



NCYC

The entire NCYC was so amazing and I'm so glad I got the opportunity to go. One of the main things I'm taking back with me is the concept and definition of faith. On Saturday, I went to Bishop Joseph's talk which elaborated on what faith is considered as, and what it's not. He said that faith is not just believing; faith is the act of believing, accepting, and responding. We have to have faith because it is our shield against the devil. This talk really stuck with me and I plan on bringing it back home. The exhibition hall was also very memorable. My friends and I went to explore and doing all the activities and seeing all the stalls is one of the highlights of the weekend for me. Everything was so nice and I hope other kids can get the chance to go to NCYC to experience the same connection I had with God. Knowing that I was in a room with thousands of peers, that have something in common with me, will always be incredible and that feeling will always stick with me. *~Danielle*



I am taking back from NCYC so many things. I am taking back that God loves us the way we are and that we not only are the future of the church, but the current church. I hope to always remember when the Pope said that AI can't replicate the face to face interactions of humans. I encourage kids in high school to go to NCYC even if you think you won't like it. I want everybody to experience the presence of the Lord and the pure joy of hearing the creed spoken by everyone there at once. However I wish I heard more about how anyone and everyone is called to be a Saint. I want to ask the Church, what can you do to encounter the Lord. I hope my faith formation continues to help me grow closer to God. I want to thank everyone who helped me get to NCYC, with a special thanks to Mrs. Russell and Mrs. Kato who brought my group there. And to the (Assumption) Parish family and all of their support and donations that helped me have a very spiritual and fun time. *~Ben*



NCYC was an amazing experience. I was nervous about going in the first place but now I wish I had signed up to go years before. I not only got closer to God, through this trip, but with other teens from my church, also. Going around the exhibition and main sessions was so much fun, it was a mix of serious spirituality and easy going spirituality that helped you stay energetic about growing in your faith. I wish other teens could experience the sheer awe of seeing 16,000 other Catholics gathered together. It finally clicked for me on Friday night while all of us were singing "Praise" that everyone there shared the same beliefs and values. At home I know about 20-30 Catholics my age that are as invested in their faith, as I am, but realizing there was 16,000 of us gathered there is something I will never forget. I really enjoyed hearing the speakers and going to the breakout sessions, they gave me new thoughts and perspectives that I wouldn't have gotten from just my church. Two things that stood out to me this weekend was from Bishop Joseph, he said "Just believing in your faith isn't enough since the devil believes in God too. You have to believe, accept, and respond to God and your faith". He also said that "Starting is for everyone, perseverance is for the life of saints". I took from that quote that our parents, youth leaders, and church can start us on our faith journey, but it's up to us to persevere in our faith. Seeing the Pope was also pretty cool. It was an exhausting experience but I wouldn't have traded it for anything. I can't wait to use what I learned at NCYC at Youth-2-Youth. Thank you to our parishes and parents for helping us go to this conference. *~Anyia*



I am taking back so much knowledge and wisdom from NCYC. In a time when my faith felt dull, NCYC brought my priorities into focus. I was almost not going to go to NCYC because of other priorities before Mrs. Russell asked me to go and I decided to make it a priority. I am so thankful for Mrs. Russell for convincing me to go and an extra thank you to our parish for making it possible. I will be taking back my want to share my faith and God high with my family and friends. I hope I will always remember that God and Jesus will always be there no matter where we are in our journey... they are always talking to us, supporting us, and the one thing in our lives that will never walk away, never say we aren't good enough, and especially never give up on us. I wish kids my age could experience meeting the Pope because that was so impactful it didn't even feel real. It was a once in the lifetime experience and he shared so much wisdom. I felt an overwhelming amount of gratitude and love in that moment. I can't wait to practice my discipleship and I will be forever grateful for this opportunity for it open my eyes to the Lord. *~Addison*

This year I was grateful to attend NCYC for a second time learning and taking in just as much as what I experienced the first time! Looking back on the week and realizing we got to hear the pope talk live and listen to all the other amazing speakers is something I wish every kid could experience! Going to NCYC for a second time I knew what to expect and didn't think I would feel the same excitement as the first time. I was definitely wrong, especially during Adoration when we got floor seats and we were so close to everything. I was overwhelmed with joy and the whole thing was just beautiful! Some of my favorite moments were during Adoration and Mass when the whole stadium was just silent and you just knew the room was filled with the Holy Spirit! Another thing I got to experience was hearing Bishop Joseph A. Espallat talk again. One thing he said that, I'll remember, from St. Augustine was "there is no love without hope, no hope without love, and neither love nor hope without faith." He shared, no matter where your at, faith is your shield and faith is not just believing but faith is believing, accepting, and responding. The whole weekend was an experience I wish every person could have! Going back home, I hope to grow closer to God and know that I can feel the powerful joy that I felt at NCYC anytime I'm at mass or just praying! ~Rina



At NCYC, I saw God in so many people. All the people I talked to I saw God and it really just showed me how God is with everyone and he's everywhere and how much everyone matters. God is with you through every up and down!

I hope I always remember the feeling when I felt God. After I went to confession and after adoration I felt God shine through me. I hope I remember the feeling of the songs being sung and how God really is with us all and he is in our hearts. I also want to remember how Pope Leo XIV talked to us and showed how he cared and gave us advice on how we can get closer to God (prayer). (He also told the youth) we are the present not the future of the church and how we can contribute now.

I went to a breakout session with Bishop Joe and he was talking we should live our life in the presence of God not behind a screen (phone). I would like to learn more about how I can continue to live in the presence of God more.

I really enjoyed NCYC it really showed me how to see God more and more, I saw him with meeting the people, confession, adoration, and during mass. I am also very thankful for the group I went with and everyone that made it possible for me to go, I really enjoyed this experience and if you ever have a chance to go take it because it is truly life changing. I wish other kids my age would experience things (like this) because then they would believe that God is really with us. ~Samantha

What I'm taking back from NCYC is that comfortable feeling that I get when at Sunday Mass. I felt amazing while at Mass with over 16,000+ people, and I wish to share that feeling with others. I loved seeing the pope and hearing him speak to us in real time. I wish more kids my age could have experienced this. I loved meeting new people and trading items with them. ~Maria



I learned so much while at NCYC! Seeing the Pope was an amazing experience! I have trouble taking the joy and experiences of retreats into my life afterwards. At NCYC, I went to a talk about daily prayer. At this talk, I learned a new approach to daily prayer and a way to implement it and stay consistent in prayer... have a dedicated prayer

space and a specific time to pray. Also, it's important to keep your phone out of your prayer space! I think that this will help me to bring what I have learned and gained into my life! Seeing so many young people gathered together for the same reason made a huge impact on me! I am very glad that I went and I will definitely be going again in two years!! ~Elizabeth



I was beyond blessed to get the chance to attend NCYC. It was nothing like I'd ever experienced before and I loved every second of it! One of my favorite things was seeing a stadium filled with over 15,000 kids who shared the same belief and faith as me, it was truly amazing! Another thing I loved was getting to know so many new people. I met and learned many things from other kids across the US, and even got to strengthen my relationship with people I already knew. Although, the most important relationship I strengthened was my relationship with God! I feel so much more connected and faithful after the experience and sitting in a stadium with thousands of others who all believed the same thing as me was extremely eye opening. Overall NCYC was truly a life changing weekend, and I am so grateful for the people who were fortunate enough to provide me with this experience, and over the moon thankful for the opportunity to go. ~Brynn



Getting the opportunity to go to the National Catholic Youth Conference was amazing. I am so grateful and blessed that I was able to strengthen my faith, and deepen my connection to God. I made a ton of new friends and met so many people from across the country. I am so lucky to be one of the 16,000 or so people who not only got to experience the conference, but be able to see Pope Leo live. He had great words of wisdom and I learned so much from him. One thing that he said that really stuck out to me was how friendships rooted in your faith are much more valuable and important than friendships that are not rooted in faith. They'll help you grow your connection to God. I will always remember my experience and the things I learned and saw while I was there. I am so grateful for the people who gave me this opportunity to go to the conference. Again, I am so thankful that I got to go to NCYC and I miss it already! ~Isabelle

I am blessed to say that this is my second time going to NCYC. The first time I was a freshman, oblivious to what I would encounter. I encountered God. I felt drowned in his love after I confessed my sins. It was a beautiful thing and that is why I said "yes" to going this year. I loved how this NCYC was different, but also the same. I encountered God, but instead through Brian Greenfield and Steve Angrisiano. I felt a changing point in my life and I just think it was how authentic they were. My message from them was to be myself and hold God in my heart. I just want to never forget how we are all in this together, we aren't alone. NCYC has changed my life and I am so very grateful to have had this opportunity. I would like to thank the Saginaw Diocese, Assumption, and my Aunt (Kathy Russell) for getting me there. Lastly, I wish my friends back home could experience the environment at NCYC. It is "Godly" and quite extraordinary. It's hard to explain because there is nothing else like it. ~Dawson



My 3rd and final year of NCYC was amazing. I can't even start to say how grateful I am to have had the opportunity to go. All 3, that I have been to, have helped my faith grow so, so much. I can't wait to spread what I learn like the ATIT (Acknowledge God the Father & thank him for the person your praying for, Trust Jesus with the petition, Intercede by calling on the Holy Spirit, Thank God for this time of prayer.) way of praying for someone. I hope I remember everything that happened and Brian Greenfield's speech as it hit home for both my friend and I. I wish more kids my age could experience how great it feels to truly feel comfortable expressing their faith. I hope the youth group I came with continues to stay close and grow together in our faith. I encourage the younger people to take the opportunity to go and enjoy many more future NCYC's. ~Roman



Pope Leo XIV
Quotes from his address to the youth at NCYC...
A MESSAGE FOR US ALL!



Mercy: “Sin never has the final word.” ... “We may struggle to forgive, but God’s heart is different. God never stops inviting us back. We experience this mercy of God in a special way in the sacrament of reconciliation,” he said “It can be discouraging when we fall, but do not focus on all your sins. Look to Jesus. Trust his mercy and go to him with confidence. He will always welcome you home.”

Mental Health: “He (Jesus) knows when life feels heavy. Scripture reminds us that he is near to the brokenhearted. Even when we do not feel his presence, our faith tells us that he is there. To entrust our struggles to Jesus, we have to spend time with him in prayer. We have to have a relationship with him.”

Friends: “It’s... important to pray for the gift of true friends.”
“A real friend is not only someone who’s fun to be with, oh, that is good, too. But it’s someone who helps you grow closer to Jesus,

someone who encourages you to become a better person. Good friends also push us to seek help when life gets difficult or confusing.” “Good friends will always tell us the truth, even when that’s not easy to do. Scripture says that faithful friends are like a strong shelter and a treasure. Friendships rooted in faith, rooted in love for Jesus.”

Technology: “Technology can really help in many ways,” and it “can help us live our Christian faith,” Pope Leo said. “It lets us stay connected with people who are far away ... It also gives us amazing tools for prayer, for reading the Bible, for learning more about what we believe.” ... “But even with all that, technology can never replace real in-person relationships. Simple things, a hug, a handshake, a smile. All those things are essential to being human,” he said.

Be Involved: “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,” he said. “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 the faith to others, helping others who need you.”

Made for something greater: “Deep down, we long for truth, for beauty, and goodness, because we were created for them,” Pope Leo said. “That is why it is not true that life is only about doing what feels good to yourself, makes you feel comfortable, as some people claim it. Sure, comfort can be nice, but as Pope Benedict XVI reminded us: ‘We weren’t made for comfort. We were made for greatness. We were made for God himself.’”

Address to the youth at NCYC can be found here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tHSWW-c-fHM>
Or scan the QR code

