

Bridging the USCCB Ministry Frameworks



Listen, Teach, Send (2024) and Renewing the Vision (1997) on Catholic pastoral ministry with youth in their teen years

In 2024, the U.S. Bishops approved *Listen, Teach, Send: A National Pastoral Framework for Ministries with Youth and Young Adults*, a national response to Pope Francis' 2019 apostolic exhortation *Christus Vivit*. It also built upon the insights of prior USCCB frameworks including *Empowered by the Spirit* (1985), *Sons and Daughters of the Light* (1996), and *Renewing the Vision* (1997) on collegians, young adults, and youth, respectively. This is a brief guide on the particular connections between *Listen, Teach, Send* and *Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry*, regarding ministry with adolescents from 12 to 18 years of age.

***Listen, Teach, Send* is the national response** to Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation *Christus Vivit* (2019) and builds upon the work of *Renewing the Vision*. *Listen, Teach, Send* serves as a summons to local faith communities across the United States to renew their efforts with youth and young adults. ***Renewing the Vision* was built upon** a previous USCCB document from 1976, *A Vision of Youth Ministry*. The 1997 document expanded to respond to new challenges at the time and addressed the call to personal discipleship, evangelization, and leadership.

Some key distinctions between these two USCCB documents include:

- **The audience** of *Listen, Teach, Send* includes families, pastoral ministers, and active Catholics (including young people), while *Renewing the Vision* is written primarily for local communities of faith to develop effective ministry with youth and adolescents.
- **The overarching narrative** of *Listen, Teach, Send* is grounded in the journey to Emmaus (Lk 24:13-35), which highlights three moments of accompaniment, modeled after Jesus' actions in the biblical story; on the other hand, *Renewing the Vision* provides a pastoral framework with three goals, seven themes, and eight components that serve as a blueprint for developing ministries with adolescents.
- **The focus** of *Listen, Teach, Send* is on both youth and young adults, whereas *Renewing the Vision* was focused specifically on ministry with adolescents (ages 12 to 18).
- **The inspiration for writing** *Listen, Teach, Send* was inspired by the global synod on young people convened by Pope Francis in 2018 and the subsequent release of his apostolic exhortation, *Christus Vivit*, in 2019, which renewed the Church's work of accompanying and evangelizing youth and young adults. *Renewing the Vision* was written to respond to challenges and opportunities of the age in which it was written. *Renewing the Vision* provides a pastoral framework that serves as a blueprint for the continued development of effective ministry with youth and adolescents in local communities of faith.

COMPLEMENTING EACH OTHER

Renewing the Vision focuses the Church's ministry with adolescents on three essential goals: (1) empowering young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today, (2) drawing young people to responsible participation in the life, mission, and work of the faith community; and (3) fostering the personal and spiritual growth of each young person. *Listen, Teach, Send* also embraces these goals and broadens the invitation to all members of the community to actively take part in this work with our young people through the three-fold approach of listening, teaching, and sending. Several of the components of ministry with adolescents, as outlined in *Renewing the Vision*, correspond to various dimensions of these three movements.

Listening: “The Ministry of Community Life” and “The Ministry of Pastoral Care” from *Renewing the Vision*

Both *Renewing the Vision* and *Listen, Teach, Send* emphasize **building trust and authentic relationships** with the young people in the community and **accompanying them** on their journey.

- “The ministry of advocacy engages the Church to examine its priorities and practices to determine how well young people are integrated into the life, mission, and work of the Catholic community.” (RTV, 27).
- “In much the same way, one of the goals of the Church’s accompaniment of youth and young adults is to guide them toward their mission to transform the world toward the Kingdom of God.” (LTS, 34)
- “The ministry of justice and service with adolescents develops the assets, skills, and faith of young people by promoting gospel values in their lifestyles and choices; by increasing positive self-esteem, self-confidence, and moral reasoning abilities; by building leadership and social skills; by helping them discover their personal gifts and abilities; by helping them learn that they can make a difference in the world and receive recognition by the community for their contributions.” (RTV, 39)
- “The proclamation of the kerygma also means sharing in the Lord’s command to offer food and clothing to those in need, to care for and be present to those who suffer or are imprisoned, and to welcome the stranger...the works of charity and justice naturally flow from evangelization.” (LTS, 36)
- “The ministry of leadership development empowers all young people for leadership and ministry with their peers –in schools, parishes, and civic communities—by affirming their gifts, equipping them with skills for leadership and ministry, and by placing them in leadership roles or giving them leadership opportunities where they can make a contribution,” (RTV, 41)
- “Young people should be presented with positive experiences so they may learn from those who joyfully live out their vocational calling: faithful married couples, devoted priests and consecrated women and men, and active Catholics of all generations infusing their work and life’s pursuits with the light of the Gospel.” (LTS, 40)

Teaching: “The Ministry of Catechesis,” “The Ministry of Evangelization,” and “The Ministry of Prayer and Worship” from *Renewing the Vision*

Both *Renewing the Vision* and *Listen, Teach, Send* emphasize the **formation of all Christians** in the kerygma and the transformative impact of fostering a **deeper relationship with Jesus Christ**.

- “The ministry of catechesis with adolescents utilizes the life experiences of adolescents, fostering a shared dialogue between the life of the adolescent –with its joys, struggles, questions, concerns, and hopes – and the wisdom of the Catholic faith.” (RTV, 29)
- “Making a bold invitation of faith can help dispel the darkness and amplify the joys in a young person’s life, allowing Jesus Christ to transform his or her lived experiences and bring about a conversion of heart.” (LTS, 24)
- “The ministry of evangelization invites young people personally into the life and mission of the Catholic community so that they may experience the support, nurture, and care necessary to live as Christians.” (RTV, 37)
- “Pastoral leaders accompanying youth and young adults, in concert with their families, share the faith as outlined in The Catechism of the Catholic Church. This includes a presentation of the life

and teachings of Jesus Christ and all the Scriptures; the celebration of the faith through prayer, liturgy, and the sacraments, rooted in the community of the Church; our moral and ethical teachings, grounded in the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes; Catholic Social Teaching; and the call of the Lord to each person to take up their vocation and mission in the world.” (LTS, 27)

- “The ministry of prayer and worship celebrates and deepens young people’s relationship with Jesus Christ through the bestowal of grace, communal prayer and liturgical experiences; it awakens their awareness of the spirit at work in their lives; it incorporates young people more fully into the sacramental life of the Church, especially eucharist; it nurtures the personal prayer life of young people; and it fosters family rituals and prayer.” (RTV, 44)
- “Above and beyond anything we do in this world to listen and teach is the grace of God, wonderfully offered in the Eucharist, freely given for our salvation and transformation. It is our work to introduce young people to this gift, to facilitate this sacred encounter in any way we can, so that Christ can encounter us. This is the ultimate teachable moment.” (LTS, 34)

Sending: “The Ministry of Justice and Service,” “The Ministry of Advocacy,” and “The Ministry of Leadership Development” (*Renewing the Vision*)

Both *Renewing the Vision* and *Listen, Teach, Send* emphasize **the Gospel call to mission** of every Christian in the world today.

- “The ministry of advocacy engages the Church to examine its priorities and practices to determine how well young people are integrated into the life, mission, and work of the Catholic community.” (RTV, 27)
- “In much the same way, one of the goals of the Church’s accompaniment of youth and young adults is to guide them toward their mission to transform the world toward the Kingdom of God.” (LTS, 34)
- “The ministry of justice and service with adolescents develops the assets, skills, and faith of young people by promoting gospel values in their lifestyles and choices; by increasing positive self-esteem, self-confidence, and moral reasoning abilities; by building leadership and social skills; by helping them discover their personal gifts and abilities; by helping them learn that they can make a difference in the world and receive recognition by the community for their contributions.” (RTV, 39)
- “The proclamation of the kerygma also means sharing in the Lord’s command to offer food and clothing to those in need, to care for and be present to those who suffer or are imprisoned, and to welcome the stranger...the works of charity and justice naturally flow from evangelization.” (LTS, 36)
- “The ministry of leadership development empowers all young people for leadership and ministry with their peers –in schools, parishes, and civic communities—by affirming their gifts, equipping them with skills for leadership and ministry, and by placing them in leadership roles or giving them leadership opportunities where they can make a contribution,” (RTV, 41)
- “Young people should be presented with positive experiences so they may learn from those who joyfully live out their vocational calling: faithful married couples, devoted priests and consecrated women and men, and active Catholics of all generations infusing their work and life’s pursuits with the light of the Gospel.” (LTS, 40)

Additional information about the USCCB documents and other supplemental resources can be found online at <https://www.usccb.org/topics/youth-and-young-adult-ministries>.