

*“Good Teacher, what must I do
to inherit eternal life?” [Mk 10:17]*



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**NATIONAL YOUTH DAY 2010
FORMATION PROGRAM**

Episcopal Commission on Youth
Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines

The second precept says "... shaped by an encounter with Christ..." Can you honestly say you have encountered Christ in this NYD celebration? *The facilitator again asks the assembly to shout their response.*

If everyone says yes, then, we are ready to accept the challenge.

The facilitator leads the participants to come up with a concrete plan, considering the great and urgent challenges listed by the Holy Father essential for the life of the world:

- *use of the earth's resources and respect of ecology*
- *fair distribution of goods and control of financial mechanisms;*
- *solidarity with poor countries*
- *fight against world hunger*
- *greater respect for the dignity of human labor*
- *service to the culture of life*
- *building of peace between peoples*
- *interfaith dialogue*
- *proper use of social communications*

It could be an individual plan for a small project or concrete act of service to others, especially those in need. It could also be a group plan for a small project or concrete act of service to the community.

The facilitator may also consider focusing on one challenge that is a reality in their context.

The facilitator should plan well and ahead of time for this part of the session. He/she must be ready to give few examples or practices (service/project) to guide the participants in their individual or group plan of action/s.

His/her word of encouragement for the participants is crucial at this point, citing that this is a real response to Christ's invitation.

4. Eucharistic Celebration

The session ends with the Eucharistic Celebration. The Gospel text for this is taken from the Gospel of Mark, chapter 10 verses 17-22. Recessional song could be Tell the World of His Love, or any other appropriate song.



EPISCOPAL COMMISSION ON YOUTH
Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines



MESSAGE

"Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" [Mk 10:17]

As we begin the Traditional Aguinaldo Masses in preparation for the coming of the Lord Jesus on Christmas Day, we once again celebrate **National Youth Day**.

But there is a particular uniqueness to this year's National Youth Day because on this day, 16 December 2010, we officially launch the declaration of **2011 as "CBCP Year of the Youth"** by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines in their 101st Plenary Assembly last July 2010, in celebration of the **25th Anniversary of the CBCP-Episcopal Commission on Youth**. As you may well know, the ECY was created in July 1986.

The youth constitute a large and dynamic portion of the laity, says the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines (cf. PCP II, art. 50). They compose a big part of our Philippine population – more than 50% – making us a Church of the young. It has always been acknowledged that they are the future of the country and of the Church as well. But they are also already very much a part of the present of the Church and society. Hence, much is expected of them in terms of what they can do to contribute to the betterment and progress of the Church and the world at large.

Through the years, young people have shown how important they are, and how gifted they can be as they place these gifts at the service of God and neighbor.

Without doubt, the youth can and do make a very significant impact on the life and activity of the church and the society as powerful catalysts of change. But it is also a sad truth that many of our young are exploited and treated unjustly. A good number of them live under abject poverty; others fall victim to drug addiction, child labor and prostitution. Many of them feel abandoned by the institutions that are supposed to take care of and protect them – the Church included, we must humbly admit.

During this **CBCP Year of the Youth**, let us together work to intensify awareness about the youth and their importance to the life and activity of the Church. By our witness let us help the young in our midst – in our homes, schools, communities, etc – to find God in their lives and generously answer His call to service and love.

Let us ask the Lord through the intercession of Mary, to teach us have a special love for the youth and to protect their rights and legitimate interests. Let us pray that there may be wider participation and greater dedication in youth ministry, leading to a meaningful and fruitful service that is undertaken with the “fullest attention and highest priority in every way by all in the Church” (PCP II, art. 50).

Happy Year of the Youth, dear young people!

Isang mapagpalang Pasko sa inyong lahat!

+ JOEL Z. BAYLON
Bishop of Legazpi
Chairman of the CBCP-Episcopal Commission on Youth

minutes, the groups change roles. The blockers now become the runners and vice-versa. The game may be played for two to three rounds. The group that has the most number of points wins the game.

After the game, the participants are invited to assemble in the plenary area.

2. Synthesis

The facilitator asks the participants the following questions: How did you feel while going through the blockers? when you successfully reached the other side?

In real life, we also encounter several blockers as we try to reach our goals.

What/Who are your blockers? How does it feel to be blocked?
How did you successfully manage the blocks and reach your goal?

Pope Benedict says that to be young means having to face many problems: unemployment, lack of clear ideas and real possibilities for the future. Despite these difficulties, he inspires us not to be discouraged and give up on our dreams. Instead, he motivates us to “cultivate all the more your heart’s great desire for fellowship, justice, and peace.”

To do this, he proposes some concrete steps: Be strong in faith. This will give us the courage to face the path of life and to take on family and professional responsibilities. Try hard to build the future by paying attention to your personal development and studies, so that you will be able to serve others competently and generously.

3. Accepting the Challenge

The Holy Father affirms you and your capacities in shaping the world. He said, “If you are willing, the future lies in your hands because the talents and gifts that the Lord has placed in your hearts, shaped by our encounter with Christ, can bring real hope to the world.”

There are certain precepts that he pointed out. First, the sentence starts with “If you are willing...” Are you willing? *The facilitator asks the assembly to shout their response.*

Meet the Challenge

Session 4

Objectives

At the end of this session, the participants will be able to:

- have a vision of their dreams in life;
- have realized that talents are God's gift to them;
- be bearers of God's hope by serving the common good competently and generously (doing everything for the greater glory of God).

Materials Needed

- Chalk, for marking the area with lines

Time Element: 1 hour

Flow

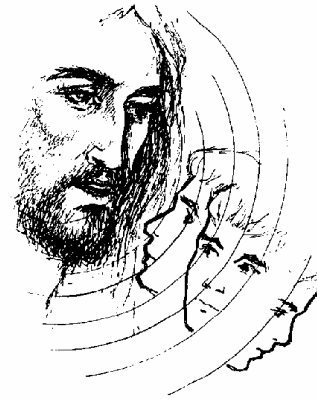
1. Activity: "Maramihang Patintero!"

This game requires a big space and a maximum of 100 participants. If there are more than 100 young people, the assembly is divided into clusters. Each cluster is given a spacious area for this game. A cluster facilitator may be assigned to guide each cluster through the activity.

Each cluster is divided into two groups. One group acts as blockers and the other group, as runners. The objective is for the runners to reach the other side of the area. The game area is marked with straight lines, as in the Filipino game, Patintero.

The blockers, while staying on the lines, prevent the runners from going to the other side of the base. The runners are given two minutes to cross the area. Once a runner is caught by a blocker, he/she is out of the game.

The number of runners who are able to successfully get to the other side of the base corresponds to the number of points that the team gets. After two



*Good Teacher, what must I do
to inherit eternal life?"*

[Mk 10:17]

CONCEPTUAL PLAN

Theme

The celebration of National Youth Day (NYD) 2010 is rooted on the Message of the Holy Father on the occasion of the XXV World Youth Day (WYD).

The Scripture verse, "**Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?**" [Mk 10:17], taken by Pope Benedict XVI as text for this WYD 2010 message, serves as the underlying theme for the observance of NYD 2010.

Rationale

In the Philippines, the NYD is a day assigned by the Church as a special day for her great treasure, the youth. Traditionally set every 16th of December, this becomes an occasion for activities and events which highlight the Church's preferential love for the youth.

The youth ministries in the dioceses and organizations spearhead the programs and undertakings in this regard, including the setting aside of the Mass collections during this day for the youth ministry.

CBCP Year of the Youth (16 December 2010 – 16 December 2011)

This year, the NYD has a special flavor as 16 December 2010 marks the start of a double celebration: the CBCP Year of the Youth and the 25th Anniversary of

the CBCP-Episcopal Commission on Youth (ECY).

Together with this module is a copy of the special liturgy prepared for 16 December 2010, the first day of the Misa de Gallo. The liturgy is offered for the use of all parishes, vicariates, dioceses, and youth organizations all over the Philippines to launch the double celebration.

Objectives

The NYD 2010, through this formation program prepared by the CBCP-ECY, is envisioned to be an occasion for the youth to:

- + reflect on the message of the Holy Father to the young people of the world on the occasion of the XXV World Youth Day;
- + look back at their life's journey and encounter Christ as a co-journeyer;
- + appreciate their God-given gifts and talents;
- + discover God's plan, and respond courageously to His call to live life fully.

Time element

This program is designed for a time element of one full day.

Mode of celebration

Date of undertaking this formation program is 16 December 2010, or any day near it, in the level of the dioceses or organizations, or in other local levels, e.g. vicariate, parish, school, youth group, etc.

The program may also be adapted in the celebration of other youth events, such as Diocesan Youth Day. In this case, it is necessary to orient the participants about the NYD.

Sessions

This module unfolds in four sessions, plus an introductory session at the start of the program.

- A. Opening Session
 1. Warming Up Activity

do not place a limit on our happiness, but shows us how to concretely find it.

In the New Testament, Jesus sums the Commandments into one great commandment "You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, and with your whole soul, and with your whole mind, and with your whole strength; you shall love your neighbor as yourself." [Lk 10:27]

4. My Covenant with God

We have been reminded of the commandments and how important these are in our lives.

What we are going to do is to write our own Ten Commandments patterned after the one that God gave to Moses, but specific and particular to our personal lives.

Background music may be played while the participants are writing their answers.

Let us look at our activity sheet. Are we happy with what we have written? How did we come up with these set of commandments? Are we willing to follow these commandments? How will these help us in our everyday life?

Our Ten Commandments reflect how we respond to God's call. As mentioned by Pope Benedict XVI in his message, these are the way to authentic love. If we are keeping the commandments, we are living a life of happiness. By living a life of happiness, we are being witnesses of God's love, thus, fulfilling the response to be His co-journeyer.

5. Closing Prayer

As we continue being co-journeyers of Jesus, let us embrace the reminders that God has given us by placing the activity sheet over our heart.

The Facilitator leads a spontaneous prayer asking for God's guidance as everyone keeps promises to be guided by the Ten Commandments.

Now, let us take a third look at the Ten Commandments and understand them in more simple words yet in a deeper way.

I.	I am the Lord your God. You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you serve.	<i>Put God first in your life. Worship him only.</i>
II.	You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.	<i>Use God's name with respect. Do not curse, do not say bad words.</i>
III.	Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day.	<i>Go to Mass. Receive Communion. Go to confession. Do your Christian duties.</i>
IV.	Honor your father and your mother.	<i>Respect your parents and the elders.</i>
V.	You shall not kill.	<i>Do not hurt other people.</i>
VI.	You shall not commit adultery.	<i>Be faithful in your vocation and in marriage. Observe the law of the Church regarding marriage.</i>
VII.	You shall not steal.	<i>Do not take what is not yours.</i>
VIII.	You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.	<i>Do not lie.</i>
IX.	You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.	<i>Do not desire your neighbor's spouse.</i>
X.	You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.	<i>Do not be envious of others' possessions.</i>

Our world today advocates freedom detached from values and norms and encourages us to refuse these limits and conform to what the society dictates or to what immediately satisfies our desires. When we do this, we become more enslaved to earthly possessions: money, drugs, personal pleasures and other entrapments. These are not the way to true freedom and authentic happiness.

During the first session, we have decided to take the trip with Jesus because he alone is our happiness. In the second session, Jesus invites us and all of us must have said yes. This third session concretely tells us how to fulfill our response.

God gives us the Commandments because he wants to bring us to true freedom and happiness, to build a Kingdom of love, justice and peace. They

2. Welcome Message
3. Orientation About the NYD
4. Guided Reading of the Message of the Holy Father on Occasion of the XXV World Youth Day

B. Session 1: Tuning Up with Christ

1. Introduction
2. Activity: Trip Ko 'To
3. The Story of a Young Man
4. Synthesis
5. Closing Song

C. Session 2: Come and Follow Me

1. Introduction
2. Activity: This is Me
3. Sharing
4. Processing
5. Closing Ritual

D. Session 3: The Way to Authentic Love

1. Introduction
2. Activity: Tablet of the Commandments
3. Processing
4. My Covenant with God
5. Closing Prayer

E. Session 4: Accepting the Challenge

1. Activity: Maramihang Patintero
2. Synthesis
3. Accepting the Challenge
4. Eucharistic Celebration

Youth Ministry Awareness Week

The week preceding the NYD (i.e. 9-15 December) is celebrated as Youth Ministry Awareness Week*. This celebration is spearheaded by the respective Regional Youth Coordinating Councils.

* The NYCC2003 Resolutions, which was unanimously approved by the ECY, provides for the celebration of the Youth Ministry Awareness Week.

Important Notes

Roles and Responsibilities

1. **Main Facilitator:** A youth minister who spearheads the implementation of the entire program. He/She steers the entire Organizing Team towards providing the participants with a meaningful experience of the NYD 2010 celebration. In the level of the diocese, this role is suitable for the Diocesan Youth Director.
2. **Organizing Team:** Composed of youth ministers and leaders together with the Main Facilitator, and entrusted with the mission of implementing the NYD 2009 formation program. Each of them works on specific areas connected to the program, such as animation, preparation of materials, training of facilitators, etc.
3. **Emcees:** Youth ministers or leaders who lend assistance in guiding the participants in the sessions in plenary, and those parts of the program which are outside the modules. They may also be facilitators.

More specific roles are identified in the modules.

Logistics

Overall, this program requires the following:

1. A suitable venue, spacious for moving around and for small group sharing, with smaller venues where clusters can have their cluster sessions;
2. Sound system;
3. Audio-visual equipment (LCD projector, computer, etc.).

Other materials are indicated in the modules.

If writing materials (i.e. pen, journal and some pieces of paper) will not be provided for the participants, it is important that they are pre-informed to bring their own.

Pieces of papers containing phrases from the Ten Commandments are distributed (each commandment is divided into at least two phrases depending on the number of participants per group). The goal is to post these pieces of papers to complete the Ten Commandments.

The group that finishes sits down.

The Ten Commandments

(abridged version by St. Augustine)

- I. I am the Lord your God. You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you serve.
- II. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
- III. Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day.
- IV. Honor your father and your mother.
- V. You shall not kill.
- VI. You shall not commit adultery.
- VII. You shall not steal.
- VIII. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
- IX. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.
- X. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

In a lively manner, the facilitator acknowledges the group that finished the game first by giving them a clap. He/She also acknowledges everyone who participated in the game.

3. Processing

This activity tells us how much we know of the Ten Commandments.

Pope Benedict XVI says the Ten Commandments are essential points of reference if we are to live in love, if we are to plan on a life with Christ as our co-journeyer. If we wish for a life of authentic happiness, God has given us these commandments to refer to and to form our conscience with.

Let us once again take a look at them and read loudly but reverently.

Everyone reads the Ten Commandments.

The Way to Authentic Love

Session 3

Objectives

At the end of this session, each of the participants will be able to:

- recall the Ten Commandments;
- respond to the challenges of the Commandments;
- commit to a personal covenant with the Lord.

Materials Needed

- Three sets of phrases from the Ten Commandments
- 3 drawings of a big tablet on a manila paper
- Activity Sheet: My Covenant with God
- paste, double adhesive tapes, or scotch tapes
- Reflective music

Time Element: 45 minutes

Flow

1. Introduction

Jesus reminded the rich young man that it is necessary to obey the Commandments in order to inherit eternal life.

The first challenge that comes to us is, “What are the Commandments?”

2. Activity: “Tablet of the Commandments”

This activity is in the form of a game. The assembly is divided into three small groups.

On the board is a tablet similar to the one discovered by Moses, with Roman numerals I – X.

Handouts for Participants

Handouts for participants are printed in loose sheets while the Message of the Holy Father is printed as a booklet. The organizers can easily re-print and use these materials.

1. Message of the Holy Father on the Occasion of the XXV World Youth Day
2. What is the National Youth Day
3. First Session Activity Sheet: “Trip ko ‘To!”
4. Gospel Passage: Mark 10: 17-22
5. First Session Reflectionnaire
6. Second Session Activity Sheet: “This is Me”
7. Third Session Activity Sheet “My Covenant with God”

Additional Activities

According to the need of the participants and the initiatives of the Organizers, this program welcomes additional activities which are relevant (the participants need it), connected (it is linked with the program flow), and purposeful (the program becomes richer with it).

Number of Participants

Young people are welcome to participate; this is for them! However, to facilitate the flow of the program, and perhaps, also to consider the size of the venue, the number of participants need to be limited to a maximum of 400 persons; more than this number would require a simultaneous program to be held at another venue, or on a separate day.

Notes for the Organizing Team

Though your roles are specific and distinct, it is important that each one of you in the Organizing Team has a full grasp of the program. Following are concrete proposals to guide you as you assume your critical roles in this program:

a. ***Know the WYD 2010 Message by heart, and make it your own.***

It is beneficial for you to read and reflect on the Holy Father's Message. Consider it personally addressed to you. Keep it present in your mind and heart everywhere and at all times. This will surely lead you to effectively carry out your role in this program.

b. ***Go through the whole process of each session over and over again!***

Practice what you are going to say; write down your thoughts if necessary.

c. ***Be constantly present.***

As you would notice, there are sessions or moments in a session where you will not have a direct task. However, it is helpful to be constantly present, actively participating in the activities, listening to the inputs or sharings. Be open to assist your teammates as needed (e.g. distributing handouts, animating, etc.).

d. ***Pray.***

It is God's work you partake in this NYD 2010 celebration, so remain always connected to the Master. Pray to the Holy Spirit to guide you, the rest of the Organizing Team, and the participants, along a meaningful NYD 2009 journey.

❖ How do I respond to His invitation?

With full confidence in God who loves us, let us respond to His invitation.

We know that it is only in Christ that life becomes meaningful.

We shall express this response prayerfully by writing it on sheets on the wall where we find an image of Jesus. As we write our response, let us pray that who we are and what we have and do may always come from and find center in Jesus.

A big image of Jesus, or a drawing of the Sacred Heart, is posted in front. When the activity starts, the facilitator leads the participants, by twos or threes, to approach and write around or in the image. Appropriate song may be played, e.g. Pilgrim's Theme / Sa 'Yo Lamang / Panunumpa.

that they received from God. If “age” or “youthfulness” is not cited, the facilitator leads them to appreciate that as young people, their age is in itself their greatest treasure.

Our youthful age is in itself our greatest treasure – not only for ourselves, but for others, for the Church and for the world. Being a young person is God’s greatest gift to us! It is a time when we make crucial choices about how we will live our lives. It is the right time to courageously ask ourselves these questions:

Am I satisfied with my life or is there something missing?
What makes a life successful? How should I plan my life?
What must I do for my life to have full value and full meaning?

Let us not be afraid to ask these questions! Pope Benedict said that far from troubling us, these questions give voice to the great aspirations we have in our hearts. Let us listen intently. The answers we have should satisfy the longing that we truly feel – fullness of life that can be found only in Christ.

Christ said, “Come and follow me!” Pope Benedict wishes for each of us to joyfully welcome this invitation so that we may live our lives intensely and fruitfully in this world. Concretely, it is a call to love God above all else, and to serve him in our brothers and sisters. It consists in no longer putting ourselves at the center, but in choosing to live in line with the Gospel.

Pope Benedict further said that in calling us to be disciples, Jesus proposes an even more radical choice for young men and women: to discern seriously if the Lord is inviting us to a greater gift, along the path of religious, monastic or missionary life, or a life of consecration. If we see the signs, let us discern together with a spiritual director or priest, and ultimately, embrace God’s call without fear for He promises deep joy to those who respond with courage!

5. Closing Ritual: My Response to God’s Invitation

In silence, let us now discern:

❖ What is God’s special invitation for me?

MESSAGE OF THE HOLY FATHER BENEDICT XVI ON THE OCCASION OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH WORLD YOUTH DAY

*“Good Teacher, what must I do
to inherit eternal life?” (Mk 10:17)*

Dear Friends,

This year marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the inauguration of World Youth Day in response to the desire of the Venerable *John Paul II* for an annual gathering of young people of faith from throughout the world. It was a prophetic initiative that has borne abundant fruits, enabling the new generations of Christians to meet one another, to listen to the Word of God, to discover the beauty of the Church, and to have a deep experience of faith. This led many of them in turn to decide to give themselves completely to Christ.

The present 25th World Youth Day is one step along the way leading to the next international encounter of young people, scheduled for Madrid in August 2011. I hope that many of you will be there to experience this grace-filled event.

To prepare ourselves for this celebration, I would like to offer you some reflections on this year’s theme: *“Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?”* (Mk 10:17). It is drawn from Gospel passage where Jesus meets the rich young man. It is a theme that Pope John Paul II reflected on in 1985, in a very beautiful Letter, the first ever addressed to young people.

1. Jesus meets a young man

“As [Jesus] was setting out on a journey” – the Gospel of Saint Mark tells us – “a man ran up, knelt down before him, and asked him, ‘Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?’ Jesus answered him, ‘Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: You shall not kill; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; you shall not defraud; honour your father and your mother.’ He replied and said to him, ‘Teacher, all of these I have observed from my youth’. Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said to him, ‘You are lacking in one thing. Go, sell what you have, and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me’. At that statement his face fell, and he went

away sad, for he had many possessions” (Mk 10: 17-22).

This Gospel passage shows us clearly how much Jesus was concerned with young people, with all of you, with your expectations and your hopes, and it shows how much he wants to meet you personally and to engage each of you in conversation. Christ interrupted his journey to stop and answer the young man’s question. He gave his full attention to this youth who was moved with an ardent desire to speak to the “good Teacher” and to learn from him how to journey through life. My Predecessor used this Gospel passage to urge each of you to “develop your own conversation with Christ – a conversation which is of fundamental and essential importance for a young person” (*Letter to Young People*, No. 2).

2. Jesus looked at him and loved him

In his Gospel account, Saint Mark emphasizes that “*Jesus, looking at him, loved him*” (Mk 10: 21). The Lord’s gaze is at the heart of this very special encounter and the whole Christian experience. To be sure, Christianity is not primarily a moral code. It is an experience of Jesus Christ who loves each of us personally, young and old, poor and rich. He loves us even when we turn away from him.

When Pope John Paul II commented on this scene, he turned to you and added: “May you experience a look like that! May you experience the truth that he, Christ, looks upon you with love!” (*Letter to Young People*, No. 7). It was love, revealed on the Cross so completely and totally, that led Saint Paul to write in amazement: “He loved me and gave himself up for me” (Gal 2:20). Pope John Paul II wrote that “the awareness that the Father has always loved us in his Son, that Christ always loves each of us, becomes a solid support for our whole human existence” (*ibid.*). It enables us to overcome all our trials: the realization of our sins, our sufferings and our moments of discouragement.

In this love we find the source of all Christian life and the basic reason for evangelization: if we have really encountered Jesus, we cannot help but bear witness to him before those who have not yet met his gaze!

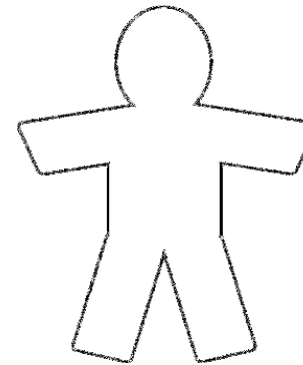
3. Finding a plan in life

If we look at the young man in the Gospel, we can see that he is much like each of you. You too are rich in talents, energy, dreams and hopes. These are resources which you have in abundance! Your age itself is a great treasure, not only for yourselves but for others too, for the Church and for the world.

For this session, let us try to discover ourselves more and the different gifts God has given each one of us.

2. Activity: “This is Me”

Each participant receives a “This is Me” activity sheet. The facilitator asks the participant to write down answers on the particular part of the drawing, starting with the legs first, then the arms and then finally, the head.



3rd HEAD: How should I plan my life in order to reach my dreams and hopes?

2nd ARMS: What are my dreams and hopes?

1st LEGS: What are the gifts and talents that God has given me?

3. Sharing

a. Small Group Sharing

The facilitator asks the participants to form small groups to share their answers to the activity using the following guide questions:

- ❖ How did I feel while answering the activity sheet?
- ❖ What are my discoveries about myself?

b. Sharing in the Plenary

The facilitator asks for some volunteers to share in the plenary.

4. Processing

The facilitator asks a few participants to share some of the gifts and talents

Come and Follow Me

Session 2

Objectives

At the end of this session, each of the participants will be able to:

- discover his/her own resources: talents, gifts, youthfulness;
- set his/her hopes and dreams in Jesus Christ;
- plan a project of life that will lead him/her to true happiness.

Materials

- Writing materials
- Activity Sheet: "This is Me"
- Reflective Music
- Song: Pilgrim's Theme
- A big image of Christ drawn on a manila paper (prepare more of this if needed)

Time Element: 1 hour

Flow

1. Introduction

In our "trips" in life, the Holy Father invites us young people to let Christ be part, to allow him to be our way and our truth and our life. Taking up his message for the 25th World Youth Day, he also strongly encourages us, young people, not to be afraid to ask the question "What must I do?". He challenges us, who live in situations of instability, of disturbances or of suffering, to rise above these situations and aspire for a meaningful life.

He leads us to ask ourselves: what does a successful life consist? What must I do? What should be my plan of life? What must I do for my life to have value and full meaning?

The rich young man asks Jesus: "What must I do?" The time of life which you are going through is one of discovery: discovery of the gifts which God has bestowed upon you and your own responsibilities. It is also a time when you are making crucial choices about how you will live your lives. So it is a time to think about the real meaning of life and to ask yourselves: "Am I satisfied with my life? Is there something missing?"

Like the young man in the Gospel story, perhaps you too are experiencing situations of uncertainty, anxiety or suffering, and are yearning for something more than a life of mediocrity. It makes you ask yourselves: "What makes a life successful? What do I need to do? How should I plan my life? "What must I do for my life to have full value and full meaning?" (*ibid.*, No. 3).

Do not be afraid to ask yourselves these questions! Far from troubling you, they are giving voice to the great aspirations that you hold in your hearts. That is why you should listen to them. The answers you give to them must not be superficial, but capable of satisfying the longing you truly feel for life and happiness.

In order to discover the life-project that will make you completely happy, listen to God. He has a loving plan for each one of you. You can confidently ask him: "Lord, what is your plan, as Creator and Father, for my life? What is your will? I want to carry it out". You can be certain that he will answer you. Do not be afraid of his answer! "For God is greater than our hearts and knows everything" (1 Jn 3:20).

4. Come and follow me!

Jesus invites the rich young man to do much more than merely satisfy his aspirations and personal plans. He says to him: "Come and follow me!" The Christian vocation derives from a love-filled invitation made by the Lord, and it can be lived out only by a love-filled response: "Jesus invites his disciples to give their lives completely, without calculation or personal interest, with unreserved trust in God. The saints accept this demanding invitation and set out with humble docility in following the crucified and risen Christ. Their perfection, in the logic of faith which is at times humanly incomprehensible, consists in no longer putting themselves at the centre but in choosing to go against the tide, by living in line with the Gospel" (Benedict XVI, *Homily at Canonizations*, 11 October 2009).

Following the example of so many of Christ's disciples, may you too, dear friends, joyfully welcome his invitation to follow him, and so live your lives intensely and fruitfully in this world. Through Baptism, in fact, he calls each of us to follow him

concretely, to love him above all things and to serve him in our brothers and sisters. The rich young man, unfortunately, did not accept Jesus' invitation and he went away saddened. He did not find the courage to leave behind his material goods in order to find the far greater good proposed by Jesus.

The sadness experienced by the rich young man in the Gospel story is the sadness that arises in the heart of all those who lack the courage to follow Christ and to make the right choice. Yet it is never too late to respond to him!

Jesus never tires of turning to us with love and calling us to be his disciples; to some, however, he proposes an even more radical choice. In this Year for the Priest, I would like to urge young men and boys to consider if the Lord is inviting them to a greater gift, along the path of priestly ministry. I ask them to be willing to embrace with generosity and enthusiasm this sign of a special love and to embark on the necessary path of discernment with the help of a priest or a spiritual director. Do not be afraid, then, dear young men and women, if the Lord is calling you to the religious, monastic or missionary life, or a life of special consecration: He knows how to bestow deep joy upon those who respond to him with courage!

I also invite those who feel called to marriage to embrace this vocation with faith, working to lay a solid foundation for a love that is great, faithful and receptive to the gift of life. This vocation is a treasure and grace for society and for the Church.

5. Directed towards eternal life

“What must I do to inherit eternal life?”. This question which the young man in the Gospel asks may seem far from the concerns of many young people today. As my Predecessor observed, “Are we not the generation whose horizon of existence is completely filled by the world and temporal progress?” (*Letter to Young People*, No. 5). Yet, the question of “eternal life” returns at certain painful moments of our lives, as when we suffer the loss of someone close to us or experience failure.

But what is the “eternal life” to which the rich young man is referring? Jesus describes it to us when he says to his disciples: “But I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you” (Jn 16: 22). These words point to an exciting possibility of unending happiness, to the joy of being surrounded by God's love for ever.

Wondering about the definitive future awaiting each of us gives full meaning to our

4. Synthesis

How did you feel while conversing with Jesus? *The facilitator invites everyone to describe his/her conversation with Christ in one word.*

Now, we realize that it is important to be able to converse with Jesus Christ, to relate with him, to be able to speak with him as a brother and friend, as a co-journeyer.

In the story, Jesus also looked at the young man and was filled with love for him. Is this not such a special encounter? How lucky the young man must have felt! Here is a great person who loves him. This is a fundamental truth: Jesus Christ loves each one of us in a personal way; and he loves us even if we turn our back on him.

In his letter, Pope Benedict XVI said that Jesus Christ's love, manifested on the cross in such a full and total way, made St. Paul write in amazement: “who loved me and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20).

This story brings us to an awareness of something very essential in our lives: that the Father loved us in his Son, Jesus Christ, who, in turn, loves everyone unconditionally. As John Paul II said, let us let this love become “a firm point of support for our whole human existence and enable us to overcome our trials: the discovery of our sins, suffering, discouragement.”

Let us allow Jesus and his love for us become our guide and criterion for our “trips” in life as young people. Through him, in him and with him, we will always be on a secure and meaningful trip.

5. Closing Song

To express our eagerness to encounter Jesus, let us stand up and join in the singing of: *One Way*. (*The facilitator may use another appropriate song.*)

b. Reflection

The participants are asked to reflect on the Gospel passage.

Jesus was out on a journey, yet he stopped and took time to listen to the rich young man. Will Jesus stop and take time to listen to you? Of course, he will!

This story tells us how Jesus gives special attention to persons, especially to you, young people, to your expectations and hopes. He desires to meet with you personally and know your trips, your journeys in life.

When you get to encounter Jesus, how will your conversation go? Let us go back to your "Trip Ko 'To" activity sheets and complete the third column: Does each of these trips help me to be tuned up with Christ?

Are you like the rich young man who turns his back sadly because he could not let go of his riches, of his "trips"? Or, are you ready to converse with Jesus, tell him your story and set out on a "trip" with him?

The facilitator instructs the participants to tick the yes or the no box and gives them time to finish the third column.

Let us look at our activity sheet again, and with the results that we see, let us assess.

c. Points for Reflection

- ❖ If I were to meet Jesus personally like the rich young man, what would I ask him?
- ❖ If I were to converse with Christ, what story would I tell him?
- ❖ How do I think Jesus would respond to me?

d. Sharing by Diads

existence. It directs our life plan towards horizons that are not limited and fleeting, but broad and deep, and which motivate us to love this world which God loves so deeply, to devote ourselves to its development with the freedom and joy born of faith and hope.

Against these horizons we do not see earthly reality as absolute, and we sense that God is preparing a greater future for us. In this way we can say with Saint Augustine: "Let us long for our home on high, let us pine for our home in heaven, let us feel that we are strangers here" (*Tractates on the Gospel of Saint John*, Homily 35:9). His gaze fixed on eternal life, Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, who died in 1925 at the age of 24, could say: "I want to live and not simply exist!" On a photograph taken while mountain-climbing, he wrote to a friend: "To the heights", referring not only to Christian perfection but also to eternal life.

Dear young friends, I urge you to keep this perspective in developing your life plan: we are called to eternity. God created us to be with him, for ever. This will help you to make meaningful decisions and live a beautiful life.

6. The commandments, the way to authentic love

Jesus reminded the rich young man that obedience to the Ten Commandments is necessary in order to "inherit eternal life". The Commandments are essential points of reference if we are to live in love, to distinguish clearly between good and evil, and to build a life plan that is solid and enduring. Jesus is asking you too whether you know the Commandments, whether you are trying to form your conscience according to God's law, and putting the Commandments into practice.

Needless to say, these are questions that go against the grain in today's world, which advocates a freedom detached from values, rules and objective norms, and which encourages people to refuse to place limits on their immediate desires. But this is not the way to true freedom. It leads people to become enslaved to themselves, to their immediate desires, to idols like power, money, unbridled pleasure and the entrapments of the world. It stifles their inborn vocation to love.

God gives us the Commandments because he wants to teach us true freedom. He wants to build a Kingdom of love, justice and peace together with us. When we listen to the Commandments and put them into practice, it does not mean that we become estranged from ourselves, but that we find the way to freedom and authentic love. The commandments do not place limits on happiness, but rather show us how to find it. At the beginning of the conversation with the rich young man, Jesus reminds him that the

law which God gives is itself good, because “God is good”.

7. We need you

Being young today means having to face many problems due to unemployment and the lack of clear ideas and real possibilities for the future. At times you can have the impression of being powerless in the face of current crises and their repercussions.

Despite these difficulties, do not let yourselves be discouraged, and do not give up on your dreams! Instead, cultivate all the more your heart’s great desire for fellowship, justice and peace. The future is in the hands of those who know how to seek and find sound reasons for life and hope. If you are willing, the future lies in your hands, because the talents and gifts that the Lord has placed in your hearts, shaped by an encounter with Christ, can bring real hope to the world! It is faith in his love that, by making you stronger and more generous, will give you courage to face serenely the path of life and to take on family and professional responsibilities. Try hard to build your future by paying serious attention to your personal development and your studies, so that you will be able to serve the common good competently and generously.

In my recent Encyclical Letter on integral human development, *Caritas in Veritate*, I listed some of the great and urgent challenges essential for the life of our world: the use of the earth’s resources and respect for ecology, the fair distribution of goods and control of financial mechanisms, solidarity with poor countries within our human family, the fight against world hunger, greater respect for the dignity of human labour, service to the culture of life, the building of peace between peoples, interfaith dialogue, and the proper use of social communications.

These are challenges to which you are called to respond in order to build a more just and fraternal world. They are challenges that call for a demanding and passionate life plan, in which you use all your many gifts in accordance with the plan that God has for each of you. It is not a matter of accompanying heroic or extraordinary acts. It means allowing your talents and abilities to flourish, and trying to make constant progress in faith and love.

In this *Year for Priests*, I ask you to learn about the lives of the saints, and in particular of those saints who were priests. You will see how God was their guide and how they made their way through each day in faith, in hope and in love. Christ is calling each of you to work with him and to take up your responsibilities in order to build the civilization of love. If you follow his Word, it will light up your path and lead you to

down their “trips” (favorite hobbies, past time, interests) in the first column. In the second column, they will describe in a word or a phrase how they feel about their “trips”.

It might be helpful for the facilitator to share a short example from him/herself before giving time for personal work.

b. Buzz Sharing

The participants are asked to share what they have written down in diads. If they find a trip that is common to both of them, they make a signal, e.g. a clap, a tweet, or a high five.

3. The Story of a Young Man

a. Gospel Reading: Mark 10:17-22

Our sharing showed us that we all have trips in life. Now, let us hear the story of a person, young like us, who is about to set out on a journey when he met another young man, like him, but who was very rich.

The reading could be done through narration, with visual aids, dramatization, through creative lectio divina, etc.

As [Jesus] was setting out on a journey, a man ran up, knelt down before him, and asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit life?” Jesus answered him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: You shall not kill; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; you shall not defraud; honour your father and mother.” He replied and said to him, “Teacher, all of these I have observed from my youth.” Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said to him, “You are lacking in one thing. Go, sell what you have, and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.” At that statement his face fell, and he went away sad, for he had many possessions. [Mark 10:17-22, New American Bible]

Setting out on a Trip

Session 1

Objectives

At the end of this session, each of the participants will be able to:

- identify their preoccupations (“trips”) and assess if these are really worth their time;
- become conscious of what is really essential in their lives;
- realize that Jesus Christ truly loves them and will take time to listen and journey with them.

Materials needed:

- Writing Materials
- Handout: Gospel Passage
- Activity sheet: Trip Ko ‘To
- Reflectionnaire
- CD: One Way (Hillsong) or another appropriate song

Time Element: 1 hour

Flow

1. Introduction

In our world today, we, the youth, find our hands full. We have so many preoccupations, so many things to do! We are consumed by a lot of things: our hobbies, past time, passions – and we refer to them as our “TRIP”.

I would like to invite us to pause and to assess ourselves: What are our trips? What are the things that take up most of our time, our energy?

2. Activity: “Trip Ko ‘To”

- a. *Each participant is given an activity sheet, and is asked to answer only the first two columns. The facilitator instructs the participants to write*

high goals that will give joy and full meaning to your lives.

May the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, watch over and protect you. With the assurance of my prayers, and with great affection, I send my blessing to all of you.

From the Vatican, 22 February 2010

BENEDICTUS PP. XVI

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Opening Session

Introductory Session

Objectives

This Opening Session which aims to gather the participants and set the formative mood of the whole program.

Materials

- Message of the Holy Father on the Occasion of the XXV World Youth Day
- Handout: What is the National Youth Day?

Time Element: 30-45 minutes

Flow

1. Warming-up Activity

The formation program starts with a Warming-Up, normally an ice breaker or animation song, to set the proper mood and create a relaxed and conducive atmosphere.

2. Welcome Message

The Bishop, Youth Director, or the Parish Priest welcomes the participants to this formation program and shares an inspirational message.

3. Orientation about the NYD celebration

The facilitator orients the participants on why the Church celebrates National Youth Day. Contents of this orientation are:

What is the National Youth Day?

In 1986, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, as a way of concretizing its preferential apostolate for the youth, approved the annual celebration of the National Youth Day (NYD) every December 16, the first

day of the Misa de Gallo or Simbang Gabi.

Activities are centered on the theme offered by the Holy Father for the yearly celebration of World Youth Day (WYD.)

How is it celebrated?

The NYD is celebrated annually in the dioceses and organizations on December 16, or on any day near it. Yearly, the ECY prepares the NYD conceptual plan and proposes activities for its celebration. Adaptation of the plan, to suit the local context, depends largely on the creativity and possibilities of each diocese or organization.

The NYD is also celebrated biennially through a national gathering. It is usually on a date near December 16, and lasts for three days. When celebrated this way, the celebration's local host assists the ECY in the planning and execution of the NYD events.

NATIONAL YOUTH DAY 2010

This year's celebration will be at the local levels, in the dioceses and national youth organizations.

It follows the theme:

"Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" [Mk 10-17]

4. Guided Reading of the Message of the Holy Father on Occasion of the XXV World Youth Day

The facilitator guides the participants in reading the Message of the Holy Father on the WYD2010 (cf. attached).

This is an essential component because it introduces the participants to the foundation of this formation program.