

National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) 2025

The 2025 National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) gathered more than 16,000 young people from across the United States - including Alaska and Hawaii - for three days of prayer, worship, formation, and joyful celebration of the Catholic faith. **The theme of the 2025 NCYC was “I Am - Yo Soy,”** inspired by God's revelation to Moses in the burning bush (Exodus 3:14). Our parish Youth Group was blessed to be part of this powerful event. The event held in Indianapolis encourages young people to encounter Christ's living presence through the Church's sacraments and discover their own identity as beloved children of God.

Each day began and ended with general sessions at Lucas Oil Stadium, where speakers, musicians, and witnesses inspired the crowds. Between these sessions, our youth participated in three different breakout conferences every day, choosing topics that helped them grow spiritually and personally.

A highlight of the conference was a special digital encounter with **Pope Leo XIV**, who addressed the teenagers gathered in the stadium on Friday. Five young people, who were representative of the “Young Church” asked him questions about using technology wisely, recovering from mistakes, giving worries to Jesus, avoiding distractions, and preparing for the future of the Church.

The pope encouraged youth with words of hope and honesty. ***“You are all called to be missionary disciples,”*** he told them. He reminded them that everyone struggles, saying, ***“All of us struggle. The truth is that none of us is perfect.”***

Quoting St. Paul, Pope Leo XIV emphasized that although all have sinned, sin never has the last word. ***“Whenever we ask for God’s mercy, he forgives us... God never gets tired of forgiving. We sometimes get tired of asking for forgiveness.”*** He encouraged the teens to trust in Christ’s mercy and to return to God through the sacrament of reconciliation, where His love is experienced in a profound way. In response to the young girl’s question about the future of the Church, Pope Leo XIV said: ***“You are not only the future of the Church, you are the present! Your voices, your ideas, your faith matter right now, and the Church needs you, the Church needs what you have been given to share with all of us. If you want to help the Church prepare for the future, start by being involved today. Stay connected to your parish. Attend Sunday Mass. Join youth activities. And say yes to opportunities ... where your faith can grow. The more you come to know Jesus, the more you will want to serve him and his Church. One great way to build up the Church is by sharing your faith, teaching your faith to others, helping others who need you. ... Deepen your prayer life as well. Spend time praying before the Eucharist. ... Go to confession regularly. ... These practices help you hear God’s voice more clearly.”***

The most powerful moment of the entire conference came on the evening of the third day during **Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament**. After a time of energetic praise - singing, jumping, and celebrating - everyone was asked to return to their seats as the Blessed Sacrament was brought in procession into the stadium.

A place that moments before was filled with loud music suddenly fell into complete silence. Jesus, present in the Eucharist, was placed on the altar, and tens of thousands of young people entered into deep prayer. After a brief prayer from the stage, silence returned once more.

During this sacred time, the youth prayed and meditated quietly. Some gazed at Jesus in adoration. Others wept. Some knelt or lay face-down on the ground in a posture of surrender, whispering in their hearts: ***“Jesus, I am yours. I surrender myself to You - everything I have and everything happening in my life, I place in Your hands.”***

It was a breathtaking moment, especially for those who were attending NCYC for the first time.

Let us continue to pray for all these young people - the “Young Church”, as they were called - so that the grace they received stays alive in their hearts and minds, and that they truly become **missionary disciples**, just as Pope Leo XIV encouraged them to be. May this encounter with Christ bear fruit in their lives and inspire them to bring His love to others.

Beata Bosak
Director of Lifelong Faith Formation

National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) 2025

