

The background is a solid, vibrant red. Overlaid on this is a complex, abstract pattern of thick white lines. These lines form a series of interconnected, irregular polygons and shapes, creating a sense of depth and movement. The pattern resembles a stylized, geometric representation of a tree or a network of paths. The lines are clean and sharp, contrasting sharply with the red background.

The
ECYD
Formator

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Introduction

In the first essay, *The Pledge of Friendship with Christ and with Each Other*, we delve into living the pledge of friendship with Christ as the foundation of ECYD's identity and as the formation pathway toward configuration with Christ. In the second essay, we will seek to describe the mission of the ECYD formator starting from the experience of the past years. We want to sketch a portrait that enlightens the mission of formators and expresses the essential characteristics of formation and accompaniment in ECYD.

According to the ECYD Statutes, the mission of the formator is "to help ECYD adolescents experience the love of Jesus Christ, the only one who can transform and give full meaning to their lives, so that they become his friends and apostles at the service of the Church".¹

¹ ECYD Statutes, 32 § 2.

The ECYD formator following the example of Christ the Apostle

Ordinarily the ECYD formators are Legionaries of Christ, consecrated members of Regnum Christi or lay associated members of Regnum Christi.²

The ECYD formator lives the charism of Regnum Christi in first person. At the same time, he feels and resonates with the expressions proper to this charism lived by the ECYD adolescents, according to the spirit of ECYD.

Regnum Christi members feel called to live and make present a mystery of the life of Christ,³ the mystery of Christ the Apostle.

In what way is this mystery made present in and through the life and action of the formator?

The ECYD formator, alongside Christ and with Christ in him, goes out to people, reveals the love of his heart to them, gathers them together and forms them as apostles and Christian leaders, sends them out and accompanies them as they collaborate in the evangelization of people and of society.⁴

² ECYD Statutes, 32 § 4.

³ SRCF, 8.

⁴ Cf. SRCF, 8.

Goes out to people

Jesus Christ is the one who takes the initiative and goes out to people. The formator and the ECYD adolescent are called at different times (Mt. 20:2-9), but summoned to the same mission: to collaborate with Christ so that he might reign in the hearts of ECYD adolescents and in the world.⁵

The formator has been encountered by Jesus Christ and knows that only His love can transform the life of an ECYD adolescent. In a certain way, Jesus can make himself present and go out to meet ECYD adolescents, through their formators.⁶ With the eyes and the heart of Christ, the formators value adolescents above the defects, failures and challenges typical of this age. They live among the weeds and the wheat without being dismayed. They bear a positive gaze toward each ECYD adolescent and their personal path toward heaven.

For the ECYD formators, each one of the adolescents is a son or daughter who is loved and sought after by the Father. Therefore, they wait for God's timing and trust that he will bear the fruit (Mt. 13:24-30). They know, live and involve themselves in the reality and life of ECYD adolescents, and from there they seek to respond to their needs. They speak the adolescents' language, according to their psychology and age.

In addition to going out to meet each ECYD adolescent, the formator seeks to foster experiences of encounter within ECYD Life.⁷

Through these experiences, the ECYD adolescents can:

- Have a deep encounter with themselves, discovering in God's eyes who they are and who they are called to be (Mk. 10:21 and Lk. 19:5).

⁵ ECYD Statutes, 3.

⁶ ECYD Statutes, 32 § 2.

⁷ Cf. ECYD Statutes 4 and Appendix 1.

- Encounter Jesus Christ personally, whom they love unconditionally to the point of giving their life for for him (Gal. 2:20 and 1 Jn. 4:9-10).
- Have a sincere encounter with others, which allows them to discover the value of each person and to learn to love them as Christ loves them (1 Jn. 4:20-21).

Reveals the love of his Heart

Jesus Christ calls ECYD adolescents to share the greatest and most beloved desires of his heart.⁸ However, ECYD adolescents need a way to discover and experience this love which fills them with meaning, strengthening and impelling them to live as Christians.

Through the formator, Christ can reveal to the ECYD adolescents that they are loved, that their life has meaning, that they have a mission, that they themselves are a gift, that they are a gift for others, that they are called by God, and that God wants them to live forever united to him. The ECYD formator introduces them to Christ their Friend, who has loved them first and proposes to them a path forward. The lives of the formators reveal the love of Jesus Christ when they seek to love like him. They do this by being close and patient, present for the important moments, and receptive and available to listen. Their witness and action is essential for making the love of God credible and concrete for ECYD adolescents.

The formator seeks to prepare the hearts of the ECYD adolescents to discover the deep value of the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist. These are the privileged places in which Christ himself reveals his love to them.

⁸ Cf. ECYD Statutes, Appendix 2, ECYD Pledge of Friendship Rite.

Gathers together

ECYD is defined as a pledge of friendship with Christ and with each other. It is relational and an experience of Christian community,⁹ in which ECYD adolescents, together with their formators, gather around Christ and the mission.

Jesus Christ is the one who takes the initiative to call those he wants to be with him (Mk. 3:13-15). The formator looks to echo his invitation and nurture this way of life in an ECYD section and its teams.

The ECYD section and teams are called to be small Christian communities. The formator understands how important it is for an ECYD adolescent to belong, to be a real friend and be known as one – not just another face in the crowd. Therefore, he lets them see that they are not alone, that ECYD is a safe space where they can grow alongside others and support each other in living the Faith.

The formator is also a promoter and participant in the local and international ECYD community, which is a living part of the Church. The mission of the ECYD formator is not carried out individually.

The team of ECYD formators itself also provides witness of a community on mission. ECYD adolescents understand the transcendence and complementarity of a team when they see it come alive in their formators.

⁹. Cf. ECYD Statutes, commentary to n.23.

Forms them as apostles and Christian leaders

Being an apostle is more than an attitude; it is a Christian way of existing in the world. You cannot speak of a Christian's life apart from the task of evangelization. Following Christ and being an apostle are one and the same.¹⁰

The formation of apostles is a challenge that does not depend only on the formator. The adolescents are formed to the degree that they develop their relationship of friendship with Christ.¹¹

The role of the ECYD formator is to help adolescents hear and follow Christ's invitations to go further and put out into the deep (Lk. 5). They desire for the adolescents to live deeply the friendship that Christ offers them. They are convinced that this friendship is profoundly transformative and that the world's transformation begins with their own heart.¹²

The formators learn from Jesus Christ how to motivate each ECYD adolescent to give their best. By example, they show them Christian leadership, understood as a service, which looks for the good of each, inspires, guides and forms others.¹³ They teach them to live as apostles, not just to do apostolate. The formator ensures that this formation helps them develop their identity as Christian ECYD adolescents. Each activity is an opportunity for the adolescents to grow.

Sends out

The ECYD formator is sent out by Christ to awaken and cultivate the heart of an apostle in each ECYD adolescent.¹⁴ They promote

¹⁰ ECYD Statutes, Commentary to n.29; Cf. EG 273

¹¹ Cf. Essay "The Pledge of friendship with Christ and with each other", p.18.

¹² Cf. ECYD Statutes, 7 § 1.

¹³ Cf. SRCF, 33.

¹⁴ Cf. ECYD Statutes, Appendix 4, Elements for Developing the Fundamental Guidelines, Part of ECYD, d.

initiative among the adolescents and their concrete living of the mission, according to the gifts and desires that God has given them.

They set into motion processes and dynamics that ignite an apostolic fire in adolescents: This apostolic fire has ECYD adolescents creatively meet the needs around them and motivates them to undertake actions that can transform the world according to the Gospel.¹⁵

Accompanies

ECYD formators, like the disciples of Emmaus, experience Christ himself walking alongside them (Lk. 24:32) and want to accompany others as Christ accompanies them. Characteristics of this accompaniment are: closeness, affection, friendship and patience, adapting and seeking the adolescents' greatest good and happiness. They make themselves accessible, offering timely advice, illuminating their reality with the Scriptures, and breaking bread with them.

Adolescence is a special and transcendent moment in life. In this stage, accompaniment is a key help in their maturing process, in their search for vocational fullness and on their path towards eternity. The formator seeks to be a friend and an older brother or sister who walks alongside the adolescents, accompanies them and guides them. Aware that prayer is an important way to accompany them, formators commit to pray for those adolescents entrusted to them (Jn. 17:9).

¹⁵ Cf. SRCF, 10.

Forming and accompanying in a formative style

The gaze

ECYD formators seek to center their gaze on the adolescent to discover what the adolescent has inside and understand the things the adolescent expresses. Therefore, the formator seeks to have a humanized gaze that is able to understand and embrace the adolescent with wonder, not falling into idealism, but trying to keep in mind all the challenges society poses for an adolescent's formation.

The gaze of the ECYD formator is a positive gaze toward the adolescent. It not only avoids being unrealistic, but it also seeks precisely to connect the concrete reality of the adolescent with the ultimate meaning of human existence. Therefore, the formator gazes directly upon the adolescent. They see both the adolescent's façade and interior. They try to gather the adolescent's whole truth in an integral and integrating way. They pull together the adolescent's expressions, including those most contradictory, and try to decipher the ultimate meaning of it all.

The formator seeks to gaze from the heart, which allows them to bring to light what is invisible to the eyes. What comes into focus is

an adolescent seeking the meaning of their life, others, the world, God; ultimately an adolescent who seeks to respond to the invitation to make a pledge of friendship with Christ.

From this gaze, an acceptance and care for others comes more readily and sincerely. There is a popular saying that goes: what the eyes don't see, the heart doesn't feel. If you turn the saying positive, it becomes: what the eyes see, the heart feels. The formator tries to have a heart that welcomes and expands when it sees others. They do not try to force themselves willfully to think or speak well of the adolescent, but they seek to look sincerely at their reality with greater love and depth. Therefore, love and charity can be lived by understanding and accepting the adolescent.

Characteristics of the formative style

Formation and accompaniment in ECYD have a particular style, which stems from the identity and mission of ECYD. Therefore, some common characteristics distinguish it and inspire the formator's mission:

1. Personal

Many Gospel passages show Jesus Christ's personal encounters with others. He sees them, invites them, calls each apostle by name, knows them, and dedicates time to them. Jesus takes advantage of the encounters, exchanges and conversations in order to form them person-to-person and grow in friendship with them.

Just as Jesus Christ has a unique relationship with each one of his apostles, the formator seeks to have a personal relationship with each of the ECYD adolescents. The ECYD formator seeks to have each adolescent realize they are known and valued as they are, and offers personalized formation according to the particular

needs of each adolescent.

Although it is important to have a formation program, formation is not simply completing a checklist. Instead, formation should take into account all the dimensions of the person, the specific needs of adolescents and the context in which they live.¹⁶ Furthermore, it is important to remember that formation should be adapted according to age and the unique the situation of each team and each adolescent.¹⁷

2. In team

Jesus Christ forms and accompanies the apostles not only through personal encounters, but also as a group. The Gospels show Jesus frequently addressing the Twelve: when he explains the parables to them (Mt. 13:18-23), when they accompany him and witness many miracles (Lk. 5:1-11; Mk. 1:29-39; Mk. 4:35-40; Mk. 5:21-43; Jn. 6:5-13).

He takes advantage of different occasions to teach them what it means to live in communion and show them the path to heaven. As a team, they share different experiences and grow together: he brings them away to rest (Mk. 6:31), he gives them the commandment of love, he teaches them to serve and to lay down their life (Jn. 13), and he assures them of his presence always until the end of the world (Mt. 28:20).

The friends of Jesus have a strong sense of community. In the same way, the ECYD formative path ordinarily takes place within the team. Every team has its own pace and needs, according to the members that compose them.

The ECYD formator forms and accompanies the teams, being familiar with their situation and capitalizing upon the different

¹⁶ Cf. ECYD Statutes, 25 § 2.

¹⁷ Cf. ECYD Statutes, Appendix 4, Principles for an ECYD Formation Program, 4.

opportunities that come up. At the same time, they intentionally seek to offer formative moments to meet their concrete needs, encourage the group's integration, foster mutual support and respect, and promote the living of Christian charity. The formation program accounts for the circumstances and reality of each team.

3. Integral

Friendship with Christ impacts all dimensions of life. It is unifying, it heals, it orders, and it brings fulfillment. Every part of the apostles' lives is filled with the Lord's presence and oriented toward friendship with him.

Sin has divided us and affects our faculties, desires and relationships. Configuration with Christ is a path of reintegration, encompassing all the dimensions of the human person. Therefore, friendship with Christ in ECYD does not remain in the chapel or in moments of prayer. It is capable of touching the concrete reality of the adolescent's life. Forming them means helping them live fully their adolescence, dreams and ideals, moving them to put their pledge of friendship with Christ and with each other into practice. The formator helps the young person live their identity in the different circumstances of their life as an adolescent, a Christian and as a part of ECYD.¹⁸

4. Gradual

Jesus forms others patiently. He knows the pace of each person, like the sower who watches the seed grow without rushing the process (Mt. 13:1-9) or the father of the prodigal son who patiently awaits his son's return (Lk. 15:11-32). He knows how to discern and ask of each person according to their capacity. He does not pressure or push, but continuously asks for what each one can give him.

¹⁸ Cf. ECYD Statutes, Appendix 4, Fundamental Guidelines.

Transformation into Christ does not happen overnight, but occurs gradually. ECYD formation is adapted to the different ages and situations of each group in order to favor growth according to the stage they are living. The formator has to attentively respect the pace of each person, keeping in mind that formation is a path that lasts a lifetime.

Formation is understood as a series of encounters, which brings the adolescents to know, accept and master themselves. It is a gradual path, and the final goal is the adolescent being conformed to the image of Christ.¹⁹

5. Propositive

Jesus Christ does not give his friends generic answers. “Come and see” (Jn. 1:35), is how he responds to the disciples who search for him and ask where he lives. This answer draws them in and causes them to stay with him. Jesus invites Simon and his brother Andrew to be fishers of men (Mt. 4:19-20). He proposes that they enter into a relationship of friendship with him.

With an attitude of listening and a readiness to respond, the ECYD formator creates instances for adolescents to encounter Christ.

Jesus Christ does not let refusals bother him. He always invites without imposing or infringing on our freedom. He insists with love and desires to satisfy the deepest yearnings of the heart. In a similar way, the ECYD formator should not tire of proposing and facilitating moments of encounter. Bringing adolescents closer to their friend, Jesus Christ, helps them learn to respond freely and generously to what He is asking of them.

Taking a propositive approach in formation is about inviting them to give their best, to take another step forward instead of staying

¹⁹ ECYD Statutes, Appendix 4, Principles for an ECYD Formation Program, 2.

put. It means helping them grow and expand the horizon of their lives and their mission. It is a formation that invites adolescents to take personal responsibility for discovering the convictions that are to be pillars for their life, to freely commit to follow Christ and to live an authentic Christian life.

6. Awakening (provoking)

In the Gospel, Jesus Christ converses with people, asks them precise questions, listens to their opinions and problems, invites them to reflect, and challenges them. Jesus raises questions and invites those whom he encounters to go deep, as he did with the Apostles (Mt. 16:13-15) and with Nicodemus (Jn. 3:10). He challenges them not to remain indifferent but to bring about a positive change, to grow in love, self-giving and generosity (Mt. 10:17-20).

In the same way, the ECYD formator does not simply look to give answers, but awakens the adolescent, setting off questions and healthy concerns that help them in their growth and formation. It is not about external assimilation, but internalizing values. In the face of a culture that suppresses the hunger for God and for meaning, ECYD seeks to awaken and connect with adolescent's longing for happiness and fulfillment.

Provoking means awakening these questions, laying them on the table and proposing Christ as the answer. Big questions characterize the stage of adolescence. It is important for the formator to teach them to question for themselves what society proposes to them –which they often receive without realizing it– in order to be able to decide freely.

In summary, the formator's attitude is to awaken, respond and accompany the adolescent in a manner that moves them and does not leave them indifferent.

This characteristic is especially relevant for developing leadership in adolescents: that they not be afraid to put themselves on the line for their beliefs. They must ask themselves which ideals they want to live by and defend them courageously.

7. Life-based

Light should be shed on the situations that adolescents encounter in their lives; and they should be provided with the tools needed to live authentically in these circumstances and to commit themselves to transforming the world according to the Gospel.²⁰

Christ knows how to talk to people about what is relevant and uses situations and images that are connected to their lives: the seed, the yeast, a wedding, the woman who loses her coins (Lk. 15:8-10), flowers and birds (Lk. 12:22-34). His words are accessible, they connect faith with life (Mt. 13:1-9; Mt. 18:21-35), and they move people to action (Mt. 7:24-29; Mt. 21:28-32).

It is fundamental for the formator to come into contact with the reality of the adolescent and to draw from their lives. It is important not to remain in the abstract. The adolescent should

not only learn concepts, but also integrate them into their lives. Encounters and convictions are authentic when they become real decisions that guide their lives and provide coherence for what they think, believe and live.²¹

8. Experiential

In Sacred Scripture, we see that the encounter with God and his revelation occurs within an experience. Christ speaks with his whole person. He forms others by his example, as he did at the washing of the feet (Jn. 13:1-17). He also forms by letting the

²⁰ ECYD Statutes, Appendix 4, Elements for Developing the Fundamental Guidelines, A, b.

²¹ Cf. ECYD Statutes, 19 § 2 and Appendix 1.

Apostles experience something for themselves, like when he invites Peter to walk on the water (cf. Mt 14:22) or Thomas to believe in the Resurrection by putting his finger in his side (cf. Jn 20:27).

The formator needs to be intentional in order to form and accompany others this way. It is important that they focus on the personal experiences of the adolescent and creatively help them draw meaningful conclusions. A well-led experience helps adolescents put into action the formative dynamic of encounters, convictions and decisions.²²

9. Oriented toward evangelizing action

The aim of Christian formation is to be conformed to the image of Christ and to develop their leadership as apostles.²³

Friendship with Christ instigates an outward movement in the adolescent. Knowing and dealing with Christ means letting oneself also be conquered by the desire to announce him to the whole world, like the Samaritan woman –she leaves her pitcher and immediately goes out to announce what Christ has done in her (Jn. 4).

The ECYD formator knows that formation is oriented toward the mission: bringing forth the apostle that each ECYD adolescent is called to be.²⁴

ECYD motivates adolescents to collaborate generously and enthusiastically in the mission of Christ and the Church. It helps them form the heart of an apostle, teaching them to prize self-giving to Christ for the salvation of each person. Apostolate formation is also practical, promoting initiative and the concrete living of the mission.²⁵

²² Cf. ECYD Statutes, 4 and 19 § 2.

²³ ECYD Statutes, 25 § 1.

²⁴ Cf. ECYD Statutes, 6 and 7 § 2.

²⁵ ECYD Statutes, Appendix 4, Elements for Developing the Fundamental Guidelines, C, a.

ECYD adolescents are not mere recipients, but active agents of evangelization and protagonists in their own formation.

10. Joyful and positive

Whoever encounters Christ receives the deep joy of the Resurrection, the good that conquers all evil. Christian joy is rooted in knowing that we are loved and redeemed.

Jesus Christ is a man who is full of joy and does not hesitate to express it: "I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete" (Jn. 15:11). He does not ignore our sorrows or worries, but instead presents himself as the source of our joy: "So you also are now in anguish. But I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you" (Jn. 16:22).

Many adolescents tend to see the faith as a burden to be suffered, influenced even from within their own social circles. Transmitting the faith joyfully and attractively is an art that ECYD formators try to put into practice.

The ECYD formator teaches adolescents to view situations in a positive way. Christian hope, which rises from the triumph of the Resurrection and the coming of the Kingdom, makes it so that no evil is enough to cause discouragement or defeatism.

Where there are ECYD members, there is an atmosphere of joy. ECYD formators play a key role in providing this essential aspect of ECYD formation and helping them live it out:

To live ECYD is to experience a charisma that is then incarnated in a lifestyle and mission. It is the joy that springs forth in the adolescents when they discover that they are loved and called by Jesus Christ; it is the initiative and creativity enkindled inside when they

know they are engaged in a great mission in the light of eternity; it is what happens within when they understand that an authentic and attractive Christianity can be lived, thus leaving a deep imprint in today's world; it is the strength given by being part of a group of friends who share the same ideals, and above all their faith.²⁶

The internal dynamics of accompaniment: awaken, respond and accompany

ECYD has its own formative style, namely one that starts with the concrete reality that the ECYD adolescent lives. Adolescents find themselves at a point in life where they are asking important questions, going through radical changes and experiencing great contrasts they do not know how to reconcile. Therefore, the adolescents need time to know, accept and stretch themselves, since it is a stage of searching for their identity. They need trustworthy, faithful and unconditional companionship and positive examples.

We are convinced that, in ECYD, Christ wants to make himself present and go out to meet the adolescent in ordinary life, walking by their side. It proposes life experiences and moments of encounter with others, with God and with themselves.

The ECYD formator does not want the adolescent merely to know things about God, but discover that the things of God are answers for their life. Therefore, the formator starts by drawing from their own experiences. The formator seeks for the adolescent to hold doctrine not as something peripheral to their life, but integrated with it.

Furthermore, the formator must strive to have each formative team activity reach the adolescent's heart, so as to awaken both

²⁶ ECYD Statutes, Epilogue.

the questions they have and their need to answer them. You only feed somebody when they are hungry, but you must remember that it is important to awaken that hunger!

1. Awaken

This means to become aware, to realize, to decipher, to unveil, and to bring to light. In order to awaken, the formator looks to identify the hunger that each adolescent has for happiness, fulfillment, meaning, and ultimately for God. Even when God is unknown to them, this hunger usually shows up in their everyday language and looks.

In this way, the mission of ECYD is to create an atmosphere in which the adolescents can identify and express their questions, naming them. The formator must then seek to be an expert in deciphering, interpreting and explaining the purpose of the adolescent's attitudes, gestures and decisions.

2. Respond

An answer to an unformulated question does not interest anyone. So in order to respond, the formator tries to connect with the existential question that has already been awakened and brought into focus. They seek to offer true and meaningful experiences so that they can find the answer together with the adolescent. The formator does not try to impose an answer, or simply theorize, but to help the adolescents discover the answer for themselves. For this reason, the formator needs to remember how important their life witness is, since the adolescent believes in witness more than words.

3. Accompany

The formator strives to walk with the adolescent in this process of awakening and responding, which occurs in daily life. The answers therefore have to impact the adolescent's life. ECYD has the mission of gradually accompanying the adolescent in their search for happiness until they find Christ, when they discover that he is the one who offers them something more for their lives.

Attitudes for accompaniment

ECYD formators follow Christ's example as they seek to accompany the ECYD adolescent. In this accompaniment, it is important for the adolescents not only to be accompanied, but to actually know that they are accompanied. Therefore, we propose some essential attitudes for the formator to help them become aware of this accompaniment:

1. Being there, wanting to be there, and knowing how to be there

This goes beyond a mere physical presence, though that is of the highest importance. It is possible to be in front of a group of adolescents and not look at them, miss what they hold inside, and remain somewhat indifferent to what they are living, doing or saying. Therefore, it is more important to want and to know how to be there for them. This implies a conscious decision of where and how to be there so that they do not feel alone or misunderstood. For this reason, formators seek to:

- Live with a deep sense of mission. Demand the best from each adolescent with tenderness, seek their good and the good of the others, and always explain the reason for the doing things. Always hope for the best

from the ECYD adolescent.

- Give of themselves with availability and generosity. Spend time with the adolescents, beyond the formal team encounters.
- Be realistic yet trusting in God's grace. Be aware that the mission goes beyond them and remember that they are instruments. Neither rely on nor wait for ideal circumstances in order to work with adolescents.

2. Listening, wanting to listen, and knowing how to listen

In order to respond and accompany, learning to listen is absolutely necessary. Listening is not simply a technique to grasp what the adolescent is saying, but rather a real desire to understand and welcome them. Only then is the formator able to shed light for them on what they think and feel.

It is not enough to listen to what the adolescent is saying. You need to want and to know how to listen to them in their totality: their gestures, emotions and affections. Therefore, ECYD formators should strive for interior silence, learn not to take center stage, and not be worried only about their answers or following a conversation. The formator should learn how to listen deliberately, without presumptions, and to be open to the unexpected.

The mission of the ECYD formator is not to provide easy solutions, pinpoint where the adolescent is wrong, or convince them to agree. The mission of the ECYD formator is to listen so as to understand. This active, profound and supportive listening seeks to go beyond the apparent. In this way, the ECYD formator:

- Knows and accepts each ECYD adolescent as they are. They are able to walk in the shoes of the adolescent,

learn to speak their language, and know how to interpret and respond to their need for meaning and for God. The formator understands them, recognizing and valuing their qualities, effort and will.

- Welcomes the adolescent in an integral way, their entire person – and accepts being challenged by them, taking into account everything that they share.

3. Trusting, wanting to trust, and knowing how to trust

Trust forms a solid ground beneath the feet of an adolescent. We want them to say, “I can build on this, because I am not alone and someone believes in me.” The road to knowing, accepting and stretching oneself is paved in good part by trust.

An ECYD formator who trusts is detached from their own plans for the adolescent. They do not want to control them, and they do not attempt to know and force the best answer upon the adolescent. They trust that, in good conscience and when well accompanied, the adolescent will know how to find the most fitting answer about who they are and what God expects from them. This trust is crucial if the adolescent is to take up the reins in their own life, to walk for themselves and complete the mission which falls to them. The ECYD formator accepts from the outset that they will be wrong at times.

The ECYD formator is a discreet person, with whom the adolescent can open up to and very naturally discuss what worries them. They should experience a “closeness and trust that is born from love”.²⁷ In addition, the ECYD formator knows how to exercise constancy and patience. They should take into account and respect the pace and freedom of the adolescent. The formator is aware that their

²⁷ Cf. Pope Benedict XVI, Letter to the Faithful of the Diocese and City of Rome on the Urgent Task of Educating Young People, 2008.

work is above all to sow a seed which will bear fruit in God's time, very likely many years later.

4. Getting involved

For this accompaniment to take place, there needs to be an encounter between the ECYD formator and the adolescent. In this encounter, both of them need to share what they are seeking. The adolescent should be able to view the formator as someone with more experience, whom they can trust, who also has the vital, open attitude of a seeker, and knows how to be vulnerable. The example of a formator who is also limited and at times falters, but gets up again and keeps on walking is very helpful for adolescents. They appreciate the value of showing who you truly are. Therefore, the ECYD formators are people who:

- Are close and humble. They know how to ask for forgiveness when they are wrong. They ask for advice when they need it. They strive to become better every day and pay attention to their own attitudes, deeds and words.
- Value their own formation. They seek it out and commit themselves to it for their good and for the good of the souls entrusted to them
- Walk with the ECYD adolescent, alongside whom they search, encounter and learn.

5. To love, wanting to love, and to knowing how to love

Everything said above starts from love and is geared toward greater love – a love that springs from knowing that one is loved unconditionally by Jesus, who invites you to love as he does. Therefore, the ECYD formator who loves adolescents:

- Has a true affection for them, forges a sincere love for each and every one which is not exclusive but universal. They seek to cultivate this love by speaking often with Christ in the Eucharist about each adolescent. Love, i.e. charity, is the necessary condition for the adolescent to feel secure, to open up and to grow humanly and spiritually.
- Does not expect gratitude or immediate recognition from adolescents. They may never show it; what's more, the formator might even receive momentary rejection when challenging them, since they do not fully perceive what is being done for them.
- Is creative and bold in motivating, forming teams, uniting wills, and continually presenting one's relationship with Christ in all its novelty. A formator is to have the leadership to create a community of friends and to persuade the participation of each and every one.

This accompaniment is not only a giving of the ECYD formator and a receiving on the part of the ECYD adolescent, but also a mutual give and take, a growing together. Karol Wojtyła expressed this idea when he wrote to a young person whom he accompanied during his time as a university professor: "The person who objectively needs me most is also, for me, objectively, the person I most need".²⁸ This is how ECYD's formators should view their work with adolescents.

²⁸ Cf. Karol Wojtyła, cited G. WEIGEL, *Witness to Hope: Biography of Pope John Paul II*, Harper Perennial, ed. 2004.

Competencies of the ECYD formator

Competencies are a set of attitudes, skills and knowledge that allow the ECYD formator to carry out their everyday mission.

The main competencies that stem from the ECYD formator's mission are presented below. It is important to clarify that the ECYD formator does not necessarily possess these competencies from the outset, but rather gradually develops them.

These competencies apply to both adult formators and team leaders, adapted as necessary.

Mission	Competencies in ECYD
Transmit the charisma lived by the ECYD adolescents	1. They are convinced of ECYD as the charisma of Regnum Christi lived by adolescents and of the adolescents' capacity to live a pledge of friendship with Christ and with each other to build a new world.
	2. They transmit ECYD as a lifestyle.
Go out to meet people	1. They look at the ECYD adolescents and their reality from God's viewpoint in order to be able to help them and respond to their deepest needs.
	2. They know how to work with the different ages and situations of adolescents. They engage the entire reality of the ECYD adolescent and patiently and flexibly accompany the path of each one toward their human and Christian maturity.
	3. They promote occasions that help the ECYD adolescent to encounter themselves, others and God.

Reveal	1. They present friendship with Christ to the ECYD adolescents in an attractive and understandable way so that they have an experience of his love.
	2. They invite the ECYD adolescents to live the ideals and values of Christ's heart, contained in the Gospels.
	3. They communicate to each ECYD adolescent that they are loved, that their life has meaning, that they have a mission, that they are a gift and a gift for others.
Gather together	1. They foster relationships of sincere friendship among the ECYD adolescents so that they live ECYD as a place where they are loved just as they are.
	2. They promote team life as a Christian community.
	3. They help the ECYD adolescent feel like part of something greater and experience internationality.
	4. They work as a team with adult formators and the Section Directors.
	5. They foster esprit de corps and the union of hearts, ideals, goals and efforts. They promote communion and collaboration among everyone (sections, schools, etc.).
Form apostles and Christian leaders	1. They set into motion processes and dynamics that ignite an apostolic fire in the ECYD adolescents: creativity for the needs around them and motivation to undertake actions that can transform the world according to the Gospel.
	2. They are creative and proactive in living out their mission.
	3. They transmit knowledge as experiences that touch and transform lives.
	4. They are capable of developing a formation program.
Send out	1. They empower the apostolic projection of each ECYD adolescent so that each may contribute from their gifts.
	2. They launch the ECYD adolescents in such a way that they themselves are the ones living their commitment and initiative to be an apostle – apostles on the move.
	3. They awaken within the ECYD adolescent an awareness of their mission's transcendence in light of eternity.
Accompany	1. They know how to form others and accompany them personally and as a team.
	2. They know how to listen, trust, be present and ask appropriate questions in order to awaken processes for growth in the ECYD adolescents.
	3. They get involved and are open to learning alongside the ECYD adolescents.

Types of ECYD formators

The ECYD formators are the adult formators and the team leaders, ordinarily young Regnum Christi members or those in the last stages of ECYD.²⁹ Each of them helps to drive and carry out the mission of ECYD from their own positions. In this part, we will speak about the types of formators and their functions.

Adult formators: director and directive team

The ECYD director is an adult Regnum Christi member, whose mission is to foster ECYD's development in a locality in accordance with its identity and mission. Their appointment pertains to the competent authority of Regnum Christi.³⁰

The ECYD directive team is comprised of the adult formators and those who habitually carry out supporting roles in ECYD.³⁰⁷ All of them share with the ECYD director the common task of driving the life and mission of ECYD.

The appointment of consecrated personnel to be part of the directive team pertains to the competent authority of Regnum Christi. The appointment of lay members who collaborate on the directive

²⁹ ECYD Statutes, 36 § 1.

³⁰ ECYD Statutes, 34 § 1.

team pertains to the ECYD director.³¹

Below are outlined the main functions that the ECYD directors, helped by their directive team of adult formators, should carry out to fulfill their mission.

Although the ECYD director is the one ultimately in charge, the other adult formators share and take on some of these functions in accordance with their talents and possibilities.

Main functions of the ECYD director:³²

- To safeguard the identity and mission of ECYD
- The formation and accompaniment of formators: adults and team leaders
- Follow-up on ordinary ECYD Life (five elements)
- Teamwork with different entities
- Follow-up on programs and projects
- Management of the section

1. To safeguard the identity and mission of ECYD

- Intentionally present the charism, and help the ECYD adolescents and formators to know, understand and live the charism of ECYD as a pledge of friendship with Christ and with each other to build up a new world according to the Gospel.
- Oversee the transition from ECYD to Regnum Christi.
- Ensure that ECYD's mission is carried out: driving growth and evangelization in the locality while following the diocesan guidelines for youth ministry.

³¹ Note: *Not all members of the directive team are considered formators, but only those directly involved in the formation and accompaniment of ECYD adolescents.*

³² Cf. ECYD Statutes, 34.

2. Formation and accompaniment of formators: Adults and Team Leaders

a. Adult ECYD formators (*Lay Consecrated Men, Consecrated Women, Legionaries, and lay members of Regnum Christi*)

- Seek out and gather adult formators.
- Organize commissions and moments of reflection.
- Have a formation program that includes initial and on going formation.
- Offer periodic accompaniment: apostolic dialogue
- Care for their spiritual accompaniment.
- Foster their participation in the life of the Regnum Christi section.
- Strengthen their apostolic projection within ECYD and Regnum Christi so that each person can contribute from their particular gifts.

b. Team leaders

- Seek, gather and send out team leaders for their section
- Create a community among them.
- Elaborate their formation program and ensure that it is lived out.
- Accompany and give feedback: apostolic dialogue, periodic meetings for follow-up and planning.
- Care for their spiritual accompaniment.
- Foster their participation in the life of the Regnum Christi Section 4 Participation in RC Life.
- Strengthen their apostolic projection within ECYD and Regnum Christi so that each person can contribute from their particular gifts.

3. Follow-up on ECYD Life

- Ensure that the five elements of ECYD Life are lived out: prayer and sacramental life, formation, apostolate, team life and accompaniment.
- Accompany the team leaders in making a program for each of the section's teams that includes the five elements, and approve it.
- Ensure that formation opportunities are available: annual spiritual exercises, courses, etc.
- Ensure that all ECYD adolescents have personal accompaniment, and help them reach their vocational fullness.

4. Teamwork with different entities

- Foster *esprit de corps* and the union of hearts, ideals, goals and efforts.
- Promote communion and collaboration among all.
- Work as a team mainly with:
 - Parents.
 - The ECYD Boys' section and ECYD girls' section in the locality, and other sections in the territory. Pastoral ministry for youth, young adults and adults.
 - Schools: support their pastoral program and assure that ECYD is known and lived within them.
 - Those in charge of vocation work for the consecrated branches.
 - Parishes (where applicable).

5. Follow-up on programs and projects

- Oversee the ECYD Mission Corps program.
- Oversee other ECYD programs (e.g. Challenge, Conquest, LTP,

Mission Youth, Knights of the Altar, etc.) and projects.

6. Management of the section

- Present the annual program and budget to the competent authority, keep in periodic contact with them, and present the section's report.
- Ensure the fulfillment of safe environment regulations in the section.
- The economy of ECYD:
 - Create and follow up on an economic budget.
 - Direct a vigorous economy (by means of dues, donations, events and works that create revenue).
 - Safeguard and administer the ECYD section's patrimony (center, properties and materials).
- Communication (internal and external):
 - Team of adult formators and team leaders.
 - ECYD members.
 - Parents.
 - Schools and parishes.
 - Locality.
 - Other entities.

Team leaders

Team leaders are ordinarily young men and women in Regnum Christi or in the last stages of ECYD who collaborate for the formation of the ECYD adolescents on their team. They stand out for their human and Christian leadership, their testimony of life and their dedication in ECYD. Team leaders are appointed by the ECYD director.

The team leader is the linchpin of ECYD. They have experienced

friendship with Jesus Christ and transmit it with their life. They share their enthusiasm for the mission and show it by their self-giving and dedication to the adolescents who have been entrusted to them. The team leader is a friend and a big brother or sister to their team. They are close in age and are present during the formative activities and other parts of ECYD Life. They have more contact with the adolescent's reality and a stronger evangelizing impact.

They live the identity and competencies of the ECYD formator mentioned above, according to their age and maturity.

Main functions of the team leader:

1. Help the members of their team live out their pledge of friendship with Christ

- Live their own friendship with Christ and contagiously radiate it to their team by their attractive witness.
- Transmit to their team members what the pledge of friendship with Christ means and the centrality and importance it has in their own life, and accompany them in living out that pledge of friendship.

2. Drive the living of the five elements of ECYD with the adolescents on their team

a. Prayer and sacramental life

- Pray for their team members.
- Seek to learn how to pray, and teach others to pray like conversing with a friend.
- Help their team members bring their prayer to life and come to see God, who accompanies them in every part of their life.
- Encourage them to live the means of spiritual growth

and the sacraments.

b. Formation

- Elaborate a formation program for their team, taking into account the dimensions of an ECYD member's identity: a Christian.
- Prepare and lead formative meetings.
- Be involved in the preparation and execution of their section's formation activities.

c. Apostolate

- Transmit to their team members what it truly means to be an apostle and help them respond with initiative to the needs around them and the opportunities that arise.
- Propose, prepare and carry out apostolic projects together with their team.

d. Team life

- Seek to foster true friendships among their team members.
- Be sincerely interested in everyone and close to each person.
- Create occasions for integration and fellowship among their team members.
- Make their team a true Christian community, in which each person feels welcomed, valued, accepted, and respected – where they can be themselves and give the best of themselves.
- Make them aware that their team is part of a larger community: ECYD that is both local and international.

e. Accompaniment

- Accompany their team members by regularly touching

base with them.

- Look for occasions to personally encounter each one and be present for some of their important moments.
- Foster friendship among the team members so that they can accompany and motivate each other in their personal growth, their search for holiness and their living of the mission.
- Seek to communicate and dialogue with the ECYD adolescents' parents.

3. Give importance to their own formation

- Participate in team leader training and gatherings.
- Have frequent mentoring with their ECYD director or other ECYD formator.
- Ask for advice from those who have more experience as formators.

Some skills that may help the team leaders complete their mission:

- Adaptability to the ECYD adolescent and their needs
- Aptitude for listening
- Accompaniment
- Public speaking
- Management of groups and dynamics
- Organization and time management
- Transmitting the life and mission of ECYD
- Knowing how to ask questions and accept help

**Appendix:
Areas of
specialization
and projection
within ECYD**

Aware of the transcendence and gravity of youth work in light of evangelizing and transforming the world according to the Gospel, ECYD formators equip themselves and acquire specializations in order to fulfill their mission with greater professionalism.

The mission of an ECYD formator requires a path of training, formation and specialization. Working together with Christ in the mission of carrying on ECYD is not something transitory or linked to a specific age or personality type.

It is very enriching to have people of different ages, temperaments, experience and expertise – each one contributes from what they are and what they bring to the table. In ECYD, experts in the different fields accompany and teach those who are just starting out as formators, thus achieving continuity in the living of ECYD.

Below, some fields are listed in which the formators can develop different skills and knowledge or become specialized in order to better serve and contribute to ECYD's mission.

Personal Accompaniment (adolescents, young adults and adults)

These are people who have walked a spiritual journey. They have the ability to listen, welcome, and stimulate others' growth by their presence, words, encouragement, motivation and advice.

Abilities

- Compassion
- Aptitude for listening
- Availability
- Self-knowledge
- Understanding of others
- Empathy
- Aptitude for bringing out the best in others
- Wisdom and counsel

Areas of specialization:

- Accompaniment of adolescents and young adults
- Spiritual Theology (spirituality)
- Psychology
- Anthropology
- Coaching

Formation and Content

- People with the aptitude, studies and training to design and develop formation programs and content, both for ECYD adolescents and formators.
- People who deal well with youth, who have an aptitude for helping others reach their full spiritual and personal potential.
- People with the aptitude for forming and accompanying adults in the unfolding of their mission.
- People with a particular sensitivity to others' needs, who attract others to become friends with Jesus and to commit themselves in the building up of a new world according to the Gospel.
- People able to translate doctrinal content into formation experiences for ECYD adolescents.
- People capable of sparking curiosity in adolescents.
- Specialists in different topics of interest for ECYD adolescents and their formators.

Abilities:

- Written communication
- Communication skills
- Understanding of others
- Ability to develop a curriculum
- Organize and lead seminars and learning workshops
- Direct the progression of learning
- Intellectual capacity
- Aptitude for listening
- Capacity to advance others in their learning and in the development of their mission
- Using new technologies
- Effectiveness in transmitting the message

Areas of specialization:

- Psychology
- Pedagogy and didactics
- Catechesis
- Psychopedagogy
- Youth work
- Group management
- Public speaking
- Evangelization
- Social responsibility
- Social Doctrine of the Church
- Affectivity and sexuality (e.g. Theology of the Body, etc.)

Management

These are people with the capacity to serve through planning and coordination, administration, execution and supervision. With their talents, they help people serve God and others efficiently.

Abilities:

- Task-oriented
- Problem solving
- Empowering others according to their capabilities
- Organizational ease
- Planning
- Workflow administration
- Feedback
- Openness to change

Areas of specialization:

- Administration
- Logistics
- Execution
- Culture change
- Marketing

Area of Direction

These are people who direct and coordinate the efforts of a group to work together with a common vision.

Abilities:

- Leadership
- Vision and projection
- Direction
- Planning

- Motivating and delegating
- Integrity and trust
- Assembling effective teams
- Empowering others
- Initiative and creativity
- Knowledge of group dynamics and development

Areas of specialization:

- Leadership and team management
- Human resources
- MBA

Creativity and Design

These are people with creative and artistic talent, capable of both crafting environments that encourage integration and responding to the needs of the current culture in an attractive way.

Abilities:

- Initiative
- Creative leadership
- Artistic skills

Areas of specialization:

- Graphic and multimedia design
- Innovation
- Visual arts
- Photography
- Digital evangelization

Public Relations and Networking

These are people good at public relations, able to break ground, involve others, create networks, etc. They are also charismatic, able to motivate and attract others, with a talent for encouraging others and building bridges.

Abilities:

- Social abilities
- Communication skills
- Public speaking
- Personal guidance

- Motivation
- Negotiation
- Creativity
- Assembling teams
- Creating healthy, fun and formative environments

Areas of specialization:

- Effective communication
- The art of public speaking
- Storytelling
- Communication and public relations
- Community manager





