



YCS

JECI



Starting a YCS Group

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1. How do we start recruiting members for a YCS group?

- Invite a friend
- Put an advertisement on a notice board
- Distribute campaign materials to invite students to join the movement (this can be pamphlets, brochures or cards)
- Room-to-room campaign
- Send invitations to students through bookmarks or creative cards (*be sure to indicate the exact venue and time of the first meeting*)
- Set a day for registration or filing membership forms

2. Conducting YCS Group Meetings

The first meeting...

- A Getting-To-Know-You (GTKY) and welcoming activities (this can be games, songs, dances, etc)
- Explain a little/briefly about the group but emphasize that the best way to know is to try it
- Testimony from a current member or former member on how YCS has influenced his/her life
- Preferably a creative prayer is prepared
- Time allotment should not go beyond an hour.
- Set the next meeting schedule

The regular YCS GROUP meetings....

There is no perfect or fixed way to run a meeting, and it is up to the group to decide exactly how it wants to do things. Here are just a few tips you can consider to have fruitful meetings:

- Regular meetings may take 1-1.5 hour. Minimum 45 minutes/a class period
- Begin the meeting at a set time and encourage everyone to keep to it.
- A group is composed of 8-12 members—not too large, so that each one can participate fully
- The group chooses a leader to coordinate the group.
- A chairperson (who may rotate amongst all the members) is chosen to preside and facilitate each meeting. The chairperson should prepare the meeting with the adult animator or leader, and ensure that it goes smoothly by encouraging all to listen to the real point and to search for meaning in the events being considered by the group.
- Select a secretary (this can be done by rotation)
- To own the movement, each member is asked to pay regular membership fees according to the decision of the group. A treasurer should be chosen to take care of the group's finances.
- The venue of the meeting can be in the corridor, school or parish ground, canteen or classroom – as long as everyone is comfortable. Having different venues every meeting will create excitement and avoid monotony.
- Get people to sit so they can see each other.
- Establish an informal sharing atmosphere. Some games, songs or any creative means may be used that would motivate and excite each member.
- The meeting should allow for flexibility to respond to the needs and concerns of the members
- Leaders ought to encourage quieter members to participate with a question such as 'What does somebody else think?'
- It is important to make new members feel welcome. One way is to offer them some responsibility. Keep in mind always that every YCS member is a leader.
- Try to help the members of the group realise each other's importance, and thus the importance of the situations in their daily lives.
- Encourage members to contact each other between meetings for friendship and support.
- Make sure at the end of each meeting that the time and place of the next meeting is decided.

3. Getting To Know YCS

What

YCS is a STUDENT movement--- for, of, and led by high school students

YCS is a CHURCH movement --- an International Catholic Organization (ICO) recognized by the Holy See, concerned about justice and peace and developing a spirituality of action and reflection. Students of other faiths are also welcome to join.

YCS is an INTERNATIONAL movement --- with a membership of 2.5 million students from 85 movements in 80 countries. It has a voice and consultative status in the United Nations.

When & Where

Originated in the late 1920s in several countries which developed national coordinations, which grew in the spirit of the Specialised Catholic Action movements that were inspired by Joseph Cardijn (the founder of the Young Christian Workers).

The international coordination was established in 1946 in the wake of World War II

YCS is now present in Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, Latin America, North America and the Pacific.

Who

Any high school students (though there are also university student members in some regions) that want to meet new people, make a difference in their lives, schools, communities, and the world, develop leadership skills, grow in their faith, and have some fun.

How

By meeting in small groups which review the life situations of the students in their school, family, community, and the world at large, in the light of their faith, and then planning actions to bring life, hope and change in these situations.

This process is called the **REVIEW OF LIFE method** which is:

- a sharing of each other's life
- a way for students to discover how to relate their faith to life in the world in which they live
- not just a discussion method but a practical process of reflection and action that becomes a natural part of life
- a way of meeting Jesus Christ in everyday life, of knowing his love and guidance, and of responding to his call to change ourselves and the world around us.

4. How to do a Review of Life (ROL)

Basically, it will involve 3 simple steps only:

SEE: Looking at a certain situation actually happening around, a reality of the student(s) at home, school or in the community. This reality is an issue affecting or influencing the life of the student.

To describe this reality, it can be presented through a role-play, a poster, a clipping from a newspaper, a photo, a recorded tape, a film, or a story-telling method.

This part of ROL allows the students to look at the situation CONCRETELY, to analyze it deeply, and to relate it to their own context and understanding.

Possible questions for sharing:

- Who are the characters in the situation? Who were involved?
- Where and when it happen?
- How and why it happen?
- How often does this occur?
- How did/do you feel about it?
- What was said?
- What influences are at work?
- How did it affect others involved?

Note: The group should focus only on one fact, situation, or case in every meeting.

JUDGE: A moment of bringing the situation into reflection.

The group discusses the rights and wrongs relevant to the situations and experiences shared, from what has been discovered in the SEE part. Then the group will read the Word of God for deeper reflection.

Possible questions for sharing:

- Do you know cases like this?
- How do you feel?
- What do you think about this?
- What was good and bad in the situation?
- What makes it right or wrong?
- What strikes us in the reading we have heard?
- What do you think God feels about the situation?
- How do you think Jesus would have reacted?
- What would Jesus like you to do?

ACT: The group discusses possible ways of responding to the situations described in the SEE part. Each person identifies, with the help of the others, some practical action he/she can take. Then the group decides on a group action plan.

Note: Action should be practical, realistic and achievable. Ensure everyone's role and responsibility in the group's action plan.

Possible questions for sharing:

- What would be my personal response to the situation?
 - Is there anything you/we can do, no matter how small to improve the situation?
 - Is there anything more we need to find out?
 - Is there anyone we can influence to improve things/situations?
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5. Case Studies for YCS meetings

Sometimes, when the group is just beginning, it may be difficult for the members to identify issues in their own lives for reflection. To assist in such cases, we offer the following case studies or issues which the students may relate to their own situations, and which might help them to learn to identify their own issues.

1) Faith:

Girls/women are frustrated with the church

Dee, a member of the YCS group, has a friend, Maria, who is also a high school student in Chicago. When she was at elementary school, she loved to go to church, attend Sunday services and to participate in activities with her parents. However, since she entered high school, she has stopped going to church. She says she feels 'bored' with the Church, complaining that the role of women is very limited within it, and she doesn't want to be treated like a second-class citizen.

See:

1. WHY did this happen. Why did Maria stop going to church? Why? Why? Why?
2. What are the root causes/issues?
3. What are the consequences if the situation is not addressed?

Judge:

1. What would be Jesus' response to this issue/situation? Why?
Which biblical texts/stories can help us?
2. Which of my own values/priorities are challenged:
 - 2.1 – by the issue/situation?
 - 2.2 – by Jesus' response?

Act:

1. What action:
 - 1.1 - will make a difference to this situation described?
 - 1.2 – will enable those involved to find freedom, fairness, and hope?
 - 1.3 – will help others to come closer to the movement (discover commitment)?
2. Who will do what? When? How?

2) Violent Conflict:

Access to Guns

Joe, a YCS member, heard the following news report on October 7, 2005: A 17-year-old male high school student was shot and killed in Richardson, TX after a fight erupted between two groups in a mall parking lot following a high school football game. The fight reportedly was a continuation of a confrontation, which started at the high school after the game. Shots were fired and the victim, an innocent bystander, was killed while five others were also shot. Nine people were shot after three separate football games that evening, with the 17-year-old victim being the only one who died.

See:

1. WHY did this happen. Why did this high school student get shot? Why? Why? Why?
2. What are the root causes/issues?
3. What are the consequences if the situation is not addressed?

Judge:

1. What would be Jesus' response to this issue/situation? Why?
Which biblical texts/stories can help us?
2. Which of my own values/priorities are challenged:
 - 2.1 – by the issue/situation?
 - 2.2– by Jesus' response?

Act:

1. What action:
 - 1.1 - will make a difference to this situation described?
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 - 1.3 – will help others to come closer to the movement (discover commitment)?
2. Who will do what? When? How?

**3) Racism:
Religious Intolerance**

Rosanne, a YCS member, on the day after September 11, 2001, saw two Arab girls walking towards the shops when someone in a car drove passed them, rolled down the window and screamed 'go home you f***ing Arab!'

See:

1. WHY did this happen. Why were the Arab girls abused? Why? Why? Why?
2. What are the root causes/issues?
3. What are the consequences if the situation is not addressed?

Judge:

1. What would be Jesus' response to this issue/situation?

Why?

Which biblical texts/stories can help us?

2. Which of my own values/priorities are challenged:
 - 2.1 – by the issue/situation?
 - 2.2 – by Jesus' response?

Act:

1. What action:
 - 1.1 - will make a difference to this situation described?
 - 1.2 – will enable those involved to find freedom, fairness, and hope?
 - 1.3 – will help others to come closer to the movement (discover commitment)?
2. Who will do what? When? How?

**4) Academic Pressure:
Depression and Stress**

Kevin, a YCS member, read the following in a newspaper: MIAMI - Caitlin Stork tried to kill herself the first time when she was 15. She was hospitalized, discharged, and attempted suicide again. The doctors diagnosed depression and put her on Paxil. Stork is now a senior at Harvard University, still taking the mood-stabilizing Lithium and the anti-psychotic Seroquel. "You would never believe how much I can hide from you," Stork wrote for a campus display on mental health. "I'm a Harvard student like any other; I take notes during lecture, goof off ... but I never let on how much I hurt." It is found that academic pressure from competition and failures among the students leads to depression and stress related illness.

See:

1. WHY did this happen. Why is Caitlin so depressed? Why? Why? Why?
2. What are the root causes/issues?
3. What are the consequences if the situation is not addressed?

Judge:

1. What would be Jesus' response to this issue/situation?

Why?

Which biblical texts/stories can help us?

2. Which of my own values/priorities are challenged:
 - 2.1 – by the issue/situation?
 - 2.2 – by Jesus' response?

Act:

1. What action:
 - 1.1 - will make a difference to this situation described?
 - 1.2 – will enable those involved to find freedom, fairness, and hope?
 - 1.3 – will help others to come closer to the movement (discover commitment)?
2. Who will do what? When? How?

5) Water:

Conservation/Preservation

Almost 98% of the water on planet earth is salt water, unfit for human consumption. Less than 1% of total freshwater is available for our use; the majority of it is locked in polar snow and ice. TO put it another way: of every hundred litres of water less than half a teaspoon is freshwater available for human use.

Global water consumption has risen almost tenfold since 1900. World population is expected to increase by 45% in the next thirty years, while freshwater wastage is expected to increase by 10%.

Recent estimates are that climate change will account for about 20% of the increase in global water scarcity.

Other factors influencing scarcity are: (1) degradation of water bodies, water tables, rivers, wetlands and bays (2) inequality of distribution (3) cross border conflicts and (4) privatization

According to the UN's 1998 Human Development Report, three-fifths of the 4.4 billion people in the developing world lack access to basic sanitation and almost a third have no access to clean water.

See:

Which one of the facts on water challenges/disturbs you most and why?

Which of these facts relate most to your area/place?

How do you and your community contribute to the water problem?

Judge:

Gospel Reading: John 7: 37-39, The Promise of Living water

John 4: 7-14, the water of life in the conversation with the Samaritan woman

Questions

What do you think is the position of the church with regard to water?

Have you heard any church statement or comment with regard to water?

Act:

Describe some activities taking place locally or in your school to conserve water? Who are involved and why? How can you contribute towards solving the problem of water scarcity ?

Note: This is an excerpt from the document 'Water for Life' prepared by the Ecology Working Group of the JPIC promoters-Rome, Italy – June 2003

Participate in developing Sustainable Ecology: 'Earth Charter'
www.earthcharter.org

6) Teacher:

Mr. John is a Secondary school teacher. He is very sincere in preparing his lessons but he stammers a bit when he speaks. His students laugh at him. One day, he was so humiliated that he had to leave the classroom.

See:

Do you know cases like this?

Judge:

How do you feel about Mr. John? What would you like to tell him?

What do you think about the students?

Should Mr. John and all the handicapped teachers be thrown out of the teaching field?

Gospel Reading for Reflection:

Sirach 10:23, If you insult a friend, you will break up a friendship

Act:

What will you do if you have a teacher that stammers when he speaks?

How can you help him/her?

7) Teenage pregnancy:

Sophie is a 15 year-old student and got pregnant by John, her classmate and boyfriend. Sophie stopped school in order to take care of the baby.

See:

Why did it happen?

What influences are at work?

Judge:

Do you know cases like this?

How do you feel about the situation?

What will the future of Sophie be? What about the baby?

What would be Jesus' response to this issue/ situation? Why?

Which biblical texts/stories can help us?

Act:

If you know boys and girls in your school who have sexual experiences, what do you say?

Do you laugh at them? Do you feel jealous?

Do you ignore them? How can you help them avoid Sophie's situation?