



Philadelphia Pastors Cohort

A 9-Month Formation & Implementation Journey

At-a-Glance Visual Timeline

February | Onboarding (Virtual)

- Individual 1:1 Sessions with Facilitator
 - Assessments: MCODE + Relational Discipleship Inventory
 - Distribution of *Growing Young*
-

March | Phase 1 Launch (In Person | 10:00 am–2:00 pm)

Session 1 – Why Ministry With Young People Matters Now

- Research + pastoral reality
 - Introduction to *Growing Young*
 - Peer relationship building
-

April–June | Phase 1: Growing Young (Virtual | Monthly | 90 min)

Session 2 (April)

- Empathize with Today's Young People
- Take Jesus' Message Seriously

Session 3 (May)

- Fuel a Warm Community
- Unlock Keychain Leadership

Session 4 (June)

- Prioritize Young People Everywhere
 - Be the Best Neighbors
 - Phase 2 Readiness + Revisit Inventory
-



MARATHON

YOUTH MINISTRY

July–October | Phase 2: Faith Formation Framework & Relational Discipleship Kickstart (Virtual | Monthly | 90 min)

Session 5 (July)

- Faith Formation Framework Overview
- Shared Parish Language
- Team-Based Inventory Reflection

Session 6 (August)

- Leading Yourself
- Adult Mentors

Session 7 (September)

- Spiritual Practices & Learning (Parts 1 & 2)

Session 8 (October)

- Service & Justice
- Families

Session 9 (October/early November)

- Leading Change (Future Focused Church)
-

November | Phase 2 Conclusion (In Person | Half Day)

Session 10 – Integration, Storytelling, and Next Steps

- Final Relational Discipleship Inventory
 - Parish stories and outcomes
 - Discernment of next steps
-

Archdiocese of Philadelphia – Program Overview

Purpose

This cohort is designed to support pastors in understanding the value of ministry with young people and to equip parishes to build healthy, sustainable, relational discipleship practices with adolescents and families.

The process integrates national research, Catholic pastoral theology, and practical parish implementation.



MARATHON

YOUTH MINISTRY

Program Structure

Length: 9 months (February–November)

Format: Hybrid (Virtual + In-Person)

Participants: Pastors (Phase 1), Pastors + Parish Teams (Phase 2)

Phase 1: Growing Young (Pastor Formation)

Phase 1 focuses on pastoral conviction, shared language, and leadership posture. Pastors engage the six essential strategies from *Growing Young* to explore how leadership decisions, parish culture, and priorities shape the faith of young people.

Outcomes include:

- A clear pastoral rationale for prioritizing young people
 - Research-informed leadership language
 - Readiness to invite parish teams into implementation
-

Phase 2: Faith Formation Framework & Relational Discipleship Kickstart (Parish Implementation)

Phase 2 equips pastors and parish teams to translate conviction into practice using the Faith Formation Framework and Relational Discipleship Kickstart.

Key emphases include:

- Relational discipleship over programmatic activity
 - Intergenerational faith formation
 - Sustainable leadership practices
 - Small, low-risk experiments that build momentum
-

Assessment & Measurement

The cohort integrates assessment as a formative tool:

- **MCODE Assessment** – pastoral leadership awareness (onboarding)
- **Relational Discipleship Inventory** – completed:



- During onboarding (pastor)
- At Phase 1–Phase 2 transition
- At cohort conclusion (parish team)

This rhythm provides baseline insight, mid-course reflection, and evidence of growth.

Expected Outcomes for the Archdiocese

- Pastors equipped to lead ministry with young people as a parish priority
 - Parishes aligned around a shared framework for faith formation
 - Stronger support structures for youth ministry leaders
 - Early indicators of long-term sustainability and vitality
-

Facilitation

The cohort is facilitated by **Christopher Wesley**, who provides group facilitation, individual coaching, and ongoing support throughout the nine-month journey.

This structure is designed to be pastorally realistic, volunteer-friendly, and scalable across the Archdiocese.