



Transforming Adolescent Catechesis: What's It All About?

A year ago St. Petronille was approached by the Diocese of Joliet to become involved in a process to reignite our youth and their families to grow and live in the Catholic Faith. This process, developed by the National Initiative on Adolescent Catechesis (NIAC), grew out of concern for teens who are “falling through the cracks.” Recent studies show that the ages between 13 and 23 are the most critical for Catholic youth and their commitment to stay affiliated with the Church. It also shows that “the greater the availability of religiously based relationships, activities, programs and opportunities and challenges for teenagers...the more likely teenagers are to be religiously engaged and invested.” (Soul Searching). NIAC will assist our parish in assessing, re-thinking and changing the methods in which we approach adolescents and their faith formation.

A small group of very committed adults, the Local partnership for Adolescent Catechesis (LPAC), has been meeting for the past year to begin the transformation by going through what NIAC calls the *Four Steps to Lasting Change: Embrace the Vision, Assess the Reality, Consider the Possibilities and Make It Happen*. For those of us involved in LPAC, embracing a vision and a direction for the team came after guided discussions and learning sessions. We are now in the assessment step, using the three surveys to map out the current landscape of adolescent catechesis in our parish. This is where we need your help in filling out the online survey.

Once we assess our strengths and weaknesses we can pair proven approaches and components for ministry with the unique aspects of our own faith community. We can “make it happen” when people like you help us to implement our plans and move from vision to a reality where young people are not just attending a *program*, but engaged and active in parish life and continue to grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ.

If you are interested in learning more go to www.AdolescentCatechesis.org

If you have questions or would like to know more about Youth Ministry at St. Petronille please contact us at millerm@stpetschurch.org.

