



Secretariat of Catholic Education

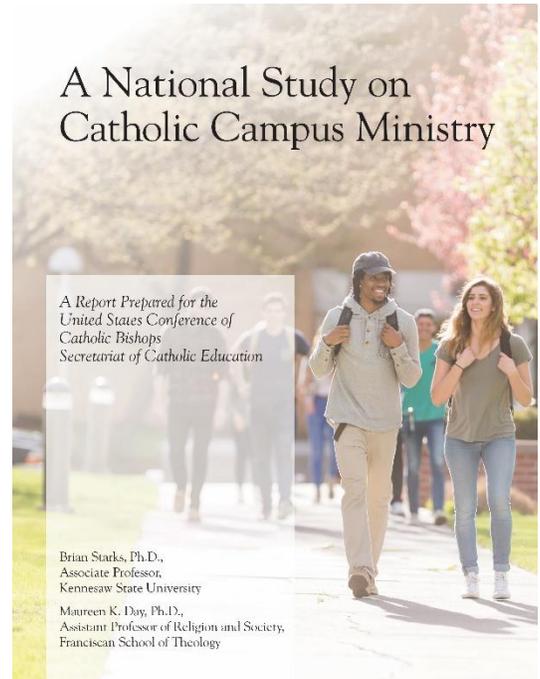
Pursuing the Church's Mission in Higher Education
November 2018 Newsletter

A National Study on Catholic Campus Ministry

considered the contemporary context as well as the formation and professional development of those who minister on campus. The report offers valuable insights into the landscape of Catholic campus ministry and the formation of those who serve as campus ministers or missionaries on campus. Key findings call for innovative growth, steadfast cooperation and on-going formation to enhance the efficacy of Catholic campus ministry.

Based on the data gathered, the report offers practical suggestions to develop and enhance Catholic Campus Ministry. According to Auxiliary Bishop Fernand Cheri of the Archdiocese of New Orleans and Episcopal Liaison for the Catholic Campus Ministry Association, “the Church must be intentional and campus ministry must be accountable in every way possible to enrich the character and formation of the whole community; taking into account the ethnic, social and spiritual diversity of each campus and its surrounding community.” He goes on to say, “Our ministry must center on people, for we are forming men and women to be people that reflect Christ to each other and to the world.”

The study had a 56% response rate among the 1,911 campus ministers across the country. The report and other support data can be found on the Secretariat of Catholic Education website: www.usccb.org/campus-ministry.



The National Gathering of the V Encuentro

was four days of prayer, sharing, listening, and learning with the people of God alive in the love of Jesus. Pope Francis welcomed the nearly 3,200 people from more than 160 dioceses and 200 Catholic organizations from around the country asking participants to build “a culture of encounter that rekindles hope.”

The V Encuentro process, and especially the national gathering, will go down in history as a special moment of grace for the Church in the United States

in these turbulent and difficult times. As Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, president of the U. S. Conference of Catholic Bishops aptly put it in his welcoming remarks: “Amidst this darkness, the Encuentro is a light that shines and illuminates the way forward. The enthusiasm, the passion, the love and the joy of the Encuentro process is a means of grace, a gift to us as we rebuild the Church.”

A special highlight of the National V Encuentro was the participation of hundreds of young adults who brought us hope with their enthusiasm and courage, witness of faith and commitment to the Church. As the process of Encuentro continues, may we welcome their energy, their gifts and talents for the service of the entire Church.

In Ministerial Breakout Sessions on Campus Ministry and Higher Education, delegates made multiple suggestions to improve and engage Hispanic participation.

Recommendations from Delegates Regarding Higher Education and Campus Ministry

Higher Education:

1. Called for Church leaders within the diocese, parish and Catholic schools to raise awareness, assist in the discernment about higher education and to investment in pathways that guarantee some success in the education of Hispanics. Delegates believe it is imperative to begin this work early – with parents and grade school children.
2. Requested assistance for parents through the parish, the diocese and other ecclesial structures to prepare for college by helping parents understand the process of applying for, attending and completing college, motivating parents to encourage and support their students to attend and complete college, educating parents on the importance and necessity of higher education and orienting and accompanying parents through parish, diocesan and other ecclesial structures.
3. Suggested the Church accompany students by beginning early, considering mentorship, and equipping non-Hispanic staff to better understand and serve Hispanic students.
4. Encourage Catholic higher education to develop outreach and support for Hispanic students as a way of building up the Catholic community.

Campus Ministry:

1. Call for greater understanding of the Hispanic identity among college and university students;
2. Investing more funds in t Hispanic students;
3. Catholic Campus Ministry Association must understand the importance of prioritizing Latino students, especially at the top of its leadership;
4. Hiring diverse professional ministers and encouraging vocational discernment;
5. Better accompaniment of Latino students;
6. The Church to pay greater attention to Campus Ministry at state schools where most Catholic students attend;
7. Building bridges between youth and young adults ministry;
8. Focus on the needs of the Hispanic community;
9. Collaboration with parishes and high schools.

The Synod on Young People



On Saturday afternoon, the Final Document of the XV Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops consisting of 3 parts, 12 chapters, 167 paragraphs and 60 pages was approved in the Synod Hall.

The text was received with applause, Cardinal da Rocha said. It is “the result of real teamwork” on the part of the Synod Fathers, together with other Synod

participants and “the young people in a particular way”. The Document, therefore, gathers the 364 modifications, or amendments, that were presented. “Most of them,” the Cardinal said, “were precise and constructive”. Furthermore, the entire document passed with the necessary 2/3 majority voting in favor.

The inspiration for the Final Document for the Synod on Youth is the episode of the disciples of Emmaus, recounted by the evangelist Luke. It was read in the Synod Hall by the Rapporteur General, Cardinal Sérgio da Rocha, by the Special Secretaries, Fr Giacomo Costa and Fr Rossano Sala, together with Bishop Bruno Forte, a member of the Commission for the drafting of the text. It is complementary to the Instrumentum laboris of the Synod and follows the three-part subdivision.

Part One: “He walked with them”

The first part of the document considers concrete aspects of young people’s lives. It emphasizes the important of schools and parishes. It acknowledges the need for laity to be trained to accompany young people especially since so many priests and bishops are already overburdened. The Document notes the irreplaceable role of Catholic educational institutions. The challenge the Document addresses is the need to rethink the role of the parish in terms of its vocational mission because it is often ineffective and not very dynamic, above all in the realm of catechesis.

The reality of young people regarding migration, abuse, the “throwaway culture” are also dwelt on in part one. Regarding abuse, the Synod Document calls for a “firm commitment for the adoption of rigorous preventive measures that will keep such abuse from being repeated, beginning with the selection and formation of those to whom leadership and educational roles are entrusted”. The world of art, music and sports is also discussed in terms of using them as “pastoral resources”.

Part Two: “Their eyes were opened”

The Synod Document calls young people one of the “theological places” in which the Lord makes himself present. Thanks to them, it says, the Church can renew herself, shaking off its “heaviness and slowness”. Mission, it says is a “sure compass” for youth since it is the gift of self that brings an authentic and lasting happiness. Closely connected with the concept of mission is vocation. Every baptismal vocation is a call to holiness.

Two other aspects covered in part two that aid in the development of the mission and vocation of young people are that of accompaniment and discernment.

Part Three: “They left without delay”

The icon presented by the Synod Fathers of the young Church is Mary Magdalene, the first witness of the Resurrection. All young people, the Synod Fathers affirm, including those with different visions of life, are in God’s heart.

“Walking together” is the synodal dynamic which the Fathers also bring to light in part three. They invite the Conferences of Bishops around the world to continue the process of discernment with the aim of developing specific pastoral solutions. The definition of “synodality” provided is a style for mission that encourages us to move from “I” to “we” and to consider the multiplicity of faces, sensitivities, origins and cultures. One request repeatedly made in the hall, was that of establishing a “Directory of youth ministry in a vocational key” on the national level, that can help diocesan and parish leaders qualify their training and action “with” and “for” young people, helping to overcome a certain fragmentation of the pastoral care of the Church.

The Synod Document reminds families and Christian communities of the importance of accompanying young people to discover the gift of their sexuality. The bishops recognize the Church's difficulty in transmitting “the beauty of the Christian vision of sexuality” in the current cultural context. It is urgent, the document says, to seek “more appropriate ways which are translated concretely into the development of renewed formative paths.”

In the end, the Document brings the various topics covered in the Synod into one vocational thrust, that is, the call to holiness. “Vocational differences are gathered in the unique and universal call to holiness.” Through the holiness of so many young people willing to renounce life in the midst of persecution in order to remain faithful to the Gospel, the Church can renew its spiritual ardor and its apostolic vigor.

The Bishops Discuss the Pastoral Letter Against Racism

Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love, a Pastoral Letter Against Racism comes from the full body of bishops to the lay faithful and all people of good will addressing the sin of racism. As the Bishops relate in the letter, “though Christ's victory over sin and death is complete, we live in a world affected by them.” It is a call for all to recall that we are all brothers and sisters, all equally made in the image of God. Because each of us bear the image of God, racism is above all a moral and theological problem that manifests institutionally and systematically. Only a deep individual conversion of heart, which then multiplies, will compel change and reform in our institutions and society. It is imperative to confront racism's root causes and the injustice it produces. The love of God binds us together. This same love should overflow into our relationships with all people. The conversions needed to overcome racism require a deep encounter with the living God in the person of Christ who has the ability to heal all division.

More information about the Pastoral Letter will be available following the November 2018 General Assembly at www.usccb.org/racism.

Prayer for Healing Victims of Abuse

God of endless love, ever caring, ever strong, always present, always just:
You gave your only Son to save us by the blood of his cross.

Gentle Jesus, shepherd of peace, join to your own suffering the pain of all who have been hurt
in body, mind, and spirit by those who betrayed the trust placed in them.

Hear our cries as we agonize over the harm done to our brothers and sisters.
Breathe wisdom into our prayers, soothe restless hearts with hope,
steady shaken spirits with faith:
Show us the way to justice and wholeness, enlightened by truth and enfolded in your mercy.

Holy Spirit, comforter of hearts, heal your people's wounds and transform our brokenness.
Grant us courage and wisdom, humility and grace, so that we may act with justice
and find peace in you. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

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