Forming People of Hope - The Jesus Youth Way

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The Jesus Youth movement, which began in Kerala, India, has grown into a global phenomenon across over 40 countries, dedicated to "Forming People of Hope." This mission stems from a foundational personal encounter with Jesus Christ, as exemplified by the author's transformation from a needs-based faith to a deep relationship with Christ. This spiritual awakening is central to every member's journey. From this core conviction, Jesus Youth members make three significant responses: accepting Jesus as their Lord and Saviour, committing to discipleship, and embracing the call to be missionaries. The movement's formation plan, drawing from Galatians 4:16, “that Christ may be formed…”, aims to cultivate these responses, with Mary, Queen of the Apostles, as their guide.

The formation process balances four crucial pillars, inspired by St. John Paul II: Human, Spiritual, Intellectual, and Pastoral, with a focus on preparing individuals for missionary discipleship.

The Jesus Youth journey unfolds through a five-phased faith formation plan.
The Contact Phase initiates members through encounter programs centred on the kerygma, leading to a personal renewal of baptism.
The Companion Phase focuses on spiritual growth and integration into the movement's life.
In the Committed Phase, individuals pledge regular membership, engaging with the movement's six pillars: Prayer, Word of God, Sacramental Life, Fellowship, Evangelisation, and a Preferential Option for the Poor.
In the Confirmed Phase members embrace their missionary call and develop leadership.
The Covenant Phase invites select confirmed members into a formal relationship with the movement and the Church.

Additionally, Jesus Youth prioritises Ongoing Formation and impactful Mission Exposure programs. Since 1991, over 2,500 young graduates have served as missionaries worldwide through their one-year volunteering program, with training centers in India, Thailand, and Uganda facilitating global placements.

A significant current initiative is 'Listening to the Movement,' a synodal process engaging over 15,000 members. This initiative, aligning with the Church's call to listen to the Spirit and God's people, fosters deeper communion, participation, and understanding of their mission, encouraging members to renew their calling and fulfil their mission of sharing the Gospel.

The formation of committed missionary disciples yields remarkable results, as seen at a National Conference with 18,000 participants in India in October 2023, when over 1,500 young people discerning religious vocations came forward for prayer, with many now pursuing formation in seminaries and convents. The author also gives his personal experience. After his recent kidney failure, nine Jesus Youth members selflessly offered to donate a kidney, with one member, Lilly, successfully donating after feeling "persuaded by Jesus during adoration." These examples showcase the profound selflessness and community spirit fostered by deep discipleship.

The Jesus Youth Coral Jubilee theme, "There is more!" or "There is Hope," encapsulates the movement's belief in the immense power of the Holy Spirit to accomplish “infinitely more than we might ask for or imagine.”

The author concludes by seeking the intercession of Mary, Queen of the Apostles, for the transformation and empowerment to be true "missionary disciples" of Jesus.