items. Worked great!

3. Taking Stock in Youth: We sell "stocks" to members of our congregation. Congregation members invest in the future of our youth because we are building the leaders of tomorrow. Stocks sell for the following prices: Gold—\$72, Silver—\$42, and Bronze—\$15. In addition to their investment in the youths' future, stockholders receive "dividends" throughout the year. These include sub sandwiches, a car wash, an ice cream social, a pancake breakfast, youth labour, May Basket delivery, and a stockholders' dinner. Dividends vary depending on the level of stock purchases. People who are not stockholders are allowed to participate in all the dividends (except the dinner) for a donation. While there's still a lot of work involved in doing these fund-raisers, we already know upfront how much money we have, and there's no pressure to make a certain amount of money on any event.

4. Church Garage Sale: Church members donate their items, and the sale is advertised and open to the general public. We set up the items inside the church in a large lobby and multipurpose worship/meeting area, but we don't price anything—the items are all sold through a freewill offering. Rarely do we have any conflict over price. Some people give too much, others give too little, but in the end, it all works out. Any items leftover at the end of the sale are donated to local organizations like the Salvation Army or homeless agencies. We set the sale up Friday and run the sale Saturday. The youth help with the whole thing.

5. Mother's Day Flower Sales: We have an arrangement with a local nursery to provide us with potted flowers at cost for Mother's Day. The nursery offers us a variety of colors of geraniums, petunias, and fuchsias in pots or hanging baskets. Flowers are brought in the two weeks before Mother's Day to allow people to see them and pre-order the ones they want. Then the Friday afternoon before Mother's Day, the flowers arrive and we label each plant with the buyer's name. Flowers may be picked up after the labelling is finished (it usually takes an hour), or they can be picked up after worship on Sunday. The remaining flowers are placed in the sanctuary to decorate for Mother's Day.

The best way to fund your child and youth ministry is to include it in your parish's annual budget. This will identify the ministry as a priority of the parish and it will let the leaders know how much money they have available for the ministry. It will also eliminate the need for children and youth to fundraise for their own ministry, or parents to bear the cost for each activity.

The fundraising ideas in this document are from:

www.groupworkcamps.com
1-800-385-4545

Group Workcamps Foundation has been offering youth mission trips since 1977.

6. Work for Work? Beginning in January, we spent almost every Saturday at the homes of church members and friends performing a variety of jobs. We cleaned inside and outside houses, picked up sticks, cleaned out garages, prepared flowerbeds for summer, and did minor construction projects. We raised over \$3,500. How did we get jobs? By announcing in church (using newsletters, e-mail, presentations, and announcements from the pulpit) that our group wanted to earn money for a mission trip by doing work projects. An unexpected benefit from doing this fund-raiser was the positive relationships that were created between our youth group and adults in our church who don't usually "hang out" with students.

7. Chilli Cook-Off: We had a Chilli Cook-Off at our church. It was easy to do because the congregation did all the work. We announced the cook-off to the congregation, and asked them either to bring a pot of their own chilli to be judged or just come to taste everyone else's chilli. We chose different categories like spiciest, most original, best vegetarian, and so on. We charged \$5 to come and taste all the different types of chilli and vote for their favourites. The youth group provided cornbread, drinks, and toppings (like cheese and sour cream). Awards were given to the winners (we chose to give out certificates). We also bought some disposable Tupperware and sold containers of leftover chilli to go. The Cook-Off concluded with a Dessert Auction. People brought their homemade cakes, pies, and cookies, and we auctioned them.

8. Talent Show/Auction: Our youth group has an annual Talent Show/Auction. The youth and any interested people from our congregation sing, dance, perform skits, and so on for the program portion of the evening. Afterwards, we auction off bake sale items and services. Examples of auctioned items include casseroles, cakes, pies, and special desserts. Examples of services include yard work, pressure washing of homes, dinners for four, and a fondue dinner for six. The Talent Show is a big attraction, and over 80 percent of the congregation comes and brings friends and extended family. Our youth group has made \$4,000.

9. Wednesday Fellowship Dinner: Our youth group meets every Wednesday from 6:30 p.m. to 8:15 p.m. But, before our youth group meeting, we prepare a home-style meal for our congregation members and their friends. The dinner is open to anyone who wants a good meal for a good price. We charge \$5 for adults, \$2.50 for children under 11, and no charge for children under 2. We serve dinner from 5:30 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. The youth are responsible for helping cook, serve, and clean up. As youth leader, I'm "head" cook and I usually start cooking around 3 p.m. Our menus vary—baked chicken, spaghetti, meatloaf, soups, chili—basically good, old-fashioned, home-style meals. The dinners have become an opportunity for the youth to raise money, and for our congregation to enjoy fellowship and food. We have families and individuals ranging in age from 2 years old to 90 years old. For each dinner, we average about 50 to 60 persons and earn about \$75.

10. Loose Change Collection About two months before our mission trip, we put out a large vase and a "thermometer" drawn on a piece of poster board. We tell the congregation our goal is to collect \$800 in loose change to pay for gas. Members dump change in each week, and we take it to the bank, marking the thermometer so people can see how close we are to the goal. This is an incredibly easy no overhead fund-raiser that gets everyone involved.