

# FAITHFUL FOOTSTEPS

AUGUST 2026 *Walking Together in Faith on a Lifelong Journey*

## Outreach:

Those in attendance included youth ministers, parents, DREs, a Lutheran missionary and a diocesan director from Oregon!

## Prayer:

Prayers were answered by the “yes” of each participant - we had over 35 in attendance allowing for a larger stipend to fund the day from the USCCB.

## Community:

Lots of good conversation took place in the table groups at the end of each session.

## “LISTEN, TEACH, SEND” BROKEN OPEN

More than 35 participants gathered on June 27<sup>th</sup> at the University of Mary to converse and understand the newest document from the US Conference of Catholic Bishops. Listen, Teach, Send: A National Pastoral Framework for Ministries with Youth and with Young Adults was approved by the USCCB in June 2024. It gives guidance for the Catholic Church in accompanying and evangelizing young people: youth (in junior high and high school) and young adults (in their late teens, 20s, and 30s). The methodology is rooted in the Gospel story of the road to Emmaus (Lk 24:13-35) and invites pastoral leaders and families, in their engagement with young people, to imitate Jesus who listens attentively, teaches from the heart, and sends disciples into the world. The document begins with a preface letter addressed directly from the U.S. Bishops to youth and young adults and continues with the three-part framework text for pastoral ministers, families, and young leaders in the Church.



## “SEND DISCIPLES INTO THE WORLD WITH COURAGE, COMPASSION, AND THE TOOLS TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE”

Two presenters from the USCCB, Maria Parker and Dominic Lombardi, came from the Washington, DC, office via a grant obtained from the National Catholic Scouting organization. This grant provided funds to cover travel and lodging for this pair and breakfast and lunch for all in attendance.

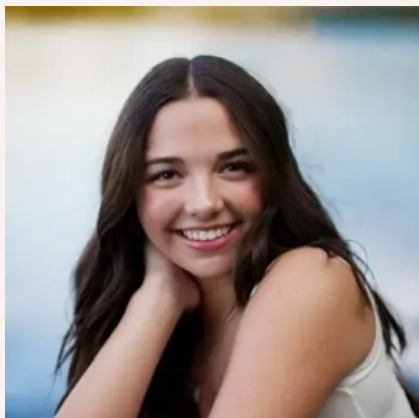
Kleo Vetter, the new DRE at the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit shared this: “Networking was huge for me. I got many ideas of how others do things. My focus kept coming back to evangelizing the family. Helping families find ways to include God even when they are traveling to sporting events on weekends, and in their daily lives. My goal is to get resources to families, so God is alive within their families. Other key points for me were to LISTEN. I'd like to get more youth participating within the Mass: readers, hospitality ministers. The speakers were practical and easy to listen to. I felt like we had meaningful conversations throughout the whole day.”

You can find the document online at  
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You can find the document online at  
[National Pastoral Framework YYA APPROVED5.pdf](#)



# Diocesan Women Answer the Call to be Missionaries



Regan Weis, parishioner of Corpus Christi in Bismarck and a 2026 graduate of Century High School, presented at all the recent Masses at her parish briefly sharing about NET (National Evangelization Teams) ministries, a Catholic youth missionary organization dedicated to evangelization through peer-to-peer ministry, retreats, and missionary service. Corpus Christi's youth director Cole Jones and his wife, Lydia, were both NET missionaries. Once accepted as a missionary, Regan began to raise "personal support funds" to cover expenses she will incur throughout the year. Regan, daughter of Kim and the late John Weis, is very excited to share she had been chosen for the '26-'27 NET Team. "I learned about NET from my director of youth ministry and his wife, who are both NET alumni. They encouraged me to look into being a NET missionary and see if it was something God was calling me to. After some research, I applied

and went to a discernment weekend where I met amazing, faithful young adults! After my dad suddenly passed away in 2023, I knew God was pulling me towards something like NET, where I could share my story and help others who may be struggling with grief, while reminding them of God's unending love and mercy. I want to help young people encounter Christ the same way I did, through evangelization and discipleship." You can support Regan by going to <https://give.netusa.org/fundraiser/7056469>



Anna Havelka, from Hettinger, ND, graduated from the University of Mary this past spring with degrees in Elementary Education and Catholic Studies with a minor in Special Education. This fall, she will be a FOCUS (Fellowship of Catholic University Students) missionary at UMary. The mission at FOCUS is simple: Make disciples for Christ. First, the missionaries invite people into a relationship with Jesus in the Catholic Church. Then, they accompany them along their journey. Finally, they equip them to share the Faith with others too.



"Growing up Catholic, I always knew my faith would be part of my life. It was not until going to college at UMary that I realized just how big a role God wanted to play. Throughout college, the Lord drew me closer to Himself through my classes, friends, and Bible study experiences. I learned what it means to truly be Catholic and see the world through a Catholic lens. Growing in my relationship with God in all these ways convicted me of the love God has for every single person and His desire for everyone to be in relationship with Him! Being involved with FOCUS as a student led me to a new understanding of who God is as a loving father. Leading and growing with other women through Bible studies and discipleship have shown me the joy and blessing of growing in one's faith with a community. I knew after graduation that God was calling me to give back to the group which has given me so much and serve as a FOCUS missionary!"

"The mission at FOCUS is simple: Make disciples for Christ." First, the missionaries invite people into a relationship with Jesus in the Catholic Church. Then, we accompany them along their journey. Finally, we equip them to share the Faith with others too. Their process begins by encouraging young people to build their relationship with Jesus, then walk with them through that journey. The end goal is to send those disciples out into the world to share the message of our Lord. If you are interested in joining Anna on mission, please reach out to her at 701-440-6957 or [anna.havelka@focus.org](mailto:anna.havelka@focus.org)!

# Walking Together in Faith to these UPCOMING EVENTS



One Mission. One Movement.  
*One Million* Connected.

## GRADUATING SENIORS CONNECT HERE

Carry your Faith  
Forward to college  
and beyond.



[signupnc.newmanministry.com](https://signupnc.newmanministry.com)



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Go on Pilgrimage with the  
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## World Youth Day

July 31 - August 13, 2027



**AVERY PORCH  
YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY  
COORDINATOR  
DIOCESE OF RAPID CITY  
605-343-3541 EXT. 240**



**Seoul, South Korea**

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FOR CHRISTIAN MATURITY  
WITH, BY & FOR YOUTH

**EXPERIENCE  
GOD IN A  
PERSONAL &  
REAL WAY.**

SEARCH IS YOUR  
OPPORTUNITY TO THINK,  
TALK, QUESTION AND  
WONDER ABOUT LIFE AND  
FAITH IN AN ACCEPTING  
AND CHALLENGING  
ENVIRONMENT.

## WEEKEND YOUTH RETREAT

OCTOBER 9-11, 2026  
NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026  
JANUARY 15-17, 2027  
MARCH 5-7, 2027  
APRIL 16-18, 2027

REGISTRATION AND MORE INFORMATION ONLINE!  
[SearchinMedora.com](https://SearchinMedora.com)



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Friday, October 9, 2026 at 12 PM - 2 PM

**North Dakota March for Life**  
Bismarck Civic Center



# Advice from a Master Catechist: Vetting Volunteers

Question: When soliciting volunteers to help with faith formation programs, what might be a respectful and noninvasive way to vet someone's catechetical background? We want to ensure that they understand foundational Church teachings and have the right resources to answer students' questions with the truth rather than their own opinions. — Katie S., Massachusetts

JONATHAN F. SULLIVAN RESPONDS ...

Sit them in a bare room with a single light bulb over their head and start grilling them with questions from the Catechism! (Just kidding.)

This is a question a lot of catechetical leaders wrestle with. We rely on the generosity of volunteers to staff our programs, so we don't want to overburden them with questions and requirements that might dissuade them from giving their time and talent. At the same time, we know that a well-formed catechist is essential to our ministry. Evaluating new (and returning) catechists ensures that we are supporting their ministry by providing them with the formation and tools they need.

One way to do this is to have incoming catechists fill out a simple self-assessment form that allows them to rate themselves on knowledge of the faith (Christology, liturgy, etc.) as well as catechetical methodology (lesson planning, classroom management, etc.). I've put together a sample two-page self assessment for catechists; you can download it at [CATmag.us/2Moxl4x](https://catmag.us/2Moxl4x).

For returning or long-term catechists, you might consider offering the NCEA's Information for Growth (IFG) assessment. A companion to the popular ACRE assessment, IFG is a more in-depth examination that gives adults the opportunity to identify their level of religious knowledge and personal spirituality. Find more at [here](#).

Both a self-assessment and IFG can help catechists develop a personal faith formation plan by helping them identify the areas they need to stretch themselves. If your diocese has a catechist formation process, a broad look at your catechists' needs can help you identify which workshops or classes to offer in a given year or which subjects need to be reviewed.

If you have concerns about a potential volunteer's level of knowledge, keep in mind that no one has a right to volunteer in the Church. You are always free to say, "No, thank you." Having a published set of expectations and qualifications for parish catechists can help in this process by giving you a set of criteria to point to. Alternatively, you can assign a new volunteer as an aide to a more experienced catechist mentor for a year. This will allow the new volunteer the opportunity to receive a year of formation before becoming a lead catechist themselves. The mentor can also give you feedback about the volunteer's degree of knowledge and skill as a catechist.

Jonathan F. Sullivan is the director of parish ministries, services, and catechesis for the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana. He can be found online at [JonathanFSullivan.com](http://JonathanFSullivan.com).

This article was originally published in Catechist magazine, October 2018.

# Look Who's Walkin' in Faith

**CELEBRATING FUN AND EDUCATIONAL EVENTS IN OUR DIOCESE THAT ARE SPREADING THE LOVE OF JESUS!**



A group of 23 from Corpus Christi-Bismarck Youth Ministry traveled to St. Genevieve, MO to take part in Life Teen's Camp Restore. Restore is a mission-based camp that combines hands on mission work in the local community with camp activities and retreat-like experiences. They attended the camp with 5 other parishes around the country and served over 20 different worksites. The group completed a lot of yard maintenance, painting, drywall, lifting a sunken house, repairing a roof, and relandscaping a motel backyard. In the evenings, the Life Teen summer missionaries and staff held sessions with games, praise and worship, talks, small groups, and times of prayer. One of the biggest highlights from their time was getting to invite the families we served to dinner on the final night of camp. They were able to hear their stories, share a meal, and pray with and for them. Not only was it a time to serve and give of them in that way, but it was a week of being filled by the Spirit. They had kids coming home excited to share how they experienced Christ with their families and friends. One mom reached out and said, "Thank you for taking my son on this trip, you have no idea how impactful it was. He got in the car and would not stop talking about every detail of his experience." All of the months of planning, advertising, and fundraising was worth it because at least one kid experienced Jesus who transform their life.

