



# Australian Young Christian Students Movement

## Cover Page



see...

***Funky looking blue and green, images of students,  
-Name of the Program  
- YCS Group Formation***



judge...



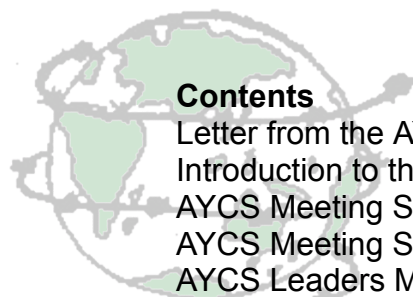
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***1Never Underestimate The Students !!***



# Australian Young Christian Students Movement

## Contents Page



### Contents

	Page
Letter from the AYCS Executive	3
Introduction to the Program	4
AYCS Meeting Structure 1	5-6
AYCS Meeting Structure 2	7
AYCS Leaders Meeting	8
Faith in Action Program	9
-Meeting One	10-12
- Meeting Two	13-14
<i>see .</i> -Meeting Three	15-16
-Meeting Four	17
Meeting Five	18- 19
Meeting Six	20
What to do now?	21
Supporting Documents	22
Prayer and Reflection Tools	23
-Gospel Reflection	24
-Prayer	25-27
-YCS Creed	28
Review of Life Tools	29
-Review of Happenings	30
-Three Truths	31-32
-Day in a Life	33
Other Resources	34
Contact Information	35





# Australian Young Christian Students Movement

## Letter from AYCS Executive

March 2008

Dear Students, Teachers, Adult Assistants and Chaplains, As the National Chairperson of the Australian Young Christian Students Movement I am proud to present you with the follow on resource to the NUTS program, the **YCS Faith in Action Program**.

YCS provides students with excellent formation in taking action that is based on their faith. This has and always will be the strength of the Young Christian Students Movement. As a Movement that is run for, by and among secondary school students, we empower students to develop a Christian faith that is truly active and relevant in their own daily lives.

The YCS Faith in Action Program is a six week program designed to help support and sustain groups to become affective YCS groups following the use of the NUTS program. The NUTS program was a prescriptive program and the Faith in Action Program will move away from this style and provide tools for YCS groups to successfully run without needing a detailed program. The Faith in Action Program can also be used by existing groups to help maintain or refresh the knowledge and formation of group members.

Part of the AYCS's focus on providing greater support for the ongoing formation and training of groups, new resources will be produced in 2008. Every 6 weeks a YCS meeting plan will be released that will focus on a particular tool, skill, campaign or action ensuring that YCS members are constantly being challenged to be active Christian Leaders in their community. This will be supported by a Quarterly Twilight Retreat Program that groups can run in their community.

Yours in the Spirit of Cardijn  
Elizabeth McFarlane,  
AYCS National Chairperson  
Year 11 Student,



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# Australian Young Christian Students Movement

## Introduction to the Faith in Action Program

The Faith in Action Program is designed to empower YCS leaders giving groups the skills and experiences to confidently and effectively run their YCS Meetings. This program runs for 6 weeks and includes guides and tools to structure, organise and run YCS local group meetings whilst allowing groups to explore the key issues which are relevant to their lives. The program will provide ongoing support to YCS group's ensuring continued formation and development of members and group actions.

### How to use the Program

- As in the NUTS Program the groups leaders need to meet with their Adult Assistant to prepare the meetings, reflect on the previous meetings and to be challenged and encouraged to grow as leaders. There is a template Leaders Meeting on page 8 which you can use to prepare meetings.
- Similarly to the NUTS Program students will complete a Review of Life over the period of two meetings, but they will select their own experiences to review rather than use prescribed topics that as in NUTS.
- Over the course of the 6 meetings the group will be introduced to 3 methods of starting a Review of Life, this is so that they can confidently review past the program.
- Links are made to various resources to support YCS Groups in running their meetings.
- At the end of the 6 weeks YCS leaders should be able to effectively plan and run their YCS Meetings using the AYCS Meeting Structures that are included at the front of the Program as a guide.

As a support to the Faith in Action Program and YCS groups across Australia the YCS will be producing a Meeting Plan every 6 weeks, which groups can run. This meeting plan will give groups new tips and tools for running Reviews of Life, faith formation and taking actions. We will also be creating a termly Twilight Retreat Program. This Retreat program will provide workshops like activities allowing groups to go deeper in their formation and explore more issues that are relevant to young people. We really encourage YCS groups to make connections with other YCS groups in their area. You may be able to do this through attending Diocesan Leadership Days and for Adults to attend Adult Training and Formation opportunities.



# Australian Young Christian Students Movement

## AYCS MEETING 1 STRUCTURE

35 minutes

**PRAYER or REFLECTION**- 5 minutes

**GAME**- where appropriate and time permits

**REVIEW OF LIFE**- 20 minutes

SEE

The SEE Section is about finding out exactly what is happening in a situation that the students want to talk about.

- What exactly happened? What was your action in response? (the facts)
- What caused this to happen and why? (the causes)
- How were people affected? (the consequences)

JUDGE

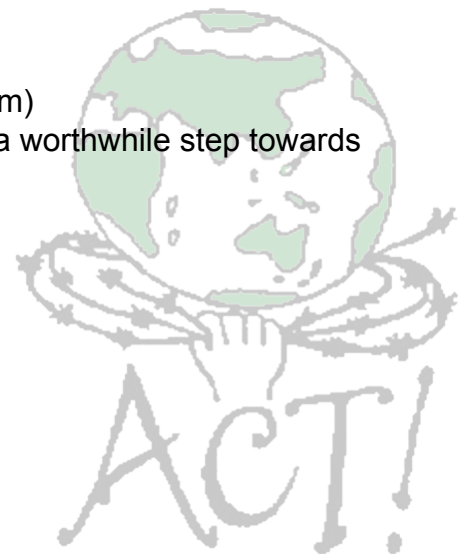
The JUDGE Section is about applying our faith and beliefs to the situation and developing an idea about what we are called to do.

- What do you think about this?
- What does your faith say about this situation? What would Jesus do here?
- What *should* be happening? (the ideal situation)

### Preparation for the ACT Section

If your YCS Meeting was occurring in a longer time period you would use the Standard Review of Life Questions which are below. Though due to lunch time meeting constraints the Act section is often carried over two meetings and we can use some alternative Questions which are below as well.

- What exactly do you want to change? (Long term aim)
- What action could you take this week that would be a worthwhile step towards achieving this change? (Short term action)
  - Individual Action
  - Collective Action
- Who else could you involve in this action?



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## Alternative Act Questions

Similar to the NUTS Program, next week you will be coming up with actions to work towards changing the particular situation you are currently reviewing. During the week it would be good for groups members to

1) *Commit to finding out more information about the particular situation?*

or

2) *Think about what a good collective action for the group would be?*

**GENERAL BUSINESS-** 5 minutes

*see...*

**PLANNING NEXT MEETING-** 3 minutes

**CLOSING PRAYER or REFLECTION-** 2 minutes



*judge...*





# Australian Young Christian Students Movement

## AYCS MEETING 2 STRUCTURE

35 minutes

**PRAYER or REFLECTION-** 1 minute

**GAME-** 5 minutes

**REVIEW OF LIFE-** 20 minutes

Reflection on Previous Meeting

1. The note-taker from last time should read out what was discussed in the SEE and JUDGE Sections
2. Does anyone have anything to add to this that might have been left out?
3. Is there anything that anyone wants to add here before we move on to the section? For example you might have thought more about the situation.

**ACT**

- What exactly do you want to change? (Long term aim)
- What action could you take this week that would be a worthwhile step towards achieving this change? (Short term action)
  - Individual Action
  - Collective Action
- Who else could you involve in this action?

**GENERAL BUSINESS-** 5 minutes

**PLANNING NEXT MEETING-** 2 minutes

**CLOSING PRAYER or REFLECTION-** 2 minutes



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# Australian Young Christian Students Movement

## Leaders Meeting Suggested Structure

Leaders meetings are a very important part of a well functioning YCS group. A good YCS meeting occurs when leaders meet with their Adult Assistants to reflect on previous meetings and look at planning the next meeting. While using this program it is really important that in between meetings Leadership meetings occur.

We recommend that you use a normal meeting structure as a guide for your Leaders Meetings but include things such as teambuilding, trust and leadership games, opportunities to reflect on the state of your group, on how each leader is going, and on the personal growth and development of each person as a Christian and a leader.

see...

### **OUTLINE FOR LEADERS MEETINGS**

**Prayer/Reflection-** This reflection or prayer could be about Leadership or even your group

#### **Evaluation of YCS Group Meeting**

##### **SEE**

What did we observe in our group meeting?  
What went well? What didn't?  
What impact did this have on the meeting and the group?  
Why did this happen?

##### **JUDGE**

What have we learnt about ourselves and our group?  
What does our faith say about these situations?  
What do we want our next meeting to be like?

##### **ACT**

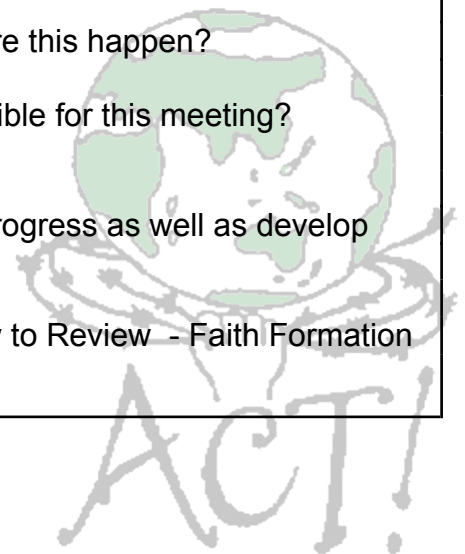
How are we going to improve?  
What actions are we going to take this meeting to make sure this happen?  
- Planning for the next meeting i.e. creating the agenda  
- Who is going to be the main leader or the person responsible for this meeting?

#### **Leadership Training/ Opportunities**

This is an opportunity to discuss each others Leadership Progress as well as develop and reflect on YCS Leadership Skills and Formation.

Things that you could look at might include

- What makes a good leader? – Leadership Qualities - How to Review - Faith Formation
- Servant Leadership -- YCS Leadership







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FAITH IN ACTION PROGRAM



*- images of students, action etc*



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# Australian Young Christian Students Movement

## Meeting One Outline

35 minutes

### **PRAYER or REFLECTION-** 5minutes

Similar to the NUTS Program every YCS meeting should open with a Gospel Reflection or a Prayer. Faith Formation is a very important aspect of the YCS and the Gospel Reflection plays an important role in helping students relate their faith to their everyday situations. Prayer is also very important for centering students action and developing their relationship with God.

Each week a particular gospel can be chosen by the group to be discussed at the meeting. This may be the weekends Gospel or a Gospel of significance to someone. Questions based on the gospel should be created so that a good discussion can occur.

In the program on page 24 there is a guide for writing a gospel reflection. The AYCS has also created a Gospel Reflection Booklet available on the AYCS Website full of reflections for meetings that may assist in group meetings. Visit <http://www.aycs.org.au/files/gospel.pdf>.

There are many forms of prayer that groups can use in their meetings but it is essentially about making a conscious effort as individuals or as community to be aware of God Presence and to enter further into our relationship with God. A good prayer resource is on page 25-27 where some information has been taken from the Formation Guide for Guides by the Melbourne Days in the Diocese Office. Your Adult Assistant should be able to help you plan and run prayer in your meetings.

### **GAME-** 5 minutes

Due to the short meeting times of many YCS meetings we encourage you to decide if your group has enough time to do a game as well as get through all the meeting content.

Games are a great way of getting students to interact with each other. They also have various purposes including team building, trust, and awareness raising or even just to have fun. A YCS group does not have to have games at every meeting it is up to the groups to decide when they are suitable. Games can be found on the internet or in a library. YCS members within your groups may also know a great wealth of games from school, drama and other activities they may have been involved in. We also encourage YCS groups to create their own games for all different purposes. The Australian YCS Games Resource can be downloaded from the AYCS Website at \_\_\_\_\_

### **REVIEW OF LIFE-** 20 minutes

#### Starting a Review

In the NUTS Program you would have had the opportunity to experience a Review of Life based on a chosen topic. This would have give you a good understanding of SEE JUDGE ACT. We can use this method on any event in our life not just a topic that someone else sets for us, so that we can really be making a difference in our everyday



# Australian Young Christian Students Movement

life. When we do a Review of Life it should be coming from an experience or situation we have seen or been part of.

There are many tools that a group can use to start a Review of Life. You have already experienced the Review of Happenings in the NUTS Program. In this program there is a list of different ways to start a Review of life; we encourage you to try a few different methods. You may find one way works particularly well for your group or that you would like variety it is up to the group.

Today you will use the Three Truths technique.

Go back to the list/brainstorm about the Truth of Faith and the Truth of Experience that you did when the group first started using the NUTS Program. If you have trouble remembering this brainstorm refer to page 31. Are there areas on the brainstorm that the group did not look at in NUTS? Is the list/brainstorm still relevant? Are there specific examples of the situations that were brainstormed occurring in students lives currently?

By asking these questions the group can work out a situation that they wish to review. Your groups can constantly be referring back to this list/brainstorm and adding new situations and concerns providing a constant tool for starting the SEE Section of the Review.

If a few people say yes, the leaders should ask the following questions to lead into a Review of Life.

- Is there anyone who would like to review their experience of this concern this week?
- Are there any concerns that are quite urgent and need to be reviewed and action taken as soon as possible?

The below questions are the Review of Life questions that you use in every meeting to develop actions and explore the student reality. Once you have chosen a situation to review the group's leader leads a discussion using these questions as a guide.

## SEE

The SEE Section is about finding out exactly what is happening in a situation that the students want to talk about.

1. What exactly happened? What was your action in response? (the facts)
2. What caused this to happen and why? (the causes)
3. How were people affected? (the consequences)

## JUDGE

The JUDGE Section is about applying our faith and beliefs to the situation and developing an idea about what we are called to do.

4. What do you think about this?
5. What does your faith say about this situation? What would Jesus do here?
6. What *should* be happening? (the ideal situation)



# Australian Young Christian Students Movement

## ACT

If your YCS Meeting was occurring in a longer time period you would use the Standard Review of Life Questions which are below. Though due to lunch time meeting constraints the Act section is carried over two meetings and we can use some alternative Questions which are below as well.

- What exactly do you want to change? (Long term aim)
- What action could you take this week that would be a worthwhile step towards achieving this change? (Short term action)
  - Individual Action
  - Collective Action
- Who else could you involve in this action?

## Alternative Act Questions

Similar to the NUTS Program, next week you will be coming up with actions to work towards changing the particular situation you are currently reviewing. During the week it would be good for groups members to

- 1) *Commit to finding out more information about the particular situation?*
- or
- 2) *Think about what a good collective action for the group would be?*

## GENERAL BUSINESS- 5 minutes

- Are there any school/parish/community activities that the YCS is being part of?
- Feedback from the Diocesan Team Meetings/National YCS.
- Are there any camps, socials, fundraising to organise etc

## PLANNING NEXT MEETING- 3 minutes

- Remind the other students when the meeting is
- Leaders to work out how they will prepare and reflect for the next meeting. Refer to page\_ for tips.
- Who will take notes next week
- Who can bring/organize some food

## CLOSING PRAYER/ OR REFLECTION - 2 minutes

- You may wish to create a prayer space with a candle and cloth if you have enough time in your meeting.
- We encourage groups to alternate between using the YCS Creed and a YCS Prayer to conclude meetings this way students are regularly reflecting on the purpose and mission of the YCS. It also will help students focus on the purpose and meaning behind the actions that they will take each week.
- After the Prayer or Creed is read out there is an opportunity for shared group prayer where time permits. This is where the Leader asks the group to pray for any special intentions they may have.

## Meeting Two Outline

12 *Never Underestimate The Students !!*



# Australian Young Christian Students Movement

35minutes

## **YCS CREED- 1 minute**

The YCS Creed should be read aloud by all group members.

## **GAME- 5minutes**

Due to the short meeting times of many YCS meetings we encourage you to decide if your group has enough time to do a game as well as get through all the meeting content.

Games are a great way of getting students to interact with each other. They also have various purposes including team building, trust, and awareness raising or even just to have fun. A YCS group does not have to have games at every meeting it is up to the groups to decide when they are suitable. Games can be found on the internet or in a library. YCS members within your groups may also know a great wealth of games from school, drama and other activities they may have been involved in. We also encourage YCS groups to create their own games for all different purposes. The Australian YCS is currently creating a Games Resource so checkout the website soon.

## **REVIEW OF LIFE- 20 minutes**

Last week we started doing a Review of Life on a member of the group's personal experience. We looked at what was happening and what we believed should be happening. Today we will quickly revisit that stuff then we will plan how we can change the situation we are talking about. We will look at taking personal action as well as a collective group action.

## Reflection on Previous Meetings

1. The note-taker from last time should read out what was discussed in the SEE and JUDGE Sections
2. Does anyone have anything to add to this that might have been left out?
3. Is there anything that anyone wants to add here before we move on to the section? For example you might have thought more about the situation.

## ACT

The ACT Section is about deciding what we can do to change the situation in the way that our faith and beliefs are calling us to.

- What exactly do you want to change? (Long term aim)

In the YCS we encourage groups to take two types of actions which are;

Individual/Personal Actions- An action an individual takes supported by others and

Collective Actions- This action involves more than one person, such as a whole YCS group or a whole Diocese.

An action can start small and personal and then develop into a larger action/campaign. For example in the Perth YCS Movement a group of students were reviewing concerns about their friends negative Body Image, they started to take small actions within their friendship group and their school. As YCS is a Diocesan Movement, they took these



# Australian Young Christian Students Movement

concerns to the rest of the diocese and realised that it was not just the reality at that particular school but an important concern for many high schools students. The Perth YCS then collectively engaged in larger actions such as letter writing, sleepovers, workshops, information days and drama groups. Body Image is now a Focus Area of the AYCS National Campaign of 100% Respect!

- 
- What action could you take this week that would be a worthwhile step towards achieving this change? (Short term action)

When discussing the following questions, where appropriate ensure the group takes personal actions as well as a Collective group Actions.

The final action question is

- Who else could you involve in this action?

This is a really important question as it helps us to reach out to those who are not engaged in the Movement and ensures that our actions are having a strong impact on the wider community.

## **GENERAL BUSINESS- 5 minutes**

- Are there any school/parish/community activities that the YCS is being part of?
- Feedback from the Diocesan Team Meetings
- Are there any camps, socials, fundraising to organise etc

## **PLANNING NEXT MEETING- 2 minutes**

- Remind the other students when the meeting is
- Leaders to work out how they will prepare and reflect for the next meeting
- Who will take notes next week
- Who can bring/organize some food

## **CLOSING PRAYER or REFLECTION- 2 minutes**

- You may wish to create a prayer space with a candle and cloth if you have enough time in your meeting.
- We encourage groups to alternate between using the YCS Creed and a YCS Prayer to conclude meetings this way students are regularly reflecting on the purpose and mission of the YCS. It also will help students focus on the purpose and meaning behind the actions that they will take each week.
- After the Prayer or Creed is read out there is an opportunity for shared group prayer where time permits. This is where the Leader asks the group to pray for any special intentions they may have.

## **Meeting Three**



# Australian Young Christian Students Movement

Use the information from Meeting One to help you run this meeting

35minutes

**PRAYER or REFLECTION-** 5 minutes

**GAME-** Where appropriate and time permits

**REVIEW OF LIFE-** 20 minutes

Previous Meeting

Time should be allocated in every meeting to follow up previous meetings actions. This should not take up the whole meeting but allows for ongoing action and groups contribution.

Starting a Review of Life

This week as a way of getting a Review of Life started we are going to use the Review of Happenings tool which is on page\_\_.

SEE

- What exactly happened? What was your action in response? (the facts)
- What caused this to happen and why? (the causes)
- How were people affected? (the consequences)

JUDGE

- What do you think about this?
- What does your faith say about this situation? What would Jesus do here?
- What *should* be happening? (the ideal situation)

ACT

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  - Individual Action
  - Collective Action
- Who else could you involve in this action?

Alternative Act Questions

15 *Never Underestimate The Students !!*



# Australian Young Christian Students Movement

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1) *Commit to finding out more information about the particular situation?*

or

2) *Think about what a good collective action for the group would be?*

**GENERAL BUSINESS-** 5 minutes

**PLANNING NEXT MEETING-** 3 minutes

**CLOSING PRAYER or REFLECTION-** 2 minutes



*judge...*



**Meeting Four**

16 *Never Underestimate The Students !!*





# Australian Young Christian Students Movement

Use the information from Meeting Two to help you run this meeting

35 minutes

**YCS CREED**- 1 minute

The YCS Creed should be read aloud by all group members.

**GAMES**- 5minutes

**REVIEW OF LIFE**- 20 minutes

Reflection on Previous Meeting

1. The note-taker from last time should read out what was discussed in the SEE and JUDGE Sections

2. Does anyone have anything to add to this that might have been left out?

3. Is there anything that anyone wants to add here before we move on to the section?

For example you might have thought more about the situation.

**ACT**

- What exactly do you want to change? (Long term aim)
- What action could you take this week that would be a worthwhile step towards achieving this change? (Short term action)
  - Individual Action
  - Collective Action
- Who else could you involve in this action?

**GENERAL BUSINESS**- 5 minutes

**PLANNING NEXT MEETING**- 2 minutes

**CLOSING PRAYER or REFLECTION**- 2 minutes



Meeting Five



# Australian Young Christian Students Movement

Use the information from Meeting One to help you run this meeting

35 minutes

**PRAYER or REFLECTION-** 5 minutes

**GAME-** Where appropriate and time permits

**REVIEW OF LIFE-** 20 minutes

Previous Meetings

Time should be allocated in every meeting to follow up previous meetings actions. This should not take up the whole meeting but allows for ongoing action and groups contribution.

Starting a Review of Life

This week as a way of getting a Review of Life started we are going to use the Day in the Life tool which is on page\_\_\_.

SEE

- What exactly happened? What was your action in response? (the facts)
- What caused this to happen and why? (the causes)
- How were people affected? (the consequences)

JUDGE

- What do you think about this?
- What does your faith say about this situation? What would Jesus do here?
- What *should* be happening? (the ideal situation)

ACT

If your YCS Meeting was occurring in a longer time period you would use the Standard Review of Life Questions which are below. Though due to lunch time meeting constraints the Act section is carried over two meetings and we can use some alternative Questions which are below as well.

- What exactly do you want to change? (Long term aim)
- What action could you take this week that would be a worthwhile step towards achieving this change? (Short term action)
  - Individual Action
  - Collective Action
- Who else could you involve in this action?

Alternative Act Questions



# Australian Young Christian Students Movement

Similar to the NUTS Program, next week you will be coming up with actions to work towards changing the particular situation you are currently reviewing. During the week it would be good for groups members to

1) *Commit to finding out more information about the particular situation?*

or

2) *Think about what a good collective action for the group would be?*

**GENERAL BUSINESS**- 5 minutes

**PLANNING NEXT MEETING**- 2 minutes

**CLOSING PRAYER** or **REFLECTION**- 2 minutes



*judge...*



**Meeting Six**

19 *Never Underestimate The Students !!*



# Australian Young Christian Students Movement

*Use the information from Meeting Two to help you run this meeting*

35 minutes

**YCS Creed-** 1 minute

**GAMES-** 5minutes

**REVIEW OF LIFE-** 20 minutes

Reflection on Previous Meeting

1. The note-taker from last time should read out what was discussed in the SEE and JUDGE Sections
2. Does anyone have anything to add to this that might have been left out?
3. Is there anything that anyone wants to add here before we move on to the section?  
For example you might have thought more about the situation.

**ACT**

- What exactly do you want to change? (Long term aim)
- What action could you take this week that would be a worthwhile step towards achieving this change? (Short term action)
  - Individual Action
  - Collective Action
- Who else could you involve in this action?

**GENERAL BUSINESS-** 5 minutes

**PLANNING NEXT MEETING-** 2 minutes

**CLOSING PRAYER or REFLECTION-** 2 minutes





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## What to do now?

Your YCS group should be able to plan and run an affective YCS meeting. Below are some tips for ensuring your YCS groups continues to function well.

- We encourage you to continue using the AYCS Meeting Plan Structure on page\_\_ to organise your meetings.
- Have regular leaders meetings.
- Attend Diocesan events such as Camps and Leadership Trainings, they are great opportunities to meet new people, learn more about YCS and how to take action.
- Encourage your Adult Assistant to stay in contact with other YCS Adults. This may be by being part of a review group, attending Adult Assistant Training and Formation or by just calling or emailing other Adults in the YCS.
- Use the Extra AYCS Meeting Plans that the AYCS will produce every 6 weeks.
- Run a quarterly Twilight Retreat using the AYCS Twilight Retreats and invite non YCS members to attend.
- Keep making a difference and Never Underestimating the Students!



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**Supporting Documents**

*21Never Underestimate The Students !!*



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- Just the Title in big letters

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**Prayer and Reflection Tools**

*22Never Underestimate The Students !!*



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*- Images of students doing Prayer and Reflection*



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## Steps to writing a Gospel Reflection

1. Choose a passage from the bible that you can relate to and can see a deeper meaning in, or that you think is a really good story.
2. Read through the passage a couple of times to identify the key issues.
3. Then think of a story that is real in your life that is similar to the Gospel passage.
4. Use the Review of Life questions as a guide to write questions which you can ask the other members of your group.
5. Make the questions challenging and reflective. You want the group to really think about how the passage relates to their lives.
6. Ask only three questions as you will run out of time in your meeting.

see...

### **Example from AYCS Gospel Reflection Booklet**

“Jesus is rejected at Nazareth”

Luke 4: 17 - 21

*He stood up to read the scriptures and was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it is written.*

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed and announced that the time has come when the Lord will save his people.”

*Jesus rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. All the people in the synagogue had their eyes fixed on him, as he said to them, “This passage of scripture has come true today, as you heard it being read.”*

Some questions for discussion

1. What point is Jesus making?
2. What does this mean in our lives, and our mission as students?
3. How do we see other Christians live out this mission in their lives?







# Australian Young Christian Students Movement

## Prayer

There are many definitions of prayer but it is essentially about making a conscious effort as individuals or as community to be '*aware*' of God's presence and enter further into *relationship* with Father, Son and Spirit. As in any relationship:

- We do not always have to communicate in words - we can just be in silence with the other
- We most certainly need to *listen* – as Christians we believe that God speaks to us in many ways (including through nature, life experience, Sacred Scripture, the sacraments and, most fully, through the person of Jesus)
- We can speak to God in the silence of our own heart or aloud in words, song or any other mode of expression (our words may be those of praise, thanksgiving, petition, wonder, fear, joy, sorrow etc.)
- We believe that our prayer can bring about *transformation* in our own lives and, therefore, in our faith communities, in society and in the world.

Here are a list of websites that you may find useful for helping to run and explain prayer in your YCS groups.

<http://www.prayingeachday.org/prayersites.html>

[www.scaredspace.ie](http://www.scaredspace.ie)

[www.churchresources.info/pray/](http://www.churchresources.info/pray/)

[www.rejesus.co.uk/spirituality/](http://www.rejesus.co.uk/spirituality/)

## Forms of Prayer

### Recollection / Relaxation / Centering

There are a variety of ways that we can 're-collect' ourselves, detach ourselves from distractions and become more *aware* of God's presence. They can be used as a preparation for meditation or simply as a method of prayer in their own right.

- Focus. Try to focus on something physical or imaginary e.g. a candle, an icon, the sunset, a cross, a flower, the sound of water, the aroma of incense.
- Focus on Breathing. Without changing the pace or depth, just become more conscious of the rhythm of your breathing. Feel the gentle movement of your chest as you inhale and exhale. You might wish to take this further and perhaps think of inhaling God's Spirit and exhaling your worries, or perhaps saying something like "Jesus" as you inhale and "Remember me" as you exhale.
- Focus on the Body. Just momentarily be conscious of the different parts of your body. This can be done as a method of relaxation by tensing and then gently relaxing different muscles in turn.



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## Repetitive Prayer

Rhythmically repeating a word or phrase over and over again: e.g. "Jesus is Lord" or "Maranatha". Whilst the words are important they are secondary to the prayer or meditation for which they provide a platform.

## The Rosary

The Rosary is the most popular and widely used 'Marian' prayer. As with the use of 'mantras', the repetition of the *Our Father*, *Hail Mary* and *Glory Be* provides a background or platform for meditation and prayer. There are, of course, designated foci or mysteries associated with the recitation of the Rosary, but it is possible to use the beads and format of the Rosary as a basis for general meditation.

## Taizé

A form of music and prayer emerged from the Taizé community in France and has become very popular with Christians of all ages, most especially the young. By using simple, repetitive chants (often in canon form) that are usually taken from Sacred Scripture, the music creates a reflective atmosphere that is conducive to prayer and meditation.

## Meditation using the imagination.

There are endless ways that we can use our imagination as a basis for meditation, e.g.:

- Visualise a scene from Sacred Scripture
- Imagine yourself as a character in a Gospel story
- Imagine that you were on a peaceful beach conversing with Jesus

Guided Meditation is when someone or something directs our thoughts and imagination. There are many resources that can be used for such meditation.

## Liturgy of Hours

This form of prayer has been used in Monasteries, and by priests and religious, from ancient times down to the present day. It involves using prescribed texts from Sacred Scripture, especially the Psalms, and is suitable for both personal and communal prayer.

## Eucharistic Adoration

Praying in front of the tabernacle or consecrated host reserved in the monstrance is known as Eucharistic Adoration. People gather to pray directly to Jesus Christ, who is really, truly and substantially present under the appearances of bread. Prayer in front of the blessed sacrament is a reminder of Jesus' presence among us; that through the Eucharist we are called to share in Jesus' life broken and poured out for us and that we are called to share the Eucharistic meal so that we are strengthened to work for the coming of the kingdom. The ceremony of Benediction (blessing) may accompany Eucharistic Adoration. This type of prayer has been very popular in World Youth Days and in follow up programmes for youth all around the world.

## Lectio Divina

Lectio Divina is a Latin term, means "divine reading" and describes a way of reading the Scriptures whereby we gradually let go of our own agenda and open ourselves to what God wants to say to us. This is so important for us as YCS leaders so that actions we



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are taking are truly what God wants for us. But we understand that silence and stillness is something that we all struggle with!

Below is a step by step guide for doing a Lectio Divina reflection in your group

- 1) Get your group to gather and reflect quietly over the events of the past days and consider what has been happening in our lives.
- 2) Opening Prayer (this could be the YCS Prayer)
- 3) Then you can commence the reading (Lectio) of the passage, slowly and reflectively so that it sinks into those listening. Any passage of scripture can be used for Lectio Divina, but the passage should not be too long.
- 4) There is then quite reflection (meditatio) for a few minutes, where we think about the text we have chosen and ruminate upon it so that we take from it what God wants to give us
- 5) The passage is read again, where we let go not only of our own ideas, plans and meditations but also of our holy words and thoughts. We simply rest in the Word of God. We listen at the deepest level of our being to God who speaks within us with a still small voice.
- 6) We then mention a word, passage, phrase or sentence that stood out for us.
- 7) We then share why that word etc spoke to us.
- 8) We close with a prayer about what we have shared.

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27 *Never Underestimate The Students !!*



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As Young Christian Students we believe in God.

We believe that God created the universe and that we, as part of God's creation, are invited to help complete God's plan.

We believe that the earth has been entrusted to us, to care for, to nurture and to respect. People, as God's creation, have a dignity and worth beyond measure, and deserve to be treated with respect and understanding.

We believe the Holy Spirit empowers us to live active lives following the example of Jesus Christ. We do this through communicating our thoughts, opinions and emotions and accepting and loving each other unconditionally.

We believe that our schools should promote these values through encouraging students to form and question their own opinions and beliefs, and treating each student as a worthwhile individual who has unique needs and talents. Our schools should educate for life.

And we believe that Jesus calls us to live through actions, not just words.  
Amen.

**REVIEW OF LIFE TOOLS**

*- Images of students taking action.*

28 *Never Underestimate The Students !!*



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## Review of Happenings

### **Explanation:**

The purpose of the “Review of Happenings” is to develop the process of students sharing something important from their lives. YCS uses the Review of Life on the everyday situations of student’s lives, as this is where students can take effective actions. Therefore they need to share something that has happened in their lives, to develop this process we ask the students to do a “Review of Happenings.” They bring up something that has happened in their lives and ask each other a few questions about it. Then later on they will be comfortable with using this process to lead into the SEE section of the Review of Life.

### **What to do:**

1. Everyone needs to share something that happened in the last week. It can be something that happened at school, or in their family. It could be:
  - A conversation they had
  - Something they read that caught their attention.
  - It can be something that made you angry or happy or confused or depressed
  - Anything as long as it affected you or had an impact on you.
2. Group members may ask some of the following questions as people share their happenings, but don’t ask them all or it will take too long:
  - What happened?
  - What caused it to happen?
  - How did it affect the people involved?
  - What are the good and bad things about what happened?
  - How did you act or react?
  - Was that a good reaction? Was it responsible?
3. Once everyone has had the opportunity to share their happenings the leader asks the group the following questions to help the group decide what situation they should review this week:
  - Is there anyone who would like to review their happening this week?
  - Does anyone think we should review someone else’s happenings?
  - Are there any happenings that are quite urgent and need to be reviewed and action taken as soon as possible?
4. Once a person’s happening/situation has been decided upon, the group starts asking the standard Review of Life Questions which are in the meeting plan.

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### **Three Truths Exercise**



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In the first meeting of the NUTS Program students would have done the Three Truths Exercise, this time we will repeat it and lead into a Review of life to show how groups should always have situations and experiences to review in their meetings.

## Your experience

The leader should get everyone to pair off into groups of two and ask each pair to come up with two things that concern them about the world. One should be something that affects them directly and the other should be something that is happening in the wider world. If they are struggling to think of things ask them what problems they see or what they would like to change.

Quickly list these, writing them on a whiteboard or butchers paper.

## Your beliefs

Then ask each pair to say in one sentence what they think the world should be like. You should ask them to think of if they could create an ideal world what would it be like:

- o How would people treat themselves?
- o How would they treat each other?
- o How would governments and countries relate to each other?

List these next to the previous list so that people can see the comparison.

## Explanation

1. Explain that the first list describes the world that we currently live in. And that the second list describes the world we would like to live in.

Tell them that: "YCS is about making it possible to transform the world we are in now into the world we would like to live in."

2. Give a brief explanation of the Truth of Faith and the Truth of Experience and show how they relate to what they have just talked about. For example a student may have brainstormed that bullying is a concern they have in their school, this is their Truth of Experience as it is a situations that is occurring in their everyday reality. They may have also said that they wished they lived in a world where everyone was treated equally and treated fairly, this is their Truth of Faith, what they believe in and would like to see happen. There is a contradiction between what they see and what they believe, YCS is about bridging the between our everyday experiences and our Christian values.

3. Explain that as members of a movement we can actually make that change in the world but we need a Movement and a method for it to happen:

- o There needs to be a movement of people working together to overcome these differences. Individually we can make a difference but when you have 2.5million people in YCS around the world then you can truly change things.
- o And there needs to be a method, a way of going about things that teaches people how to change the world. The Review of Life is this method.

4. From this point the group now has a list of contradictions which can be a stimulus for the Review of Life.



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5. The leader should ask then ask the group whether someone has had a recent personal experience of some of the brainstormed concerns or if the group has seen any examples of the concerns in their everyday experiences?

6. If a few people say yes, the leaders should ask the following questions to lead into a Review of Life.

- Is there anyone who would like to review their experience of this concern this week?
- Are there any concerns that are quite urgent and need to be reviewed and action taken as soon as possible?

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**A Day in your Life**

**31 *Never Underestimate The Students !!***



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Walk/talk your YCS group through a day or an event. Get them to sit in a relaxed position so that they can reflect.

Ask them questions that relate to relationships, interactions, feelings and emotions. For example if you were walking them through a school social.

You may ask

- How did you get there?
- When you got there did you have someone to talk to?
- Did everyone have someone to hang out with?
- How did everyone interact with each other?

If you were walking them through a normal day, you may ask them:

- What time did you get up?
- Who was the first person you saw? How did you feel?
- How did you get to school?
- What did you see on the way to school?
- What happened at school?
- How did you feel about school?
- After school, did you watch TV?
- What happened on TV?
- Did you eat dinner with your family? How did you feel?

As you can see these are just some example but it gets students to look at their everyday situations and recognise injustices, concerns or events, which they can review.

After this exercise has been completed the YCS leader would ask each member to share one significant thing or experience that stood out for them after reflecting on their day?

Once everyone has had the opportunity to share their experience the leader asks the group the following questions to help them decide what situation they should review this week:

- Is there anyone who would like to review their experience this week?
- Does anyone think we should review someone else's experience?
- Are there any experiences that are quite urgent and need to be reviewed and action taken as soon as possible?

Once a person's experience/situation has been decided upon, the group starts asking the standard Review of Life Questions which are in the meeting plan.





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## Other Resources

Thank you for using this Program. For information regarding the other resources contact the Australian YCS Office on [office@aycs.org.au](mailto:office@aycs.org.au)

Some examples of our other resources are:

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- AYCS' Gospel Reflection Booklet
- NUTS 8 Week Introduction to YCS Program
- Get SMART About Casual Work Curriculum Kit
  - Say NO To Racism Kit
- Adult Assistants and Chaplains Info Kit



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