



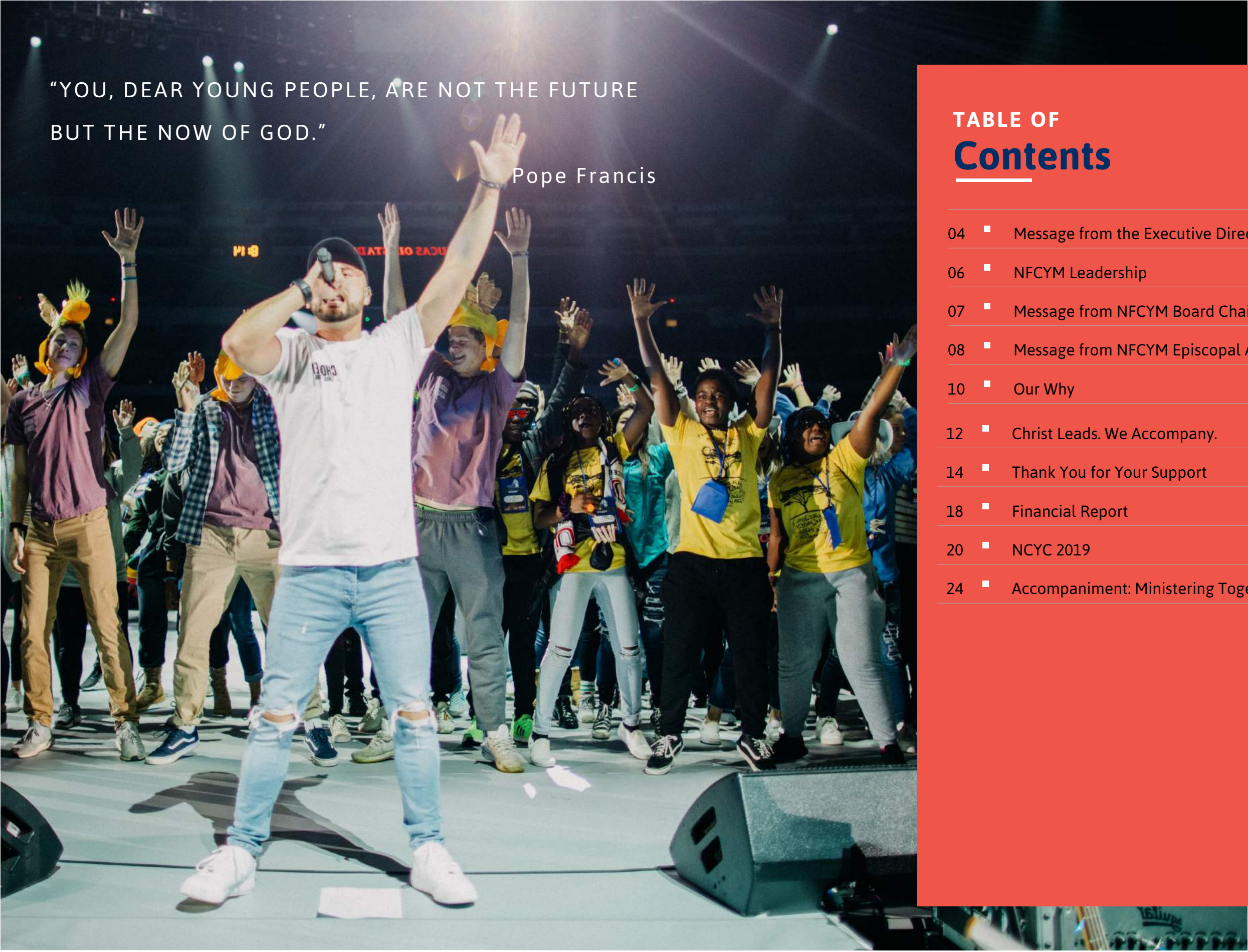
ACCOMPANIMENT: JOURNEYING TOGETHER

# 2019-2020 Annual Report



NATIONAL FEDERATION FOR  
CATHOLIC YOUTH MINISTRY





“YOU, DEAR YOUNG PEOPLE, ARE NOT THE FUTURE  
BUT THE NOW OF GOD.”

Pope Francis

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MESSAGE FROM THE  
**Executive Director**

Over the last 40 years, the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM) has supported those who accompany young people with in-person events, conferences, formation, and resources. This year was no different, despite the drastic changes we experienced with COVID-19. The back half of 2019 was filled with much joy and hope for the Church. In October and November, we empowered 32,000 young people to be missionary disciples via their participation in the National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) in Indianapolis, Holy Fire Great Lakes in Ohio, Holy Fire South Texas, and Holy Fire Nashville. What a testament of how our members are accompanying each other and the young Church to encounter Christ.

As we entered 2020, our ministries experienced drastic changes, particularly in ministering to young people. However, despite the changes, we witnessed creativity, adaptability, and resiliency within the youth ministry community that was palpable nationwide. As a community, we led the charge by holding virtual gatherings and initiating tough conversations to combat racism. Our courageous witness and leadership were much needed in these moments of crisis. We accompanied more than 75,000 people in the field of youth ministry and beyond. Thank you for your support to make all of this possible.

As we continue in this uncertain environment, planning for the next three weeks, let alone an entire year, seems daunting. According to the renowned computer scientist Allan Kay, “the best way to predict the future is to invent it.” Therefore, led by the Spirit and united as one, we embraced the daunting task and mapped out a strategy to begin anew amidst the unknown. A strategy that enables us to carry out the mission of NFCYM with sustainability and relevance. A strategy that allows us to do better and be better together. A strategy that relies on our ability to serve and support with a pastoral heart and to have the courage to adapt to meet the realities of those who accompany our youth... YOU!

I look forward to even bigger and brighter things in the coming year as Christ leads and we accompany.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, we place our trust in You.

Blessings,



**Christina Lamas**  
Executive Director



“... WE ARE SO THANKFUL FOR THIS COMMUNITY TO TALK ABOUT WHAT’S GOING ON, BOUNCE IDEAS OFF OF, HEAR HOW THINGS ARE GOING, AND PRAY TOGETHER. IT’S HELPFUL TO KNOW THAT WE ARE ALL WALKING TOGETHER.”

**Vicky Hathaway**  
Office for Youth and Young Adults  
Diocese of Gary





“... NFCYM MOVES FORWARD WITH YOU—AS TOGETHER WE ACCOMPANY YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE CHRISTIAN WITNESSES IN THEIR DAILY AND EVER-CHANGING LIVES.”

LEADERSHIP  
NFCYM Board

Mark Mann  
NFCYM Board Chair

- REGION 1

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Diocese of Fall River
- REGION 2

Thomas Semeraro  
Diocese of Ogdensburg
- REGION 3

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Diocese of Greensburg
- REGION 4

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- REGION 5

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- REGION 6

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- REGION 7

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- REGION 8

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- REGION 9

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- REGION 10

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- REGION 11

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- REGION 12

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Holy Redeemer Catholic Parish,  
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- ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBER REP

Tom East  
Center for Ministry Development
- AT-LARGE: ORGANIZATIONAL NEED

Rich Curran  
Parish Success Group
- Randy Raus  
Life Teen International
- AT-LARGE: CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Marthamaria Morales, Liaison for  
Ministry Networks and Alliances  
Department of Justice, Peace &  
Human Development, USCCB
- Cheryl Cattledge  
Christ the King Jesuit College  
Preparatory School,  
Archdiocese of Chicago
- EPISCOPAL ADVISOR

Most Reverend Nelson Pérez  
Archdiocese of Philadelphia
- EX OFFICIO

Paul Jarzembowski  
Secretariat for Laity, Marriage, Family  
Life, and Youth, USCCB
- Christina Lamas  
Executive Director, NFCYM

MESSAGE FROM THE  
Board Chair

This year marks NFCYM’s 40th anniversary as an organization dedicated to supporting and strengthening the Church’s ministry with young people and their families. Yet, this year feels like we are in our first year.

Like other ministries of the Church, youth ministry has shifted in response to the various challenges confronting the human family—the coronavirus pandemic, an economic downturn, the confronting of racism. Let me emphasize, ministry has shifted, not been disrupted. Diocesan leaders, pastors, parish ministers, leaders in youth-serving organizations, and parents found new and creative ways to connect with and spiritually care for young people.

This comes as no surprise for us as disciples of Jesus Christ since our lives pattern his paschal mystery—suffering, dying to ourselves, rising to new life, and ascending to live fully, gloriously the life we have been given.

The truth of our message remains the same: “Jesus is risen, and he wants to make us sharers in the new life of the resurrection. He is the true youthfulness of a world grown old, the youthfulness of a universe waiting “in travail” to be clothed with his light and to live his life. With him at our side, we can drink from the true wellspring that keeps alive all our dreams, our projects, our great ideals, while impelling us to proclaim what makes life truly



MARK MANN  
NFCYM Board Chair

worthwhile”. (Pope Francis, Christus Vivit, 32)

The Pope encourages us all to find in Christ our source of remaining youthful as a Church, of moving always forward in hope. Siempre adelante.

The field of Catholic youth ministry has seen many changes over the past 40 years. Through it all, members of the NFCYM have responded creatively, open to the calling of the Spirit of the Lord. As the Church’s ministry efforts continue to develop to meet the needs of a new time, NFCYM moves forward with you—as together we accompany young people to be Christian witnesses in their daily and ever-changing lives.

So, let us look to this new year as a “first year”—not as a year of crisis but as a year of grace. Let us move always forward, embracing a bright future for the Church.

Blessings,  
*Mark Mann*  
Mark Mann  
Board Chair



## MESSAGE FROM THE Episcopal Advisor

My dear brothers and sisters,


It is my pleasure to serve as the episcopal advisor for NFCYM and help advance their mission. NFCYM touches the lives of thousands of young people all over this country, along with those who serve and accompany them with great love and passion. The Church of the United States is blessed and strengthened by the gift of the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry.

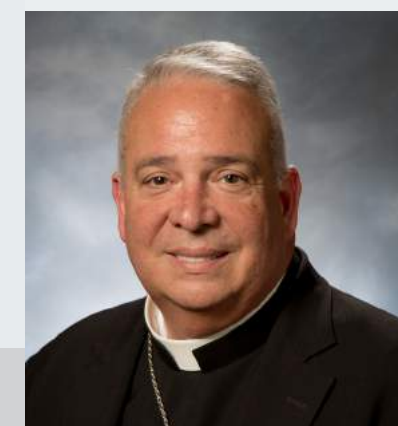
This year, NFCYM will celebrate 40 years of accompanying youth ministers and young people, and although this anniversary serves as a great milestone in their work, it also represents a moment for new beginnings, especially in this time of uncertainty—a time where we are all called to accompany young people.

Our future as a church rests in the hands of today's youth as tomorrow's priests, religious, and lay faithful. The work of NFCYM is vital in invigorating their faith and encouraging young people of all diverse realities to be active participants and witnesses of Christ's love now. NFCYM members are the conduits and catalysts for our young church to realize these realities.

I look forward to the thoughtful and innovative ways NFCYM will serve our ministers and young people in this coming year and into the future. I continue to keep you and our youth in my prayers.

Sincerely yours in Christ Jesus,

  
**Most Reverend Nelson J. Pérez, D.D.**  
Archbishop of Philadelphia  
Episcopal Advisor for NFCYM



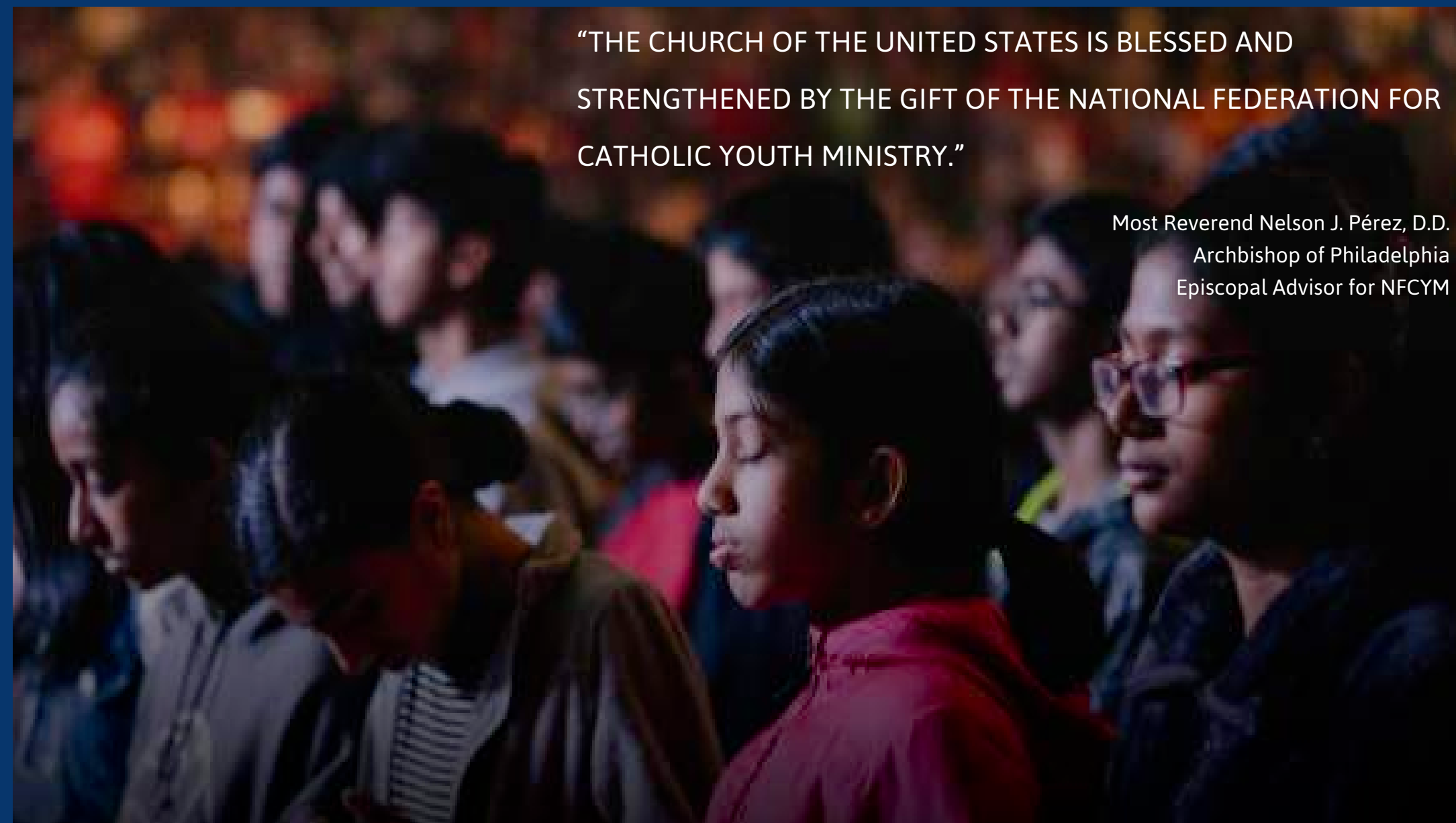


WHO IS NFCYM?

## Our Why

The National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM) seeks to empower young people to be missionary disciples.

That's why we equip pastoral leaders, youth ministers, parents, and others as they accompany youth to be Christian witnesses in their daily and ever-changing lives.



"THE CHURCH OF THE UNITED STATES IS BLESSED AND STRENGTHENED BY THE GIFT OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION FOR CATHOLIC YOUTH MINISTRY."

Most Reverend Nelson J. Pérez, D.D.  
Archbishop of Philadelphia  
Episcopal Advisor for NFCYM

## NFCYM: CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF ACCOMPANIMENT



"I AM JUST SO EXTREMELY GRATEFUL FOR NFCYM, THEY LIVE UP TO WHAT IT MEANS TO ACCOMPANY SOMEONE. I NEVER FEEL ALONE WITH NFCYM."

Deacon Sal Carranza  
Diocese of Boise

CHRIST LEADS

# We Accompany

In uncertain times, NFCYM has embraced the new, learned from the old, and planned for the future by thoughtfully inviting those we serve to share their needs, fears, challenges, and accomplishments.

Since March 2020, NFCYM has held nearly 40 opportunities to engage members, ministers in the field, clergy, and parents, in listening sessions. Here are some of the fruits of those conversations.



**67%** Increase in new associate members in under three months

**230** Resources in three languages on the NFCYM COVID-19 Resource Page

**20K** Views on the NFCYM COVID-19 Resource Page

**18.5K** Registrations to **50** NEW webinars

**475+** Ministers joined NFCYM for our NEW quarterly formation event, Momentum

**2.6K** People reached through our racism webinar series

THANK YOU

# For Your Support

## \$5000 and Up

Catholic Youth Foundation USA  
FADICA  
Most Reverend Nelson Pérez  
His Eminence Joseph William Cardinal Tobin

## \$2500 to \$4999

Healey Family Foundation

## \$1000 to \$2499

Archdiocese of Los Angeles  
Diocese of Nashville  
Diocese of Owensboro  
Most Reverend Timothy L. Doherty  
Most Reverend Wilton Gregory  
Mark D. Pacione Foundation

## \$500 to \$999

Mr. and Mrs. Steve Angrisano  
Mr. and Mrs. James C. Councill  
Ms. Louise Dussault  
Most Reverend Gregory J. Hartmayer,  
OFM Conv.  
Mr. Paul Henderson  
Most Reverend Louis Kihneman III

## \$250 to \$499

Most Reverend Gregory M. Aymond  
Most Reverend John T. Folda  
Drs. Bob and Maggie McCarty



Mr. Joseph Montoya  
National Catholic Committee on Scouting  
National Religious Vocation Conference  
ODB Films  
Most Reverend Michael J. Sheridan  
Most Reverend Thomas J. Tobin

Most Reverend Joseph E. Kurtz  
Most Reverend Mikal Mouradian  
Most Reverend Gregory L. Parkes  
Mr. and Mrs. Brian Singer-Towns  
Most Reverend Dennis J. Sullivan D.D.  
Rev. Msgr. Francis G. Weldgen  
Mr. Edward J. Wenstrup Jr.

Mr. Robert P. Nicholas  
Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet

MAY, 2020: “DEAR ROBBIE, IN HONOR OF YOUR BIRTHDAY, I MADE A DONATION TO NFCYM. THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU HAVE DONE FOR THE YOUNG CHURCH, ESPECIALLY AT ST. GEORGE, AND FOR INTRODUCING ME TO SO MANY AMAZING YOUTH MINISTERS - IN MY HUMBLE OPINION, YOU ARE STILL THE BEST!!! WITH LOVE AND HIGHEST REGARDS.”

Maureen Cetera  
Archdiocese of Chicago

## \$100 to \$249

Ciro Aguilar Alvarez  
Mr. and Mrs. John Benintendi  
Mr. Javier Bustamante  
Mr. and Mrs. John P. Campbell  
Mr. George W. Casey  
Ms. Maureen A. Cetera  
Michaeline Chandler  
Jennifer Chellburg  
Peter Clifford  
Mr. and Mrs. Walter Costner  
Mr. and Mrs. Joe B. Dorfmeister  
Robert Feduccia  
Mr. and Mrs. Frank Fullone  
Camerina Garcia  
Mr. and Mrs. Patrick J. Hare  
Paige Hartl  
Ms. Cydny Holt  
Mr. and Mrs. James Kuzma  
Most Reverend John M. LeVoir  
Fr. David Loftus  
Ms. Kathleen Loney

Claire McManus  
Joseph Mele  
Ms. Elzbieta M. Milewska  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Oldowski  
Mr. and Mrs. James Pegoni  
Mr. Joseph Perdreauxville  
Ria Pereira  
Mr. and Mrs. Randy S. Raus  
Ms. Kellie Reynolds  
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Seeger  
Most Reverend Michael J. Sis  
Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Smith  
Most Reverend Oscar Solis  
Mr. and Mrs. Greg Surdyke  
Mrs. Bonnie Waltz  
Mr. and Mrs. Mark Warnecke  
Mr. and Mrs. Arthur L. Wilmes

Donations reflect gifts given to  
NFCYM between July 1, 2019  
and June 30, 2020



THANK YOU

# For Your Support

## Up to \$99

Cristeta Acayan  
Mr. and Mrs. Callan Ackerman  
Mr. and Mrs. Curtis Albertson  
Mr. and Mrs. Troy Allen  
Mr. and Mrs. Steven J. Anslinger  
Dcn. and Mrs. John Baker  
Mr. Angel Barrera  
Matthew Beck  
Ms. Carol A. Blecha  
Mr. and Mrs. Clavert Bowen  
Cassandra Boyles  
Mr. Samuel Butler  
Felisa Cepeda  
Elizabeth Chock  
Ms. Amanda K. Confiado  
Mr. Michael Conlon  
Mr. and Mrs. John Dalelio  
Mary Joan D’Amore  
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Ms. Cristela Duran  
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Mary Hernandez  
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Ms. Jennifer Ledonne  
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Colleen Morgan  
Mr. and Mrs. William Motts  
Raymond Nedohon  
Hoa Nguyen  
Mr. John F. Offerle  
Mr. and Mrs. Brian Popovitz  
James Priester  
Mr. and Mrs. John M. Rakszawski

Danielle Ramos  
Ms. Leota Roesch  
Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Ross  
Ms. Teresa J. Rousseau  
Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Sallurday  
Pamela Smouse  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Spinelli  
Ms. Kelly Sweet  
Ms. Sheila Tullier  
Ms. Cynthia P. White  
Tricia Wilson  
Ms. Julita Q. Zaratan

Donations reflect gifts given to  
NFCYM between July 1, 2019  
and June 30, 2020



2019-2020

# Financial Report

In a time of great change and uncertainty NFCYM is committed to advancing the mission of the organization as we look to strengthen and empower those who accompany our young people.

Together we thoughtfully charge into our 40th year with confidence in our financial position, focusing on support, relevance, and sustainability.

## Financial Position 2019-2020

### ASSETS

Bank Accounts	\$325,712.58
Accounts Receivable	\$370.90
Investments and Other Current Assets	\$1,855,306.92
Fixed Assets	-
Security Deposit	\$3,587.56
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$2,184,977.96</b>

### LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable	\$4,798.50
Credit Cards	(\$1,310.24)
State and Federal Tax	\$10,528.03
PPP Loan	\$125,196.00
Security Deposit	\$3,914.00
Deferred Revenue	\$28,701.47
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$171,827.76</b>

### EQUITY

Opening Balance Equity	\$957,337.21
Restricted Funds	\$219,066.47
Unrestricted Fund Balance	\$1,553,134.28
Retained Earnings	(\$928,249.06)
Net Revenue	\$211,861.30
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>\$2,013,150.20</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Equity</b>	<b>\$2,184,977.96</b>



## Income Statement 2019-2020

REVENUE	YTD ACTUAL	BUDGET
Membership Services	\$88,316.37	\$113,700.00
Management and Administration	\$128,263.13	\$24,000.00
Publications	\$57,599.98	\$102,000.00
NCYC	\$4,706,025.34	\$ 5,407,200.00
NCCYM	\$465.00	-
Holy Fire	\$208,792.68	\$481,300.00
Strategic Direction	\$20,000.00	\$206,600.00
Membership Meeting	\$45,856.00	\$68,400.00
Encuentro	-	-
Development and Marketing	\$119,256.33	\$504,000.00
Projects	\$1,732.70	\$26,800.00
Region 2	\$1,200.00	-

<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$5,377,507.53</b>	<b>\$6,934,000.00</b>
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EXPENSES	YTD ACTUAL	BUDGET
Membership Services	\$50,606.12	\$235,700.00
Management and Administration	\$1,036,236.41	\$1,141,500.00
Publications	\$38,644.18	\$65,700.00
NCYC	\$3,324,033.24	\$3,280,900.00
NCCYM	\$428.78	-
Holy Fire	\$188,510.61	\$412,800.00
Strategic Direction	\$128,668.01	\$216,400.00
Membership Meeting	\$118,716.14	\$136,500.00
Encuentro	\$5,769.76	-
Development and Marketing	\$255,927.54	\$305,000.00
Projects	\$16,970.24	\$63,900.00
Region 2	\$1,132.20	-

<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$5,165,646.23</b>	<b>\$5,858,400.00</b>
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<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$211,861.30</b>	<b>\$1,075,600.00</b>
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# NCYC

In a uniquely Catholic setting, 20,000 young people gathered in November 2019 for formation, fellowship, workshops, presentations, worship, and an opportunity to encounter Jesus Christ. The National Catholic Youth Conference has continually served as an impactful anchor point in the faith journey of the young Church and as a reminder, even in uncertain times, that there is a thriving community of Catholic young people.



"THE MOST MOVING AND INSPIRATIONAL THREE DAYS OF MY ENTIRE LIFE."

"WHAT AN INDESCRIBABLE BLESSING TO GO ON THIS JOURNEY WITH SUCH BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE. MY FAITH HAS BEEN STRENGTHENED BY SHARING THESE MEMORIES WITH YOU. I THANK GOD FOR BLESSING ME WITH THE PRIVILEGE TO ENCOUNTER ALL OF YOU AND I AM PROUD TO CALL YOU MY NCYC FAMILY. *FOR I, THE LORD YOUR GOD, HOLD YOUR RIGHT HAND, IT IS I WHO SAY TO YOU, 'FEAR NOT, I WILL HELP YOU.'* ISAIAH 41:13"

"THE MOST MOVING EXPERIENCE I'VE HAD IN MY FAITH JOURNEY. 'IF YOU CAN CURSE, YOU CAN BLESS.' THIS QUOTE HIT ME BECAUSE IT MADE ME REALIZE THAT I CAN HAVE AN IMPACT ON OTHERS' LIVES NO MATTER WHAT THEY BELIEVE."

"NCYC 2019! YOU TRULY CHANGED MY LIFE. I THANK THE LORD FOR ANSWERING MY PRAYERS. I HOPE EVERYONE WHO STILL IS SEARCHING FOR ANSWERS THEY WILL BE FOUND! GOD IS GOOD ALL THE TIME AND ALL THE TIME GOD IS GOOD! NC! YC! #NCYC2019"

"NCYC WAS AMAZING, EVERYWHERE AROUND YOU THERE ARE LIVES BEING CHANGED. IT BROUGHT ME CLOSER TO CHRIST AND HELPED ME BUILD MY RELATIONSHIP WITH FRIENDS."



## The Present and Future

Dear Young People of NCYC,

I send you an affectionate greeting and my prayers at this moment of encounter that you are living. May it be an opportunity to strengthen and deepen your faith and communion. May it light your missionary hearts with the courage and strength to live in and with the Lord always as a Church sent forth. Today, as in the beginning, we need to go out to meet each person, as it is our mission to do so, especially with those most separated and those who are suffering most. We must reach the existential peripheries of our world. You know from your everyday life that many are alone, that many do not know Jesus.

Go, go and take the Lord with you. Go and fill your surroundings, even the digital ones.

Not of convictions. Not to convince others. Not to proselytize but to bear witness of the tenderness and mercy of Jesus.

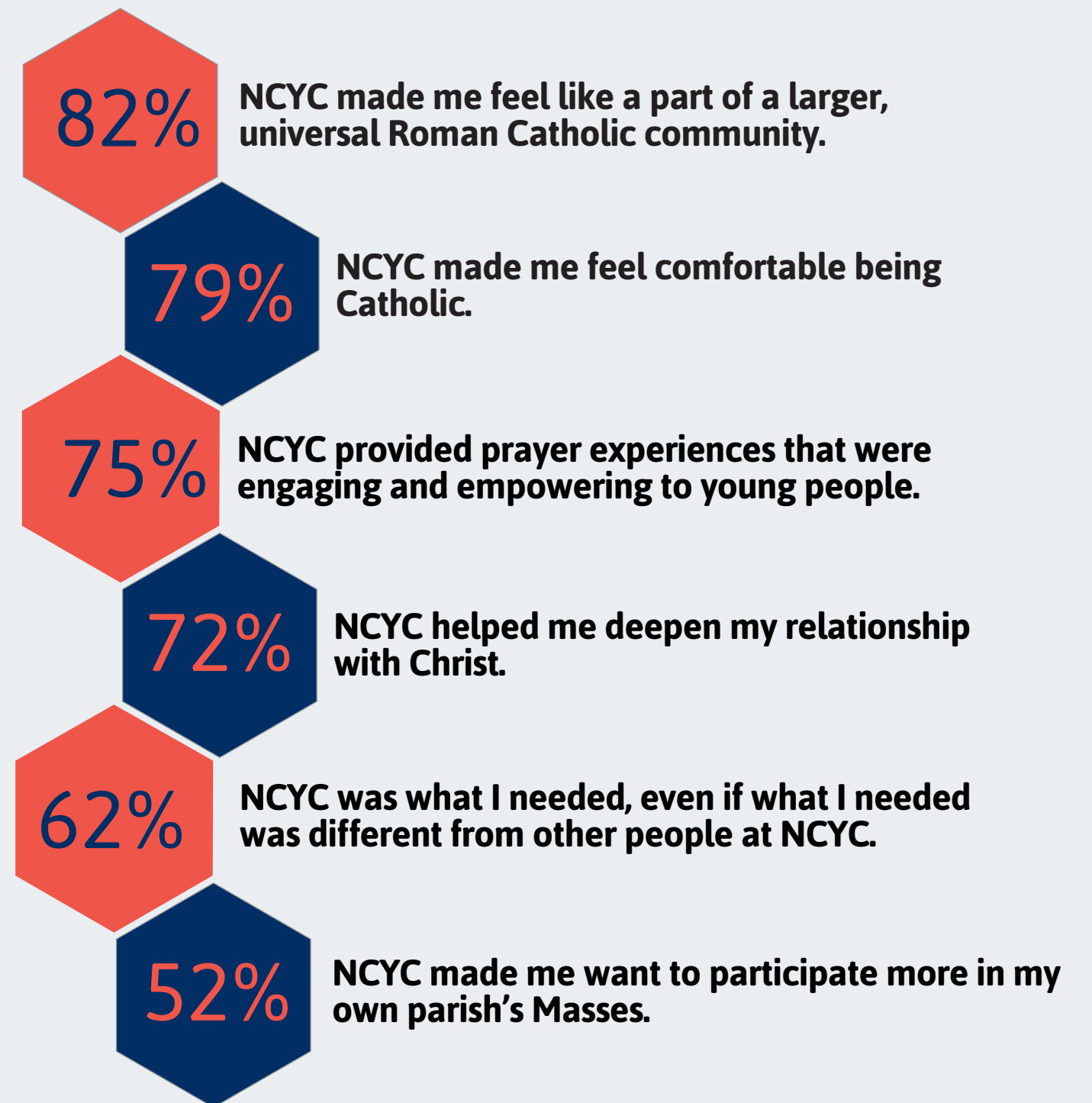
I bless you with all my heart. [Makes the sign of the cross] And don't forget to pray for me.

Thank you.

- Pope Francis, video message to the young people of the National Catholic Youth Conference in 2019

### NCYC 2019

The numbers don't lie. NCYC has a significant impact on youth who attend. Below are some statistics from a survey conducted by the Archdiocese of Dubuque, consistently one of the largest delegations to participate in NCYC. 82% of their NCYC youth completed the survey.





# ACCOMPANIMENT

Our journey to minister together

Highlights from NFCYM members  
as they journey together serving the  
young Church.



## ACCOMPANIMENT

# Ministering Together

“THIS VOCATION IS A GIFT THAT I  
AM GRATEFUL FOR EVERYDAY”

### PAMELA HARRIS

- Director, Ethnic Ministries, Catholic Diocese of Columbus
- 15 years in ministry



### NFCYM: Why ministry? Why do you do what you do?

**PAM:** When I answered the call to work in ministry it was during a time in my life where I thought I was happy and content with my job in the finance sector. It was God who chose me, even though it took a couple of years, I said yes to ministry. The only experience I had was in my parish as an altar server and a member of the justice and peace committee, among other roles. I am reminded daily that God qualifies the unqualified. Why ministry? I’m not sure if I can fully answer this question because it is similar, in my opinion, to having a conversion experience. We are called to conversion regularly throughout our lives. Jesus said “follow me,” and He continues to tell me to follow. I never had any desire to work in ministry, but when God calls, the only thing we can say is “speak Lord, for your servant is listening.”

This vocation is a gift that I am grateful for every day.

### NFCYM: What are some of the ways you have been able to minister through these uncertain times?

**PAM:** During these challenging times I have been able to minister through various forms of media platforms. I facilitate courageous conversations on racism through virtual gatherings. I offer uplifting and encouraging words, scripture, and/or phrases through Twitter and Facebook. I collaborate with other Black Catholic Organizations to video encouraging messages. I’ve been blessed through my contacts with NFCYM to participate in panel discussions on racism. I also write articles regarding the racial and health disparities in the African American Community for our local Catholic newspaper and national organizations, such as the National Association of Black Catholic Administrators.

If there is one thing that I’ve learned throughout my experience of ministering, it is that we are a communal people. We must embrace the practice of accompaniment. Ministry is holistic in that it includes the family, the parish, and the community, regardless of the issue. We share in a community of charity; we are in solidarity with one another because when one suffers, we all suffer (1 Corinthians 12:26). Let us all embrace the universality of our faith and continue to make charity (love), and Christ, the center of all we do and say.



## ACCOMPANIMENT

# Ministering Together

### DEACON SALVADOR CARRANZA

- Director, Office of Youth & Young Adult Evangelization, Diocese of Boise
- 16 years in ministry



#### NFCYM: Why ministry? Why do you do what you do?

**DEACON SAL:** Out of a deep sense of gratitude for how amazing our Lord has been with me and my family and a longing to share this awesome gift with our sisters and brothers in Christ.

#### NFCYM: If you could share one thing with other ministers, parents, families, and clergy, that you have learned throughout your experience ministering what would it be?

**DEACON SAL:** When we were all forced to stay home, there were so many doubts and fears going through my mind. One Tuesday night, I was kept awake by so many thoughts—thoughts such as am I doing enough? Should I be doing more? Will I be fired or furloughed? Do I need to be more visible so that I am able to keep my job?

“AS I REFLECTED ON THESE MOST HUMBLING WORDS, I REALIZED THAT OUR LORD, AS HE DID WITH THE APOSTLES, DOES NOT CALL US FOR WHAT WE KNOW, BUT FOR WHO WE ARE.”

I finally was able to fall asleep. The next day I woke up pretty much in the same state. I proceeded to do my morning prayer, hoping that somehow my Lord would speak to me and put my mind and my heart at ease. Unfortunately, that was not the case.

I proceeded to go through my emails. Somehow I had signed up for the daily briefing from the *New York Times*. As I scrolled through the headlines, a quote completely stopped me in my tracks:

“I’ve never felt less useful as a doctor. The one thing I can do—what I think will matter most, in the end—is just to be a person first, for these patients and their families.” Dr. Helen Ouyang

As I reflected on these most humbling words, I realized that our Lord, as he did with the Apostles, does not call us for what we know, but for who we are: His sons and daughters and therefore brothers and sisters called to be present to each other, to “love one another.” John 15:17



## ACCOMPANIMENT

# Ministering Together

### DR. ANSEL AUGUSTINE

- Executive Director of Cultural Diversity and Outreach, Archdiocese of Washington
- 22 years in ministry

#### NFCYM: Why ministry? Why do you do what you do?

**ANSEL:** I feel a calling to do what I do. I believe Jesus gave me the gifts that I have, and the experiences that I've had, to be able to do the unique work of ministering with young people, and those who minister with them; especially from our underrepresented communities. I also do what I do because my ancestors and elders sacrificed for me to do what I'm doing, and I honor them by making a way for those coming after me.

#### NFCYM: What are some of the ways you have been able to minister and accompany through these times?

**ANSEL:** It definitely has been a struggle to minister during the dual pandemics of COVID-19 and racism. Some of the unique ways of gathering via technology have afforded more interaction with groups that normally would not connect. I have been asked, more than usual due to racial unrest, to educate many of my white colleagues, while also continuing to advocate for the Black Catholic experience.

#### NFCYM: What does accompaniment mean to you?

**ANSEL:** The term accompaniment means to journey with someone, or a group, as a resource for that group. Accompaniment does not mean directing or controlling, but building a relationship during the journey process, thus both parties learn from each other and see Christ in both sides of the relationship and grow together.



I have been accompanied by NFCYM since I became a member in 2007. I have served on various internal committees. I have served as a keynote, workshop presenter, and MC at various NFCYM conferences. I've also served as a board member. Also, NFCYM has given me another platform to advocate for the Black Catholic Youth Ministry Community. Although it continues to be a challenge for the wider Catholic Church to understand our unique struggles, NFCYM has created opportunities for me to have relationships with various organizations and individuals to uplift my youth ministers and youth. I have also received great support for programming for youth leadership development.

#### NFCYM: If you could share one thing you have learned throughout your experience ministering, what would it be?

**ANSEL:** I would share a quote that my mother in ministry, Sr. Eva Regina, SSF, used to tell me while in class at the Institute for Black Catholic History at Xavier University of Louisiana. "Remember, wherever you go, bring Christ, but respect and value the Christ that's already there."



## ACCOMPANIMENT

# Ministering Together

### ROSY HARTZ

- Coordinator of Faith Formation, St. Viator Parish, Las Vegas
- 20 years in ministry



### NFCYM: Why ministry? Why do you do what you do?

**ROSY:** I didn't know when I started ministry at age 20 that I would still be doing it. Yet, I keep encountering young person after young person who have new questions, challenges, and hopes. As soon as I think it is maybe time to step aside, God reassures me through some young person that it is, in fact, not.

I feel strongly that when youth need someone or an outlet, ministry serves as that need—we walk alongside them because they need us. Too often the world is pushing them down, but I love ministry with teens because it pushes them up to new levels.

Rosy wrote an article, "[Confessions of a Youth Minister](#)" for Center for Ministry Development (CDM) that helps explain her "why" when it comes to youth ministry.

**NFCYM:** What are some of the ways you have found to be successful in ministering to the young Church during times of tragedy and through this pandemic?

**ROSY:** We have certainly had our challenges but have met them with creativity. There have been lots of Zoom youth nights led by our college students who suddenly were experiencing their world in new ways as well.

We did yoga with Susan Searle, project coordinator for Just5Days, and YouthLeader programs on Zoom.

We had a parent and youth dinner and a show where families ate together then came on Zoom for a magic show with Giancarlo Bernini.

There was an Easter blessing on Zoom with over 100 youth ministry families with Fr. Bill—then again for Pentecost. (LoL, who knew this pandemic would have lasted so long?)

We played scavenger hunts and did a comedy hour.

We also focused on Instagram and Facebook, posting prayers that unite generations. A teen and a family member of two different generations posted a prayer to show that we are united. You can see them @viatoryouth on Instagram.

For campus ministry, we gave all the 8th graders signs to put in their yards and we did weekly challenges. They completed them by sending in pictures. We would post the pictures and then mail packages to all who took part.



## ACCOMPANIMENT

# Ministering Together

### JENNIFER CHELLBERG

- Youth and Young Adult Ministry Coordinator, Nativity Catholic Church, Longwood, Florida
- 16 years in youth ministry



#### **NFCYM: Why ministry? Why do you do what you do?**

**JENNIFER:** From my personal experience growing up in the Church, I know how important it is for a young person to have faith-filled adults who love them and care about them and want to help them live a life of holiness (and ultimately get to heaven). I had many adults who filled that role for me as I was growing up in the Church and I feel blessed to be entrusted with the ministry of helping to ensure that the young people of our parish have that same experience. I would not be here as a youth minister in the Church today if it wasn't for some of those adults who encouraged me, supported me, and were an example for me, especially during my high school and college years. I am blessed to be ministering in the same parish that I grew up in. So many of those adults who accompanied me 25+ years ago are still a part of the parish and still a part of my faith journey today. I would love to be able to witness my teens living their lives as faith-filled adults in the parish and still be a part of accompanying them on their faith journey (in a new way) 25+ years in the future.

### JIM FLANAGAN

- Director of Youth Ministry, Holy Name Parish, West Roxbury, Massachusetts
- 28 years in youth ministry



#### **NFCYM: Why accompany young people? Why do you do what you do?**

**JIM:** I love youth ministry. I continue to feel like I have the best job in the world. It has been a great blessing for me to journey with young people and their families. I hope and pray that I am helping them have an encounter with God.

#### **NFCYM: What does accompaniment mean to you?**

**JIM:** Journeying together. That takes on so many different forms—praying for—being a resource for—lending an ear or shoulder to—empowerment—network.

I have always felt the support and friendship in the various forms that I have been associated with NFCYM. I can't imagine NFCYM not being part of my ministry. One of the many highlights of accompaniment that I felt from NFCYM was getting a phone call from the executive director after the scandal hit Boston starting with a youth ministry leader being arrested for abusing several children. I also feel it now as NFCYM has trust in me to be a small part of the project team. You have empowered me.



## ACCOMPANIMENT

# Ministering Together

### LISA KURNIK

- Director of Youth Ministry, Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee
- 35+ years in ministry



### NFCYM: Why ministry? Why do you do what you do?

**LISA:** I grew up in the transition from CYO, to youth group, to youth ministry. I lived both the *Vision of Youth Ministry* and *Renewing the Vision*. I had wonderful leaders who were volunteers in charge because in those days no one was paid to do ministry. Their faithfulness and commitment were what inspired me, as well as that nudge from the Holy Spirit calling me to ministry. I love young people and want them to have a strong faith and relationship with Jesus that will sustain them through the joys and sorrows in their lives.

### NFCYM: What are some of the ways you have been able to minister through these times?

**LISA:** The most important ministry right now is supporting and accompanying each other in the uncertainty. The ministry of presence, listening to youth ministers and colleagues as we process how we continue to minister to young people. Over 35 years, there have been so many challenges thrown at us in ministry and I have always reminded the youth ministers that Jesus had many challenges thrown at him but he didn't let that stop his ministry. "Jesus I trust in you," should be our prayer every day.

### NFCYM: Talk a little bit about your involvement in Northern California's "Youth on a Mission" Leadership & Discipleship program. What drew you to participate? What did you and your ministers take away from your involvement?

**LISA:** Someone posted about it in the chat one Monday during the NFCYM meeting and when I checked it out, I realized it might help me in figuring out how to do a virtual youth event.

I contacted them and asked if I could sit in and they welcomed me. I was the only one from my diocese to participate. I was very impressed with the amount of coordination it took because they had a large team and everyone had their responsibilities.

When the kids were in small groups, I was able to see the team check-in with each other and get ready for the next segment. Everything they did was meant to engage the youth through their senses – visuals, music, prayer, etc. I was also impressed that they sent out "swag bags" to each participant that had things they could use throughout the event.

The MC did a great job of bringing energy and trying to engage. The team realized they had a limited amount of time each day to engage the young people and they made the most of that time. This was an excellent example of a collaboration of several dioceses and it gave me many ideas for any virtual youth events we might do in the future.

YOUTH ON A MISSION is a 4-day VIRTUAL discipleship training camp for Catholic teens led by the Dioceses of Fresno, Monterey, Oakland, Reno, Sacramento, Santa Rosa, Stockton, and the Archdiocese of San Francisco. More at <http://yoamnocal.weebly.com>.



## ACCOMPANIMENT

# Ministering Together

### CHRISTOPHER WESLEY

- Founder, Marathon Youth Ministry
- Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry, St. Joseph Parish, Cockeysville, Maryland
- 16 years in ministry



#### **NFCYM: Why accompany young people? Why do you do what you do?**

**CHRIS:** I love youth ministry. There have been several times I've pondered the question, why do I stay? And God always affirms it with an encounter or experience that reminds me why this ministry is so incredible. However, about two years into serving, I noticed that many different men and women around me were not lasting in ministry. They were leaving and burning out, and it broke my heart.

And it was also around that time that I recognized my limitations, and I began to log my experience through a blog. Little did I know, is that my story was resonating with other youth ministers. People would leave comments and reach out to me to ask questions and talk about their ministries. Blogging led me to get involved with local and national networking groups, and it was through those relationships, I began to grow as a leader.

“... WE HAVE FIRST TO LEARN HOW TO ACCOMPANY ONE ANOTHER. I FEEL LIKE NFCYM HAS OFFERED THIS THROUGH THEIR MEET-UPS THROUGHOUT THE PANDEMIC AND, MORE RECENTLY, WITH THEIR VIRTUAL EXPERIENCE, MOMENTUM.”

I was discovering that if I were going to accompany the young church, I had to make sure I had others accompany me.

In 2016, after twelve years in my first parish, I decided to take a step out to start up Marathon Youth Ministry to equip, empower, and encourage the leaders who accompany the young church.

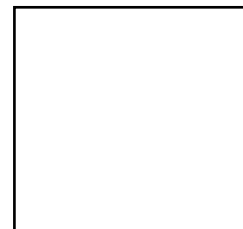
#### **NFCYM: What are some of the ways you have been able to minister through these uncertain times?**

**CHRIS:** I think the largest battle we have in ministry is isolation. The challenge of figuring out how to serve teens in a socially distant society has proved daunting. And then you add the political polarization and social unrest, and it's easy to lose hope. While there are no quick fixes, what we've seen is a more vital need to accompany the men and women in ministry trenches. At Marathon Youth Ministry, we've seen an increase in enrollment for our online courses and cohorts. Through these collaborative efforts, a youth minister in one part of the country can connect with someone on the other side. We've been growing our ministry by reminding youth workers that they are not alone and connecting them with other like-minded leaders.





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## OUR MISSION

The National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM) supports and strengthens those who accompany young people as they encounter and follow Jesus Christ.