



NATIONAL FEDERATION FOR
CATHOLIC YOUTH MINISTRY

2020-21 ANNUAL REPORT





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Message from the Executive Director



Dear NFCYM Community,

Together, we have journeyed through a significant moment in ministry and continue to build a new paradigm for how we accompany young people on their path to discipleship.

Our community of ministry leaders, volunteers, clergy, parents, and young people embody the voice of the Spirit, reminding us of the importance of our young Church. God has sent us an invitation to think outside the box, innovate, and invite young people to lead. This past year, we, the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM), celebrated our 40th anniversary. In that celebration, we committed to being agents of change, building awareness, creating strategies, expanding resources, and laying down the critical elements to be trailblazers for our next forty years.

As I take a moment in reflection to think about the last year, I am overwhelmed with a feeling of gratitude for:

- Our members, the ministry leaders, volunteers, clergy, and parents who carry out the mission of NFCYM every day and bring to life the vision of this organization
- Continued innovation in youth ministry and ways to support and connect ministry leaders
- A five-year strategy that will activate and innovate the young Church and those who accompany them
- The upcoming addition of the National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) in Long Beach in 2022

Thank you to all who serve our young Church and commit themselves to empowering young people in their path to missionary discipleship. I look forward to our journey together, as Christ leads and we accompany.

Blessings,



Christina Lamas
Executive Director
National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry



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**GOD HAS SENT US AN INVITATION
TO THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX, INNOVATE,
AND INVITE YOUNG PEOPLE TO LEAD.**

LEADERSHIP

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CULTURAL DIVERSITY

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U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

AT-LARGE –

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Christ the King Jesuit College

Preparatory School

Archdiocese of Chicago, IL

AT-LARGE –

ORGANIZATIONAL NEED

Jim Lundholm-Eades

AT-LARGE –

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Most. Rev. Nelson Pérez

Archbishop of Philadelphia

USCCB LIAISON (EX OFFICIO)

Paul Jarzembowski

U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops





**I AM CONFIDENT THAT WITH CHRIST AND
THE HOLY SPIRIT LEADING US, NFCYM IS READY TO
EQUIP THE FIELD OF YOUTH MINISTRY TO ACCOMPLISH
THE GOAL OF REACHING 15,000 MINISTERS.**



Message from the Board Chair



Dear NFCYM Community,

This past year has been one where we have seen continued change in the landscape of youth ministry. In the second half of 2020 and the first six months of 2021, our members navigated ministering online, canceled gatherings, and socially distanced retreats. We saw dioceses navigate tough restructuring decisions, sometimes resulting in losing youth ministry personnel. Our board this past year had to make the difficult decision to not hold our biannual National Conference on Catholic Youth Ministry. To be honest, there were many complicated conversations, and sometimes the path forward was not an easy one.

Amid all of this, however, was Christ. Jesus has accompanied us in these trying moments and continues to be with us as we go forward. Through these difficult times, NFCYM has learned a lot by listening to our members' struggles, hopes, and dreams. These lessons and insights have taught us how to move forward and informed our five-year strategic plan. We are excited to begin the journey to empower "15,000 ministers to advocate for young people to be an integral voice within their local faith communities over the next five years" through four strategic focus areas:

1. Embrace the Essentials Elements of Comprehensive Youth Ministry
2. Embrace the Profession and Practice of a Youth Ministry Leader
3. Understand and Engage Youth as Protagonists
4. Support the Growth of the Domestic Church

I am confident that with Christ and the Holy Spirit leading us, NFCYM is ready to equip the field of youth ministry to accomplish the goal of reaching 15,000 ministers. Thank you for being a partner and advocate as we minister to the young Church through supporting and strengthening those who accompany them.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul J. Sifuentes". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Paul Sifuentes
Board Chair
National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry

Message from the Episcopal Advisor



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

The Church of the United States is blessed and strengthened by the gift of the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry. Its work is vital in encouraging young people from many diverse backgrounds to experience the unity of Christ's love and share it with others.

For the past three years, it has been my pleasure to serve as the Episcopal Advisor for NFCYM. During that time, I have found true joy in collaborating with ministry leaders, volunteers, clergy, and parents. Together, we have labored to prioritize the voice of young people in the various ministries and good works of our Church.

NFCYM has journeyed with ministry leaders throughout this critical time in our society. It understands the need for new models of how we, as a Church, accompany our young people on their path to discipleship and their journey toward holiness, which is lifelong. NFCYM urges us all to bring advocacy and awareness to the importance of doing much more than just carving out a space for the young people in our Church. NFCYM calls all of us to an understanding that youth are an inherent part of "the now of God," to quote Pope Francis.

I am excited and encouraged by the work of NFCYM. It invigorates me to be a part of their mission and to serve as their episcopal advisor. Thank you for your continued support. Please be assured of my prayers for you and for our young people.

Sincerely yours in Christ Jesus,

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



“

**THE WORK OF NFCYM IS VITAL IN ENCOURAGING
YOUNG PEOPLE OF ALL DIVERSE REALITIES TO BE ACTIVE
PARTICIPANTS AND WITNESSES OF CHRIST'S LOVE NOW.**

Organizational Overview

The National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry seeks to empower young people to be missionary disciples by supporting and strengthening those who accompany young people as they encounter and follow Jesus Christ.

As a membership organization, we connect youth ministry leaders across the nation to collaborate in an authentic community and engage in Christ-centered formation.



COMMUNITY:

- **1,250+ current members** across associate, constitutive, diocesan, and organizational categories
- **1,500+ connected** through eleven topic- and role-based ministry networks
- **1,200+ heard** through listening sessions and member meet-ups
- **200+ engaged** in project teams to advance the mission of NFCYM



RESOURCES AND PROGRAMS:

- **1,000+ entries** in an online library of talks, webinars, articles, and more
- **10,000+ equipped through programs** such as Strong Catholic Families, *Fortaleciendo Familias en la Fe*, and the National Dialogue
- **675+ trained** through the New Diocesan Directors Institute



EVENTS:

- **200,000+ teens** have encountered Christ at National Catholic Youth Conferences (NCYC)
- **35,000+ middle school youth** ignited with the Spirit at Holy Fire events
- **35,000+ pastoral leaders** supported through in-person and virtual formation events

Who We Are

PURPOSE: To empower young people to be missionary disciples

MISSION: Support and strengthen those who accompany young people as they encounter and follow Jesus Christ

VISION: The NFCYM looks to a future when young people see themselves as children of God who live as missionary disciples of Jesus Christ; when the gifts, struggles, and diverse realities of young people are welcomed in Catholic faith communities; when ministry leaders have embraced the joy of the gospel; and when families are living as the domestic Church.

The NFCYM commits to advancing the field of pastoral ministry to young people by:

- Forming, equipping, and supporting ministry leaders in their service to young people and their families
- Modeling and fostering a ministry of *acompañamiento* among young people of all cultures, languages, socioeconomic, and geographic realities
- Partnering with parents and equipping families of young people as they witness to Jesus Christ in their daily lives

VALUES:

- Guidance of the Holy Spirit discerned through prayer
- Fidelity to the mission and teaching of the Church
- Ministry rooted in prayer and sacraments
- Communion with the bishops of the United States
- Dignity and giftedness of each person
- Inherent goodness, unique gifts, and charisms of all young people
- Baptismal call of each person to discipleship, mission, and holiness
- Richness of diversity
- Promotion of justice and peace
- Responsible stewardship of our resources
- Wisdom of shared leadership and collaboration

Resulting Strategy

To accomplish our strategic goal, NFCYM will align work across four focus areas to advance the field of youth ministry with clarity and consistency within all ethnic and cultural realities found within the Catholic Church in the United States:

STRATEGIC GOAL:

Empower 15,000 ministers to advocate for young people to be an integral voice within their local faith communities over the next five years.



Embrace the Essential Elements of Comprehensive Youth Ministry*

(Audience—Ministry Leaders)



Embrace the Profession and Practice of a Youth Ministry Leader*

(Audience—Ministry Leaders)



Understand and Engage Youth as Protagonists

(Audience—Adults)



Support the Growth of the Domestic Church

(Audience—Families)

*Desired to distinguish program elements from personal development for guidelines and resources

Our How

Ensure all work is:



CHRIST-CENTERED

Know, love, and serve Christ according to the gospel values



AUTHENTIC

An honest awareness of who we are, what we do, and why we do it



ENGAGED

Activate and empower the gifts and strengths of all members



COLLABORATIVE

Working together with diverse voices



FORMATIVE




Ongoing growth in professional practice and faith



How the Strategy Aligns with Our Organizational Goals




GOAL 1

Support, engage, and develop members to make a greater impact in the field of pastoral ministry to young people.

-  **Focus 1:** Elements of comprehensive youth ministry—easier to identify and address key components to ensure a well-rounded approach
-  **Focus 2:** Profession and practice of a youth ministry leader—provides formation for the individual
-  **Focus 3:** Help adults understand and engage youth as protagonists—the more they know about those they serve, the more effective ministry leaders can be in reaching youth and encouraging/elevating them to live as disciples

GOAL 2




Equip members to identify and enable adults in ministry to respond to the diverse needs and gifts of young people.

-  **Focus 1:** Diversity and inclusion to be incorporated as part of the key components
-  **Focus 2:** Diversity and inclusion training to be included in essential elements of formation
-  **Focus 3:** Gen Z is the most diverse generation—therefore any research conducted will inherently address their unique needs

GOAL 3



Equip members to provide opportunities for encounters with Christ through dynamic engagements that foster mature discipleship and authentic accompaniment with adult leaders and young people.

NFCYM youth programs (NCYC & Holy Fire) reflect four focus areas:

-  **Focus 1 & 2:** Inform adult programming to develop effective youth leaders
-  **Focus 3:** Ensure youth are engaged effectively
-  **Focus 4:** Support the growth of the domestic Church—provide ways to help parents accompany their child through the programs

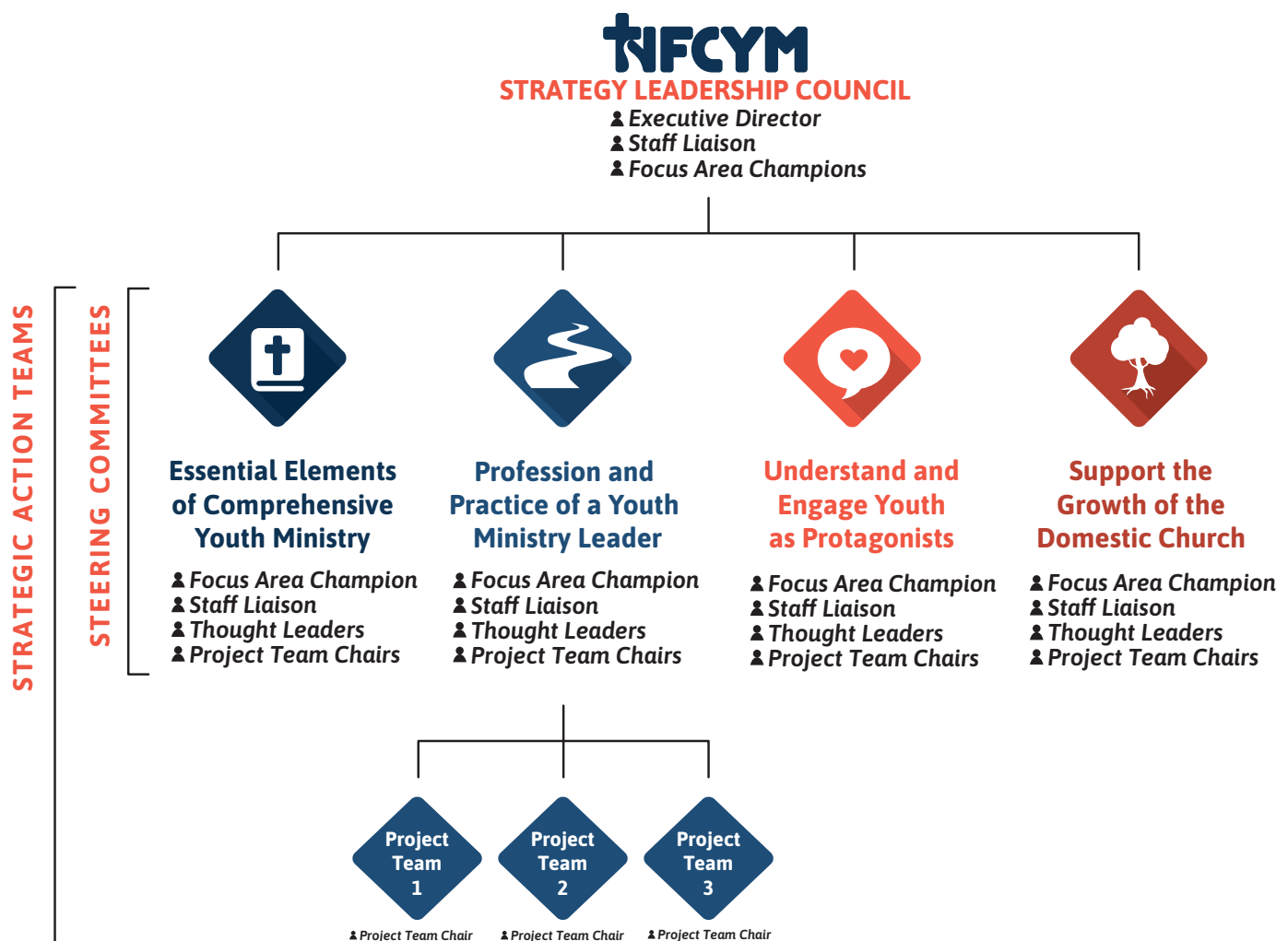
GOAL 4

Equip members to partner with parents to enhance their confidence and ability to accompany their children to seek, know, and love Christ.

-  **Focus 1:** Key program elements will include a special focus on engaging parents
-  **Focus 4:** NFCYM will model ways to engage parents in faith development of their children at NFCYM youth programs

Process to Accomplish This Work

Each focus area will be assigned a focus area champion and staff liaison to serve as representative on the steering committee. They will oversee all project teams assembled to accomplish the work of their designated focus area. Sub Teams if applicable would complete the work under each project team.



Thank You

FOR YOUR SUPPORT

\$5,000 AND UP

Mr. Paul Henderson

\$2,500 TO \$4,999

Mr. Chris Miller

\$1,000 TO \$2,499

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Mr. Tom East	Ms. Mary May	Mr. and Mrs. Mark Warnecke
Ms. Diane Flanagan	Drs. Bob and Maggie McCarty	

Donations reflect gifts given to NFCYM between July 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021





Thank You

FOR YOUR SUPPORT

UP TO \$99

Ms. Rachel Alcocer	Most Reverend Jeffrey Grob	Mr. Dan Pin
Ms. Patricia Antonacci	Ms. Angel Guzman	Ms. Chelsea Piper Baldwin
Mr. Matthew Beck	Ms. Pamela Harris	Mr. John M. Rakszawki
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Mrs. Dolores Graham		Ms. Katie Zeigler

Donations reflect gifts given to NFCYM between July 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021



2020-2021

Financial Report

ASSETS

Bank Accounts.....	\$344,322.16
Accounts Receivable	\$370.90
Investments and Other Current Assets.....	\$3,265,875.17
Fixed Assets.....	—
Security Deposits	\$3,587.56
Total Assets.....	\$3,614,155.79

LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable	\$11,532.60
Credit Cards	\$3,618.87
State and Federal Tax	\$14,768.25
PPP Loan.....	\$125,197.00
Security Deposit	\$2,057.00
Deferred Revenue	\$2,157,493.26
Total Liabilities	\$2,322,316.08

EQUITY

Opening Balance Equity	\$957,336.94
Restricted Funds.....	\$192,162.87
Unrestricted Fund Balance	\$1,580,037.72
Retained Earnings	\$(716,387.76)
Net Revenue.....	\$(721,310.06)
Total Equity.....	\$1,291,839.71

Total Liabilities and Equity.....	\$3,614,155.79
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Income Statement 2020-2021

REVENUE	YTD ACTUAL	BUDGET
Development	\$98,610.93	\$180,000.00
Marketing	\$25,000.00	-
Management & Administration	\$416,230.99	\$23,000.00
Diversity & Inclusion	\$15,689.00	\$8,300.00
Membership Services	\$70,690.00	\$28,225.00
Merchandise	\$28,936.54	\$77,600.00
Annual Membership Meeting	\$11,100.79	\$3,500.00
Projects	\$25,059.49	\$144,835.00
Region 2	-	-
Encuentro	-	-
Total Revenue	\$691,317.74	\$465,460.00

EXPENSES	YTD ACTUAL	BUDGET
Development	\$13,120.33	\$7,400.00
Marketing	\$111,430.82	\$84,099.40
Management & Administration	\$938,400.01	\$923,380.84
Diversity & Inclusion	\$14,928.70	\$14,800.00
Membership Services	\$20,511.26	\$19,139.00
Merchandise	\$72,216.13	\$23,280.00
Annual Membership Meeting	\$8,762.26	\$3,500.00
Projects	\$39,760.13	\$69,800.00
NCCYM	\$191,000.00	-
Region 2	-	-
Encuentro	\$2,498.16	-
Total Expenses	\$1,412,627.80	\$1,145,399.24

Net Income **-\$721,310.06** **-\$679,939.24**

The Current State of *ministry*

In August 2021 809 member respondents answered questions about the state of youth ministry. These are their stories.



ETHNICITY

A majority of our membership is white/Caucasian while minority groups represent 20% of the membership.



EDUCATION

79% of our members have at least completed a college degree. 33% of the sample have completed an undergraduate and 46% have completed a graduate degree or higher.



YEARS IN MINISTRY

A majority of our members have done ministry for ten years or more (65%).



CURRENT ROLE IN MINISTRY

Although many ministers have experienced changes in responsibilities and role, 81% of ministers who responded stated they will stay in their current role.



MINISTRY CAPACITY

Compared to last year, ministers serve more in a part-time and full-time capacity rather than as a volunteer.



SALARY RANGE

Even though 46% have an advanced degree and 65% have more than 10 years of experience, 71% make less than \$50,000.



INTEREST IN GENERAL MINISTRY TOPICS

Interest in youth development and parents and families continue to be a priority for ministers. This year, there is more emphasis on understanding social trends with a continued focus on prayer, spirituality, social justice, and service.



LEVEL OF CONCERN ABOUT MINISTRY ISSUES

Ministers are most concerned about parent and youth participation along with polarization in the Church, recruiting volunteers, and ministry during the pandemic.

Colleen Trevisani

MEMBER TYPE: Associate

Tell us a bit about yourself.

I love teaching, talking about faith, and working with children, teens, and adults. My dream job is to lead a team of innovative thinkers to build communities that help individuals and families grow in faith. At this time, I am focused especially on how parents raise their children as faith-filled people. I believe that I am being called to work with others to unite best practices of Catholic school education, faith formation, and homeschool to build up the domestic church and create mission-focused communities. I want to create communities of formation and mission—connect households within neighborhoods to work for good.

How has being a member of NFCYM helped you and your ministry to young people?

NFCYM is a great asset to all involved in youth ministry. Participating in professional development, especially in these last few months, has enabled me to stay connected to conversations about the best practices in the field. Youth, parents, and volunteer leaders have also benefited through attending NCYC. In addition to the actual conference, preparing for an experience like NCYC helps the whole group to grow spiritually and as a community during the preparation time.

What does accompaniment mean to you, and how has NFCYM accompanied you?

To accompany is to walk with. I think of the story of the Road to Emmaus and how Jesus walks with, listens, and discusses in a way that opens hearts. NFCYM has focused on sharing best practices and research to inform action. In this more distanced time, NFCYM has continued to bring people into conversation with one another to share the hopes and struggles of ministry.

Why ministry? Why do you do what you do?

I have been called to use my gifts at the service of the mission of the Church, to help form people in faith and draw them closer to life in Christ.



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?

You are the “tool” with which you minister. This phrase from one of my graduate classes became very real to me as I found that it was necessary to prioritize my own spiritual growth, healthy marriage, and family life in order to best minister to and with others in a professional way.

NFCYM members can ask me about . . .

Theology, spirituality, curriculum design, long-term planning, personal productivity and efficiency, organizational leadership and visioning, social media and web management, and fundraising/development.



**PARTICIPATING IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT,
ESPECIALLY IN THESE LAST FEW MONTHS,
HAS ENABLED ME TO STAY CONNECTED
TO CONVERSATIONS ABOUT THE
BEST PRACTICES IN THE FIELD.**

Fr. Edward Hanna

MEMBER TYPE: Diocesan

Tell us a bit about yourself.

Born and raised in Lebanon, in 2004, I became a certified physical therapist. Not being able to deny God's calling, I joined the Maronite Missionaries in 2007. I was ordained a priest in 2014 and moved to Houston in 2016 as assistant pastor of Our Lady of the Cedars. In 2020, I was appointed national director of the Office of Maronite Youth. On May 8, 2021, I received my MBA.



How has being a member of NFCYM helped you and your ministry to young people?

Being new to this country and position, I needed all the help I could get in finding resources and help from experts. NFCYM offered me access to many resources, conferences, and experts who helped me better understand the reality of our youth ministry in the United States and helped me find ideas and form a strong youth program for our diocese.

What is your relationship with NFCYM? What does accompaniment mean to you, and how has NFCYM accompanied you?

I have been a member of this organization since 2020. I regularly join the regional meetings and participate in different conferences and Momentums. Accompaniment, to me, means that someone is at my side helping guide me and give me advice along the way. NFCYM has done just that. Anytime I am at a loss for ideas and understanding, NFCYM has been there.

Why ministry? Why do you do what you do?

The priesthood is a call to serve all those I encounter. An essential part of this call is serving the youth during their critical age of faith formation. It is very important to me and the future of our church that I am able to assist them and positively influence and help them find and keep their special Maronite identity within the Catholic Church.

What are some unique ways you have ministered and accompanied through these times?

The recent events in our world turned into the perfect opportunity for me to listen to our youth and to be there with them to guide them in constructive and informative lessons and debates. They were taught to always depend on Christ and follow his teachings on love and acceptance. I always aim to explain the Church's teachings when needed in a wise manner and at the right time.

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?

Working with the youth is a big challenge. They are so vulnerable and thirsty for knowledge at this age. We should always be ready to challenge ourselves and our capabilities. You will be surprised how much you can do when you depend on the Lord!

NFCYM Members can ask me about . . .

The Maronite Eastern Catholic Church, an Eastern Syriac Catholic Church (liturgies, traditions, etc.). Coming from a different cultural background, I learned how to adjust to a new culture and way of life. The diversity I experienced in my youth was helpful to me. It has made me better able to understand diversity and cultural differences and I am always willing to give my advice on these issues.

Anything else you want to mention?

I want to pray:

May the Lord bless all youth leaders for their dedication and service. May he lead us to discern his divine will and work upon it in order to guide our youth on the right path and towards the one goal.

Amen.



**ACCOMPANIMENT, TO ME, MEANS THAT SOMEONE IS
AT MY SIDE HELPING GUIDE ME AND GIVE ME ADVICE
ALONG THE WAY. NFCYM HAS DONE JUST THAT.**



Rachel Alcocer

MEMBER TYPE: Associate

Tell us a bit about yourself.

I have been a youth minister for four years, but I have been volunteering in ministry since I was a junior in high school. I grew up in Katy, Texas in a single-parent household. My mother was a true inspiration to me growing up, and without her support I would not be pursuing ministry. With her support and encouragement, I attended St. Mary's University in San Antonio. Go Rattlers!

How has being a member of NFCYM helped you and your ministry to young people?

Being a member of NFCYM has helped me in my ministry by providing the opportunity to collaborate with other youth ministers on a national level. It has truly helped me see that no matter what part of the country we are in, we all have similar struggles. It is great to know that we can overcome our struggles together, and create disciples of Jesus Christ, one teen at a time.

What is your relationship with NFCYM? What does accompaniment mean to you, and how has NFCYM accompanied you?

I am proud to say that I am the Region 10 associate member representative. To me, accompaniment means being able to see the needs of those you serve and not just offer them up in prayer but truly, and authentically walk with them on their journey of faith. NFCYM has accompanied me by providing great people to whom I can reach out and collaborate with and show my authentic self.

Why ministry? Why do you do what you do?

Ministry is a great way for me to personally reach out to those who truly want to live their faith compared to those who want to just learn about it. I serve as a youth minister because I am inspired every day by the questions, lived faith, and community that I see from the young church. It is an honor to walk with young people and be authentically myself. That will always be enough!

What are some unique ways you have ministered and accompanied through these times?

I created and delivered small care packages with a small note of encouragement for my young people and core team at the beginning of the pandemic. Also, I provided a safe space for my young people to discuss issues of race and civil unrest in a judgment-free zone.

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?

I would say that it is important to never forget to be authentically who you are. You will notice a change in your ministry if you continue to be true to who you are. Do not be afraid to talk about challenging topics that you tend to shy away from. I can honestly say that when you have those challenging conversations, it will be the best thing for your ministry and your young people.

NFCYM members can ask me about . . .

Burnout and how to overcome it. I am also here to lend an ear to whatever you might be going through or as a sounding board. No matter what you have gone through, I probably have been right where you are and am willing to just listen and help you however I can!

Anything else you want to mention?

I cannot express how much I love working in ministry. It truly has opened my eyes to the dedication it takes to truly have an amazing and authentic ministry with young people. The first step is remembering that we are not alone; there is a community around you who understands what you are going through. Never be afraid to reach out and ask for help or prayers when you need it!



**NFCYM HAS ACCOMPANIED ME BY PROVIDING
GREAT PEOPLE TO WHOM I CAN REACH OUT AND
COLLABORATE WITH AND SHOW MY AUTHENTIC SELF.**

John Pratt

MEMBER TYPE: Diocesan

Tell us a bit about yourself.

I am the director of youth ministry for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend and a 2015 graduate of the University of Notre Dame in theology and American studies. Since beginning diocesan ministry in 2017, I have helped establish leadership opportunities for youth and youth ministers to enable them to make an impact in their local communities. I have also brought the church's love of the young to life through establishing an annual celebration of World Youth Day at the diocesan level. Prior to diocesan ministry, I was the director of religious education and youth ministry at Old St. Patrick Catholic Church in Ann Arbor, Michigan.



I have an enthusiasm for hands-on ministry that has involved incorporating intergenerational ministry, parish-wide events as well as pilgrimages and programming that bring young people in touch with the beauty, truth, and goodness of their faith and communities.

I am an avid athlete who competed in USA Cycling's Professional Road Tour, but now as a husband and father, I enjoy being outdoors with my wife, Valerie, and son, Joseph. Together we go out on tandem bike rides, visits to the zoo, and walks around our neighborhood in Fort Wayne.

How has being a member of NFCYM helped you and your ministry to young people?

It has enabled me to build friendships and professional networks that have supported my ministry. One of the best things I have experienced with NFCYM is the New Diocesan Director's Institute. It was at this point after sixteen months on the job, that I finally felt I was learning what I was supposed to be doing for ministry at the diocesan level.

What is your relationship with NFCYM? What does accompaniment mean to you, and how has NFCYM accompanied you?

I serve as the internal coordinator for Region 7 (Wisconsin, Illinois, and Indiana). In this position, I have the privilege to bring together members to discuss ministry in our area and to try to support and accompany those who are new to ministry. NFCYM has best accompanied me through some of the caring people who took the time to ask how I was doing and supported my dreams in ministry.

Why ministry? Why do you do what you do?

I am a member of the St. John Paul II generation, and his example and leadership and writings inspire me daily. Like him, I want to help young people learn the meaning of life and a concrete way to go about living that meaning (*Crossing the Threshold of Hope*). There is nothing more compelling than witnessing a young person who has devoted their life completely to Jesus Christ.

What are some unique ways you have ministered and accompanied through these times?

I have learned a great deal through the challenges of the last year. In particular, I am grateful for the kindness and authenticity of leaders from my diocese who have been willing to share their experiences of racism with me, as I have grown a lot through hearing their stories. I want to see NFCYM take a bold stand on witnessing to the truth of every life issue. Much can be done here.

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?

Young people want to be able to be active leaders in the faith. So many “service” opportunities seem to simply be doing what everyone else has done. Finding creative ways for young people to have leadership roles that really matter is a great way to grow engagement in the faith. Learn to delegate and invite others to use their gifts for the glory of God. That is when ministry takes flight.

NFCYM members can ask me about . . .

How to find the courage to pick up the phone and call someone else to ask how they are doing and to ask them for advice. These conversations have been really fruitful for me, and I know they would be beneficial for others as well. Also, anyone who loves the mountains and cycling, I would be happy to share my enthusiasm for these great ways to celebrate the outdoors.

Anything else you want to mention?

It seems to me that the only stance that is truly Catholic is one that adequately addresses all aspects of Catholic Social Teaching. I am challenging myself to grow in areas that I am not well-versed in. Can we say we are Catholic if we do not hear the cries of those affected by racism, abortion, immigration, the death penalty, gender ideology, and the environment?



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