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NATIONAL CATHOLIC YOUTH CONFERENCE

PRESS RELEASE

National Catholic Youth Conference

Largest ever donation

Washington, D.C., December 2, 2009: Catholic teens donate \$126,520—and are matched by a \$100,000 gift.

At the 2009 National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC), November 19-21, in Kansas City, Missouri, the 21,000 young people, their youth ministry leaders and chaperones were challenged to “Put \$Five Aside” for the offertory collection at the closing liturgy. The collection is used to provide scholarships to future NCYCs and to fund creative youth ministry initiatives nationally through the Catholic Youth Foundation USA.

Prior to the collection a generous couple offered to match the young people’s donations if they reached their \$100,000 goal. When the NCYC participants were told of the matching donation challenge, their standing ovation was a witness both to the anonymous donors’ kindness and to a belief in their own generosity. The collection totaled \$126,520, which was 44 percent higher than any previous collection at NCYC.

Bob McCarty, executive director of the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry, which sponsors NCYC, commented that “Our young people were so excited about the trust placed in them by our anonymous donor. They certainly rose to the challenge of ‘paying it forward’—sharing their resources with their peers at future NCYCs. This is an incredible story of adults who genuinely care about young people and about spirited and spirit-filled young people who are committed to their Catholic faith.”

NCYC is the largest gathering of Catholic young people in the country. This year twenty eight bishops and approximately 300 priests participated in the conference with the theme, *Christ Reigns*. NCYC also went virtual and global—through the Virtual Pilgrimage and live streaming of the general sessions via the Internet by MyCatholicVoice—and 31,268 people from 106 countries visited the broadcasts and Virtual Pilgrimage. There were over one hundred workshops for young people, including a special track of discernment workshops on vocations and a track of workshops just for parents. The Reign Forest, the thematic park and exhibit area, had 203 exhibitors, including seventy religious communities and fifteen Catholic universities and interactive venues on social justice, climate change issues, contemplative prayer and the saints.

NCYC was hosted by the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas and the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph and their Offices of Youth Ministry. Their one thousand volunteers were integral in planning and implementing the conference, under the leadership of Archbishop Joseph Naumann and Bishop Robert Finn.