

Connections

January 2009

an online publication for the membership
of the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry

Highlights...

Getting in the Game Against Climate Change



Since I was on the road for the previous game, I was not about to miss my alma mater, Xavier University, play UCLA in an NCAA Tournament game. It was a Saturday in late March, and as I settled into my recliner with a soft drink and a bowl of popcorn, my daughter appeared and started unplugging things: the lamp, the computer. She was reaching for the TV plug when I said, "Whoa, what do you think you're doing?"

"It's Earth Hour, dad. We're supposed to not use any electricity for the next hour."

"Earth Hour," I replied. "I didn't hear about this." She told me that I, of all people, should have known about it. Well clearly I missed

that memo.

"Look, you can unplug everything around me. I'll sit in the dark. But you're not touching that television." With a look of extreme disappointment—not an uncommon look for a 15 year-old—she turned to walk away and in a stage whisper said, "Real nice, Mr. Climate Change."

[Read More . . .](#)

Bloggers Give 16 "Thumbs Up" to NCCYM

By Pat Finan
Diocese of Davenport

If you were among nearly 2,300 folks who gathered December 4-7 in Cleveland, you can't forget the great experience that was the 2009 National Conference on Catholic Youth Ministry.

If you weren't, you missed a lot! And while there's no



Leadership Perspectives: No Matter Where You Sit, Every View Is Great at NCCYM

From the NFCYM Board Chair
Carole Goodwin

Snippets from My Watch

The official conference photographer was smack-dab in the front of the audience at the opening, sometimes blocking the view of folks in the front row. He was professional and completely disengaged from the activity as he skillfully did his job. But as the conference progressed from opening



way to re-create the spirit that spilled forth like living waters from that snowy city, you can find a lot of video, audio and resources [on My Catholic Voice](#).

Technology played new roles during NCCYM as well. One innovative effort was microblogging that featured eight people from a deep and wide cross-section of the youth ministry community. Their comments will help tell the story of NCCYM 2009.

[Read More . . .](#)

to keynotes to prayer times to on-stage drama and music, a metamorphosis began to occur. The photographer became more and more engaged in the content of the conference. He still took his photographs but he was careful not to block the view of others. He began to join in prayer and musical interludes. One could see him listening more intently during later keynotes as he looked for the key visuals to photograph. On the last day I was able to chat with him and he said, "I loved this experience! I hope I can come to something else you people do!" I cannot wait to see his photographs. I think they will reveal the artful eye of a skilled photographer, but I also think they will reveal the presence of God's people in an assembly of love.

[Read the entire column. . .](#)

'Round the Regions...



...reporting from:

- [Region 5 ...](#)
- [Region 7 ...](#)
- [Region 9 ...](#)
- [Region 11 ...](#)

Reflections: Starving for Hope!



There is no denying the momentous changes occurring in our country these past months.

Certainly the election of Barack Obama, regardless of one's politics, signals a significant shift nationally. Anyone who watched—or participated—in the inauguration on January 20 couldn't help but be caught up in the sense of change that was heralded. The excitement was palatable. And his inauguration speech signified major shifts in US policies globally as well. The country has been told—we can no longer afford business as usual either nationally or globally.

But it's more than just a new president.


[Read More . . .](#)

And Don't Miss . . .

- Management Committee Report from the [Advocacy](#), [Adult Training and Certification](#), [Communications and Publications](#), [NCCGSCF](#), and [Youth Events](#) Management Committee.
- Collaborating Member Updates from [Australian Network of Diocesan Youth Ministry Coordinators](#), [Center for Ministry Development](#), [Group Publishing](#), [Souper Bowl of Caring](#), [Teens Encounter Christ](#), and [World Library Publications](#).
- An update from the [National Association of Catholic Youth Ministry Leaders](#).

Print Connections !

There are two print options:

- Use your browser's print function or click on the  "Print this page" link at the bottom of the right-hand navigation column.
- Print the entire issue by using the link below. This will open a single PDF document made up of "printed pages" of each article in order. You can also download this PDF to your computer by right-clicking the link and selecting "Save Target As . . ." With the PDF file open, click the printer command in the Adobe Reader interface and the entire issue will be printed.



[Open/download](#) the PDF print file for this entire issue.  (430 KB)

In This Issue:

Highlights

Columns

From the NFCYM Board Chair

From the Executive Director

Features

Youth Get in the Game Against Climate Change

Encounter and Content: You Can't Have One Without the Other

Bloggers give 16 "Thumbs Up" to NCCYM

Reports

'Round the Regions

Management Committee Reports

From NACYML

From Our Collaborating Members

© 2009 NFCYM, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Connections

January 2009

From the NFCYM Board Chair

*by Dr. Carole Goodwin
Archdiocese of Louisville*

No Matter Where You Sit, Every View Is Great at NCCYM

I had several unusual perspectives from which to observe the happenings at NCCYM. Often I sat in the front row of general sessions due to official duties. I presented two workshops to completely different audiences. I sat at the back of the assembly several times and was able to watch people take part in prayer, listen to keynote presentations, or enjoy the extravaganza. And I had a wonderful opportunity to engage in conversations with exhibitors and musicians.

*Snippets from My Watch*

- The official conference photographer was smack-dab in the front of the audience at the opening, sometimes blocking the view of folks in the front row. He was professional and completely disengaged from the activity as he skillfully did his job. But as the conference progressed from opening to keynotes to prayer times to on-stage drama and music, a metamorphosis began to occur. The photographer became more and more engaged in the content of the conference. He still took his photographs but he was careful not to block the view of others. He began to join in prayer and musical interludes. One could see him listening more intently during later keynotes as he looked for the key visuals to photograph. On the last day I was able to chat with him and he said, "I loved this experience! I hope I can come to something else you people do!" I cannot wait to see his photographs. I think they will reveal the artful eye of a skilled photographer, but I also think they will reveal the presence of God's people in an assembly of love.
- I have been privileged and honored to present workshops at many adult conferences. This year there seemed to be a significant difference. I cannot exactly pinpoint the reason, but the workshop participants seemed to be more focused on exploring deeper ways to do God's work and more interested in ways to serve the young people in their care rather than on sharing the woes and negative aspects of their ministry. We all can agree that there are plenty of challenges and frustrations among adults who give their time and talents to youth ministry. However, that was not the agenda that people wanted to communicate. It was indeed a spiritual experience for me as a presenter to walk with people who serve the young church.
- There were many times I had the vantage point to watch people engage in the conference, especially in the general sessions. I joined people in belly-busting laughter at the extravaganza. Like many, I was moved by the keynote addresses and Extreme Faith gifts.
- Conversations with exhibitors affirmed for me that our vendors "get it." They are faith-filled brothers and sisters who happen to have talents, merchandise and messages that are bonuses for our work and ministry.
- I was awed by the harmony of our musical artists, who worked together regardless of their affiliation with OCP, GIA or WLP. I realized that combined efforts in musical prayer gives witness to the teaching that we are all one body.
- And finally, as we gathered each day for Eucharist, the conference attendees shifted their focus to the summit of what and who brings us together and bonds us into one faith. I felt completely united with all those assembled.

To be involved in youth ministry is a blessing. To participate in the National Conference on Catholic Youth Ministry is the affirmation that this ministry is where one belongs.

© 2009 NFCYM, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Connections

January 2009

*From the NFCYM Executive Director**by Dr. Robert McCarty**Starving for Hope!*

There is no denying the momentous changes occurring in our country these past months. Certainly the election of Barack Obama, regardless of one's politics, signals a significant shift nationally. Anyone who watched—or participated—in the inauguration on January 20 couldn't help but be caught up in the sense of change that was heralded. The excitement was palatable. And his inauguration speech signified major shifts in US policies globally as well. The country has been told—we can longer afford business as usual either nationally or globally.

But it's more than just a new president.

It is so appropriate that the March for Life was held in Washington, DC only two days after the inauguration. Though there is an ecumenical dimension to the march, it really is a very public display of the Catholic Church. The March is perhaps the most public way the Church speaks to the country's leadership about our core values and our commitment to our social teachings. And the intergenerational aspect reflects our entire faith community celebrating the call to be people of Eucharist and people of justice.

But it's more than just the march.

Though all of this sounds very positive and optimistic, perhaps the most significant factor affecting our ministry is the impact of the economic downturn and, for some dioceses still, the payouts from the sexual abuse scandals. Story after story is being told of budgets being slashed, salaries frozen, staff reductions, and even youth ministry offices closing or expecting to be closed soon. Pastoral positions continue to be combined into a single person wearing multiple ministry 'hats'. There is a somber tone when we speak about our parish and diocesan ministry and the future work of the federation. There is a distinct sense of déjà vu—we've been here before.

I think we are starving for hope.

We see a glimpse of this hunger in our country's deep expectation that our new president can make a significant difference in the economy, in the climate, and in our global reputation. Likewise, we are excited about our national commitment to once again be the embodiment of those values that we hold dear: justice, liberty, and freedom. We really want Obama to be right when he says "yes we can", we need him to be right, we want him to succeed because the alternative is too painful to consider.

And we sense this hopeful yearning in our Church as we strive to be a community of compassion, of inclusivity, of forgiveness, of welcome and of discipleship, knowing that only if we embody Gospel values at all levels of Church can we have any moral authority in the public arena. As Church, we must "earn the right to be heard" if we are to truly evangelize and transform culture.

But sometimes the heaviness weighs on us like a blanket and we can find small cause for hope. We see need on every side, hear questions without answers, and feel hunger that no food satisfies. Can feel like we are starving.

And sometimes, the gentle, persistent power of God's love asserts itself within us and will not be denied until it buds forth, then bursts full flower. Paul reminds us " ... we even boast of our afflictions, knowing that affliction produces endurance, and endurance, proven character, and proven character, hope, and hope does not disappoint..." (Rom. 5: 3-5).

It is time for each of us to recommit—in every arena in which we minister—to be ambassadors of hope for a sometimes

starving Church and a starving country.

© 2009 NFCYM, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Connections

January 2009

*Youth Get in the Game Against Climate Change**By Dan Misleh**Director, Catholic Coalition for Climate Change*

Since I was on the road for the previous game, I was not about to miss my alma mater, Xavier University, play UCLA in an NCAA Tournament game. It was a Saturday in late March, and as I settled into my recliner with a soft drink and a bowl of popcorn, my daughter appeared and started unplugging things: the lamp, the computer. She was reaching for the TV plug when I said, “Whoa, what do you think you’re doing?”

“It’s Earth Hour, dad. We’re supposed to not use any electricity for the next hour.”

“Earth Hour,” I replied. “I didn’t hear about this.” She told me that I, of all people, should have known about it. Well clearly I missed that memo.

“Look, you can unplug everything around me. I’ll sit in the dark. But you’re not touching that television.” With a look of extreme disappointment—not an uncommon look for a 15 year-old—she turned to walk away and in a stage whisper said, “Real nice, Mr. Climate Change.”

In the end, I should have just let her unplug the thing because not only does my daughter now question my commitment to care for creation, but Xavier got beat badly. I went to bed feeling both sheepish and disappointed.

Unlike my personal behavior and sometimes-mixed messages to my children, I take heart that our Church has been out in front on the issue.

From John Paul II’s 1990 World Day of Peace Message to the U.S. bishops’ 2001 statement, [*Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence and the Common Good*](#), our leaders have urged us to recover the ancient tradition of reverence for creation and the creator. Just this August while visiting an Italian diocese, Pope Benedict addressed a priest’s question about climate change:

“Creation is groaning - we perceive it, we almost hear it - and awaits human beings who will preserve it in accordance with God,” the pope said. “The brutal consumption of creation begins where God is not, where matter is henceforth only material for us, where we ourselves are the ultimate demand, where the whole is merely our property and we consume it for ourselves alone...”

“[W]e [must] find a new way of living, a discipline of making sacrifices, a discipline of the recognition of others to whom creation belongs as much as it belongs to us who may more easily make use of it; a discipline of responsibility with regard to the future of others and to our own future, because it is a responsibility in the eyes of the one who is our judge and redeemer.”

For their part, the [U.S. bishops](#) have been at the forefront of efforts in Washington to ensure that public policies addressing climate change take into consideration not only the requirements of creation but also the needs of people. There is special concern for those who will be most impacted by climate change but possess few resources to adapt or get out of harm’s way.

In addition, the bishops’ support of the [Catholic Coalition on Climate Change](#)—whose members include nearly a dozen other national Catholic partners—will help ensure that Catholics will come to appreciate Church teaching on this vital



issue. This teaching goes beyond the debate between environmental groups on one side and the energy industry on the other. It places a priority on prudent action in the face of uncertainty, the promotion of the common good of all God's people and the protection of poor people in our country and around the world.

In dioceses, parishes, schools and beyond, the Catholic community is responding to the climate crisis and environmental justice in inspirational ways. In the [Diocese of Stockton](#), Bishop Blaire dedicates one Sunday during the observation of Respect Life Month in October to the care of creation because "the environment is the envelope that holds all life." In Texas, the bishops of the state [voiced concerns](#) about plans for several new coal power plants, pointing to the toxins from the smokestacks and urging state officials to harness other natural resources in the state including wind and solar.

Catholic individuals, families and parish communities are finding ways to decrease their carbon footprint through sensible, affordable means. They install more efficient light bulbs, appliances, heating and cooling systems, weatherization and insulation. And they see such efforts as consistent with God's call to be good stewards of the gifts we are given.

For its part, the Catholic Coalition on Climate Change is leading a new effort to be unveiled in the spring. [*The Catholic Climate Covenant: The St. Francis Pledge to Protect Creation and the Poor*](#) will be an unprecedented outreach effort to every parish in the country. It highlights the impressive array of activities already happening in our faith community and encourages individual Catholics, parishes, schools and institutions to renew our covenant with God to be caretakers of God's wonderful gift of life.

We certainly hope that this effort is responding to a need rather than piling on new duties to ministers already overwhelmed with programs and priorities. In our experience, young people such as my daughter understand climate change intuitively. With the staff at NFCYM, our goal is to help you reach youth in ways that go beyond unplugging appliances and sitting in the dark. The Covenant project will provide tools and resources that help you deliver messages and encourage actions that are authentically Catholic and in keeping with the challenge set before us by Benedict XVI:

"One of the areas in which work appears to be urgent is without a doubt that of protecting creation...To the new generations the future of the planet is entrusted, in which there are evident signs of a development that has not always known how to safeguard the delicate equilibriums of nature.

Before it is too late, it is necessary to make courageous decisions that reflect knowing how to re-create a strong alliance between man and the earth."

Pope Benedict to youth gathered in Loretto, Italy, September 2, 2007

© 2009 NFCYM, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Connections

January 2009

*Encounter and Content:
You Can't Have One Without the Other**By Patrick Rinker**Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry, Diocese of Lansing*

“Christ first directs his apostles to go, to set out in all directions with a specific goal in their hearts: to proclaim his Gospel and bring people into communion with God... That fundamental mission is inseparable from the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the energizing center of evangelization and the heart of catechesis. Christ, the first evangelizer, is himself the Good News who proclaims the kingdom of God...”

National Directory for Catechesis, pages 3, 4

When I give presentations on the vision of youth ministry, based on *Renewing the Vision*, I share an analogy demonstrating the relationship between evangelization and catechesis. I ask the group of teens present how many of them are dating. Several hands go up, and I ask one of the girls if I can ask a few questions. She says yes.

I paint a scenario in which her boyfriend calls and her mom answers the phone. She demands that her daughter get on the phone and talk for two hours. I ask the girl if this is what happens. Usually the reply is a bashful “no.” Then I paint a scenario in which she answers the phone and has a two-hour conversation in which her mother constantly hounds her to get off the phone. I then ask the girl if this is what happens. The usual reply is a bashful “yes.” I then ask if her boyfriend is a babe and the reply is usually a bashful “yes.”

I then explain to the group what is going on. The young couple is on the phone engaging in catechesis because they have been evangelized. You see they met, had a meaningful encounter that was good news and are now engaged in a relationship in which they are getting to know each other better. This impacts their behavior and view of their world.

The problem we have with catechesis is too often, “God is not our babe.” We rush in with catechetical endeavors without the context of meaningful encounters with the person of Jesus Christ, God with us, Emmanuel. If God is not “our babe,” then why do we want to learn, grow and develop this relationship?

A high school senior once approached me near the end of a year of attending our Sunday night fellowship group. She had gone on a retreat the year before and faithfully attended fellowship the year following the retreat. She told me she had learned more that year than in 11 years of faith formation. I agreed but told her that it was because she wanted to learn. There was plenty of instruction, but she wasn’t ready to take it in.

“The Parish Is the Curriculum: While this pastoral plan is concerned primarily with intentional adult faith formation programs, the success of such efforts rests very much on the quality and total fabric of parish life. This includes, for example, ‘the quality of liturgies, the extent of shared decision making, the priorities in the parish budget, the degree of commitment to social justice, the quality of our catechetical programs’ ”

Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us, Paragraph 118

“People listen more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and when people do listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses.”

Evangelii Nuntiandi, No. 41

There are so many contextual issues to consider when contemplating the effectiveness of our catechetical endeavors.

It is absolutely essential that NDC paragraph 29 on human methodology be read in its entirety.

To conclude this short reflection on the relationship between content and methodology, I turn to the above two quotes. We must ask ourselves if the content we teach is validated by our personal witness and the witness of the faith community in which the message is shared. If our witness as persons in community does not resonate with the content of our message, to the mind of those who receive us, we invalidate the message.

However, if in preparing to pass on the faith, we attend to every aspect of our context and encounter, so that in all ways we share the light of Christ, then the message is validated by its context and the witness of those who instruct.

Content, separate from effective witness, is at best impotent and at worst counterproductive. The key to our effectiveness in sharing the good news is our own conversion, as we humbly walk the journey of faith, in communion with those with whom we share it.

Our dialogue regarding catechesis, from this point on, must never separate methodology and content into separate entities, but realize that one is a natural outgrowth of the other. Inasmuch as we are the Body of Christ, and inasmuch as, "Christ, the first evangelizer, is himself the Good News who proclaims the kingdom of God..." so must we be the good news as we share the good news with all we encounter. Peace!

© 2009 NFCYM, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Connections

January 2009

*Bloggers Give 16 "Thumbs Up" to NCCYM**By Pat Finan**Coordinator of Faith Formation and Youth Ministry
Diocese of Davenport*

If you were among nearly 2,300 folks who gathered December 4-7 in Cleveland, you can't forget the great experience that was the 2009 National Conference on Catholic Youth Ministry.



If you weren't, you missed a lot! And while there's no way to re-create the spirit that spilled forth like living waters from that snowy city, you can find a lot of video, audio and resources [here](#).

Technology played new roles during NCCYM as well. One innovative effort was microblogging that featured eight people from a deep and wide cross-section of the youth ministry community. Their comments will help tell the story of NCCYM 2009.

Hundreds of participants came early for pre-conferences, including "Speaking of Faith," about presenting to groups large and small.

"Speaking of Faith pre-con takeaway: kids are worth it, God is worth it, Church is worth it. If you're gonna do this then BRING IT." Chris Weber, veteran parish youth ministry leader, Muscatine, IA.

"Hearing Bob McCarty. Point: Youth ministry presenting is adult learning, and about giving LANGUAGE to our Catholic identity." Mike Patin, national speaker, Lafayette, LA.

Many more youth ministry leaders poured in on Thursday, creating hug jams in hotel lobbies and the exhibit hall.

"The excitement is building as people show up. They are so happy to be here. It is contagious." Gene Monterastelli, national speaker, Baltimore, MD.

"My job for the next four days is to say in BIG and small ways. 'Welcome. Thank You! I love you!' over and over again." Monterastelli.

Many found welcome at regional gatherings throughout the convention center. Region IX (Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas) threw a tailgate party for more than 100 folks.

"Reg 9 gathering. Good stuff. They really did it up right this year. Chris Padgett & Judy McDonald. All that and a bag of chips—literally." Weber.

Later that evening Farmer and Monterastelli welcomed the youth ministry family into the center's ornate music hall.

"Welcome home. Think about it... In Him we find our rest and therefore our home... Beautiful home where WE are welcomed." Lauren Arroyo, first-year youth ministry leader, Baltimore, MD.

Dr. Kenda Creasy Dean spoke about how youth can help us recover a missional faith in the opening keynote.

"Dr. Dean: 'We are to help young people see their lives from God's point of view'" Monterastelli.

"KCD hit it and hit it hard tonight. Gonna need some time to process, but first it's time to socialize."
Weber.

By Friday morning, many were still processing.

"Still taking in last night's challenge from Dr. Dean. Keep thinking about those fleas in a jar. Do we share WHO we love?" Anne Marie Cribbin, national speaker, suburban Maryland.

But it was time to worship, and Msgr. Ray East hit it hard in his homily.

"Fr. Ray: 'When we read about the blind and deaf today...it is talking about us.'" Monterastelli.

Concurrent sessions and workshops followed, including Dr. Tom Groome's "Forming Catholic Identity in Teens."

"Thomas Groome: Real presence, How He's present is less important than why." Weber.

"We must nurture the head heart and hands of the youth, do both youth ministry & catechesis deliberately." Arroyo.

As Friday progressed, many began to sense a special feel to NCCYM.

"This conference is feeling more like a retreat this year. Enjoying a quieter pace to reflect more."
Cribbin.

Many were inspired by the Youth Ministry Awards and the energy brought by keynoter Michael Norman of Los Angeles.

"Mike Norman said it...every other year is not enough!" Weber.

"Faith is what keeps you climbing when gravity is saying no way." Patin.

Later that evening, the energy shifted to the "Rock Out Poverty" event at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Can't believe I'm listening to 'The King of Glory' at the Rock n Roll hall of fame." Patin.

Saturday had many highlights, including the "Woman at the Well" dramatization by ValLimar Jansen and Stan Cordero, Lee Nagel's inspirational keynote, and dozens of great workshops. But the moment everyone was waiting for was the annual Youth Ministry Extravaganza. Catholic musicians and entertainers brought down the house with a very special Christmas special.

" 'And the three wise men will wear the table cloths when we are done with dinner. That will look clean and tight.' Bob Rice" Cribbin (twittering during rehearsal)

"Anne Marie u sing so beautifully!!! I'm so glad to be so close to stage :)" Arroyo.

"I want the Ronco 3000 youth ministry translator!" Weber.

Sunday brought the closing liturgy with Bishop Roger Gries, followed by long farewells. For some, it was "See you in K.C." For others, it was "see you at the alley!" At the Catholic Youth Foundation's Bowling Tournament, the bowlers experienced more pain than the pins.

"No skill required. "That means you Patin." -Gene Monterastelli" Cribbin.

"Bowling with a great group of friends STRIKING fear in the hearts of the GUTTER Gang who are impugning my athletic ability." Patin

Patin bowled a 155...who'd he pay to put up the gutter bumpers?" Weber.

As the echoes of pins faded, the bloggers grew introspective.

"Reflecting and smiling at the memories shared these last few days. Such good nourishment for the soul!" McMillan.

Can't sum up how amazing the last 4 days were in 140 characters. A moment I will savor for a lifetime. And we call this work? Such blessing." Monterastelli.

"Cleveland seems quieter without 2,000 youth ministers. Now it's time for me to leave and to LISTEN for living waters this Advent." Patin.

"Sitting in the Cleveland airport reflecting on the last few days and praying about the impact they may have on the days & years to come." Weber.

"Home and getting warm. Missing everyone already. Such an uplifting 4 days. Just what I needed!" Cribbin.

© 2009 NFCYM, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Connections

January 2009

'Round the Regions

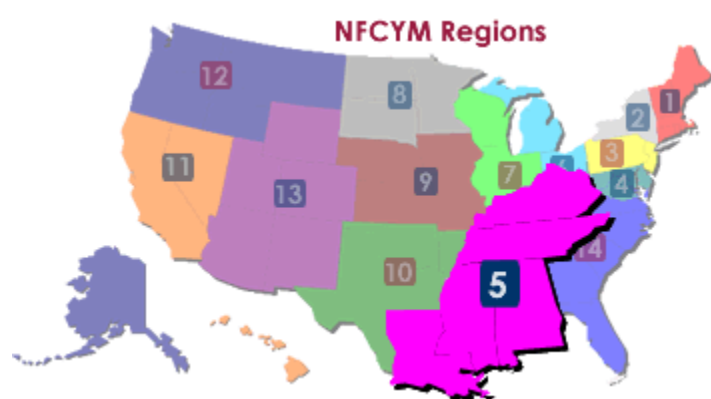
It's Been Wet, But We're Getting Set in New Orleans for 2010

Region 5: Alabama, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee

Submitted by Carole Goodwin

cgoodwin@archlou.org

We have struggles related to Hurricanes Gustav and Ike. People on the coastal rim of the Diocese of Lake Charles are still living in tents. We still haven't completely recovered from Katrina on our coastal areas, so continue to pray for us.



Would you ever think that Kentucky would be hit by a hurricane? Louisville and other areas spent 10-12 days without electrical power after the winds of Hurricane Ike blew northward! And now ice storms have hit Memphis and other parts of Tennessee. We are ready for the weather to arrive with less gusto in our region!

We are concerned about the economy, as are many of you. We know there will be fewer of us at the Membership Meeting, so we are sending a leadership delegation to bring back the news that connects us to

NFCYM.

We are looking forward to preparing for you all to visit our region in 2010 for NCCYM in New Orleans. Our next two region meetings will focus on hospitality efforts for you! So prepare your budgets and time to come see us!

© 2009 NFCYM, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Connections

January 2009

'Round the Regions

Heavy Lifting: Many Join in Handling Load of Ministry Issues

Region 7: Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin

Submitted by Matt Schwartz, Diocese of Rockford

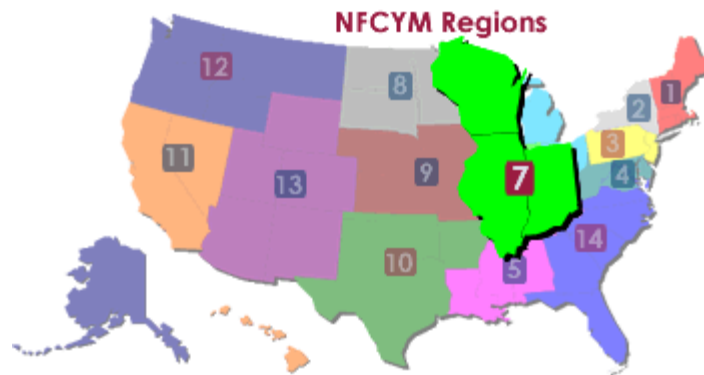
Over the past two years, Region 7 has been intentional in addressing current issues in youth ministry that affect not only diocesan, parish and school work, but also the collaborating members located with the region. We have explored youth culture, the document "Implications of Co-Workers in the Vineyard," tensions associated with lay ministry, shifting roles in ministry, and the National Initiative on Adolescent Catechesis.

Specifically, we addressed the following questions based on the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life:

1. Are our youth ministry efforts building membership or discipleship?
2. Do our youth ministry efforts build Catholic identity?

These discussions have been fruitful as we have worked effort to include all perspectives that minister to the youth of the church. We recognize that youth ministry is an ever-evolving effort that needs the advocacy of diocesan directors and collaborating members.

NFCYM Executive Director Bob McCarty will facilitate an in-service at our meeting in May.



© 2009 NFCYM, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Connections

January 2009

'Round the Regions

Moser Guides Discussion on Adolescent Catechesis

Region 9: Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska

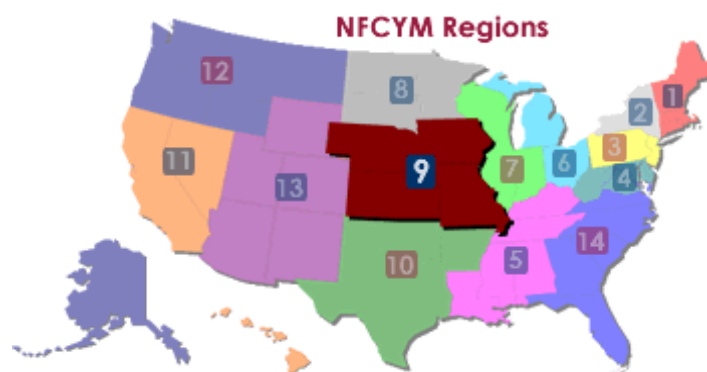
Submitted by Steven Polley, Diocese of Dodge City

When I recall my 14 years as a diocesan director, my thoughts quickly roam to NCCYM 1994 in Colorado Springs.

Region IX's diocesan directors met for two days prior to NCCYM. It was here that I first felt the warm welcome of our region's youth ministry community and met many wonderful people from Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas. I quickly understood what MINK is. The spirit I experienced was like a beautiful, warm mink coat.

Many faces present back then are gone, while some remain the same. Each spring at our regional meeting, we take time to share what is going on in our dioceses. Last spring as we shared, it was mentioned that our sharing should include not only the activities in our dioceses but what was going on in our lives. I reminisced to earlier years. Here again was that sense of care I have always experienced from Region IX.

Fourteen years later, one thing remains the same. Truly, there is a joyful spirit that flows from this region's people. When you arrive in Kansas City for NCYC this November, I promise that you will be greeted with the same love and warmth that welcomed me in 1994.



© 2009 NFCYM, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Connections

January 2009

'Round the Regions

Moser Guides Discussion on Adolescent Catechesis

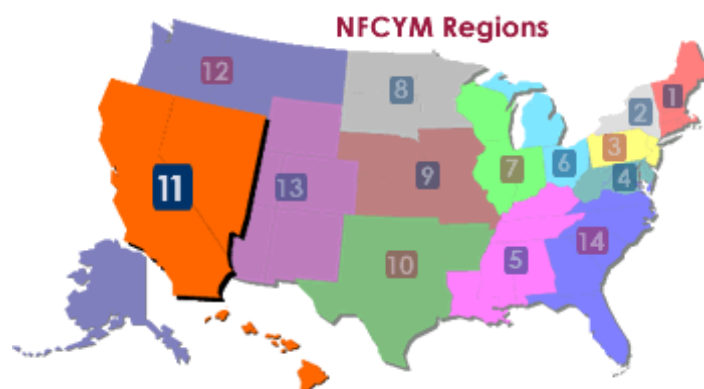
Region 11: American Samoa, California, Guam, Hawaii, Nevada

Submitted by Judy Wilber Alvarez

jualvarez@salesianym.org

Region XI met Sept. 16-19 in Santa Cruz, with new diocesan directors from Fresno, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco and Stockton participating. This gives us representation from all California dioceses. Five collaborating members in the region also attended. NFCYM's Kathy Carver taught us to use the iNet for regional collaboration.

Stan Cordero, diocesan director for Santa Rosa, led a visioning process in which diocesan directors examined their ministry and considered a preferred future. Collaborating members offered their vision of a working relationship with diocesan directors and what they can offer through support and resources. Five directions or needs emerged from this reflection, and further sorting of priorities with strategies is now being carried out via the iNet.



Another significant initiative developed from a presentation by Sergio Canjura, a member of the Region XI Committee on the Spanish Speaking (RECOSS). He overviewed the work of RECOSS, which advises bishops about issues concerning the Spanish-speaking community. We discussed the needs of ministry with Hispanic youth, particularly for equal staffing, funding, resources and training. We determined to foster a stronger relationship with Pastoral Juvenile Hispana, a subgroup of RECOSS. In doing so, we will always have representatives at each other's annual meetings.

© 2009 NFCYM, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Connections

January 2009

Management Committee Reports

Advocacy Committee Listens to the Heartbeat of our Faith

Submitted by Dee Hawthorne

[E-mail Dee](#)

The core principles of the Advocacy Management Committee are based on the key themes of Catholic Social Teaching.

We promote the dignity of the human person through efforts such as the “Girls Gone Wild” project. We support families by offering scholarships in the name of the late Sr. Thea Bowman to help youth minister leaders attend NCCYM.

We uphold the rights and responsibilities of youth by trying to give them access to the larger church. At a time when more dioceses are cutting budgets or closing youth offices, we are responsible for advocating for the jobs and resources those dioceses need to maintain contact with NFCYM.

The work of advocating for the poor and vulnerable is challenged by our difficulty in finding people willing to lead or participate in task groups. It is also our responsibility to find new ways for the young church to worship, pray and find faith in their creator.

In the pursuit of solidarity, we are trying to encourage the African-American Network to participate more fully in NFCYM events and share resources that will enable us to reach more African-American Catholics. Ansel Augustine from the Archdiocese of New Orleans has agreed to chair this task group.

© 2009 NFCYM, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Connections

January 2009

Management Committee Reports

NFCYM Leadership Fuels Certification Alliance

Submitted by Pat Rinker

[E-mail Pat](#)

The Adult Training and Certification Management Committee's task groups and commissions are expanding their collaborative efforts.

The Accreditation and Certification Commission is leading the progress of the Certification Alliance, a collection of five organizations working to compile common standards for review by the USCCB. This work involves drafting diocesan youth ministry leader competencies for NFCYM membership approval and revising the National Certification Standards.

Work with the Alliance includes recommendations to address multicultural communities as part of the National Certification Standards revision. The A&C Commission hopes to diversify its roster at the membership meeting.

NCCYM 2008 provided great spiritual depth and excellence in youth ministry training thanks to the efforts of the NCCYM, Adult Spirituality, Training Services and Sustaining the Spirit groups. Work is under way on NCCYM 2010 in New Orleans.

The NDDI group continues to orient and train new diocesan directors. The Training Service group is developing diocesan in-services and regional dialogues. A new task group is being formed to develop a diocesan director job description.

A kindred group on Pathways to Ministry will gather at the 2009 membership meeting. We hope to facilitate a dialogue that provides pathways to ministry for a diversity of youth ministry leaders.

© 2009 NFCYM, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Connections

January 2009

Management Committee Reports

Website Updates, Resource Manual in the Works

Submitted by Patrick Donovan

The Communications and Publishing Management Committee continues its efforts to wrap up the 2009 Youth Ministry Resource Manual, which will focus on living our faith beyond Sunday mornings.

The committee also is following up on the myriad of ideas formulated at our annual meeting in May. These include updates to the website (some of which already have been realized), several new resources that are in negotiations with authors, and a continued conversation about web-based resources that could be made available to youth ministry leaders.

Crystal-Lynn Medeiros will become chair in January, and Patrick Donovan will remain on the committee.

© 2009NFCYM, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Connections

January 2009

Management Committee Reports

Lively "Alive in the Spirit" Inspires Leaders of Girls Scouts, Camp Fire

Submitted by Joan Treacy

Two years ago, the National Catholic Committee for Girl Scouts and Camp Fire (NCCGSCF) decided to try something different for the 2008 National Conference on Catholic Youth Ministry.



Colette Kennett presented the keynote address, titled "Come with Me into the Fields." Workshops included "Hearing the Voices of Young Women" by Carole Goodwin, and "Personalizing the National Training Packet for Your Catholic Committee" by Pat Antonacci. Tammy Amosson's dynamic "Shepherding the Heart" workshop kept everyone awake and active after lunch. Many thanks to all who helped to make this day happen.

Please check out the new NCCGSCF website: www.nccgscf.org It has a new look, (incorporating the colors of our new logo) and many more resources, ideas and links. Check back often as we update the site.

© 2009 NFCYM, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Connections

January 2009

Management Committee Reports

Christ Reigns, Youth Will Shine at NCYC in KC!

Submitted by Stan Cordero

[E-mail Stan](#)

The Youth Events Management Committee continues to prepare for NCYC 2009. Steve Angrisano will be our MC, and Cardinal Daniel DiNardo and Brian Johnson of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston will together present one of our keynotes. Concurrent session and workshop speakers will include Apex Ministries, John Beaulieu, Joia Farmer, Jesse Manibusan, Judy McDonald, Mike Patin, Bob Perron, Randy Raus, John Angotti, Lisa Bagladi, Brother Mickey McGrath, Chris Padgett and Bob Rice.

There are many leadership roles for youth at NCYC. Youth Animators from the host diocese and surrounding region will share gifts of song, dance and drama as they lead us in worship and celebration. Youth Ambassadors from all dioceses will introduce speakers and lead prayer. We are working with MyCatholicVoice on a Youth Reporter program. This would be modeled on a World Youth Day program, but with an application process and more specific expectations for reporters.

We'll convene task groups at the Membership Meeting to begin work on NCYC 2011 in Indianapolis. If you are interested in serving on an NCYC task group, please contact Stan Cordero, outgoing Youth Events Management Committee Chair, at dsryouth@sonic.net. NCYC information is available at www.nfcym.org and the i-net. See you in Kansas City!

© 2009 NFCYM, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Connections

January 2009

NACYML Members Set Goals, Win Great Prizes!

By Mary Mueller

Leadership Team Chairperson, NACYML

December 4 marked the third biennial gathering of members of the National Association of Catholic Youth Ministry Leaders.

More than 100 members experienced a day of professional development and strategic goal setting.

Professional development included sessions led by Ann Marie Eckert of the [Center for Ministry Development](#), Frank Mercadante of [Cultivation Ministries](#) and Sister Eileen McCann, CSJ of the [USCCB](#). Topics included responding to our baptismal call to ministry, approaches to evangelizing youth, and developing a professional approach to youth ministry.

Members from all 14 episcopal regions identified and prioritized strategic goals for NACYML. The goals will be published when approved at the leadership team meeting this spring.





Each of the speakers and their organizations offered attendance prizes, including:

- A registration for the 2010 Fashion Me a People Conference (Center for Ministry Development)
- A registration for the New Youth Ministers Institute (Cultivation Ministries) and a World Youth Day registration (USCCB)
- Members in attendance at NCCYM were eligible for gift card drawings, and Steve Grass was the winner of a five-Year NACYML membership.

NACYML continues to work with [Ministry Training Source](#) in offering [OnCourse](#), a series of online education and retreat opportunities.

Discernment of new leadership team members is under way.

Oncourse Information

- Download the [informational brochure](#) 
- Download the [registration materials](#) 

Courses and retreats are significantly discounted for NACYML members, but everyone is welcome to participate. To take advantage of the discounts, [become a NACYML member now](#).

For more news and information, please [visit the NACYML website](#).

© 2009 NFCYM, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Connections

January 2009

From Our Collaborating Members

G'Days for Australian Youth Ministry Follow WYD

Submitted by Karen Lunney, Secretary

Australian Network of Diocesan Youth Ministry Coordinators

[E-mail Karen](#)

A final draft of a proposed National Youth Ministry Vision Statement for Australia will be presented to the Australian Catholic Bishops (ACBC) in May 2009 for ratification. This project was initiated by the Australian Network of Diocesan Youth Ministry Coordinators (ANDYMC) and has been developed in conjunction with the Bishops' Commission for Pastoral Life.

As a follow up from World Youth Day 2008, the ACBC has established a new Senior Youth Ministry Projects Officer role to lead youth ministry into the future. This is the first of its kind in Australia. Malcolm Hart has been appointed to this position for the next three years. Malcolm works in the Archdiocese of Brisbane and has been ANDYMC executive director for the past two years.

Ten of our twenty-eight dioceses are experiencing staffing change since World Youth Day. Some positions are being created in dioceses that did not have a coordinator. In some cases, a WYD coordinator has taken a diocesan youth ministry role. In still other dioceses, a coordinator needs to change focus after a challenging year and let someone else take the reins.

ANDYMC has developed a Facebook group is preparing to use Skype for a networking catch-up in February.



ANDYMC members pose at their October meeting with Archbishop Philip Wilson of Adelaide, Bishop Joe Grech of Sandhurst and Mr. Bruce Ryan, Executive Secretary of the Australian Bishops' Commission for Pastoral Life.

© 2009 NFCYM, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Connections

January 2009

From Our Collaborating Members

CMD Celebrates Thirty Years of Partnership with Ministry Leaders

Submitted by Tom East

[E-mail Tom](#)

Visit [CMD Website](#)

Since the Northeast Center for Youth Ministry was founded thirty years ago to help parishes and dioceses implement the then-new *Vision of Youth Ministry* document, its name has changed and ministry areas have been added. But its original commitment to partnership with ministry leaders continues.

Looking back at the opportunities to learn and share in ministry over these three decades at the Center for Ministry Development, there are many images that stand out. Leaders gathered to learn and grow in ministry skills. Youth served those in need. Parish teams joined around the table to dream new dreams for ministry. Diocesan leaders forged new ministry pathways in collaborative efforts. All of these images hold common elements: shared mission, shared energy, and shared purpose.



Where do we need to be together to provide the resources, training, and support that will empower new generations of ministry leaders? We are looking for your input and your stories.

Please go to www.cmdnet.org/30years. This site is a place to share visions, stories, and dreams for the future. We appreciate the journey we have shared with all of you so far and look forward to the pathways ahead.

© 2009 NFCYM, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Connections

January 2009

From Our Collaborating Members

Catholic Parishes, Schools Benefit from Group's Collaboration

Submitted by Jim Knowles, Special Markets Manager

[E-mail Jim](#)

Visit [Group's Catholic Page](#)

Group Publishing continues to connect with a variety of publishers and ministries as it strives to develop its identity with Catholic parishes and schools. During 2008, Group connected with:

- Life Teen in offering a special subscription to Group magazine to Life Teen churches and a new game book to their middle schools
- Spirit and Song to offer training to Catholic dioceses on Renewing the Vision
- Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Religion Publishers edited Group's "Power Lab" Vacation Bible School and will continue with "Crocodile Rock" and "Rome - Paul and the Underground Church"
- Archdiocese of Baltimore as the cosponsor one of the 2009 Micah Experience for Summer 2009
- Eight dioceses that hosted Group youth ministry workshops this past fall



Besides exhibiting at Catholic events, Group continues to gather information on what works in ministry and how to make it practical. We continue to explore collaboration and seek to meet the needs of Catholic youth ministry.

© 2009 NFCYM, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Connections

January 2009

From Our Collaborating Members

Youth are MVPs in Souper Bowl's 20-Year Dynasty

Submitted by Caroline Stephens

[E-mail Caroline](#)

Visit [SBC Website](#)

On February 1, 2009, twenty years will have passed since one youth group believed it could make a difference. The youth acted on their passion and started a movement that is transforming Super Bowl weekend into the nation's largest youth-led weekend of giving and serving.



Since that time, Souper Bowl of Caring has become a national movement uniting schools, congregations, community organizations, and compassionate individuals in the fight against hunger. Young people take the lead and allow God to use them as they share Christ's love and compassion with others.

Souper Bowl of Caring is as simple as holding soup pots at church doors following worship on Super Bowl Sunday and asking worshippers to drop in a dollar to help people who are hungry. Each group then donates their collection directly to the charity of its choice. Organizers only ask that groups report their collection amount so a national total can be determined.

In 2008, more than 14,000 youth organizations generated \$10 million for charities across the country. Since beginning with a prayer in 1990, young people have raised more than \$50 million for those in need through Souper Bowl of Caring collections.

[Learn more and register for the 2009 Souper Bowl of Caring.](#)

© 2009 NFCYM, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Connections

January 2009

From Our Collaborating Members

TEC Conference

Submitted by Ronald Reiter, Executive Director

[E-mail Ronald](#)

Visit [TEC Website](#)

The Teens Encounter Christ (TEC) movement continues to grow in its depth and breadth.

A fourth workshop, "Team Formation," is being developed and will be piloted in Spring 2009. It joins TEC's three other workshops - Renewing the Vision, Communities of Faith and Follow Through, and Spiritual Directors. Between five and seven workshops will be offered this year. The fourth annual TEC Congress will be July 24-26 in Peoria, IL.

The translation of the TEC manual into Spanish continues under the guidance of Fr. James Brown, OAR. Meanwhile, TEC continues to spread around the world by responding to requests for TEC from Nicaragua, West Indies, Russia and Canada. A second TEC Center is emerging in Diocese of Hamilton.

Internally, the conference is strengthening the five ministry teams that support its staff. These are Spirituality, Leadership, Communications, Development and Finance. And the conference is working to deepen relationships with local TEC leaders and spiritual directors.

The ongoing expansion, along with the continuing needs of the TEC family, challenges the TEC conference's small operating staff. A committee is exploring the latest technology opportunities and the challenges they bring. Outreach for partnership with religious orders is an ongoing priority.



© 2009 NFCYM, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Connections

January 2009

From Our Collaborating Members

WLP's Ministry Features New Tunes, Tech

Submitted by Lisa Bagladi, Public Relations and Marketing

[E-mail Lisa](#)

Visit [WLP Website](#)

World Library Publications continues to be a leader in Catholic music and resources for liturgy, prayer, Christian initiation and the multigenerational needs of our culturally diverse Church. Some highlights from 2008 include:



- Launch of our new website at <http://www.wlp.jspaluch.com/>
- New WLP digital download store at <http://wlpmusicnow.downloadcentric.net>
- WLP Music Fans Facebook Page for up-to-date news and happenings
- WLP provided musicians and animators for 2008 World Youth Day catechetical sites as well as liturgy and music support for the U.S. Mass and Concert gathering in Sydney. Musicians included: John Angotti, Lisa Ferlita Bagladi, Noelle Garcia, and Jorge Rivera. They also ministered at Days in the Dioceses in Canberra and Wollongong.
- WLP recently signed a new band, Jacob and Matthew. They will be featured at the 2009 L.A. Congress, and their song "Step Up and Live!" has been chosen for the theme song for Youth Day. Learn more about them at <http://www.jacobandmatthew.com/>
- WLP continues to support and collaborate with Loyola Press, SummerSong at the University of Notre Dame, Music Ministry Alive leadership program for developing young pastoral musicians, and St. Meinrad School of Theology's "One Bread One Cup" summer institute.

© 2009 NFCYM, Inc. All Rights Reserved.