

What are the activities youth commissions can organise during the pandemic

Be Creative - think out of the box

Due to COVID-19 we are locked down in our institutions and homes. We had to either postpone or cancel all the events planned for the year 2020. We are not very sure about the future. How long this situation is going to last is only a guesswork. What can we do when we are locked down. Here below we have given a few activities that the youth commissions can organise.

During the last three months (end of April to June) young people in different dioceses have done different things. To help you we have put together these activities.

1. Online Bible Quiz - daily challenge : Just fifteen questions prepared on a theme like Church, Sacraments, Prophets, Miracles, Women in the Bible, Letters of St. Paul etc.) This is done through Google form and there is also a professional platform called FYREBOX, KAHOOT.com [Use Kahoot.com to run an online quiz for your youth. You can find a quiz already made online, or create your own! If using Zoom, the host can share their screen to all the participants while they input their answers on a separate device. A fun interactive game with live leader boards and scores to keep everyone on their toes to get the right answer... and fast!]

2. Online Survey : Having data is an asset. We can use data for various purposes. During the year when we are busy, it is difficult to collect and collate. I feel, this is the best time to have data collected and analysed properly. There are many free websites to create a free form and they do the collation of the data. Eg. Google forms, freeonlinesurvey.com, create online poll.

3. Update your resource material : Most of us have prepared our power points and have some resource material on several topics. We have accumulated a lot during our seminars, training programmes etc. We find it difficult to update and most of us do a little editing when we are invited for a session. This time is best utilized updating our **recourse** materials and creating new.

4. Organise challenges: **These** young people all over the country are planning a lot of challenges. The popular ones are: Biblical fashion show (young people were asked to dress up like a biblical figures, click a photo and send to the commission) poster making (based on themes), singing and dance (record one minute song/dance and send), creating awareness videos (one minute video on topics like healthcare, mental health, environment etc.) photography, news reporting video on Biblical scene (**Agra**), best out of waste, selfie with papa (**Meerut**), rosary making, altar making, eco pals, Cooking and styling foods, *Shayari* ,poems, short story competitions, room arrangement etc. We can create more of these. I have mentioned a few things already done in our dioceses.

5. Theme based videos to spread awareness: Days like World Environment Day, Earth Day, Cancer Day, Mental Health Day, Road safety week etc

6. Create helplines to help people : This means creating contact lists of people who are available for youth counseling, blood donation, career counseling, job offers, catholic doctors, nurses, lawyers etc. Also a list of migrant youth.

7. Prepare and publish stories of the saints. Find some interesting facts of their life. You can shortlist young saints or saints who supported and cared for young people. Create a habit of writing. A lot of information is available online. We need to take information that we need and relevant.

8. Creating a web portal/e-learning site etc: interdisciplinary study portal which can employ teachers and interested students with a certain fee charge for gaining knowledge on various disciplines which syllabus cannot cover. There are

many young people who are web designers, graphic and content creators who can help. Webinars can be organised on various themes.

Play some games with your friends to build your teams eg. <https://youtu.be/rvkM12p4iTA>

9. Youth Commission/Director can :

1. Encourage more interaction in youth groups (online interaction can be organised by every parish at least once a month)
2. Encourage DEXCOs to meet regularly and share their faith stories and organise bimonthly interaction with Bishop. It could be spontaneous or pre-planned, where youth ask bishop questions and he responds. If not Bishop, at least with VG/Youth director & DEXCO. Once in four months you can invite all the young people for a planned session with the bishop where you take questions and ask bishop to reply. This creates goodwill and bonding.
3. Encourage virtual Catechetical forums in parishes and dioceses (where youth interact among themselves along with a priest or religious to animate them) This is the best time to start YouCat, DoCat, Bible study groups
4. Encourage more online programmes (E.g. On *Christus Vivit*, matters of interest to youth like media, environment, social responsibility, career, education, social issues etc.
5. Educate young people on encyclicals and exhortations by different Popes and Church teachings. Imparting the teachings of the church....topics like the holy mass, way to sainthood, how to build youth ministry etc...just little inputs.
6. Ask suggestions/opinions on real life issues that the youth face...their views how they would deal/ react in such situations...more of an interaction. This helps to guide others having similar problems
7. Encourage family prayer which they many have neglected because of the busy schedule . **lockdown** is a great opportunity to revive it. This can help bring young people closer to parents
8. Prepare image based short catechesis and educate them