

**DRAFT**  
Subject to change. Full  
syllabus available in Canvas  
the week of May 19<sup>th</sup>.

Loyola Institute for Ministry  
Loyola University New Orleans

**Youth and Young Adults:  
Spirituality and Methods of Faith Development  
LIM-G876-Y1G0E**

**Summer 2025**

**Important!** You will be notified by email when your course is available (normally the week before class begins). Please check your *Loyola email* account for instructions. ***Please reply*** to the instructor's email when you receive it.

**Course Description**

In this course, students first examine in depth the phenomenon and characteristics of youth, young adult, and *los jóvenes* spirituality.\* They examine typical stages of religious development during adolescence through the emerging adult years. Using the method of practical theological reflection, this course draws on stories of faith and life told by young people from diverse backgrounds as the foundation for exploring the theory and practice of nurturing the spiritual life of young people attentive to a variety of factors that contribute to identity formation in contemporary culture. Students will demonstrate an ability to apply a variety of methodologies for enhancing the faith development of young people with a focus on the religious and educational development of contemporary youth young adults. Finally, students direct their attention to a study of a variety of methodologies to enhance and encourage the faith development of young people, and explore ways to help them grow in faith, religious knowledge, and religious expression.

**Learning Goals**

By the end of this course, students will be able to

- better appreciate the psychological sociocultural, and religious reality of the young people as the starting point for ministry by utilizing the method of practical theology to engage in a critical analysis that explores how these influences are shaping their understandings of their spirituality, their place in society and their development towards adulthood and that leads to finding ways to build the Reign of God in their own surroundings.

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\* The USCCB delineates youth to be ages 12-18 (in junior high or high school), young adults as those 18-39 years of age, and *los jóvenes* as those 18-35 years of age, or until marriage.

- demonstrate an understanding of the developmental needs of young people, with its particular popular, ethnic, cultural, and family subcultures, as appropriate to the faith community being served;
- foster the ability to mentor the developmental and spiritual growth of young people and explore the implications of recent research on youth and young adults, spirituality, and religion including the role family, parents, and the community play.
- facilitate the development of community among young people, their families, and within the Church and society, including the development of small faith communities by youth from different cultures, spiritualities, or pastoral models and propose a number of processes and interactions that can help communities accompany young people on their journey to spiritual growth.
- appreciate the role that technology and social media has in the lives of young people and how it can be a method for evangelization and offer a sacred space.
- reflect critically on their spiritual autobiography for how they came of age and allow the power of narrative and dialogue as a method of ministry with youth and young adults transform their ministry with young people and their community.

### **Required Readings**

*Please order the required texts as soon as possible from the bookstore of your choice.*

Francis, *Christ Is Alive (Christus Vivit)*. Vatican. *The Holy See*, 2, April 2019, [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco\\_esortazione-ap\\_20190325\\_christus-vivit.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20190325_christus-vivit.html) ISBN:1601376286 List Price \$ 11.95.

O’Keefe, Theresa A. *Navigating Toward Adulthood: A Theology of Ministry with Adolescents*. Paulist Press, 2018. ISBN: 080915398X, List Price \$ 29.95 This book is available in Canvas as an ebook whose pages you can read online or download.

Ospino, Hosffman and Timothy Matovina. *Young Latino Catholics: Stories of Faith*. Paulist Press, 2022. ISBN: 978-08091-5568-2

Patel, Eboo. *Acts of Faith: The Story of an American Muslim, the Struggle for the Soul of a Generation*. Beacon, 2020. ISBN: 9780807050828, List Price \$16.00. This book is available in Canvas as an ebook whose pages you can read online or download.

NFCYM, *The National Dialogue on Catholic Pastoral Ministry with Youth and Young Adults: Final Report*, NFCYM Publishing, 2021. Available for free online in [English](#) and [Spanish](#), or purchase the print version for \$18.00: [English](#) or [Spanish](#).

Additional readings, audios, and videos are available in Canvas in the weekly modules.

**Recommended Texts**

Bengtson, Vern, et. al. *Families and Faith: How Religion is Passed Down across Generations*. Oxford UP, 2013. ISBN:13: 978-0-19-994865-9. This book is available in Canvas as an ebook whose pages you can read online or download.

Day, Maureen and Brian Starks, editors. *A National Qualitative Study on Catholic Campus Ministry: A Report Prepared for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Secretariat of Catholic Education*, USCCB, 2017. <https://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/catholic-education/campus-ministry/upload/19-051-Campus-Ministry-Report.pdf>.

Mercadante, Frank. *Engaging a New Generation: A Vision for Reaching Catholic Teens*. Our Sunday Visitor Pub. Division, 2012. ISBN:978-1-59276-722-9.

Ospino, Hosffman, editor. *Our Catholic Children, Ministry with Hispanic Youth and Young Adults*. Our Sunday Visitor, 2018. ISBN: 9781681928654

Parker, Evelyn L. *The Sacred Selves of Adolescent Girls: Hard Stories of Race, Class, and Gender*. Wipf & Stock, 2010. ISBN 978-1-6-0899-3901. See video series [here](#).

Parks, Sharon Daloz. *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams: Mentoring Young Adults in Their Search for Meaning, Purpose and Faith*. Fortress Press, 2019. ISBN-978-1506454870. This book is available through Loyola’s Monroe Library as an ebook whose pages you can read online or download.

Roberto, John. *Lifelong Faith: Formation for All Ages and Generations*. Church Publishing Inc., 2022. ISBN 978-1-64065-486-0.

**Evaluation and Course Requirements**

**Sequence of Topics/Calendar of Assignments**

| Session                  | Topic                                                                                           | Assignments                                                   |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 1<br>May 27– June 2 | Introduction to Youth and Young Adult Spirituality: The Stories We Hear and the Stories We Tell | Introduce self, complete readings, video, discussion question |
| Week 2<br>June 3–9       | The Developmental and Spiritual Lives of Youth and Young Adults                                 | Complete readings, videos, discussion questions               |

|                       |                                                                                                                      |                                                          |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 3<br>June 10–16  | Contemporary Culture and the Dynamics of Family Life                                                                 | Complete readings, video, discussion questions           |
| Week 4<br>June 17–23  | It Takes a Universe: The Importance of Community for Youth and Young Adult Development (June 19, Juneteenth holiday) | Complete readings, video, , small virtual group response |
| Week 5<br>June 24–30  | Vocation and Discernment with Young People                                                                           | Complete readings, videos, discussion questions;         |
| Week 6<br>July 1–7    | Mentoring and Accompaniment: <i>The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly</i> (July 4, Independence Day holiday)               | Complete readings, videos, discussion questions;         |
| Week 7<br>July 8–14   | Pastoral Care and Spiritual Direction: Challenges in Nurturing Spiritual Growth with Young People                    | Complete readings, video, audio, discussion questions    |
| Week 8<br>July 15–21  | <i>Oh, the Places You'll Go</i> : Strategies for Building Spiritual Growth                                           | Complete readings, video, small virtual group response   |
| Week 9<br>July 22–28  | Working on Final Assignment                                                                                          | Final assignment due by 11:59 pm on 7/28                 |
| Week 10<br>July 29–31 | Completing Course Evaluation                                                                                         | Complete course evaluations                              |

**Due date for posting final grades:** Wednesday, August 6, 11:59 pm CT

## Week 1 Assignments (The Developmental and Spiritual Lives of Youth and Young Adults)

Please complete the following readings:

- Groome, *What Makes Us Catholic*, Preface and chapter 1 (in Canvas)
- O’Keefe, *Navigating toward Adulthood*, Introduction (available as an ebook in Canvas)
- Ospino and Matovina, *Young Latino Catholics*, preface
- Francis, *Christus Vivit*, Introduction and chapter 1 (par. 1-21)
- Patel, *Acts of Faith*, ch 1-3 (use the handout in Canvas as you read this book that is available as an ebook in Canvas)
- Review the LIM Focus Area Introductory Information for Youth and Young Adult Ministry (on Canvas)
- Complete Discussion Questions

## Assessment

Each student’s final grade will include the following parts:

|   |                                               | Percentage of Grade |     |
|---|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------|-----|
|   |                                               | Graduate            | CEU |
| 1 | Discussion Board and Reflection Journal Posts | 50%                 | 90% |

|   |                     |     |                               |
|---|---------------------|-----|-------------------------------|
| 2 | Spiritual Formation | 15% | 5%                            |
| 3 | Final Project       | 35% | 5% (1-2 paragraph reflection) |

### 1) Discussion Board (50% of Graduate Student Evaluation; 90% of CEU Evaluation)

For each weekly discussion, your participation includes your original post in response to the assigned question(s), as well as the comments you are asked to make on your colleagues' posts. There are specific directions posted about these requirements each week in Canvas. Postings should address the question(s) for the session, respect the word limit posted for each week's question(s), and demonstrate some interaction with course materials for that session.

In addition to addressing the question(s) for each week, you are also asked each week to comment on the postings of your colleagues in this course. This comment should also be substantive: "I agree" or "I like what you posted" is not a substantive comment. Please articulate what about their posting is compelling to you, and why you consider their comment relevant, challenging, important, etc. There is no word limit requirement to comment posts.

Asking Questions: One of the most effective tools of a good online discussion is the question. Communication in the online medium can be easily misinterpreted; conversely, it can be challenging to effectively convey tone and nuance in an online discussion. This can lead to misunderstanding, conflict, and frustration in the learning group.

When in doubt about the meaning of a post, a good strategy is to pose a question about it, and to avoid making assumptions or jumping to conclusions. Even if the meaning seems straight-forward, it is good practice to ask follow-up questions and/or questions for clarification. My hope for our discussions is that we will rely on the question as a standard tool for effective communication.

Discussion Leaders: Each week there will be one or two Discussion Leaders to help initiate the flow of our conversation. The task of the Discussion Board group leader is simply to post first. Group leaders post their major response consisting of 300-400 words to the discussion question by **Friday**, 11:59 pm Central Time; other members of the group respond to the weekly question by replying to the Discussion Leader's thread before **Saturday** night, 11:59 pm CDT, with a 300-400 word response (major post). All students respond to two other group member's posts in 100-200 words by **Monday** at 11:59 pm (minor posts). All group members should have a total of three discussion posts by Monday at 11:59 pm (one major, two minor) for each discussion board question. All posts must be informed by course material (please cite your sources).

Be sure to check the Discussion Leaders link on the course homepage to see when your

name will come up. If you are unable to lead the week you are scheduled, please let your instructor know as soon as possible.

Optional asynchronous whole-class meetings will be held, as well as required small group meetings 2 times this semester.

**2) Aesthetic Spiritual Formation through the Arts (15% of Graduate Student Evaluation; 5% of CEU Evaluation)**

The spiritual formation journals in our class will combine both poetry, music, and visual art. Full details found in the final syllabus in Canvas.

**3) Final Project (35% of Graduate Student Evaluation; 5% of CEU Evaluation)**

*Graduate Students* choose one option for your final paper (full details in Canvas).

Option #1: A 10-12 page research paper based on two of the course objectives as they apply to your ministry.

Option #2: A persuasive 12-15 min video presentation relevant to your ministry context that addresses a particular concern with young people.

Option # 3: Interview a youth or young adult minister or high school or college/university campus minister and explore those implications.

Full details found in the final syllabus in Canvas.

*CEU Students* complete a 1-2 paragraph reflection documenting how this course enhanced your ministry praxis.

**Grading Scale**

|           |         |           |         |           |         |
|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|
| <b>A</b>  | 93-100  | <b>B-</b> | 80-82.9 | <b>D+</b> | 67-69.9 |
| <b>A-</b> | 90-92.9 | <b>C+</b> | 77-79.9 | <b>D</b>  | 60-66.9 |
| <b>B+</b> | 87-89.9 | <b>C</b>  | 73-76.9 | <b>F</b>  | 0-59.9  |
| <b>B</b>  | 83-86.9 | <b>C-</b> | 70-72.9 |           |         |

**Overall Grading Scale**

| <b>Letter Grade</b> | <b>Quality Points</b> | <b>Characteristics of Student Work</b>                                                                                                              |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>A</b>            | <b>4.0</b>            | Work done with distinction. An outstanding use of all four evaluation criteria as a catalyst for critical reflection.                               |
| <b>A-</b>           | <b>3.7</b>            | Work done with distinction, with a few minor corrections needed.                                                                                    |
| <b>B+</b>           | <b>3.3</b>            | Work of very good quality. The assignment is addressed in an exceptional manner with a good balance of personal insight and academic documentation. |

|           |            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>B</b>  | <b>3.0</b> | The standard for the master's degree. The assignment is adequately addressed in a clear and concise manner with appropriate documentation. If subsequent work meets this standard of quality, the degree will be awarded.                                                                    |
| <b>B-</b> | <b>2.7</b> | The work is slightly below the standard for master's level work. The assignment is addressed, but a number of corrections is needed to address the assignment in a clear and concise manner. If subsequent work continues at this level, the student may not continue in the degree program. |
| <b>C+</b> | <b>2.3</b> | Substandard graduate work. Evaluation criteria are not adequately met in the assignment. Moderate improvement is needed. If subsequent work continues at this level, the student may not continue in the degree program.                                                                     |
| <b>C</b>  | <b>2</b>   | Less than graduate-level work. Evaluation criteria are not met. If subsequent work continues at this level, the student may not continue in the degree program.                                                                                                                              |
| <b>C-</b> | <b>1.7</b> | Below average, grade does not count towards graduation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>D+</b> | <b>1.3</b> | Minimally passing, grade does not count towards graduation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>D</b>  | <b>1</b>   | Minimally passing, grade does not count towards graduation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>F</b>  | <b>0</b>   | Assignment not addressed at all, incomplete assignment, or not submitted on time.                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

Please note that the LIM grading scale uses B as the standard for graduate-quality work. A and B+ indicate graduate work done with distinction, with B- and below signifying levels below graduate standards.

## **Course Policies**

### **Incomplete Grade Policy**

Students are subject to the university policy regarding incomplete grades with the following additions to university policy. Grades of Incomplete are given at the instructor's discretion. Students must complete LIM's Incomplete Grade Request Form found in the Resources » Policies, Forms, & Services section of their Canvas course. Students should first inquire of their instructor whether or not they are eligible for an incomplete; this must occur with sufficient time to complete the process explained here. To be eligible, students may not have received an Incomplete in the previous semester, must have completed at least 75% of the course work to date, and must have at least a C or above in the course. After the instructor makes an initial assessment of eligibility, including checking with the LIM Office to ensure there was no Incomplete in the previous semester and finds the student eligible, by the due date of the course's final assignment, a student must complete and obtain all signatures for LIM's Incomplete Grade Request Form found in the Resources section of their Canvas course and submit it to their instructor, who will forward a copy to the LIM Director. LIM graduate students may not receive Incompletes in LIM courses in consecutive semesters.

### **Attendance & Participation**

Students are subject to the university policy regarding attendance found online in the Bulletin. Students in online courses communicate their presence by active participation in weekly discussions. Each course's instructor sets requirements for how many times students must post on the Discussion Board in Canvas. Failing to post during the first week of class may result in removal from the course. If you foresee that you will be unable to post in a

given week, please contact the instructor ahead of time. Extensions for posting are given at the instructor's discretion and for a valid reason may be granted if arranged ahead of time. In extraordinary circumstances, students may arrange with their instructor to post up to two weeks after a deadline, though this may entail a grade reduction. Posts and other assignments submitted more than two weeks late may be subject to a grade of zero. If students do not post in a given week, they are considered absent. Absence for more than one week without contacting the instructor may result in removal from and failure of the course.

### **University Policies**

Please read Part 2 of the syllabus (located on LORA and in Canvas) for university policies on plagiarism, accessible education, and more.