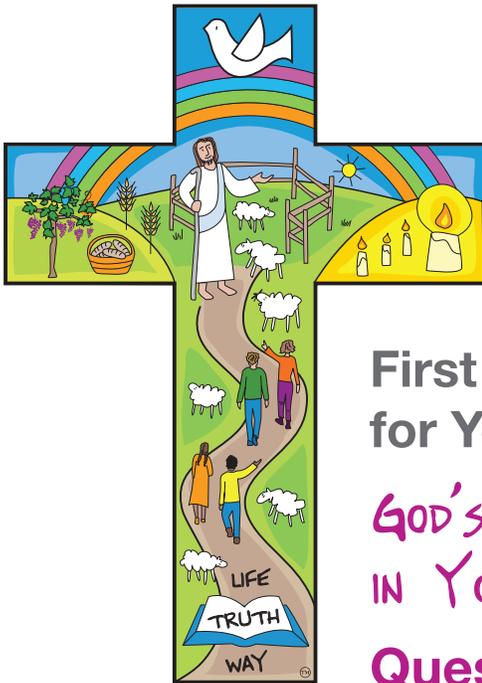




Biblical Mission for Youth and Young Adults
GOD'S WORD COMES TO LIFE IN YOUNG PEOPLE



First Continental Biblical Mission for Youth and Young Adults

GOD'S WORD COMES TO LIFE
IN YOUNG PEOPLE

Questions and Answers

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE BIBLICAL MISSION

WHAT IS THE BIBLICAL MISSION, "GOD'S WORD COMES TO LIFE IN YOUNG PEOPLE"?

This Biblical Mission for Youth and Young Adults is a missionary initiative of the Catholic Church, coupled with an evangelizing and formative effort on the part of its young leadership. It is carried out in the spirit of Jesus, who had the mission of announcing the Good News of the coming of the Kingdom of God to humanity. This mission was assumed by his disciples, and with the same strength yesterday, today, and forever, Jesus continues to invite the baptized to bring him as the Word of Life to the ends of the earth in every generation (Mt 28:18–20).

In this Biblical Mission, the missionaries are young people who are firm in their faith and active in the life and mission of the Church, supported by their ministers, advisers, and the Church hierarchy. The resources are available in English and Spanish, so that young people who speak either language may participate.

WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF THE BIBLICAL MISSION?

- 1 To bring the Word of God to young people with new ardor, expressions, and methods.
- 2 To promote the evangelizing vocation of young Catholic leaders.
- 3 To create a sense of the universal Church among Catholic youth and young adults in the Americas.



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WHY IS THE BIBLICAL MISSION IMPORTANT?

There are five main reasons to carry out this evangelizing project:

- 1 It provides an opportunity for many young people to approach the Word of God, so that they may encounter Jesus, receive his liberating love, and be strengthened in their faith, hope, and love.
- 2 It promotes Catholic young people as agents of the New Evangelization in the Americas based on their apostolic zeal and enthusiasm for life and pastoral action.
- 3 It responds to the "Synod on the Word of God in the Life and the Mission of the Church," convoked by Pope Benedict XVI, so that the Word of God would be better heard, contemplated, loved, and lived.
- 4 It participates in the effort launched by the Latin American bishops and reaffirmed by Pope Francis to keep the Church in an active and permanent state of mission.
- 5 It activates the spirit of the apostolic exhortations *Ecclesia in America* and *Evangelii Gaudium* by creating a missionary bridge that links the experience of young Catholics throughout the Americas.

II. ORGANIZATION OF THE BIBLICAL MISSION

WHO ORGANIZES THE BIBLICAL MISSION?

The Biblical Mission can be organized in a small ecclesial setting such as a group for parish youth or young adults, a class in a Catholic school, or a community center for young people in a small town. It can also be organized in larger institutions, such as a diocese or archdiocese, or an apostolic movement.

The role of Instituto Fe y Vida is to spearhead and coordinate the project, create all the necessary materials in English and Spanish, and support the organizing leaders through the websites. Several partners, promoters, and donors have contributed their expertise to make the Biblical Mission a success (see section VI. below).

HOW ARE THE BIBLICAL MISSION TEAMS ORGANIZED?

There are two types of teams working together with a shared leadership approach:

- A **Core Team** composed of: (a) one or two **organizers** who coordinate the Biblical Mission; (b) **trainers or catechists** who train the young missionaries; and (c) **advisers** who support the young missionary teams at the Biblical Mission sites, especially if the missionaries are adolescents.
- **Teams of Young Missioners** consisting of young **evangelizers** and **hosts**, who are the principal agents of the pastoral action in the Biblical Mission project.

WHO ARE THE EVANGELIZERS AND HOSTS, AND WHAT IS THEIR ROLE?

The evangelizers and hosts are Catholic young adults or adolescents who demonstrate sufficient faith formation, training, and maturity as disciples of Jesus. The age range follows the guidelines of youth and young adult ministry in each country. The missionaries should be about the same age as the participants they will serve.



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The Biblical Mission's sessions are designed to be facilitated by a team of four young missionaries: two **evangelizers**, in charge of the reflections and prayers, and two **hosts**, in charge of hospitality and preparing the materials for each session. This team of missionaries is in charge of inviting their friends and peers to experience the Biblical Mission, although the Core Team also participates in inviting young people.

EACH TEAM OF YOUNG MISSIONERS
CONSISTS OF TWO EVANGELIZERS AND TWO HOSTS.

AN ADVISER MAY ACCOMPANY THE TEAM,
ESPECIALLY IF IT INCLUDES ADOLESCENTS OR YOUNG ADULTS
WITH LIMITED PASTORAL EXPERIENCE.

WHO ARE THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE BIBLICAL MISSION?

The Biblical Mission is geared toward young people in general—teenagers and young adults—who accept the Church's invitation to know, pray, share, and live the Word of God in their hearts. They are friends, classmates, coworkers, relatives, or neighbors of the young missionaries, whether they be active members of the parish or young Catholics who do not regularly participate in the life of the Church.

WHERE WILL THE BIBLICAL MISSION BE HELD?

The Biblical Mission is taking place in the United States and Latin America, as well as other Spanish-speaking and English-speaking countries.

WHAT IS THE CORE TEAM'S COMMITMENT?

- To implement the Biblical Mission, supported by the materials that were designed for this purpose.
- To incorporate the Biblical Mission into the planned activities for the youth group, parish, Catholic school, or apostolic movement, empowering the young people to take on their evangelizing mission in union with other young Catholics throughout the Americas.
- To support and promote the Biblical Mission in the parish by sending forth the young missionaries at a Sunday Mass and by celebrating the closing of the Biblical Mission with all the participants present at another Sunday liturgy.
- To share the experience with Instituto Fe y Vida through the Biblical Mission websites, in order to create a virtual community of evangelizers of young people and to improve the organization of future missions, so that "God's Word comes to life in young people."



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HOW MUCH DOES THE BIBLICAL MISSION COST?

- All material and resources for the Biblical Mission are available free of charge through the Biblical Mission website: www.YouthBiblicalMission.org.
- Instituto Fe y Vida in the United States and some publishers in Latin America publish the *Manuals*, *Guidebook*, and *Journal* of the Biblical Mission, in English and Spanish, for those who prefer printed materials. They are sold at the cost of printing, with permission to make photocopies.
- Each institution or community that implements the Biblical Mission will cover the expenses for training the young missionaries and providing the materials to their constituency.

WHEN WILL THE BIBLICAL MISSION BE IMPLEMENTED?

God's Word has no time limit; therefore, the Biblical Mission can be implemented at any time. The general process and the training of young missionaries can be carried out as many times as desired. The resources will remain available on the websites. Fe y Vida plans to offer new content periodically for other biblical missions.

III. PROCESS AND CONTENT OF THE BIBLICAL MISSION

WHAT IS THE PROCESS TO FOLLOW AND HOW LONG DOES IT LAST?

The process has three main stages. The preparation time will depend on the situation in which the Biblical Mission is planned; for example, a diocese or archdiocese that needs to organize the Biblical Mission by regions will need much more time than a parish group or a high school.

1 Initial preparation

- Embracing the Biblical Mission
- Forming the Core Team
- Studying the materials and planning the Biblical Mission
- Identifying potential young missionaries

2 Training of the young missionaries

- Inviting the young missionaries
- Experiencing the Biblical Mission and discerning roles
- Training Day
- Preparing to facilitate the biblical sessions

3 Implementation of the Biblical Mission

- Sending Forth Liturgy
- Inviting participants to the Biblical Mission
- Facilitating the four sessions:
"God's Word Comes to Life in Young People"
- Closing Liturgy and social gathering
- Evaluating and making the final report





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WHAT IS THE FOCUS OF THE BIBLICAL MISSION?

The focus of the First Biblical Mission is helping young people to identify with Jesus. Quotes from the Gospel of John were chosen in which Jesus reveals himself to his disciples by saying, "I am." These quotes, symbolized on the Mission Cross, are discussed in four sessions:

- **Jesus gives us his life and empowers us to bear fruit:** "I am the vine" (Jn 15:5) and "I am the bread of life" (Jn 6:35).
- **Jesus, the friend who gives life today and always:** "I am the resurrection and the life" (Jn 11:25) and "I am the way and the truth and the life" (Jn 14:6).
- **Jesus, the good shepherd, loves me, calls me, and gives me life:** "I am the gate for the sheep" (Jn 10:7, 9) and "I am the good shepherd" (Jn 10:11, 14).
- **Jesus is the light of the world; I want to be a light for my peers:** "I am the light of the world" (Jn 8:12) and "You are the light of the world" (Mt 5:14, 16).

Future Biblical Missions will also consist of four sessions. They will focus on new evangelizing themes and biblical passages that proclaim the Good News. In this way, those who participate in them may appropriate various messages from God's Word. In addition, as time passes, the organizers will have a variety of themes from which to choose in order to respond in the most effective way possible to the pastoral needs of the young people they serve.

WHAT FRUITS WILL THE BIBLICAL MISSION BEAR?

- Personal and communal encounter with Jesus through the Word of God
- Promotion of the evangelizing vocation and mission of young Catholics
- Training of young pastoral leaders at the local level through a formation-in-action process
- Multiplying the pastoral effectiveness of leadership in the Church, among both adults and young people
- Strengthening the young Church and its Catholic and missionary identity
- Coordinated pastoral work among Catholic institutions

WHAT COMES AFTER THE BIBLICAL MISSION?

The evangelizing mission of the Church never ends; the young Church cannot give up its missionary mandate once this project ends. It is everyone's responsibility—young people, families, priests, religious, schools, dioceses, and movements—to continue the New Evangelization among the young.

The partner institutions that make the Biblical Mission possible offer various ways to support ongoing evangelization in the young Church, each one from its own particular ministry. Below you can find some contributions:

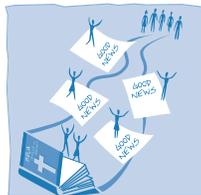
- 1 Saint Mary's Press offers a program called *YES! Youth Engaging Scripture*, several versions of the Bible for young people of different ages, and countless resources for strengthening the biblical foundations of pastoral ministry with young people, in English. Visit www.smp.org.
- 2 Young people who wish to continue reflecting and praying on the Word of God in Spanish can use *La Biblia Católica para Jóvenes (BCJ)* and the *Diálogos Semanales con Jesús* series (DSJ), which offers an adapted *lectio divina* for young people, based on the Sunday readings. These resources may be used personally or in community. Visit www.BibliaParaJovenes.org.



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- 3 In the United States, Instituto Fe y Vida offers the course, “La Biblia desde la óptica de los jóvenes” (“The Bible from the Perspective of Young People”), in collaboration with dioceses, groups of parishes, or other Church institutions. Visit www.FeyVida.org/esp.
- 4 Editorial Verbo Divino has abundant biblical publications and materials in Spanish. Visit www.verbodivino.es.
- 5 Producciones Dynamis offers a series of biblical CDs named, “Joven, a ti te digo,” which present young biblical characters with messages relevant to the young Church, as well as songs with a biblical message, in Spanish. Visit www.Dynamis.com.mx.
- 6 Instituto Fe y Vida will periodically organize new Biblical Missions for youth and young adults with different themes, producing the bilingual resources to carry them out. Stay informed by registering for the e-newsletter at www.BibliaParaJovenes.org.



IV. FORMATIVE AND EVANGELIZING REACH OF THE BIBLICAL MISSION

WHAT LEVEL OF IMPACT WILL THE BIBLICAL MISSION HAVE?

The Biblical Mission can have a very broad reach if it is organized by adult Catholics in key ecclesial roles in dioceses, religious orders, or apostolic movements. Promoting the evangelizing and missionary vocation of youth and young adults can put thousands of young missionaries into action and bring hundreds of thousands more to an encounter with Jesus through God's Word. The document, “Scenarios of the Organizing Centers and their Missionary Potential,” available at the Biblical Mission website, shows the capacity of our Church to mobilize its young leaders. All depends on the openness to the Holy Spirit of the adults and well-formed young missionaries!

WHAT IS MEANT BY THE TERMS “SCENARIO,” “CENTER,” AND “SITE”?

- The “scenarios” are visual examples of how the Biblical Mission can be implemented through a particular ecclesial body. See the document, “Scenarios of the Organizing Centers and their Missionary Potential.”
- The “centers” are the organizing bodies under the leadership of a Core Team, with a certain number of Teams of Young Missioners. A parish, a diocese or archdiocese, an apostolic movement, or a school may function as an organizing “center.”
- The “sites” are the places where the four biblical sessions are offered. The sites are prepared by the organizing ecclesial body, which includes the training and sending forth of the Teams of Young Missioners. Each center may have as many sites as the number of committed young missionaries allows.

Ideally these sites should be distributed in different locations throughout the target area so that they can offer more opportunities for young people to participate in the Biblical Mission. It is also possible to hold the sessions at different times and days in a central location, to accommodate the busy schedules of young people.



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At the end of the document on the organizing centers there are two charts. The first one shows the number of sites that could potentially be scheduled during a week. The second one provides an idea of how to distribute the sites in a particular geographic area.

WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PARISH IN THIS MODEL OF MISSION?

The parish is typically the main organizing body. As a place where the faith community gathers at the tables of the Eucharist and the Word, the parish is invited to open its doors to adolescents, young adults, and adults who wish to bring God's Word to young people. The organizer could be the pastor, another priest, the person in charge of youth ministry, a catechist, or any parish leader with suitable pastoral experience.

The parish could be the place where the Core Team meets, young people are trained, and the Biblical Mission is carried out. Optimally, the Sending Forth and Closing Liturgies of the Biblical Mission would be celebrated in the parish at a Sunday Eucharist, so that the whole faith community can participate in them.

Through the Biblical Mission, the young people will find the parish to be a place to share their life and be in contact with God. This will rejuvenate the parish, renew its evangelizing and missionary spirit, and strengthen the Christian families who call the parish their spiritual home.

Ideally, the parish leaders will find space to conduct the sessions in as many sites as possible. If additional facilities are needed, the parish could ask for help from Catholic schools, apostolic groups, retreat houses, and families. Conversely, some Catholic schools, apostolic movements, and other ecclesial groups may need support from a parish to celebrate the Sending Forth and Closing Liturgies during a Sunday Eucharist.

SAY TO THEM,
THE KINGDOM OF GOD
IS AT HAND FOR YOU.

Lk 10:9

V. PUBLICATIONS AND RESOURCES FOR THE BIBLICAL MISSION

WHAT PUBLICATIONS AND RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?

Stage 1: To understand, share, and plan the Biblical Mission

- ✓ PowerPoint presentation
- ✓ Flyers and posters
- ✓ Document: Questions and Answers
- ✓ Document: Overview of the First Continental Biblical Mission for Youth and Young Adults
- ✓ Document: Scenarios of the Organizing Centers and their Missionary Potential
- ✓ Document: Guide to Using the Resources for the Biblical Mission
- ✓ Sample Calendar for Planning the Biblical Mission
- ✓ Template for Planning the Biblical Mission



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Stage 2: Manuals and resources for implementing the Biblical Mission

- ✓ *Core Team Manual*
- ✓ *Manual for the Team of Young Missioners*
- ✓ *Mission Guidebook* – for conducting the biblical sessions
- ✓ *Mission Journal* – for the participants
- ✓ Theme song with sheet music for instrumental accompaniment
- ✓ Training video, in Spanish
- ✓ Songbook with additional music for use in the Biblical Mission
- ✓ Materials to promote and celebrate the Biblical Mission

All of the resources are available on the Biblical Mission website for use at any time. The two *Manuals* are foundational in this project and may be utilized repeatedly throughout the years. New *Guidebooks*, *Journals*, and supporting materials will be created for future Biblical Missions.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR USING THE PUBLICATIONS AND RESOURCES?

- The publications and resources can be downloaded from the following websites:
 - ✓ www.YouthBiblicalMission (English)
 - ✓ www.MisionBiblicaJuvenil.org (Spanish)
- All of the materials available in the two websites may be downloaded and utilized free of charge.
- Instituto Fe y Vida's copyright must be acknowledged in all printed or photocopied publications, and when promoting the project.
- Providing the publications and resources to the users should also be free of charge, if possible, or at most the cost of reproducing the materials may be passed on to them.

VI. PARTNERS, PROMOTORS, AND DONORS

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN "PARTNERS," "PROMOTERS," AND "DONORS"?

- "Partners" are the institutions that made this project possible by collaborating to create the publications and resources, as well as promoting the Biblical Mission. These key institutions are identified below.
- "Promoters" are people and institutions committed to disseminating information about the Biblical Mission and motivating its implementation at a broad level.
- "Donors" are people and institutions that contributed financially so that the publications and supporting materials for the Biblical Mission may be offered free of charge through the Internet.

WHO ARE THE "PARTNER INSTITUTIONS" AND WHAT ARE THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS?

Instituto Fe y Vida: Conceptualization and direction of the project; development of the publications and resources; involvement and collaboration of partner institutions; acquisition of funding for the project; and development of the websites. See www.FeyVida.org and www.BibliaParaJovenes.org.



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Oregon Catholic Press (OCP): Rights to the theme song in English and compilation of songs for the Biblical Mission in English. See www.ocp.org.

Editorial Verbo Divino: Organization of a biblical campaign to offer *La Biblia Católica para Jóvenes* at a subsidized price in Latin America; donation for the development of the materials; promotion of the Biblical Mission at the international level. See www.verbodivino.es.

Producciones Dynamis (Martín Valverde): Composition of the theme song and its video clip, in Spanish; production of the training video, in Spanish; promotion of the Biblical Mission with its network of collaborators and friends; acquisition of donated theme songs for each session in Spanish. See www.Dynamis.com.mx.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB): Promotion of the Biblical Mission in the United States through the Secretariat for Cultural Diversity in the Church and the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry. See www.usccb.org.

Latin American Bishops Conference (CELAM): Promotion of the Biblical Mission in Latin America through their *Sección de Juventud* and the *Centro Bíblico Pastoral para América Latina* (CEBIPAL). See www.celam.org.

Catholic.net, México and U.S.: Promotion of the Biblical Mission through its website: www.es.catholic.net.

WHO PROVIDED FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO THE MISSION?

Major funding for the translation of the Biblical Mission publications, website, and all supporting materials into English was provided by the Lilly Endowment, Inc. Most of the donors are from the United States. Donors from other countries are indicated as such.

- Anonymous Foundation in Latin America
- Anonymous Foundation in the United States
- Benefactors of Instituto Fe y Vida in the United States and Mexico
- Catholic Youth Foundation USA
- Congregation of the Mission, The Vincentians
- De La Salle Christian Brothers: Midwest Province, California Province
- Donald D. Lynch Family Foundation
- Fund for Pilgrims and Prophets, Carmelite Friars
- Fundación SERTULL, Mexico
- Fundación Verbo Divino, Spain
- In memory of Rancho el Chilar de San José, Mexico
- Koch Foundation
- Oregon Catholic Press
- Our Lady of the Assumption Parish, Diocese of Stockton
- Raskob Foundation for Catholic Activities
- Saint Anthony of Padua Parish, Diocese of Stockton
- Saint Joseph Parish, Diocese of Beaumont
- Saint Jude Shrine, Diocese of San Diego
- Saint Mary's Press
- Sisters of Providence, Washington State
- Sisters of Saint Joseph of Orange