

## **20 Practical Suggestions for Supporting Volunteer Leaders**

- Acknowledge verbally your staff members' hard work and accomplishments before the whole parish or school, the youth in your community, and parish leaders.
- Print a list of volunteers and other staff in the community's bulletins and newsletters; distribute it to parents and other parishioners.
- Send birthday, special occasion, and feast day cards.
- Call each on the phone now and then – fill listeners in on good news about how they have positively affected someone's life.
- Hold a recognition dinner; award staff with certificates, honors, mementos.
- Provide child care for those staff members who will need it during their times of service.
- Send personal notes of appreciation.
- When one or more handles a difficult situation well, praise all involved; ask them to share with other staff how they dealt with the matter.
- Have the pastor and/or the head of the community's youth ministry committee write a letter expressing deep appreciation.
- Provide an annual retreat for the adult staff (leave the youth group home).
- Pray with them frequently, especially in periodic worship services which support them as a Christian service team.
- Develop an occasional, newsworthy article about your staff members for the local newspapers.
- Celebrate their service through a party.
- Allow some time just to talk things over with staff members individually; deal with problems or make small-talk; but recognize and appreciate always; build relationships.
- Pay all fees for them to attend workshops, seminars, courses, etc.
- Develop a monthly and annual recognition (e.g., Volunteer of the Month, Staff Member of the Year).
- Plan an annual family-outing day for the whole staff.
- Make yourself (or other leaders) available for conferences with staff members.
- Communicate by note or phone with each staff member's spouse (or family); indicate the great job the staff person is doing and how grateful the parish/school community is that the spouse (or family) stands in support of the staff member's service.
- Make the site of the volunteer's work as pleasant and hospitable as feasible.