

Project : Development of a framework curriculum for spiritual formation for children and youth across ACSA. (Commonly known as PROJECT2013)

Project2013 was established in 2013 (as a consequence of a resolution passed at Provincial Synod 2013) to develop a framework curriculum for the spiritual formation of children and youth. A project team was established with team members recommended by various Bishops and approved by the Archbishop. The project team met once as a full group and sub teams met on other occasions.

Input and advices from the team members were collated into one document. That document contains all the salient recommendations and guidelines and is downloadable using the link, below.

This document summarises everything, concisely.

A. What has the Project produced?

1. The fundamental understanding of the importance of Children and Youth Ministry and answering the question : Why Children and Youth Ministry? It helps us to understand why a greater focus should be placed on this ministry within God's mandate for mission and discipleship and the growth of His Kingdom. A church which neglects the development of its young is setting itself up to fail in later years. Without a serious and intentional focus on the young will result in too thin a spiritual foundation being laid causing children and youth to take ill-informed decisions about their future as Christians within the context of the Church and society.
2. A framework for curriculum development for the spiritual formation of children and youth. It draws on the Anglican Communion's TEAC Framework for spiritual formation in laity as well as a variety of other sources and materials. It attempts to answer the question : What should our Children and Youth be taught (and what must they learn)? It discusses methodologies for teaching as well as various approaches to curriculum development.
3. A framework for the development of our volunteers (Sunday School Teachers, Children's Workers, Youth Leaders, Confirmation Instructors, etc.) whose responsibility it is to help our children and youth to understand and develop their spirituality and response to God's love and grace. Much emphasis will be placed in this area as it is the key to a great children and youth ministry in any Diocese or Parish.
4. The volunteers are not the only role players in this ministry. Guidelines are given to develop a support infrastructure around the children and youth ministry in order to enhance efficacy and productivity. The role that Special Interest Groups (SIGS) and Guilds can play, are also discussed.
5. A strategic implementation framework is also suggested. Implementing an intentional and holistic ministry to Children and Youth requires the serious consideration of a number of key factors which all work together to provide a holistic approach to the ministry resulting in efficacy and better productivity. Suggestions for pilot implementations in selected Dioceses are also made.

B. What did we learn during the project development?

1. Developing a curriculum or producing learning materials should be a secondary purpose. 80% of our focus should be on the volunteers into whose care we have placed our children and youth.



Without key competencies and skills, the volunteers are liable to make serious (theological and educational) mistakes which may have lifelong consequences in the lives of the young. Teaching incorrectly from the Bible is a real danger and using incorrect or ineffective teaching methods will not help either.

2. A key ability or skill that is seriously missing, is in localised curriculum development and correct resource/material selection. The Church does not currently provide the means to do proper analysis of the real needs of Sunday Schools, Children's Ministries and Youth Groups and this results in ineffective interventions being applied (if, any interventions are applied in the first place).
3. In at least 75% of all Dioceses there is a lack of vision and direction in this ministry area and the ministry does not have an intentional focus supported by staff or appointees who have the authority to drive the ministry in terms of growth (quantity and quality).

C. Critical recommendations.

1. To pilot the recommendations in 2 Dioceses in 2016. To craft a strategic plan with leaders within the 2 Dioceses and implement in not more than 5 Parishes in each Diocese.
2. To place a serious emphasis and focus on the development and skilling of **all** the volunteers. Our target is to ensure that over 10000 volunteers across ACSA receive the best in skills development in order to carry out their task.
3. In order to achieve this, to establish a Leadership Development Academy who will serve the Dioceses. Each Diocese is to appoint a Champion for Children's ministry and another for Youth Ministry. The Province will develop the Diocesan Champions through training seminars and symposiums, and they will, in turn, develop and train all the volunteers in their respective Dioceses. A full proposal exists for the establishment of the Academy.
4. The Academy also needs to manage a number of other related support areas, e.g. establishing an ACSA database of all volunteers, online mentoring services, online resourcing and courses, communication through social media, resource web site, etc. Volunteers need access to resources and materials as well as expert advices, etc.
5. For ACSA to consider the YEAR OF THE YOUNG proposed for 2017 when special focus will be placed on the ministry to the Young. A motion to this effect will be tabled at Provincial Synod in 2016.

The full Project2013 recommendations document can be downloaded here:

<https://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/105403553/Developmental%20curriculum%20of%20topics%20and%20themes%20-%20prior%20split%20%28Autosaved%29.docx>

Project2013 will, forthwith, be closed down as the required frameworks have been produced. Pilot implementations and project communications will be handled by Tony Lawrence and will be incorporated into the Leadership Academy once this initiative gets off the ground.

We take this opportunity to thank the Project2013 Project Team for their invaluable contributions and input. We hope that we will be able to draw on your expertise in the future as the need arises. Many opportunities exist to put theory into practice and we hope that you will remain on the forefront of implementation and praxis.

Further information may be obtained by emailing Tony Lawrence on : info@aysa.org.za

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