

SETTING OUT ON A JOURNEY TO EMMAUS...

August 2010

Dear Coordinator of Youth Ministry,

I am proud to announce the release of the new *Journey to Emmaus: A High School Youth Ministry Curriculum* of the Catholic Diocese of Arlington's Office of Youth Ministry (OYM). For several years I have wanted to develop a curriculum to assist Coordinators of Youth Ministry in their ability to catechize young people through a more systematic and comprehensive approach. Thanks to the growing staff of the OYM, this goal is now becoming a reality.

The spark to initiate this project came in January 2010 when the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis released the document, *Adaptation of Doctrinal Elements of a Curriculum Framework for the Development of Catechetical Materials for Young People of High School Age*. This document established the framework of catechesis that all youth ministry programs must cover. Using this document, and the Catholic Diocese of Arlington's *Secondary Religion Guidelines*, we set out to create a four-year curriculum that covers all of the required material that must be taught to young people during their high school years.

The goal of our new *Journey to Emmaus* curriculum is to put some flesh onto these frameworks, making practical and distinct youth ministry sessions out of them. Collaborative efforts within the OYM, youth ministers within and outside the Diocese of Arlington, and other prominent catechists, have resulted in the creation of a four-year, eighty session curriculum that can be used weekly in meetings with young people. If you allow these sessions to guide your ministry over the next four years, you can rest assured that you have provided your teens with the complete understanding of the faith that God has called you to bring to them.

Each session includes direct correlations to the *Secondary Religion Guidelines*, Scripture references, Catechism and Church document citations, opening and closing prayers, games and icebreakers, a sample talk, and related media links to music, movies, and websites. The curriculum will tie also in each year to the OYM's annual theme.

The sessions are divided into two categories. The first category is 'catechetical nights' and the second category is 'issue nights'. The 'catechetical nights' teach specific doctrine, while 'issue nights' address common cultural issues that teens may face. We have placed the 'catechetical nights' in the order that we think makes the most sense for the semester. The 'issue nights' are created to be inserted at any point into the curriculum. We attempted to make the curriculum as 'systematic' as possible, in that certain information should come before you address the next topic. However, we also understand that each year new students enter the program and learn alongside the teens from previous years. For this reason, the curriculum will cover some foundational topics on an annual basis.

It is our privilege to create this resource for you to use with your young people. We hope that this curriculum helps you in your ministry and provides you with fresh ideas to teach young people about Jesus Christ. Please contact us if you would like to assist in creating sessions for future semesters. We pray that God will work through this curriculum and through each of you as you take on the invaluable role of catechizing the young people of the Catholic Church.

In Christ,



Kevin Bohli
Director
Office of Youth Ministry