



DIOCESE OF
SAN JOSE



OBJECTIVES ADDENDUM YOUTH MINISTRY

RENEWED IN CHRIST, TOGETHER IN MISSION - JOURNEY TO 2031

Grounded in the 2025 Youth Survey, the Youth Assembly,
and the work of the Youth Ministry Task Force



“A Church where every teen is known by name,
welcomed with joy, and led to a living friendship with
Jesus Christ.”



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A MESSAGE FROM BISHOP OSCAR CANTÚ

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Our path to 2031 calls us to make generous room for the youngest among us. Teens are not simply the future of the Church—they are the Church now. Their questions keep us honest. Their hope keeps us moving.

The Youth Ministry Task Force has offered a clear and practical way forward. These pages point to four things we must do well: form youth and the adults who serve them; provide safe, trusted places to speak about life and mental health; gather for diocesan moments that lift us; and plan and communicate together so families hear one loving, consistent invitation.

Please read this with your parish or school in mind. Where can you welcome a teen by name? Who can you train and support so they can accompany our youth with patience and care? How might you help a young person discover prayer, friendship, and purpose?

Let us move together—Renewed in Christ, Together in Mission.

In the peace of Christ,
Most Rev. Oscar Cantú
Bishop of San José



Vision & Mission



This addendum grows out of listening: parish and school voices, the 2025 Youth Survey, and the 2025 Youth Assembly. The aim is simple—help teens meet Jesus, make real friends in the Church, and grow into confident, generous disciples. The steps here are doable. They're meant to be measured, improved, and shared as we journey to 2031.

Shared Language

To stay aligned across parishes and schools, here's how we'll use the following terms consistently:

- **Youth Ministry:** Ministry by, with, and for students in grades 6–12.
- **Youth Minister:** An adult (18+)—staff or committed volunteer—who serves youth in a parish, school, or apostolate.
- **Youth Mentor:** An adult (18+) who accompanies teens as a vetted, trained volunteer and advocate.
- **Youth Leader:** A middle- or high-school student serving peers through a defined role.
- **Resources & Spaces:** Programs, events, media, and mentors—plus the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual environments that help teens flourish.

Key Takeaways From the 2025 Youth Survey



1. **Belonging drives behavior.** One caring adult at church strongly correlates with increased participation in Mass, service, and leadership.
2. **Prayer matters.** Teens who pray weekly are more likely to show up, stay, and invite friends.
3. **Attendance barriers are practical.** Conflicts (sports, work), transportation, and family schedules outpace “lack of interest.”
4. **Trusted guidance is thin.** Many teens want advice but don’t know whom to ask—or worry they’ll be judged.
5. **Mental health is a top concern.** Ministers and teachers regularly name anxiety, loneliness, and stress.



6. **Digital engagement is the front door.** Teens hear about events from friends and social platforms first.
7. **Service unlocks leadership.** Volunteering often leads to liturgical roles and peer leadership.
8. **School–parish transition support is weak.** Students want clearer bridges from campus life into parish youth life.
9. **Parents are key.** Encouragement at home shapes participation more than we think.

Objective 1: Formation, Advocacy & Development



Why it matters

Formation is more than a class; it's a relationship that shapes a young life in Christ. Advocacy means youth—and the adults who serve them—belong at the center of parish and school life, not the edges.

Next steps, we will

- **Open doors.** Grow age-appropriate gatherings and youth spaces; lower barriers like cost, timing, and rides.
- **Invite personally.** Recruit and train youth mentors who know teens by name and walk with them.
- **Support the ministers.** Provide spiritual care and coaching; encourage reasonable workloads and fair stipends/compensation; publicly affirm their evangelizing role.
- **Equip families.** Share simple at-home tools—conversation starters, short prayers, “first-time” guides.

Objective 2: Resources & Support for Mental Health



Why it matters

Teens carry real burdens. We want respectful, safe, loving places where they can speak openly about mental health and spiritual well-being—without stigma.

Next steps, we will

- **Shape safe spaces.** Provide clear norms, trained supervision, and developmentally aware settings.
- **Train the front line.** Establish a professional pastoral role that equips youth ministers/teachers on boundaries, referral paths, and compassionate responses.
- **Build a net.** Intercultural parish–school–family partnerships; a mapped list of local clinicians for accurate referrals.
- **Integrate faith.** Short guides and practices—guided reflection, resilience habits, saints’ stories—that connect Catholic wisdom to mental wellness.

Objective 3: Diocesan-Wide Programming



Why it matters

Shared experiences build Catholic identity, diocesan pride, and joy.

Next steps, we will

- **Set a steady rhythm.** Development-matched events (spirit- retreats; mind- assemblies; body-rallies), plus summer offerings, catechetical partnerships, and service/mission opportunities.
- **Make it doable.** A ready-to-use menu of speakers, programs, venues, logistics contacts, and a simple “how to run an event” starter kit.
- **Train for excellence.** Release a practical Youth Ministry Manual (processes, standards, best practices) and run workshops on budgeting, communications, small-group skills, pastoral care, and mental-health awareness.

Objective 4: Organizational Cohesiveness & Communication



Belonging begins with a clear invitation.

Why it matters

When we plan together and communicate clearly, youth and families feel it.

Next steps, we will

- **Go digital-first.** Treat social media as primary channels to reach teens; pilot a crowd-sourcing process for content capture and editing through parish youth groups.
- **Lift youth voices.** Train supervised student creators to reach peers across the Diocese.
- **Plan as one.** Host an Annual Youth Ministry Planning Summit; publish the shared calendar.
- **Keep a digital hub.** Maintain a Diocesan Youth Resources webpage with trustworthy materials.

Where this fits in the Pastoral Plan

These objectives live inside the Youth & Young Adults priority of our diocesan plan. Implementation will be coordinated by the Office of Youth Ministry, with parish and school partners across our cultural communities.

Who does what

- Lead: Office of Youth Ministry
- Parish & School Partners: pastors, principals, youth/campus ministers, teachers, parents, mentors



How parishes and/or schools can plug in

- Name a Youth Ministry point person and introduce them to the diocesan team.
- Look at your spaces and schedule—note quick fixes (access, timing, cost).
- Build a mentor bench by screening and training mentors for meaningful accompaniment.
- Align calendars and communication so families hear one invitation.



TASK FORCE & CONTACT

Thank you to our Task Force and to the parish and school leaders who shared time, insight, and love for our young Church.

YOUTH MINISTRY TASK FORCE



Noel Balce • Kevin Bernaga • Andrew Brown • Row David • Elizabeth Ekman • Marianna Gonzalez • Diego Hernandez • Fr. Francis Kalaw • Fr. Robert Lamorena • Erin Mansuetto • Kalena Moreira • Laura Quiroz • Debbie Santos • Emanuel Valenzuela



QUESTIONS? CONTACT

Kevin Bernaga

Associate Director Youth Ministry

kevin.bernaga@dsj.org

THANK YOU



LEARN MORE
ABOUT THE
PASTORAL PLAN



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