

A Simple Guide to and Resources for a Youth Retreat

by the Pastoral Planning Office
Catholic Diocese of Parramatta

Outline for a retreat:

- Ascertain the need and purpose for a retreat
- Select the theme for the retreat, centred on Scripture and Tradition
- Plan for related songs and music
- Include and integrate sacramental life e.g. confession, Mass and adoration
- Identify strong leaders with communication and organisational skills
- Discern leaders of presentations and those better in small groups or as part of the wider support team
- Plan for small group discussions, usually with a leader per group to encourage faith sharing and reflection
- You may decide to include workshops on particular themes or aspects of Christian or Church life
- Incorporate elements of silent time and dedicated prayer
- Include time for recreation and social interaction, keeping in mind especially those who may be newcomers to the life of the parish or youth group

Logistical issues

- Leaders must have a Working with Children Check (there are different forms for volunteers and people who are paid). Contact Catholic Youth Parramatta, the Office for Safeguarding and Children Protection (02 8838 3423), and visit <https://wwccheck.cyp.nsw.gov.au/Applicants/Application>
- Parental consent forms for under 18's
- Photo disclosure statements
- First Aid provisions and
- A report structure in the event of an accident or injury
- Insurance - most or all retreat centres will have insurance but this must be checked
- Guideline of stipends for presentations provided by Religious. This is provided by Catholic Religious Australia (CRA). This guide is provided to parishes as information only in their planning for adult formation. In many cases external speakers, religious and otherwise, are pleased to provide input for an honorarium or rates far less than those outlined by CRA, or even *pro bono* depending on circumstance. The appropriate budget for external speakers in a parish context is usually determined by the parish priest in consultation with youth ministers and parish finance committees. The CRA guidelines for religious are available online at this website: <http://www.catholicreligiousaustralia.org/index.php/resources/ministerial-stipends>

Resources for youth retreats

Provided below are Catholic movements and individuals dedicated to youth outreach and young adult faith formation. They are able to provide support tailored to the specific needs of the retreat, from suitable speakers, to resources to compliment the retreat.

Catholic Youth Parramatta (CYP)

Director: James Camden

Assistant Director: Sr Rosie Drum MGL

Contact: (02) 8838 3428 or (02) 8838 3418

Email: jcamden@parra.catholic.org.au

Catholic Youth Parramatta is the official agency serving youth and young adults in the Catholic Diocese of Parramatta. CYP is called to animate, support, resource and accompany parishes, schools, faith communities and leaders in their ministry to young people.

Donnie Velasco at the Institute for Mission (IFM)

Donnie Velasco is the Program Planning Coordinator at the Institute for Mission. Working alongside Fr Paul Roberts, his role includes development and delivery of the IFM's adult faith formation programs and initiatives. Prior to joining the IFM, his career and his background were in HR management. Currently he is also an active leader at St Andrew's Parish in Marayong, with over 15 year's involvement in leadership, youth ministry and planning and running youth events. Contact Donnie at (02) 9831 4911 or email donnie.velasco@ifm.org.au

YMT - Youth Mission Team Sydney

Manager: Peter Dominish

Email: sydney@ymt.com.au

Phone: 0428 771 744; (02) 9639 3961

Website: www.ymt.com.au

The Youth Mission Team is a retreat agency focusing on senior high school students, aiming to empower young people to live life to the full through a personal relationship with God; a realisation of their own value; and a respect for the dignity of others.

NET - Net Ministries can be reached through CYS (Catholic Youth Services)

Net Co-ordinator and Special Projects Officer: Natalie Ambrose

Contact: (02) 9764 4357

NET visit schools and run retreat days as well as events for young adults.

Parousia Media

Parousia Media strives to bring the message of faith and formation to Catholics and individuals across Australia. They provide media outlets, bookstores, schools, universities, teachers, catechists and individuals with quality Catholic resources in CD, DVD and Book formats.

They also coordinate national tours and events, inviting international speakers and prominent figures to address audiences of all ages, creeds and cultures. Visit their website at www.parousiamedia.com to see the resources on offer.

CFCA - Couples for Christ Australia

Couples for Christ Australia (CFCA) is a family lay renewal movement within the Church. It provides the Church in Australia with faith renewal programs aimed at personal, family, parish and Church renewal by offering an 8-week parish retreat, weekend youth camps, marriage enrichment retreats, family enrichment retreats, singles weekends, a 13-week Christian Life Program, pastoral formation teachings and weekly small cell group meetings all over the country. The community provides ongoing formation for its members in various ministries. The National Office of Couples for Christ Australia is located in the Blacktown CBD. For further information, contact the National Office by phone on (02) 9831 4044 or visit their website: www.cfcaustralia.org

Suggested Retreat Centres:

- Benedict XVI Retreat Centre, Grose Vale
Website: www.benedictxvicentre.org.au
Phone: (02) 4572 2899
- Mount Schoenstatt Spirituality Centre, Mulgoa
Website: www.schoenstatt.org.au
Phone: (02) 4773 8338
- 'Winbourne' Edmund Rice Retreat Centre, Mulgoa
Email: manager@winbourne.org
Phone: (02) 4773 5555
- The Collaroy Centre, Collaroy
Website: www.collaroycentre.org.au
Phone: (02) 9982 9800
- The Tops Conference Centre, Stanwell Tops
Website: www.thetops.com.au
Phone: (02) 4294 1430
- Uniting Venues at Naamaroo, Elanora, and North Parramatta
Website: www.unitingvenues.org
- Teen Ranch, Cobbity (near Narellan)
Website: www.teenranch.com.au
Email: info@teenranch.com.au