



# THE EUCHARIST YOUTH MOVEMENT

## A Eucharistic life in Jesus' way

**Brief Description:** EYM good practices could be key elements to favor the accompaniment of the structure and the dynamic of other young ecclesial structures. Which are the key elements of the EYM proposal that can help/ orient/ inspire/ other youth groups of the Church?

International Team

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## The Eucharist Youth Movement (EYM)

### A Eucharistic life in Jesus' way

#### 1. A Brief history of the Movement

The Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network's youth branch is a Movement dedicated to the Christian development of children and young people from 5 to 25 years. Established in 1915 as the Eucharistic Crusade and recreated in 1962 as the Eucharistic Youth Movement (EYM), it offers a path for human and Christian development.

The EYM encourages members to cultivate their friendship with Jesus Christ through three main pillars or "core concepts", that are lived out and experienced within a community life to foster an apostolic life:

**The Word of God** (with special emphasis on the Gospel): to pray and contemplate the life of Jesus to live like He does.

**The Eucharist:** to be nourished and modelled by Jesus' life to love like He does.

**The Mission:** to collaborate with Christ's mission, attending the needs and challenges facing humanity, which involves ongoing training in discernment and decision-making.

Present in 59 countries, the EYM encompasses approximately 1.7 million of children and young people from 5 to 25 years. Of these, 80% participate through parishes, while 20% through schools. The Society of Jesus supports 25% of them, and the religious congregations such as Religious of Jesus and Mary, the Company of Mary, Esclavas del Corazón de Jesús, Siervas del Corazón de Jesús, the Marist Brothers, Brothers of Christian Schools, etc. and diocesan parishes support the other 75% of the members.

In the past decade, the EYM has seen significant growth worldwide, enhancing not only its international network and organization but also the local ones. For example, in Ethiopia, where Catholics constitute only 0.7% of the population, there are more than 17.000 children and young people from 11 dioceses engaged in the EYM movement, which began there in 2009.

The direction of the EYM mission is guided by the prayer intentions that the Holy Father entrusts each month to the Prayer Network. These prayer intentions are the parameters by which we can incarnate the mission and can also inform concrete decisions regarding the mission of communities, children, and young people within the Movement.

"The Way of the Heart" (TWH) is a formative program for the mission, designed to guide participants into the dynamic of Jesus' Heart —aligning with His actions, desires, and attitudes— and to embark on a mission of service to our brothers and sisters in need. It is a pathway of inner transformation undertaken through prayer that prepares members for a compassionate mission in the world. This pathway is also the spiritual foundation of the Pope's

Worldwide Prayer Network, which EYM members are encouraged to join as adults in various ways. One such way is through the community life, so-called Prayer Network Communities.

The Way of the Heart is adapted to EYM children and young people in three core concepts: God's Word - The Gospel, the Eucharist, and the Mission. In the section dedicated to the EYM spiritual charism and "The Way of the Heart," we delve deeper into this subject.

**God's Word - The Gospel, the Eucharist and the Mission** are the inseparable concepts that recreate the formative proposal that is offered by the movement. Members are encouraged to foster their relationship with Jesus through these pillars.

To meditate on the Word of God, which is a key aspect of the first pillar, and to participate in Eucharistic adoration, central to the second, lead EYM members towards embodying a proactive Church life, as highlighted in the third pillar. The meditation of God's Word helps them to realize that the desires of the Jesus' Heart strongly echo with their own, bringing about a bond in affection and in mission. The young disciple learns to recognize God's voice inside themselves, to attune themselves with His feelings, to model themselves to His lifestyle. Their own life is a mission when they receive the Spirit of the Lord, and when becoming sensitive to His inspirations and motions they join to Jesus' project of compassion for the world. Their mission is to participate in Jesus' lifestyle, living like Him. In this way, assuming Jesus' behavior they become missionary disciples, apostles. The EYM members live in this way their baptismal commitment like apostles in everyday life.

The formation path that the EYM suggests, offers a different choice of life to what the existing culture presents to them. It offers tools to recognize the Lord's voice and to be able to respond to the great challenges that the world presents today. The EYM members learn that to live is a decision that gets real meaning and depth when they look their own vital experience through their faith. They practice discernment to recognize the Risen Jesus in historical events, who calls them to a life of fulfillment. The art of discernment, in the style of Jesus as proposed by EYM, is more relevant than ever.

The prevailing culture of immediacy and a lack of depth have eroded the appreciation for process and the ability to perceive Lord's presence in everyday life. Many young people participate in pastoral activities in different spaces as if they were doing some degree or with the goal of reaching some place or getting something. In the EYM, we do not look for people to be finished products, but rather we want to open growth processes in which EYM members may keep along their lives. With the result that the EYM members participation in pastoral activities, as a service to the Church, will always be a discerned decision that springs from their own growth process to collaborate with Christ's mission.

In the Eucharist adoration, young people learn to «be with the Lord», to remain in His love. (John 15.9) In contemplation, the bond of love strengthens and, when we look at

God's Heart in the Eucharist, the deep meaning of service is recreated. Through that act of prayer, Jesus Christ reveals the desires of his Heart that finds an echo in ours. In this deep relationship with the Lord, EYM members' desire to be with Him, at the service of his mission and according to his lifestyle is born.

The current culture of indifference and waste has permeated human relationships weakening bondages and the social fabric. Both realities strongly strike Christian values, but above all more fragile and vulnerable people. The EYM formation path also look forward to tackling these social problems, to which EYM members are called to attend. The experience to be unconditionally loved in the Eucharist gets its full depth in the service to the others.

In EYM we understand that our personal relationship with Jesus Christ opens us to the Gospel of God's Kingdom. The friendship with Jesus Christ opens us to his desire of fraternity, of solidarity and justice, of compassion; so, before the challenges facing humanity and of the mission of the Church, we help young people to move themselves through prayer and action at the service of God's Kingdom. This formation path leads EYM members to develop a healthier relationship with themselves and a freer and more authentic relationship with the others; it allows to build a real culture of encounter, open to everyone. It provides tools for discernment and for the free choice to collaborate actively in building a more humane and fraternal world.

## 2. Internal Structure

When we talk about the structure of the movement, it is important to have in mind that, although there are common elements, the structure configuration is not the same in the EYM communities in parishes as it might be in schools. We specify some differences that may help to understand.

In the case of EYM communities that work in schools, the structure and functioning are adapted to the structure of the educational institution and many times within the frame of the pastoral department. Mostly, the EYM is a non-core proposal, meaning that it does not belong to the schedule of mandatory courses, and in many cases the activities take place out of the school schedule, which is to say out of school hours or after classes. In some schools, the EYM is not the only non-core pastoral proposal, but it coexists with other proposals that the institution brings forward, such as the missionary group. We will see a little further that it is important to be careful that the EYM in schools does not turn into an extension of the "religion class" with classroom format, since it would be a distortion of the movement proposal that aims to have a different form from the "classroom format" and to invite also to a different pedagogical experience.

The EYM in schools needs an adaptation in terms of the space used for the activities. That is to say that the children and young people clearly notice that it is not an academic subject or simply another religion class. Therefore, the setting of the space is important. Also in some educational institutions, the EYM formation path is assumed, at least in part, by the school pastoral plan, inspiring contents, providing elements for the methodology and pedagogy, resulting in a synergy of both realities, “the movement formation plan” and “the school pastoral plan.” In many cases, this synergy enhances the institutional life.

Although the age range in the EYM is between 5 and 25 years old, each school takes the movement proposal in different age ranges, resulting in quite different realities. Some schools only take the proposal for the elementary school from age 5/6 to 12. Other schools only take the proposal for children after they receive the First Communion and only for 2 or 3 years of their schooling cycle. In other schools, it is a pastoral choice through all school years and even for those who graduated from the institution. As can be seen, the EYM is a proposal that is possible to adapt to the institutional life, keeping the spiritual charism, only if it is clearly noticed the spiritual foundation and the basis of the movement.

In the case of parishes, there are also different realities. Without the intention of covering all the field, we can point out some of them. In some parishes, the EYM is a parish proposal for children after they receive the First Communion onwards. In some other parishes, the EYM is the only parish proposal or the most numerous. Children enter the movement which accompanies their human and spiritual growth, and within which they live and receive their sacraments. Meaning that there is not a separated formation path for the sacramental preparation (Holy Communion, Confirmation, Reconciliation), instead the preparation for the sacraments of initiation is given within the dynamic of the movement. For that it is considered the individual process of every child and young person. Here we also find different adaptations to different realities, with the provision that the own charism and spiritual foundation are clearly perceived so that the adaptations keep the EYM typical style.

This said, we can look at some roles within the movement:

The EYM **members** are children and young people between 5 and 25 years old who approach to live the movement charism. They integrate a EYM **center** or community in a Parish or School. Within the center there are **groups** or teams, which are small communities of life of about 10 to 12 EYM members at most, who are in the charge of one, two, and up to three monitors or animators that accompany the life and the group process. These groups or teams are gathered by age. The monitor is 3 or more years older than the EYM members.

The EYM centers have a Coordinator and many times also a Spiritual Advisor, who are mostly lay young adults that know the Movement and have experienced on it.

At the level of country or region (group of countries), the visible face of the movement is a **director** or **coordinator** designated by the International Director. The International Director who is the last person responsible for setting the EYM course, orientations, and organization at a global level, is designated by the Holy Father. The PWPN including the EYM is a Pontifical work under the care of the Society of Jesus.

### 3. Formation Activities

The Movement life develops through different formation and recreation moments that are lived in community. The EYM groups that are part of different communities get together regularly (weekly or every two weeks) in “meetings” in which the monitor or monitors in charge present and accompany the experience over a formation topic. There are also other moments such as camp meetings, national or regional meetings, retreats, prayer days, Eucharist adorations. All these moments help the children and youth to build a friendship with Jesus, and they live these moments in a friendly atmosphere with the Lord, recreation, music, shared table, and prayer.

These activities are designed and organized based on the experience methodology with the foundation of the EYM spiritual pedagogy.

### 4. The EYM Spiritual Pedagogy – A Spiritual Pathway to Emmaus

In the EYM, we help young people to enter a deep and personal friendship with Jesus. Meaning helping them to know Jesus, to be closer to Him, to be His friends. This is the way we lead children and young people so that they can live His lifestyle. In the EYM we suggest a Eucharistic way of life. A Eucharistic way of life like Jesus who gave Himself to others, at the service of them. Jesus’ life that found the source of his self-offering in the Love to the world and to His brothers and sisters, a mission of compassion for the world.

This Eucharistic life develops throughout the day with **three moments** of personal meeting with the Lord. It starts with a prayer of offering, being available to Christ’s mission and aligned to His heart; at mid-day there is a pause to collect and bring the day back; and at the end of the day there is also a pause to collect and re-read the day to be aware of their availability to the mission entrusted by the Lord. This way is oriented by the Holy Father’s prayer intentions, which he entrusts us every month and which are the compass of the EYM mission, the orientation to incarnate the mission every day.

This way of praying suggested by the EYM helps to cultivate a deep friendship with Jesus, to keep ourselves vigilant and awake to His presence along the day, to be docile to his motions and faithful in everyday answers and decisions according to the mission entrusted. It is

a daily pathway that helps to build a Eucharistic life, committed to a mission of compassion, and founded in a personal friendship with Jesus.

*What is the pedagogy to go deeper in this Eucharistic way of life according to Jesus' style? It is the pedagogy of the Emmaus disciple's spiritual pathway.*

Those disciples who, after Jesus' death, go away from Jerusalem unhopeful and sad; they experience an encounter with the Risen Lord on the road and they recognize Him by the signs of his presence.

A) There is a first moment when the Lord interpreted the Scriptures to them and showed them the way He should live to announce the Kingdom of God. The Scriptures turn to be a discernment place to recognize the Lord's presence in their lives. In such a way that at the end of their journey, they expressed "Were not our hearts burning within us while he spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures to us?" For that reason, in the EYM we propose that to go into a deep friendship with the Lord, it is necessary to know the Scriptures, to take time to meditate, to pray on them, especially the Gospel. To listen and to know the God's Word, since it is through His Word that Risen Christ comes to meet us. And we invite the EYM young people to nourish with the Word of God every day, as it is a true food. Knowing Jesus in the Gospels helps to recognize Him in the historic events that we live day after day. Knowing about Jesus' life through the contemplation of the Gospels narratives is essential in the life of prayer of EYM children and young people. This is the first pillar of the spiritual charism: God's Word with the special focus on the Gospels.

Thus, in **Click To Pray**, the official Pope's prayer platform, we propose to meditate the God's word every day.

B) There is a second moment when they shared the table with the Lord; in that moment they recognized Him in the gesture of blessing the bread, breaking it, and giving it. For that reason, in the EYM the Eucharist is the privileged place of meeting with the Risen Lord. It is a place of transformation of their own life embracing Jesus Christ's life, to be with Him, to be like Him and to be at the service of His mission. In the EYM we propose to live the Eucharist as a true food, being molded and transformed by the Lord's life; eating His flesh and drinking His blood opens us to be food for the others. This is the second pillar of the spiritual charism: the Eucharist.

C) The third moment is the desire to announce the good news of the encounter with the Risen Jesus. In the EYM, it is about sharing with others this mission of compassion for the world.

Where can we find Him risen? Mainly we can find Him in the life of men and women who suffer, in the poor and most vulnerable people. For that reason, in the EYM we propose to live this mission at the service of our brothers and sisters who suffer, in an extremely specific way and with different actions according to the age of every child or young person.



It is necessary to support the fidelity to this mission of compassion in the practice of the re-reading or the pause. Through that practice, movement members are invited to recognize the Lord's presence in their lives and to be faithful to such presence with their answers. It is the way of discernment in real life the apostolic availability to the Christ's mission. Here it is the third pillar of the spiritual charism in the EYM, the mission.

In this way, the pedagogy of the Emmaus disciples is the origin of the EYM three pillars: the Word - Gospel, to recognize Jesus and go into a deeper friendship with Him in the way, the Eucharist, to be transformed by Him, and to be at the service of His mission, being sent by Christ to His mission.

To be faithful to this pedagogy and let the EYM children and young people live it, it is necessary to cultivate in them the practice of the re-reading (Exam) and to help them with it, as it is the cornerstone of their interior life.

In this way we help them in the art of discernment, so that they learn to recognize the Lord's presence in their lives, and little by little they can take decisions being responsible for them. So, it is a pedagogy of decision making. At the beginning they decide little things, growing in this practice. In this way, they learn to choose life, meaning they choose Christ in their lives. The art of discernment is part of the EYM spiritual charism and of this so important third pillar, the mission.

## 5. Experiential Methodology

The experiential methodology is a propaedeutic or method that helps to design a formative program, sequencing the contents to better achieve the goals. It helps to simply organize the way and order of the development of the formation topics with the focus on the essential: to start from an experience, observe it, discern it and act in consequence. The method helps to convert what the EYM members look in the world, starting from being aware of that look and attuning it with the Lord's way of looking, to finally act like Him and live according to Jesus. It is a method that helps to make real the following of Jesus in everyday life, developing evangelical attitudes in EYM members.

It is the method that is applied in the design and development of the weekly meetings of the EYM groups, where they live these formation topics. It is also applied in every formative stage, meetings, camp meetings. This method is the way to set down the spiritual pedagogy in the different formative moments the EYM has.

It is important not only to understand the steps, but also to achieve the comprehension of the interior logic of this method to be able to apply to different formative moments, adapt it according to the circumstances preserving the richness of the process and the goals that this method allows to achieve.

With no intention of exhausting the explanation of the method, since a lot have been said, I present here and explain briefly the steps of the method:

- a. Objective: in this first stage it is essential that the monitor in charge of the activity states an objective from the EYM perspective. For example: “that the children find the importance of being grateful, learn to thank and why to thank.” This objective is the yardstick with which they can “examine” later if they have achieved it or not. It is not specified to the group, but it is part of what is called the “hidden agenda” of the monitor who organize the activity.
- b. Motivation: it is an activity that aims at raising interest and desire, and it allows to contextualize and define the topic with the group. The group must discover the topic from this activity and then, the monitor contextualizes, specifies, and closes the definition of the meeting topic with clarity. The activity may be a game, a short video, a song, following an instruction. The variety of possibilities is huge. Going on with the example about being thankful, the motivation could be a short video about the topic in which the presence and absence of gestures of gratitude can be seen. There are dozens of children’s films with that topic.
- c. Description: then the children must “recognize” the topic in their vital experience. In this moment, the monitor can give some questions to answer individually, or to do a production in groups, or make a debate in groups, or some other activity the monitor considers helpful to achieve this goal. This step is about that the topic presented and defined can be subjectivized in children’s life and recognized as a personal experience. The children make the topic subjective; they make it their own; they connect the topic with their own experience of life. For what is not possible to appropriate and recognize in the own life, it is not easy to create an affective bond to work inside. Here it is about that children may “look the topic in their life, in their personal history.” They explore the topic at the level of their own personal history, ideas, feelings, desires, evaluating it in its length and depth. This moment is shared in the group. Going on with the example about being thankful, the children could answer some questions individually and then share them, or they could take some questions from a box and answer them in the group in the form of plenary.
- d. Analysis: in this moment, the group analyses the topic in a greater context, the community, the family, the country, the world. The monitor delimitates this new contextualization of the topic. It is an invitation to widen the circumstances of the person, time, and place to go on educating the gaze on the topic. Also, it is developed through a planned activity: questions, a piece of news, an image, anything that helps more. The monitor must contribute to enlarge the reflection, taking more information to expand the perspective on the topic. The group shares. For example, the monitor could take a piece of news about a gesture of thanking from the social network and ask

about how their own families live the gratitude.

- e. Discernment: In this moment, the aim is to enlighten what they have seen from the evangelical perspective and to enlighten the experience from Jesus' life. Making the topic an evangelical experience. The focus should be placed on Jesus' attitude, on some story of His life, or on some person of the Gospels. The monitor could also find different resources, a prayer, a reading of a story, a comment, a song. Something that helps to make this moment as a prayer is to change the space or the atmosphere, with some image, music, or other things that allow the meditation and make the meeting with Jesus easier. The aim is to lead them to be open to listen to the Word of Jesus, to convert their way of looking, to arise new desires, goals, and attitudes. They give a re-reading of the topic from an evangelical perspective, working with questions, a reflection, or a short meditation. They could take the children to some place with an altar, and for example, place an image of the healing of ten lepers from the Gospels in which only one turned back to express his gratitude. And from that place they pray and share with Jesus.
- f. Purpose: children must incarnate what they lived in real things of their life, for the passing time until the following meeting. Individually or in community, they should make concrete a purpose through attitudes, gestures, "something" specific for each one's life. This purpose will be the starting point for the following meeting, from which they will re-read how their lives have been in relation to this point. Every child will be able to make a purpose in relation to their own way of being thankful in some circumstance or with some person in particular along the week.

## 6. Resources – Global Projects

The EYM has at its disposal resources and materials that can be used as content of their formative moments and which spring from the development of three global projects. Such projects are ways of continuing and to make real the PWPN mission, at the same time, they provide with tools and resources that benefit the life of the movement and the formation programs. These projects are:

- a. [Click To Pray](#): is the official prayer platform of the Pope that helps to pray for the Holy Father's prayer intentions and to live and deepen the apostolic availability and the daily re-reading (Examen). It provides with daily prayers that involves three different times throughout the day, with Jesus in the morning, in the afternoon, and in the evening, as a daily way in which we offer our lives at the service of the mission of Christ and we exam our docility to the Spirit when we review the day; having the Holy Father's prayer intentions as a compass through which the EYM mission actualizes. Besides, there are different suggestions to actualize that intention in everyday life, pieces of advice to pray, and a section where you can share your personal prayer with the global

community. Every month, Click To Pray specially suggests developing personal and community attitudes to incarnate the intention in our own life, making it visible through real gestures in every environment. There is a website, social network, and app for your mobile. It is available in seven languages. The EYM communities find a way of praying, of connecting to one another, and creating their own style of community prayer. Within the framework of this project, it has been developed an application to pray the Rosary, which is presented as a pedagogical way for young people that, through audio guides and videos, can join the beauty and richness of this prayer to the digital technology world, [Click To Pray eRosary](#).

- b. [The Pope Video](#): it is a monthly video and a social media communication campaign which announces and introduces the content and the orientation of the challenges facing humanity and of the mission of the Church that Pope Francis expresses in his monthly prayer intention. These prayer intentions are needs and real situations of our world, of men, women, children, to which we urge to tackle through prayer and service. The Holy Father takes part in person, speaking to the camera. This resource provides with contents (infographics, elements about the challenge, orientations about how to deal with it) that can be the basis in the EYM communities to present to young people the great challenges of the world and of their local reality. The prayer intention needs to be taken to the real life through their own prayer and the cultivation of personal and community attitudes that spring from the intention itself and which Click To Pray proposes. It is available in eighteen languages.
- c. [The Way of the Heart](#): it is a group of 11 digital books that include the content of the spiritual pathway. It is also an app for the mobile and a website with audio, videos, and texts designed to make this journey in prayer. Both presentations are available only in Spanish. We have started the process of translation to the other languages. The EYM communities can use these materials in its original version and/or they can adapt them to the different ages of the children and to their own community reality.

## 7. The EYM Spiritual and Formation Program - The Way of the Heart

This program is the core of the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network and likewise of the EYM. It is the center of our mission, the foundation where everything that shapes our mission is supported. Without this heart, without this foundation, our mission is not understood. It is the spiritual and formation itinerary which transforms people's life and helps us to commit ourselves to the mission of compassion for the world. Why is it so important? Because by going this way, walking it, living it, praying with it, and leaving it to go through our lives, we are given the grace of the internal knowledge of the heart of Christ, so that we align our heart to His, we let the compassion of that Heart move ours, and the gestures that spring from that compassion be our gestures. Praying this way consists, like Pope Francis says, on entering the Heart of Jesus with our own heart, opening a road within the Heart of Jesus, feeling what Jesus feels: Jesus' feelings of compassion, and make a journey towards our own heart to convert it according to Jesus' Heart. For this reason, we affirm that our own way of entering this dynamic of the Heart of Jesus is called "The Way of the Heart." In the EYM, the proposal of this itinerary is adapted to the three pillars of the spiritual charism Word of God - Gospel, Eucharist, and Mission, including all its steps (9). In this way, the first three steps of this itinerary are related to the first pillar (Word), steps 4, 5 and 6 to the second pillar (Eucharist), and steps 7, 8, and 9 to the third pillar (Mission). Also, the EYM young adults can deepen the full itinerary, the nine steps, when they grow up and achieve spiritual maturity being close to a more mature pedagogy. Hence, The Way of the Heart is the root and what support the three EYM pillars.

We propose to our EYM young people to enter this way and deepen in it. It is the spiritual foundation, the way in which we live the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the EYM. It is a formation program that we propose to our EYM monitors and advisors so that by living it they can be inspired and find new ways to make it known by the EYM groups they accompany, adapting it to the own EYM pedagogy, according to the ages of children and young people. It is a way of prayer that invites us to go through it, to live it and to make a deep experience of meeting with the Lord. It is not about thinking a lot or knowing things, but it is about having an experience of an intimate and close encounter with Jesus Christ, the Savior, Friend, who desires to be with us in this way more than we desire to be with Him. Entering The Way of the Heart is being available to let our heart be transformed to the way of the Heart of Christ. In this way we are invited to mold ourselves into a way of being and living: "like Jesus" being docile to the Spirit. It is about entering the dynamic of the Heart of Jesus to grow in apostolic availability, so that all our life is molded into Jesus Christ's life and this transformation can be seen in our everyday life.

The prayer that transforms the life opens us to serve and love our brothers and sisters through true actions. Prayer is a meeting that changes our life, which makes us to go out of ourselves, that commits ourselves to the others. And this apostolic dimension of the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network, including the EYM turns to be true in the prayer intentions that the Pope entrusts us every month. And here it is where The Way of the Heart gets all its value and beauty. Since the proposal is not to build just an intimate relationship with the Heart of Jesus, but a personal relationship that "announces to the world" the Heart of Jesus through an attitude of apostolic availability to his mission of compassion. The personal relationship with Jesus, when it is sincere, commits us with the realities of our time. The Way of the Heart, adapted to the EYM three pillars: Word of God -Gospel, Eucharist, and Mission, is the itinerary that helps us to attune ourselves to those challenges facing humanity and of the mission of the Church that live in the center of the Heart of Christ.

The nine steps of The Way of the Heart are:

- 1) In the beginning there was Love
- 2) The human heart, restless and needy
- 3) In a broken world
- 4) The Father sends His Son to save us.
- 5) He calls us his friends.
- 6) Christ abides in us.
- 7) We offer our lives along with Him.
- 8) A mission of compassion
- 9) A worldwide network of prayer and service attentive to the needs of humanity

## 8. Good Practices in the EYM

This section summarizes what has been previously explained in a list of good practices, which is not intended to be exhaustive but a possible contribution that is the result of personal experience. Some of these practices could be key elements to favor in the accompaniment of the structure and the dynamic of other young ecclesial structures.

*Which are the key elements of the EYM proposal that can help/ orient/ inspire/ other youth groups of the Church?*

1. Strong proposal of formation. In the EYM the formation program is one of the essential dimensions to offer the world young collaborators in the humanizing mission of Jesus. Young people that commit themselves to the search and development of a more fair and fraternal society; a commitment that gets with the bonding experience of knowing oneself responsible for the own and others growth. It is essential to provide a strong formation to the EYM young leaders.
2. Spiritual charism centered on Jesus - attitude of apostolic availability. The friendship with Jesus is the foundation of following Him and of the apostolic participation as missionary

disciples in their environments. The EYM member collaborates with the mission of Jesus in the world and discerns where is the place to live that mission in their own context. The direction of the EYM mission and apostolic availability are set by the Holy Father's prayer intentions. The manner and place to incarnate the mission are the Pope's intentions.

3. Spiritual pedagogy with evangelical foundation and anchored to the youth vital realities. The spiritual pedagogy springs from the reality of the children, of their vital experience according to places, times, and persons. It is a personal and community process at the same time. It accompanies the real life, and it is inspired on the Emmaus disciple's spiritual pathway. The core of the pedagogy is Jesus, the friendship with Him, to collaborate in His mission, a friendship that is lived and shared in community. It is a process by which the EYM member is expected to have an experience with the person of Jesus and not "to learn a doctrine or a set of moral rules." "Values or doctrine" are not taught in themselves. Values, doctrine, and every knowledge "accompany and nourish an experience" that should be anchored and supported in the real life of children and young people. The key elements of this process are life of prayer - being nourished by the Eucharist to be living eucharist - discernment for the mission.
4. Including young people in levels of leadership and decision-making. To train is also to include children in levels of decision-making, of communication and planification; it is to give them responsibilities and to accompany them in the movement life. It is to give them confidence in the management, organization and planification of the movement. When they help in the design of the formation plannings, or in the organization of meetings, etc. they grow in commitment and responsibility since they will be the addressee of those activities. Listen to them, orient them, and help them to make up a decision and to be responsible for their decisions. To designate young people at a regional and national level has given great dynamism to the EYM. There are young people of 20, 23, 25 years of age who are National Coordinators and work in regional coordinating teams (several countries) and international teams with more experienced and older people who help and support them.
5. Spiritual pedagogy - continuous and structured formation programs - the cultivation of the inner life. The EYM has a structuring pedagogy, with proposals that accompany the human and psychological development (evolutionary process, management of emotions, leadership, gifts); social responsibility (poverty, ecology, culture); the process of faith (spiritual life, Bible initiation and Spiritual Exercises); pedagogical tools for camp meetings and formative meetings (dynamics, games, plannings, logistics, cooking, first aids). In the EYM it is essential the music just like the community dynamic. The EYM young people are well-known for living a well-structured and deep inner life.
6. Personal and community spiritual accompaniment. The children live the formation process with a personal accompaniment lived in community which is adapted to the circumstances and real possibilities of every child and of the group. All the children and young people's

dimensions are considered: their affective life, their commitment to the society and to the Church, their civil status responsibilities. Since the aim is to prepare strongly committed Christian people who live 24 hours a personal relationship with Jesus witnessing with their own life this choice for Jesus Christ in all their contexts and environments. It is a spiritual charism of decision-making. Children are accompanied to take their life in their hands, embrace it and share it. The aim is that they be Christian and committed people, free and responsible of their own choices. Feeling the responsibility to collaborate in Christ's mission there where they are called.

7. Methodology supported on a spiritual pedagogy with the Gospel on the center. The experiential method is the methodological practice of the formative stages. It is a propaedeutic way that helps the EYM member in their human and spiritual development, based on recognized, valued, and discerned experiences of their life, and which help them to decide more freely each time, with love and at the service of God and their brothers and sisters. It is a methodology that promotes to expand the capacity of awareness about themselves in relation to God Father, to Jesus at the service of the challenges of the world and listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit. It is a method that helps to grow being progressively more conscious, open-minded, free, and available to the mission of Christ.
8. Formation organized by stages and ages. The formation process is organized in growth stages by ages and according to the progress of the process. In the EYM groups, they share with other children of their age, even when their process and their ways in spiritual life are different. The intention is that the monitor is the person that accompanies that difference gap among the children and help them to take the opportunity to nourish one another. This allows that some EYM groups that already have a process done may incorporate new children to the movement without problem, sharing from scratch formation topics, accompanying them according to the circumstance of everyone.
9. Formation designed in paths or itineraries. The formation itineraries are designed with suggested topics according to the age and the children's evolutionary development. We promote and cultivate healthy environments. We enhance discernment, critical judgement, freedom, and responsibility for their choices. The EYM members do not live for the EYM, thus they live at the service of the mission of Christ in the Church and in the world.
10. Pedagogy of discernment and of decision-making – *inspiration from the pedagogy of St. Ignatius' Spiritual Exercises*. The EYM spiritual pedagogy proposes to children and young people to embrace the given life and discern the real call to collaborate in the mission of Christ in their own circumstance of life. Thus, the practice of the rereading and the art of discernment are the structuring elements of the EYM spiritual charism.

*International Team*

Appendix.

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