

New Models of Church in Eastern Africa

Connecting Young Adult Seekers Through Small Christian
Communities

This is a PowerPoint presented by Joe Healey MM and Alloys Nyakundi MPS during the December 20 webinar that Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers organized.

Definition of terms:

- **Seekers** – People who are looking for or trying to find something. The Catholic Church Reform International (CCRI) decided to use this word to describe Young Adults who are always searching.
- **Young People Small Christian Communities:** These are caring, sharing, faith-reflecting, praying and serving communities in Eastern Africa in which ongoing Christian formation and pastoral outreach to young people takes place.
- **Online Young Adult Seekers Small Christian Community:** This is an international and diverse group of young adults that meets twice a month on Zoom, who are seeking to find their rightful place within the Catholic community.

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- A good example is the OYASCC, that is sponsored by CCRI. To join their gatherings, click

on; <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86345194432?pwd=MFZraXRBZDRnNFZmaGJVS1dGbD>
[BEQT09](#) Passcode: seekers.

- Find more information about the dates and times for their gathering on the CCRI;
<https://catholicchurchreformintl.org/>
- The online platform offers young people a safe space to share their concerns and find support for the life issues they face.

Difference between Online, Hybrid and In-person Small Christian Communities

- **Online YASSCCs** – This is a gathering of young people that use their phones, laptops or internet connected devices to meet in the same virtual room on Zoom.
- **Hybrid YASSCCs** – Gatherings of young people that meet both in-person/ face-to-face and virtually.
- **In-person** – Young people who gather physically in a designated physical place to read the gospel and relate it with their live experiences. They also talk about social issues affecting them and the community.

Our hopes for Young Adults Small Christian Communities

1. Free and open participation of all young people.
2. Respect for views and opinions. i.e LGBTQ and Women.
3. Acknowledging that nobody is perfect.
4. We are all learners.
5. We will be informal in our gatherings.
6. We will listen to each other.
7. To enhance networking and collaboration amongst young people in different parts of the world.

Through our YASCCs, the young people have been able to speak on different issues like:

1. They feel disconnected from the church because they no longer feel welcome and are discouraged by the church because of the silence when injustices are perpetuated in front of their eyes and no one speaks against them.
2. Young people want to be included in the church's leadership and don't want to be mere spectators. They want to be part of the decision-makers.
3. Young people want accompaniment and help in understanding issues like Sexuality, drug and substance abuse, depression, and transitions in life.
4. Injustices to the environment. We are interconnected with nature, and any destructive action affects humans and animals.

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5. Some say there is a lot of criticism in church, and they avoid attending church because they don't want to be criticized. Instead of criticism, we should have more listening.
6. The impact of social media on their lives.
7. Sexuality and personal relationships. Many ask whether the Catholic Church wants to listen to their concerns, such as sexuality, affectivity, and personal relationships.
8. The Church needs to open its arms and embrace the LGBTQ community, which faces a lot of persecution and rejection in society.
9. A listening and inclusive Church that supports women's rights and freedom.

Importance of YASCCs

1. Help young people have a global experience of life
2. Promote positive use of social media.
3. Offers young people a safe space to share their concerns and find support for the life issues they face.
4. Helping the church to meet young people where they are

What more can we do to support Young Adults?

1. Invest in people who can reach out and serve beyond the confines of the parish and meet young people where they are.
2. Accompany their vulnerable families
3. Help young people to discern
4. Adults to have a loving, trusting and reassuring attitude toward young people.
5. Adults to be open to listening and dialogue. Young people make mistakes and fall, and need someone who will welcome them and not frighten them.
6. Find practical ways of accompanying young people

Priorities for YASCCs

1. Choose good facilitators in YASCCs.
2. Form YASCCs facilitators in deeper evangelization that integrates Young People's and Christian values.
3. Train facilitator's facilitation and coordination skills.
4. Training member's computer and internet skills.
5. Ongoing formations and training of young adults with a focus on the meaning and importance of YASCCs, Bible Reflection, social awareness and mission outreach.
6. Encourage more formal courses, workshops and workshops for young people. i.e, Online SCC course at Loyola University, New Orleans.

World Youth Day in Portugal, 1-7 August, 2023

Theme: Mary Arose and Went With Haste (Luke 1:39).

- * We appeal for financial help for young African Catholic adults who can't afford the airfare to Portugal. The cost per person is \$1860, including all travel expenses. The OYASSCs wants to support four young adults (2 young women and two young men).
- * Our Young Seekers hope to connect with Maryknoll-sponsored young adults.
- * For those wishing to offer a donation electronically, please visit www.maryknollsociety.org, click on the red Donate button (bottom right corner), and then complete the short dialogue box and enter Fr. Joe Healey's MA for WYD in the tribute line.

Images of one of the online gatherings of Young Adult Seekers:

A screenshot of a Zoom meeting grid showing 14 participants. The participants are arranged in a grid with 5 columns and 3 rows. The bottom row contains 4 participants, and the bottom-right cell is empty. The participants are: Gerard (muted, hand icon), Phidelis Wamalwa, Joseph G. Healey, mutie redemptah, Alloys Nyakundi, Becky, staicy semben wandiema, IRENE KARIUKI, Arslan Nazir Khokhar, Shaloon khokhar, Ashiknaz Khokhar (highlighted with a yellow border), Juma, Collins Ongoma, and Tumuhaise Jenipher. The bottom toolbar includes: Unmute (muted), Stop Video, Participants (14), Chat, Share Screen (active), Record, Live Transcript, Reactions, Apps, and a red Leave button.

Participant Name	Row	Column
Gerard	1	1
Phidelis Wamalwa	1	2
Joseph G. Healey	1	3
mutie redemptah	1	4
Alloys Nyakundi	1	5
Becky	2	1
staicy semben wandiema	2	2
IRENE KARIUKI	2	3
Arslan Nazir Khokhar	2	4
Shaloon khokhar	2	5
Ashiknaz Khokhar	3	1
Juma	3	2
Collins Ongoma	3	3
Tumuhaise Jenipher	3	4
	3	5

St. Dominic YASCC Kenyatta University; farewell party for Father Joe Healey, MM.



Young people participating in tree planting



KU Young People Dancing During Mass





Contact Information:

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Any question or feedback?

THANK YOU