



JOURNEYING TOGETHER

A National Catholic Intercultural
Encounter for Ministries with
Youth and Young Adults

Proceedings

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church



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Journeying Together logo design and cover art: Patricia Jimenez.

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Preface

Dear friend in Christ,

May the peace and joy of the Risen Lord be with you!

On behalf of the Committee on Cultural Diversity in the Church at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, and of all who have made this journey possible, I am happy to present to you the *Journeying Together Proceedings Report*.



For more than two years, hundreds across the country—most of them young adults, but also ministry leaders who work with young people in a variety of settings and circumstances, as well as several dozen bishops—were immersed in an eminently synodal process. We listened to, dialogued with, and accompanied one another on this journey.

At times, we felt shame and sorrow for the hardships, difficulties, and humiliations some of our fellow journeyers, their families, and their communities have had to endure. At other times, we experienced great joy, drew hope from inspiring stories of faith and perseverance, and felt enriched by the variety of gifts being offered. Personally, I drew tremendous inspiration from our small-group conversations. It was such a privilege to be able to participate in these cross-cultural and intergenerational conversations and to witness the young people and the ministry leaders engaging in candid conversation about matters of faith and life. Across traditions, cultural divides, and generations, I found tremendous faith, love, hope . . . and leadership potential!

The Spirit of the Lord is moving us now to act on what we have seen and heard—to chart a new path forward together with renewed faith in him and in one another.

Whether you joined us in person for the Journeying Together national encounter in Chicago, or you plan to apply some of the learnings of this process in your local communities and ministries, it is my hope that you will find inspiration in these pages and a renewed sense that the Spirit of the Lord walks with us on this journey. I invite you to prayerfully read and meditate on each section and to ask the Lord for help discerning what is yours to do.

Finally, I entrust this process—and all the good things that will come from it—to the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who accompanies us on the journey. Mary’s constant presence reminds us—when we feel tempted to despair or quit, when we face the uncertainty ahead—that a single “yes” can make a world of difference and even change the course of humanity. Like St. Juan Diego on the hill of Tepeyac, let us be comforted by the words she also extends to us today: “Aren’t I here, I, who am your mother?” Our Lady of the Journey, pray for us!

En Cristo y María,

✠ Most Rev. J. Arturo Cepeda
Auxiliary Bishop of San Antonio
Chairman, Committee on Cultural Diversity in the Church (2021-2024)

Beginning the Journey

Introduction

The Journeying Together process of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) originated several years prior to its official launch. In 2016, a worldwide invitation was sent by the Holy See to church leaders, youth, and young adults to begin a synodal process of reflection and dialogue to listen to the concerns, hopes, and desires of young people. The Holy Father, Pope Francis, invited a diverse group of individuals representing various parts of the world to this preliminary work. He was motivated by a belief that “taking care of young people is not an optional task for the Church, but an integral part of her vocation and mission in history.”¹ In 2018 this belief led to the development of the Synod of Bishops’ XV Ordinary General Assembly on the theme “Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment.” During the Synod, young people from around the world were auditors along with the Synod fathers. Those who gathered agreed that the Church’s mission to young people must result from investing time, energy, and resources. They agreed that this mission is a “pastoral priority of epoch-making significance.”²

In 2019, as a result of this synodal process, the Holy Father issued the post-synodal apostolic exhortation *Christus Vivit* (*Christ Is Alive!*).³ In its nine chapters, the Holy Father acknowledged the realities and challenges of young people that surfaced in the Synod’s listening sessions. He emphasized the importance of the call for dialogue and co-responsibility across generational lines in the Church and in society (see CV, nos. 38, 87, 206). He called for the advancement of new models for pastoral ministry and accompaniment with youth and young adults: “We need to make all our institutions better equipped to be more welcoming to young people” (CV, no. 216). Pope Francis concluded his insights by reminding young people that the Church “needs your momentum, your intuitions,

your faith” (CV, no. 299). Throughout the exhortation he reminded young people that God loves them, that Jesus saves and suffers with them, and that Christ is alive and present in their lives (see CV, nos. 1, 112, 118, 124-125).

To prepare for and respond to the synodal process, the USCCB began in 2017 to gather material and to study the realities that face youth and young adults in the United States. A 2016 study conducted by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) on cultural diversity in the Church and the engagement of youth and young adults had made clear that a dramatic change had taken place in the ethnic, cultural, and racial makeup of Catholics in the United States.⁴ Although the Church in the United States has always been diverse, the CARA study showed that—especially among millennials (those born between 1981 and 1996⁵) and younger generations—the majority of Catholic youth and young adults in the United States were no longer of European ancestry. To respond to these shifts, the USCCB Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church decided to revisit conversations from 2010 about leadership and ministry, this time expanding and diversifying the group of participants in this new process and focusing on young people.

In 2018, the Secretariat for Cultural Diversity in the Church invited representatives from the USCCB Secretariats of Catholic Education, Evangelization and Catechesis, and Laity, Marriage, Family Life, and Youth, along with national Catholic organizations, to engage with this data in light of the Synod. From the start, young voices from the various cultural families in the Church clearly needed to be heard, and other people needed to be present at the table for this conversation. The goal was to listen attentively to the voices of young people and those who accompany them. This opportunity for the Church would provide a pathway toward a more inclusive, responsive, diverse, and

just society, as well as an opportunity for transforming the way the Church engages in pastoral ministry with youth and young adults of all cultures in the United States.

With *Christus Vivit* as a guide, this group devised a multistep process that included an initial invitation and welcome extended to a broader group of diverse youth, young adults, ministers, and bishops. (The steps of this process are described at length in appendix C of this *Proceedings* document.) The original gathering, held virtually because of the pandemic, was followed by a series of virtual intracultural conversations for participants to gain self-awareness, build confidence, and both listen to and share stories with one another. The third step was a series of virtual intercultural dialogues that allowed each cultural family to introduce themselves to the others, speak to the issues that were important to them, share gifts and contributions to Church and society, and discuss concerns, all while discerning important pastoral goals and responses. That step was followed by a national in-person gathering in June 2022 in Chicago.

From this process, Journeying Together: A National Catholic Intercultural Encounter for Ministries with Youth and Young Adults was born. As the USCCB's response to the global Synod process and to *Christus Vivit*, Journeying Together sought to translate and implement the challenges of *Christus Vivit* for the Catholic Church in the United States. The process took its name directly from Pope Francis's exhortation: "Youth ministry has to be synodal; it should involve a 'journeying together.' . . . 'Motivated by this spirit, we can move towards a participatory and co-responsible Church, one capable of appreciating its own rich variety. . . . No one should be excluded or exclude themselves.' In this way, by learning from one another, we can better reflect that wonderful multifaceted reality that Christ's Church is meant to be" (CV, nos. 206-207, quoting the Synod's *Final Document*).

The Church in the United States stepped out on this journey in July 2020. This process was shaped by the COVID-19 crisis and was inspired by the Holy Spirit. Even with this virtual beginning, there was still hope that an in-person gathering could be celebrated within six months to bring the process to its final step. The pandemic persisted, and the delay created new challenges, possibilities, and adaptations that, with the help of the Holy Spirit, deepened the conversations.

Throughout 2020 and 2021, the participants returned to cultural family conversations, embarked on "deeper dives" to explore emerging issues, developed resources to hold local conversations, and collaborated to compile what was learned throughout the process. The original *Intracultural and Intercultural Proceedings Report* (April 2022), included in part 2 of this *Proceedings* report, served as a foundation for the June 2022 national in-person gathering in Chicago. This updated report includes now the process, proceedings, and conclusions of the national Journeying Together event, Alive In Christ, and the recommendations that emanated from the action planning sessions that took place there.

A sense of empowerment—born from the hard work of planning, dialogue, challenge, clarification, and consensus—has been the good fruit offered by the Holy Spirit to the members of the different cultural families making this journey together.

(For a more complete description of the steps of the Journeying Together process, please refer to appendix C, "Taking the Journey Together.")

Theological Foundations

Three theological principles shape the Journeying Together process. First, all of us are made in the image of God. Second, young people are called to resolute witness: to stand firm in the living and sharing of their faith. Third, God has created us to live with and for others.

Made in the Image of God

First, because all of us are made in the image of God and share a common dignity and capacity for love, young people share a role in assisting the Spirit of God in unfolding the reality of the sacred. In our scriptural tradition, Samuel lived a life of dedication in the Temple with his mentor, a priest named Eli. As a young person, Samuel heard the call of God. With the help of Eli, Samuel was the first great prophet in Israel after Moses. This young man exhorted Israel to turn from idolatry and serve God alone. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, he inaugurated the monarchy by anointing Saul as Israel's first king. He was also sent in the Holy Spirit to the small town of Bethlehem, where he entered the house of Jesse. The Spirit told Samuel that he would anoint the next king of Israel from among Jesse's sons.

The youngest of those sons was a “ruddy . . . youth with beautiful eyes,” and his name was David. As soon as David entered, God spoke to the prophet and said “There—anoint him, for this is the one!” (1 Sm 16:12). The Spirit rushed on David at that moment. This young person, open to the Lord and seeking to serve God’s people, brought victory to Israel by slaying Goliath the Philistine, united the tribes of Israel as one nation, established Jerusalem as the seat of faith and government, and sought to serve God with his life.

In the Christian Scriptures, the epitome of youth at the service of God is Mary, the Mother of Jesus. When the angel visited her, she had reached an age at which she was considered a young adult in her culture. She was challenged to embrace mystery and to embrace a role in the salvation of the world with youthful joy and trust in the God who called her. The consequence of her “yes” was a mission to nurture the Word of God under her heart and bring that Word to birth for the salvation of the world.

Called to Resolute Witness

Young people are called to stand firm in living and sharing their faith. This second theological principle of resolute witness follows from these examples. None of the young people empowered by the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures came easily by their ability to serve God. David had to struggle with his king, Saul, and with his brothers, who did not believe he was sincere in his willingness to help Israel find victory over the Philistines. Later, he had to face the reality of his own limits as he himself humbly sought to serve God as Israel’s king. He was still able to fulfill his call, making the difference God intended him to make among his people. Imagine, too, how Mary must have felt after the angel left her, a young woman, with the news of what God had done for her. One can only imagine fear, doubt, and hesitation wrapped into the “yes” she gave to a plan, still not fully known to her, to en flesh the Incarnate Word in the world.

The same is true for young people in the Church today. Offered gifts are not always readily accepted or acted on by leaders or groups, who sometimes hesitate to examine the types of things young people offer to help us better “reflect Jesus Christ” (CV, no. 39). The Holy Spirit has empowered young people to do God’s work and to embrace a vision for the future. This part of our faith story inspired Pope Francis in *Christus Vivit* to remind all youth and young adults, “You are the now of God” (no. 178). Dialogue and cross-generational co-responsibility, even

in the face of challenge, caution, or hesitation, are nonetheless part of the mission and service of young people to the Church and to the world. *Christus Vivit* reminded the whole Church that we must “appreciate the vision but also the criticisms of young people” (no. 39). The pope further reminded young people that part of their vocation is to “take risks, even if it means making mistakes. Make a ruckus! Cast out the fears that paralyze you” (no. 143).

Called to Live with and for Others

Finally, God created us to live with and for others. The Gospel shapes us to find our fulfillment in self-giving love and in the service of others. Faith is lived not in isolation but in community. We share a responsibility to accompany each other on the journey of faith, utilizing our gifts to bring the message of Christ to the world and building a more inclusive, diverse, responsive, and just society. Woven into the very fabric of our lives are holy companionship and an accompaniment that makes us co-responsible for the proclamation of the Gospel. We come as we are from wherever we are to listen, learn, and encourage. In the dialogue of everyday life, we discover the invitation to convert our hearts and draw others deeper into the reality of God. When Jesus stepped into his public ministry, he called together a diverse community of disciples who became his students and companions as they brought the Good News of salvation to others. Even more powerfully, at Pentecost the Spirit fell in fullness on a community of believers, who then took up a common mission not born of individual skills but empowered by the Spirit they shared. Two friends journeyed, disillusioned and confused, from Jerusalem to Emmaus on a Sunday morning after their teacher had been crucified. They met a stranger who joined them on the road; and in sharing their story and receiving the encouragement of his words, they found hope, nourishment, and an encounter with the risen face of God.

Christ is revealed to us and we reveal Christ to others as we accompany one another on the pilgrimage of faith. The Second Vatican Council identified the Church—“a people made one with the unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit”—as a pilgrim people, a people on journey together to the fullness of God’s Kingdom.⁶ On this journey we bring our ability to listen, to encourage, and to stand in solidarity with others. Together we motivate and challenge one another as well as appreciate, understand, and care for each other. This work is as much a task for young people as it is for any believer.

Guiding Principles

A series of guiding principles were articulated early in the Journeying Together process. They ensured that the process remained effective and that it could produce the “good fruit” that “communicates the joy of the Gospel” (CV, no. 205). From the beginning in 2018, Journeying Together sought to gather many different voices from within and beyond the walls of the Church. Those involved in youth, young adult, and campus communities, as well as those who minister with and to them, all received an invitation. The invitation was also issued to the broad spectrum of ethnic and cultural communities who form the many different “cultural families” of the Church in the United States. This invitation created a varied, profound conversation that celebrated the first guiding principle: inclusion.

Inclusion addresses the needs and supports the heart’s desires of people from diverse cultures and communities to empower them to share their gifts and dreams. Inclusion recognizes and values each unique contribution. To be inclusive means to practice a hospitality that is open and kind. When people are invited to bring their voices, everyone else must be willing to let each voice echo and be heard. Inclusion means that status, experience, and position must give way to the honest encounter of one heart, any heart, with another. In Journeying Together, inclusion has meant an opportunity for all who have participated to express freely who they are, to participate fully in the process, and to feel safe from judgment or criticism in the environment the process created.

A second principle guiding this process was to ensure that everyone, in every large- and small-group gathering, could feel confident that each community’s story would be shared in its own unique voice, providing a platform for

the resolute witness of participants. Young adults grounded in the Native American tradition could speak honestly from the sometimes confusing and wounded perspective of not being understood by elders or not always being appreciated in everyday church life. Hispanic and Latino Americans could speak with joy about those elements of cultural integration that have nourished family relationships and given them a distinct place in Catholic life in the United States. Sharing “our story with our voice” has contributed to an authentic opportunity of encounter, encouraged empathy, and fostered a deeper appreciation of all we hold in common, even in our diversity.

When people journey together, they talk. Just as importantly, however, they listen. The final principle that guided this process was a commitment to nurture sacred listening. When Moses heard his name called from the burning bush in Exodus, chapter 3, he did not listen with just his ears. He approached the bush closely; he removed his sandals because he recognized that something holy was happening. He became still, opening his heart to God’s presence in that dialogue. Sacred listening implies the same. When we are willing to listen patiently, with empathy and compassion, and to listen for understanding when someone else tells us his or her story, we can discern the holiness being shared. During the Journeying Together experience, especially during the intercultural conversations of step 3 (recounted here in part 2), the small groups followed a dialogue process to give each person a chance to share, with empathy and compassion, and to invite everyone else to listen deeply for understanding when someone else told his or her story; this process allowed us to discern the holiness being shared. Sacred listening allows us to hear the Spirit of God at work in the other and opens us to the deepening work of that same Spirit in our own heart. It is a necessary step before discerning a response and taking action.

Intercultural Conversations

An Orientation

The reports of each cultural family in this section were developed from the cultural family conversations and the intercultural dialogues. These narratives were the results of speakers' comments and participants' interactions during the gatherings for Journeying Together. Each report addresses the specific life, needs, and challenges of an individual cultural group and reflects the intention to honor the different approach and style of each group. The rich differences evident in these reports point to the depth of diversity among youth, young adults, and ministers who participated in each of these encounters.

The content of these reports was gleaned from young adults and ministry leaders who shared their stories, in their own words, through panel presentations. Bishops responded to panelists and participants by reflecting on what they heard in the process. Participants engaged in small-group discussions, offered comments and affirmations through the chat, and shared their experiences in large-group interactions. Themes were identified in each of the intercultural sessions by using software to make a "word cloud," which helped to define priorities and surface language for content raised by the participants. This introduction to the cultural family reports offers some explanation of specific terms that readers will discover in the subsequent material. The prayer for Journeying Together was used throughout the process and can be found in appendix A of this *Proceedings* report.

To prepare you to engage with this portion of the document, we invite you to consider the practice of *lectio divina*, a "reflective reading of Scripture" that invites contemplation. The practice "relies on the guidance of the Holy Spirit within the heart, as the person praying reads a passage and pauses to seek out the deeper meaning that God wants to convey through his Word."⁷ These cultural family reports are complex and insightful essays worthy of time and thoughtful consideration. At the conclusion of

each cultural family report, as well as each lesson learned (in part 3, following these family reports), reflection questions guide a deeper exploration of the journey. You may want to journal your responses to the reflection questions as a personal exercise.

Asian and Pacific Islander American

Open my eyes, open my ears, and open my heart, Lord, that I may see the goodness of your Creation.

Who Are We?

The presence of Asian and Pacific Islander (API) Catholics in the United States of America is not well known because they usually are not included in the teaching of American history. Schools tend to neglect teaching about APIs in general, so children growing up in the United States, including API children themselves, do not know much about the API presence. Furthermore, if the API presence is mentioned, API histories and cultures are often misconstrued. An example is an assumption that APIs practice only other faith traditions and not Christianity. This was not lost on API young adults during the Journeying Together panel. API young adults now see a recognition of the presence of API Catholics, as well as the acknowledgment of the contributions and gifts of API Catholics to US society.

The ethnic diversity and geographic range of APIs underscore the complexity of the community. There are so many different ethnicities and cultures under one overarching API label. It is not uncommon, then, for many APIs to claim identity differently. For instance, more than 62 percent of APIs identify themselves by their country of origin, such as Pakistani, Tongan, or Indonesian, rather than as API.⁸ This statistic suggests that API is not an agreed-upon identity

but is rather one created for easy designation by the larger society. Also, the particular cultures among APIs are not easily interchangeable because people come from a variety of countries and backgrounds that are distinctive. There are hundreds of language groups, cultural differences, and histories that do not easily meld under one identity marker. Moreover, the identity of API was fashioned in the United States during the civil rights movement to bring together these communities in a united fight against oppression and inequality. The challenge many APIs face in identifying as an API is a reality that needs to be kept at the forefront of any conversation about API communities. This challenge is not lost on the young adults who want to claim their particular cultural identity given to them by their parents but also want to be part of a larger community of APIs.

The large number of ethnic communities included under the identity marker of API Catholics complicates inclusion and definition.

Many of these individual ethnic communities do not fit neatly under some of the attributes generally associated with API Americans, especially the experiences of immigration, colonialism, or war. While many do have these experiences, they do not represent each and every community. Hence, in defining the wider community of API Catholics, one must keep in mind that finding a common thread does not erase each community's uniqueness and its particular contribution to the overall Catholic experience in the United States. Additionally, different Catholic liturgical rites are practiced by some API Catholics, such as Syro-Malabar and Syro-Malankara. These are recognized liturgical rites that identify a cultural tradition as well as a particular worship ritual. These rites create a faith experience that is grounded in the rich history of the Church and the unique culture. The varied background of API Catholics, from ethnicity to liturgical rites, provides a very complex and intriguing story of faith, culture, and family for our young adults.

What Did We Learn?

The Journeying Together panel introduced listeners to the importance of ancestors through *kupuna*, the Hawaiian word for ancestors. The ancestors are recognized because *kupuna* have guided the young adults on their faith journey. Like the communion of saints, ancestors continue to be a part of the living through shared stories and traditions. These stories are rich; some are complicated, and some are not easy to retell. But they are being told in order to

connect the generations. Many APIs have endured hardships and persecution for their faith, political upheaval in their respective countries, and devastating natural disasters that have displaced many people. Escaping these conditions pushed many to the United States of America. They came looking for security and a betterment of life. Some APIs sought the chance to worship freely without fear of persecution or execution for their beliefs. Some of the communities came to America directly from refugee camps, where they spent decades in some cases waiting for asylum. These immigrants and refugees have maintained their faith even as they have started over with little or no knowledge of the customs or language of the United States. Other API Catholics claim many generations in the United States. For instance, Chinese and Filipino Catholics claim a strong presence in the United States going back to the nineteenth century. Many came for economic betterment, educational opportunities, and life under a different political system.

Other APIs never migrated to the United States but rather claim a presence here dating before the arrival of Europeans. These include the Native Hawaiians, Chamorro, and Tongans, who were made citizens when the US government claimed their lands. Chinese and Filipinos arrived in the continental United States at the same time as explorers from Europe landed on US soil; several generations of Asian Americans have never stepped on Asian soil. Thus, APIs are more than just newcomers to the United States; they include those who helped build America from the very beginning. Nevertheless, the lack of awareness of API history ends up casting all APIs as foreigners or newcomers to the United States. The many generations' worth of API presence needs to be acknowledged in order to understand the fuller picture of API young adults.

In discussions about API Catholic communities, the panel highlighted some important contextual keys. First, the family is central to the faith journey of the young adults. This stems from learning faith through parents and grandparents, which is strengthened by other extended family members. The young adults recognize the generational tensions that can occur when many generations live under one roof. The multigenerational family setting is also crucial in maintaining connection with cultural traditions, rituals, and faith practices. Second, APIs are still not fully accepted by the larger US society. The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the bias that considers Asians to be “forever

The fifth and final consideration is passing on the faith to the next and subsequent generations. The young adults recognize that secular culture can be a challenge to their faith journey. But it is weaving their API culture with their faith that has strengthened their Catholic journey. Through this strong binding-together of culture and faith, API young adults engage with the Gospel and maintain a strong prayer life. Furthermore, API young adults need to be invited to leadership positions to help maintain the Church for the future generations. Current API young adults will carry on the faith that was brought to them by the ancestors. But as many API young adults acknowledged, passing on the faith requires the participation of all in the community. Relying on the power of God's love and the prayers of all the faithful, they will definitely lead the way on the journey of faith.

Reflection Questions

1. What in this section resonated with or inspired me? What challenged me?
2. What steps can I take to better understand and appreciate the diversity within the Asian and Pacific Islander community?
3. How can the API American emphasis on family—both those living and past—help me to grow?
4. How can I help end the experience of being “forever foreign” as well as any violence the API community has endured?

Black/African American

Open my eyes, open my ears, and open my heart, Lord, that I may see the goodness of your Creation.

This writing is offered in the memory of all persons of African descent who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith, so that we, those of us on this side of eternity, may continue the work they began. It is especially offered in the names of Servant of God Mother Mary Elizabeth Lange, OSP; Servant of God Julia Greeley; Venerable Pierre Toussaint; Venerable Fr. Augustus Tolton; Venerable Mother Henriette Delille, SHF; and Servant of God Sr. Thea Bowman, FSPA. May their beatification and canonization come as we pray, “Lord, do not delay” (see Ps 70:1):

Come by here, my Lord, come by here.
Come by here, my Lord, come by here.
Come by here, my Lord, come by here.

If you only read the above and did not hum the words to a tune, what follows may not be as efficacious. It is fitting that most of our experiences as the Black and African American (BAA) cultural family are rooted in song and praise and from time to time are accompanied by movement and dance. Our history as people of faith, our very lives, bears the joys and wounds of our experiences, and they are best expressed in song. Whether the words are originally from St. Augustine of Hippo, it is true that he (or she) who sings prays twice! “Come by here, my Lord” is an invitation for you, the reader, to join in as we, the BAA cultural family, invite you and the Lord into this moment of reading, listening, praying, and accompaniment.

Who are we? We are beautifully diverse men and women from all walks of life, generations, and experiences. We are all created in the image and likeness of God. In fact, when BAA cultural family members say, “I am Black and beautiful” (see Sg 1:5), it is not to deny other beauty but to affirm what the psalmist says to the God of our praise: “I am [we are] wonderfully made; / wonderful are your works! / My very self you know” (Ps 139:14). When you hear or see the words that remind us that Black lives matter, they offer an invitation to affirm the truth and, in solidarity, to stand with a people often denied the dignity of their meaning. It would not be necessary to express this truth if the dismissive rhetoric in secular society and within the institutional Church were not espoused.

We are Creole from southwest Louisiana, the Caribbean, and virtually every country in the continent of Mother Africa. We are from the Midwestern United States, where a Catholic of African descent, Jean Baptiste Point du Sable, settled in what is now Chicago, Illinois. For some of us, our first language may be English, French, Creole, or Spanish. We are traditional in our worship and expressive. Hallelujah! We are the hope and dreams of our ancestors, who made sure that our Catholic faith was passed on to us as a gift, that their stories of resilience entrusted to us were never forgotten, and that what they began, we must continue. We are monotheistic and Trinitarian, but we are not monolithic or one-dimensional. “There is a richness [and beauty] in our Black experience that we must share with the entire People of God. These are gifts that are part of an African past. For we have heard with Black ears and we have seen with Black eyes and we have understood with an African heart.”¹⁰

There are an estimated three million BAA Roman Catholics in the United States, representing 4.9 percent of the sixty-two million citizens of the cultural family. BAA

cultural family members may be found attending one of 798 Roman Catholic parishes considered predominantly African American, and some are immersed in multicultural parishes.¹¹ We are not inconsequential to Mother Church; we are her sons and daughters, and we bear the same indelible character on our soul by virtue of our Baptism. We love our faith, we live our faith, and some have given their entire earthly lives to our faith with joy and often teary-eyed hope in the resurrection to come. In the words of Most Rev. Fernand J. Cheri III, OFM (d. March 21, 2023), the former auxiliary bishop of New Orleans, uttered during the second Journeying Together intercultural dialogue in February 2021: “I am black. I am Catholic. I am here.” We are Black. We are truly Catholic. We are here!

During a Journeying Together virtual gathering led by the BAA cultural family, a word cloud activity revealed some prophetic responses. The most prominent word was “courage” tethered to other words like “truth,” “honesty,” and “solidarity.” These words speak to a desire for belonging, unity of mission, and accompaniment. Revelation of the word “courage” is also a lamentation in response to hurt, pain, and suffering, with a hopeful expectation of what should happen. The role of the Holy Spirit was evident in the sharing of words, and it is the “Lord, the giver of life, / who proceeds from the Father and the Son”¹² compelling all baptized persons, with courage, to foster true communion in the Body of Christ. We believe that communion is not only the gift we receive; communion is also the gift we are called to be with each other. Some words in the word cloud reflected pain, anguish, and frustration—not some sort of phantom experience, but rather an enduring pain dating back to the founding of the United States that remains with us generations later.

The BAA cultural family hungers not for food that perishes, but for the True Bread from Heaven and for the courageous love and accompaniment of the institutional leadership within the Church. There is a deep desire to heal the sin-sick soul of our world and our Church—intentionally or unintentionally scourged by racism and marked by its stain—with the balm of Gilead (see Jer 8:22). There is a need for a movement toward the Eucharist, toward Christ Jesus, in solidarity with all God’s children. The needs of the BAA cultural family are fundamentally a response to Jesus, who said, “Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty

and you gave me no drink, a stranger and you gave me no welcome, naked and you gave me no clothing, ill and in prison, and you did not care for me” (Mt 25:40, 42-43).

Varied forms of unresolved trauma experienced by different generations exist within the cultural family and consequently have had a compounded effect felt by all. The young adult generation experiences the present-day effects of trauma within American culture and the Church and the blowback from pain and suffering experienced by elders. Does the Church hear the cry of the lambs yearning from a need to be tended by their shepherds? Our young adults, as Dr. Valerie Lewis-Mosely puts it, “are the [now] Church of the 21st Century, one that is authentic and radical about the Gospel of Jesus Christ.”¹³ The elders often manifest as roadblocks to young adults responding to God’s call to serve. Elders may be resistant to sharing ministerial roles because they have struggled long and arduously to establish parishes and ministries within the Church, which has often left them feeling ignored and abandoned. There needs to be a generational atonement within the BAA cultural family so that elders, adults, young adults, and youth are not moving in different directions; rather they should move in the same direction guided by the Holy Spirit within their respective baptismal call.

These roadblocks manifest in the form of church elders being resistant to letting go of an ownership mentality within a ministry. What should happen is more of an invitation by elders to young adults to participate and collaborate, recognizing that in order to continue the work the elders began, the current generation of young adult leaders must be mentored, nurtured, and apprenticed. Young adults, through prayer and understanding, may be called to a spirit of continued patience with elders because accompaniment, within this cultural family, is two-sided. Elders need to accompany young adults and vice versa. One of the challenges in the early Church, evident in the New Testament, was the struggles in matters of table fellowship and neglect. Similarly, the BAA cultural family experience is fraught with echoes of the early Church’s treatment of Gentiles, and the familiarity remains (see Acts 6:1; Gal 2:11-14). There is a resentment of persons who dismiss pain, suffering, and wounds as simply a notion of the past. This sentiment reflects a major disconnection with an understanding of what being Black and Catholic truly means.

those Europeans who immigrated to the United States in recent years. Many cultural families who immigrated to the United States were motivated by difficult socioeconomic conditions in their country of origin and arrived to encounter varying circumstances. A Polish American family whose ancestors came to the United States prior to or during World War II (1939-1945) would likely have a different experience than would an Irish American family who immigrated to the United States during the Potato Famine (1845-1852). EAs are diverse in age and economic status and make up a significant portion of the population in nearly every region of the United States.

Despite beautiful differences in ancestral languages, customs, and more, the EA cultural experience in the United States has been defined by a willing and contentious push toward uniformity, with many distinguishing features given up in the name of “being white” or “being more American.” This theme was repeatedly identified throughout the Journeying Together process, mentioned in every part of the intercultural dialogues in step 3. In the discussion during the EA presentation, several panelists specifically stated that they had trouble identifying as EAs given how far removed they were from their familial culture. These sentiments were affirmed in the virtual chat by others who expressed a deep sense of loss when reflecting on the distinct and beautiful cultural identities of their ancestors. For example: “Since I never really thought of myself as EA, it was very interesting for me to hear so many others say the same thing. It made me reflect on the fact that so many of us were raised with an emphasis on becoming Americans with very little emphasis on the culture of those who came before us. My grandparents were all from Ireland, yet we never made any effort to preserve traditions.” At the end of the discussion, a word cloud was created to reflect key experiences and emotions during the session, generating words like “discomfort” and “universal” alongside “solidarity” and “togetherness,” reflecting the challenging but necessary nature of this dialogue.

From the initial intracultural dialogue (step 2), the EA cultural family was confronted with the idea that “whiteness robs”—the reality that many of the cultural groups who compose European Americans willingly, though in some cases reluctantly, gave up aspects of their cultural heritage in order to be white. There is a cost and an occasion for mourning when a group relinquishes aspects of its culture

for the sake of mainstream acceptance; this is not a choice that any group should have to make. European immigrants gave up what made them unique to receive the benefits provided by conforming to American norms. This disturbing realization caused some participants to share that they felt robbed of their culture, but they also identified the accompanying privilege; that is, those in other cultural families who assimilated were never fully accepted into the dominant culture.

EA Catholic young adults now seem to be largely (but not completely) untethered from their ancestral cultural communities. A recurring theme heard throughout the intercultural dialogues in step 3 was that many adults do not feel accepted in their parish communities and struggle to find any sort of community of faith. This was something that EAs had in common with all cultural families. Panelists and participants alike were also quick to note that—while not nearly to the degree experienced by non-white communities—many European migrants, such as Irish, Italian, and Polish migrants, were also on the receiving end of significant persecution. Participants recognized that the Church has struggled to welcome some immigrants of European origin, just as EAs struggle to welcome non-white immigrants today. In light of these experiences, some participants suggested that they would benefit from spending more time reflecting on our shared history as cultural families and exploring current opportunities for collaboration to forge a path forward. Some felt it was important for EAs to identify and unequivocally condemn any abhorrent behaviors—specifically racism and classism—of their ancestors, while building a strong foundation for moving forward in the spirit of dialogue, compassion, and mercy.

Some of those present from the EA community identified that willingness to have dialogue, that openness to discussion, as one of the gifts the EA cultural family brings to the Church. Others highlighted the diversity—in culture and experience—of the EA family, sharing that each of the included cultures have unique traditions, charisms, and experiences that enrich the life of our Church in a myriad of ways. Reclaiming or embracing one’s own cultural customs and inviting others into them is one of the greatest and most personal gifts anyone can offer to another. Some identified cultural expressions of food, gathering, or holiday traditions that could be enhanced by our different cultures. Others were proud of their cultural family’s

is enhanced by those on the road with them. Our walks in life do not diminish just because we did not start our journey from the same place. This comment was seen by many to be foundational to this ministry of inclusivity and compassion moving forward. Can Catholics today discover that which unites us by first coming to know and recognize what makes each cultural family unique and integral to the Body of Christ?

The fourth and final takeaway was the observation that the younger generation in the Church both is positioned to lead and, in many cases, is already leading the charge against racism. It seems that young adult participants listen with more of an open heart, willing to enter into discomfort rather than closing their heart to feel more comfortable. There exists a real opportunity here for ministry leaders to involve young adults in the life of the Church, particularly on such critical issues. Young adults are poised to lead an effort to end racism in all its forms and to build a more intercultural Church, one that is truly universal. Journeying Together was created as a way to engage young adults through intercultural encounters. There were many unexpected twists and turns along the way. The process invited and fostered relationships, fueling hopes for the fruits which are still to come.

The fundamental takeaway comes in the form of a question: Recognizing our history and the Church's diversity, how can EAs appreciate, encourage, and pursue the fullness of what it means to be Church?

Reflection Questions

1. What in this section resonated with or inspired me? What challenged me?
2. How does the historically European influence of church practice in the United States limit my perspective of the Church's diversity? How might I expand my view?
3. How might EA Catholics stand in radical solidarity with other cultural families or more fruitfully take on their own work to eradicate racism?
4. This document expresses mourning for the loss of traditional ethnic practices. In what ways does this reflect my experience? What traditions might I want to recover?

Hispanic/Latino American

*Open my eyes, open my ears, and
open my heart, Lord, that I may see
the goodness of your Creation.*

¡Somos comunidad, somos familia! We Are Community, We Are Family!

The Hispanic/Latino American (HLA) community in the United States comprises more than sixty million people¹⁵ and represents the combined identities of more than twenty countries in Latin America, the Caribbean, Spain, and the United States. The word “Hispanic” refers to the Spanish language spoken by a majority of peoples in the Americas. For historical and sociological reasons, the term is used to lump together these various ethnic groups into one large category. Many in our communities resent this labeling when done without consideration of the rich heritages that contribute to our collective identities. In general, the term “Hispanic/Latino” includes multiple generations of those born in the United States (the majority) along with immigrant populations.

We recognize diverse combinations of mestizaje and mulatez (mixed races), with heritages blended over various centuries: Native American, European, African, and Asian cultures converge in our social fabric. We speak Spanish, English, Portuguese, Nahuatl, Mixteca, Quechua, Garífuna, Arabic, Chinese, and Japanese, among other languages. While most are bilingual, fluent in English and Spanish, many young people express themselves in new “Spanglish” ways. We value family, language, elders, cultural traditions, popular piety, justice, service, and leadership. We work as grassroots leaders, campesinos (farmers), musicians, students, professors, entrepreneurs, pastoral leaders, teachers, and hospitality, service, and healthcare workers. We support Dreamers,¹⁶ whose constant struggle to overcome adversity models for us perseverance and long-term goal setting. We support comprehensive immigration reform with a path for citizenship. Beacons of faith like San Juan Diego, Santa Rosa de Lima, Santa Teresa de Ávila, San Martín de Porres, and San Óscar Romero affirm our gifts for the whole Church. Our profound Marian devotion, under various advocations, compels us to integrate our cultural identity into a Catholic faith that experiences

the maternal tenderness of God and into a sense of being one people, a Marian people, un pueblo Mariano.

Nuestra comunidad es expresión de nuestra fe ***Our Community Is an Expression of Our Faith***

More than thirty million Hispanics/Latinos in the United States identify as Catholic,¹⁷ passing on the faith from one generation to the next through family, church, schools, and cultural and civic associations. We reaffirm our identity as gente puente (bridge people) who foster the theology of encounter. God sees in our hearts and from the depths of our souls moves us into action: No hay puente sin Dios (There is no bridge without God). Bilingual and multilingual HLA Catholics are a great gift to the Church as bridge builders between two or more cultures, making rich contributions to society amid grave challenges to family, community, and diversity—embracing life and hope.

HLA young adults show a deep concern for, and often themselves suffer from, the living conditions of undocumented immigrants, children at the borders, separated families, racial discrimination and violence, and exclusion of those who identify as LGBTQ+ in the United States. They see social justice as integral to ministry. The thirst for mercy moves young Catholics to follow the footsteps of giant figures in the lucha (struggle) for human rights, better living conditions, and humane treatment of workers. They expressed hope that more and more Catholics will respond to God's call to be missionary disciples and joyfully walk with others who do not look like them.

Encontrarse es fundamental ***To Encounter One Another Is the Foundation for Living Together***

To foster a culture of encounter, HLAs embrace history, art, and popular devotions, combining liturgy, music, religious education, theological reflection, and pastoral care. Music, drama, and the arts are key vehicles for learning, teaching, and even transforming our communities. We worship in centuries-old mission buildings as well as contemporary parishes; we walk in processions, celebrate Las Posadas, experience Our Lady of Guadalupe festivities, and celebrate more than twenty titles used for Mary in our rich Catholic heritage. We pray that our personal encounter with the Crucified and Risen Christ transforms our hearts and moves us to love God and neighbor.

Young adults have expressed a need for more dialogue and identified a concern that the voiceless are often speaking to

us, but we are not listening. Many shared that the Church often does not pay enough attention to inclusion and the promotion of unity in diversity. They want to be heard, seen, and recognized. They need support to gather as HLA youth and young adults in groups and ecclesial communities; and they need to feel welcome not only as individuals but as a group, to develop a sense of belonging and ownership that will allow them to be protagonists in the life and mission of the Church. We need to be willing to have our hearts broken as we listen to the experiences of others. We show we are familia (family) when we offer radical solidarity, that is, active inclusion that stems from the practice of listening with the heart. Our Lady of Guadalupe,¹⁸ listening and talking with Juan Diego, set the example for a Church faithfully engaged in dialogue.

There is great concern that the loss of identity leads to deprivation of dignity. Hispanics/ Latinos actively struggle and work to continue cultural traditions without losing identity. One of the participants in the intercultural dialogue led by the HLA family echoed these sentiments by proclaiming, “We are not a melting pot, because melting pots contribute to the loss of who we are. We are a patchwork quilt, where everyone is integral, and the thread that holds us together is God.” Pronounced discrimination leads many to believe that they do not fully belong in the Church; struggles at the local level generate most of the hurt and misunderstandings. The Greek root of the word “parish” refers to a “house where strangers meet,” and HLA communities long for parishes that welcome, accept, embrace, appreciate, and invite their cultural identities to flourish as active members of the Church.

The global pandemic tremendously affected HLA communities, leaving many families hurting and grieving because of the losses they experienced and continue experiencing: losses of loved ones, jobs, and in some cases even hope for the future. Youth and young adult ministries have seen paid staffing levels diminished. The need to invest in and to accompany HLA youth and young adults is both urgent and important. We must walk with young people before it is too late. Society and the Church renew themselves through emerging adults. Amid all this suffering, we learned from one of the HLA panelists that “God does not wait to show off” when we are about to lose our way, and that HLAs are indeed “passionate about faith and passionate about trust.” We do not walk alone! The Church is our extended family! We are gathered and sent as missionary disciples. We support one another, consult, collaborate, and



share resources. Together we create new spaces for young people to evangelize their peers and change the world.

¡Somos Iglesia en salida! ***We Are a Church That Goes Forth!***

The Journeying Together process yielded many pastoral insights for our cultural family. The concerns, challenges, experiences, and hopes shared among all participants call us to integrate faith and life, to put our faith into action as bridge builders at all levels.

Pastoral listening is the first step to becoming a bridge builder in our local parishes, neighborhoods, and communities. We naturally witness to our faith through storytelling at family gatherings, when cooking meals, or when celebrating First Communion, marriages, and Christmas. We share our own stories and listen to other people's stories, expressing the joys and sorrows, with all their complexities, twists, and turns.

Active inclusion leads to radical solidarity with those who are hurting, oppressed, and at the margins. Pope Francis's invitation to inclusion stems from the realities lived out in the peripheries and should always be the focus of the Church moving forward. One participant even challenged

us to model solidarity as a concrete way of expressing our faith.

Intercultural competency is crucial for church leaders and young adults to grow in their skills and knowledge when working with the diverse Body of Christ. Intercultural competencies implemented in pastoral training will reaffirm the heritage and validate various identities of the HLA cultural family, and they are key to the collective well-being within the Church.

Protagonists with prophetic voices are called to speak up against injustice of any form and to transform the Church and society to be a more just and unified place where all can live and thrive. Every young adult is encouraged to exercise a prophetic voice for the common good, toward the building-up of a civilization of love.

Bridges of hope are needed in this time of uncertainty and divisive political climate. By facing hurt and persevering in healing, we bring about new hope for ourselves, our families, and all communities. We give hope when we demonstrate that walking *en conjunto* (together) with all cultural families as one Church is the only way forward.

Transformative education is the key to our full development as members of our families, cultures, and society. We have learned from our families to emphasize the formation of the whole person to serve others. This formation propels us to work hard and seek knowledge. However, we do not always find adequate schools or the support and financial resources necessary to secure a quality integral education. A complete education includes the means for vocational discernment, spiritual growth, and development. Investing financial resources for the education and ongoing formation of young HLA Catholics will lift up millions across the country, a clear benefit for Church and society.

**¡María, Madre de las Américas,
ruega con nosotros!**
**Mary, Mother of the Americas,
Pray with Us!**

In prayer, we place ourselves in Mary's care, asking for her accompaniment, asking her to form us the same way she formed her Son: that is, to know, love, and serve God in every person we meet every day. We can, and must, witness to unity in diversity so others can look at us and see the love we have for one another.

Reflection Questions

1. What in this section resonated with or inspired me? What challenged me?
2. What steps can I take to better understand and appreciate the diversity within the HLA community?
3. How does the HLA emphasis on bridge building inspire me to build bridges amid my own experiences of challenge and hope?
4. How does a more expansive notion of family and a posture of radical solidarity with those on the margins shape my Catholic identity and vocational call? What choices can I make in daily life to reflect this idea?

Native American

*Open my eyes, open my ears, and
open my heart, Lord, that I may see
the goodness of your Creation.*

Who Are We?

Indigenous communities across the United States represent 575 tribal nations with distinct cultural practices and

languages.¹⁹ Indigenous peoples' cultures and spiritual beliefs often were rooted and shaped by the lands they dwelled in. While every tribal nation is distinct, great similarities appear among the nomadic bands of the Great Plains or among the agricultural Southwest desert nations. As communities rooted in their relationship to the earth, many tribal nations are greatly aware of the importance of the natural environment.

One significant historical fact that connects nearly all tribal nations is the shared experience of historic colonialism within the wider story of the birth and development of the United States. Each tribal community experienced a distinctly different relationship with the US government and the Catholic Church. Many were displaced, confined, and nearly eradicated in the attempts to assimilate them to US culture and ways of life. This includes the ways in which the US government built schools either through its own actions or with assistance given to religious groups. Despite this history, Indigenous communities have survived and are resilient.

What Are Our Gifts?

Indigenous peoples bring many gifts to the Catholic faith. In the wake of Pope Francis's encyclical *Laudato Si'* the Church is slowly recognizing the value and importance of our care for God's whole creation. Indigenous peoples have, throughout our history, been people who are tied uniquely to the land. Land is recognized to be that which has provided us with life. Indigenous people's relationship to the land highlights the spiritual connection with the Creator in a more visible and meaningful way, especially when we think of the phrase "God in all things." This is something Indigenous people have recognized for centuries.

Indigenous people have often placed family at the center of their lives in all ways. The Catholic faith values family as the first teacher of the faith and the primary place of passing it on. Indigenous people bring a concept of family that is expansive and diverse and shows that family can be greater and stronger than the core nuclear family. Indigenous people developed a greater network of kinship systems; they have also, in many communities, valued adoption and the creation of new families. This gift allows us to always be welcoming of nontraditional families and open to the many ways in which families can be a powerful source of learning and sharing and providers of faith-filled lives.

Indigenous people have also produced saints, blessed, and servants of God over the centuries. In addition to the better-known St. Kateri Tekakwitha, the Martyrs of La Florida, Blessed Ceferino Namuncurá, and Servant of God Nicholas Black Elk are examples of those who merged their Native cultures with their Catholic faith. These figures have modeled the gifts of Indigenous people and how they have brought those gifts to deepen and enrich the Catholic faith.

What Needs Were Expressed?

Indigenous people's needs, especially when it comes to the Catholic Church, are certainly varied and individual. But collectively, there are shared concerns and ways in which the overall challenges Native peoples face could be addressed more directly by their faith community.

There is a tension inherent in being a Catholic and an Indigenous person. That tension stems from the Church's history and involvement in Indigenous assimilation policy. There is a great need for the Catholic Church to acknowledge this in a meaningful way. To some non-Catholic Indigenous people, this history presents a fundamental barrier to their even considering the Catholic faith. For Indigenous Catholics, especially lapsed Catholics, this historic tension and lack of respectful engagement from the Catholic community can prolong their struggle to remain Catholic.

One Indigenous Catholic person in our discussions spoke of the reality that the Catholic Church engaged in decades of trying to assimilate Indigenous peoples, yet today Indigenous peoples can feel forgotten by the greater Church. Inclusion means acknowledgment of the harmful history and a true seat at the table in determining the future of Indigenous Catholic ministry. This includes the importance of making sure Indigenous peoples are fully known by church leadership and communities who perhaps lack any regular engagement with Indigenous peoples.

What Did We Learn?

Indigenous peoples, including Catholics, have a complicated relationship with Catholicism. Many Indigenous Catholics face ostracization by the larger Indigenous community because of the Catholic Church's involvement in eradicating Indigenous beliefs and cultures from those who were placed in religious boarding schools. Many were taught that they needed to assimilate by shedding their cultural identity in favor of the colonial oppressors. This

history has led not only to widespread distrust of the Catholic Church among the Indigenous community, but also to Indigenous Catholics' being perceived as "less Native" than the non-Catholics within their cultural family. Similarly, Indigenous Catholics are perceived as less Catholic at times by Catholics outside Native American culture. For some, Indigenous cultures are incompatible with the Catholic faith. For many Indigenous Catholics, however, incorporating their heritage into their Catholic beliefs is but one way they have expressed their identity. After all, they are both Indigenous and Catholic. For the number of those who are Catholic and Native, an appreciation of being included and recognized is deeply important. Throughout *Journeying Together*, the inclusion of Indigenous people in this process moved the participants, and they shared a depth of gratitude.

In a community "on the rez," or reservation, everyone is family. The COVID-19 pandemic hit the Native American communities very hard. Living in close proximity and in multigenerational family households easily caused Indigenous communities to be COVID-19 hot spots early in 2020. Simply put, it is hard to isolate someone when many are living together. The lack of basic necessities in some parts of the reservations has also made life difficult for people without running water or electricity.

The Native American cultural family presentation in *Journeying Together* highlighted the need for reconciliation between the Church and Indigenous peoples. It is not enough to say "we're sorry." There is a need to grapple, to face the Church's own past, and to feel the shame and horror of the sins of the past that truly affect the present day and will always be reflected in the history of Native peoples and endless future generations. Healing this historic conflict remains the most important step for the Catholic Church to take with Indigenous peoples. Healing is possible and powerfully shown in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. As a faith community, we admit our failures and seek penance and forgiveness. Indigenous Catholics have a unique opportunity to lead the way toward reconciliation and healing, and there is a need for the greater Church to actively engage in that process.

Takeaways

The first takeaway was the need for increased awareness. Indigenous Catholics exist and are active participants and contributors in the Church and larger society. The second

Pastoral Care of Migrants, Refugees, and Travelers

Open my eyes, open my ears, and open my heart, Lord, that I may see the goodness of your Creation.

The Pastoral Care of Migrants, Refugees and Travelers (PCMRT) outreach encompasses a large number of unique and diverse communities that weave a multicolored and colorful fabric. Some cultural families have moved from one place to another for survival. Others have reconvened in new places for spiritual growth and the nurturing of family ties. Still others move regularly to make their living and to use their gifts in service of others along the way. The identified communities participating in this family include the following:

1. Ethnic families and recent immigrants to the United States: African, Brazilian, Caribbean, Haitian, and European immigrants; members of Eastern Catholic Churches, including Chaldean Catholics, Our Lady of Lebanon, the Maronite eparchies of the United States, and Our Lady of Deliverance Syriac Eparchy
2. Refugees and victims of forced migration
3. Communities on the move, which include migrant farmworkers, circus and traveling show communities, seafarers and mariners (served via Stella Maris, or Apostleship of the Sea), airport chaplaincies, and Irish Travelers

The members of this cultural family have come from varied cultures and countries and live in diverse places here in the United States. They inhabit cities as well as rural communities. They include young and old. Some are first-generation US young adults, and others have roots that sink deeper into the American experience. Some live in close-knit ethnic or cultural communities, and others are immersed in a more multiethnic experience. Each of these communities is proud of the unique contributions it offers to the broader Church. They all represent diversity in culture and in liturgy, and they share a presence in the Church that challenges us to appreciate the breadth of our faith expression.

During the Journeying Together process, a series of important themes emerged. First was the need for acceptance

that leads to inclusion. Participants identified a lack of representation in the decision-making process of parishes. Often a group might be sidelined or left out of the normal structures of the pastoral advisory process. One participant spoke of the refugee experience with gratitude for the resettlement support that the local church offered, but she also spoke of the confusion generated when that same church did not include her in its everyday life. This discomfort was augmented by images used in the local church and the school that focused on the stereotyped labels of poverty, hunger, and desperation to raise money to “help refugees.” Participants also revealed their frustration that they were often burdened with having to explain their roots and their faith to others. One panelist—a member of one of the sui juris Eastern Catholic Churches, whose family has roots in Iraq—stated that in sixteen years of Catholic education there was never a mention of other expressions of the Catholic faith apart from the experience of the Latin Church. He stated, “People weren’t even sure we were Catholic.”

Inclusion also means cultural integration. Participants spoke of the invisibility they often experience, especially as young adults. Exclusion from facility usage or restrictions on where a group might meet or what relationship it might have to the overall parish make people feel they are strangers in their own Church. The Haitian Catholic experience for one young adult participant is one where culture and faith “is celebrated in song, language, and dance.” In her parish community, these expressions were tempered over time because the larger white community misunderstood these elements in ritual and were not comfortable with these particular expressions. The Haitian community experienced this tempering as a lack of respect. This panelist noted, sadly, “Ignorance is not bliss. It hurts.”

A second theme that emerged explored the reality of bias and discrimination. Participants agreed that there is a lack of racial unity in the mainstream (white) Church. There is a desire for the Church to be a leader in reshaping the racist environment that participants sometimes experience. Participants identified this racism as the result of ignorance that everyday life and education in the faith have not dispelled. One panelist talked about the struggle “to find a sense of belonging.” When it comes to the bias born of racist behavior, participants said, the Church needs to be called to educate people to “appreciate that we are all made in the image of God.”

This bias is expressed in another way. Members of traveling communities find that because they are not regularly connected to parish communities, they are not valued when they need pastoral care or the sacraments. In the world of the traveling circus, for example, where individuals live on the road and have little opportunity to interact outside their traveling community, young people encounter a lack of acceptance because they may not fit into the pattern of a parish's programs. Sometimes sacramental needs are hard to meet because travelers simply cannot conform to already established parish schedules. They experience this situation as a lack of acceptance. One participant stated that such behavior on the part of mainline parish churches convinces them that Catholics in the United States "don't understand diversity."

Even with the challenges that these varied communities experience, they are also quick to identify the gifts and the graces they bring to the Church in the United States. Along with the admission that the great diversity of custom and practice is a gift these groups bring to the broader Church, two other elements were identified:

1. **Pride.** Each community is proud of the unique perspective that it can bring to the larger Church. There is an eagerness to share, to reach out, and to educate so there may be mutual understanding. They believe such sharing will deepen an appreciation of the depth and breadth of our faith experience overall.
2. **Richness.** A second gift offered by these PCMRT communities is the recognition of our common riches. When one looks at and appreciates our cultural, liturgical, racial, and ethnic diversities, one can be invited into a deeper dialogue with what it means to be Catholic. The members of these communities who have had that "starting-over experience"—because of travel, displacement, or the need to live on the move—already experience the "constancy of God who is always there for us," as stated in the panels. Encounters with these communities, and growth together in faith with them, can produce the same rich homestead. Hope for them is planted there.

All of this group reflection surfaced certain needs that many of our PCMRT communities see as important in our unfolding faith journey.

Beyond efforts to welcome youth from a variety of communities, there appears to be a gap in the Church's response to the pressures and issues of these youth in the preaching and practice of the Church. There is a need for vigilance on the part of church leaders to embrace youth from this cultural family, who is seen sometimes as being on the periphery. Efforts should be made to ensure that the Church is truly the second home this cultural family longs for.

Awareness of the different rites and traditions of various groups is also an important need. Taking the further step of integrating these realities as much as possible into parish life will also show respect for the people who bring these unique realities to the Church.

There must be a frank admission that racism is still a reality in our communities. In humility, the Church must make a commitment to identify areas of racist and xenophobic behavior and examine how each parish can move beyond the fears and the stereotypes that still restrict and divide us.

Division is born from not knowing and not listening to the other. The Church needs to be a place that ensures that people can speak and listen together in a gratifying and life-giving way. At the same time, parishes' education programs must strengthen the specific faith of young adults and expand the broader Church's understanding of its diversity and beauty. These things will affirm the common dignity we share in Jesus.

There is a need for the Church to be present to all sorts of people. The Church—especially bishops, other clergy, and adult leaders—must be present in service to those who, because of fear or other pressures, have not darkened our doorways.

Our ability to build bridges and close gaps together relies on a few pastoral imperatives that surfaced in the PCMRT group discussions.

1. **Accompaniment rather than assimilation.** More than encouraging mere presence in a parish structure, the Church must make efforts to reach into the PCMRT communities to cultivate parish leadership, to provide clergy and lay adults as mentors to help young adults to grow in faith and spirituality, and to help each

Lessons Learned

Journeying Together is an evangelical enterprise. In *Christus Vivit*, Pope Francis writes, “Youth ministry has to be synodal; it should involve a ‘journeying together’ that values ‘the charisms that the Spirit bestows in accordance with the vocation and role of each of the Church’s members, through a process of co-responsibility. . . . Motivated by this spirit, we can move towards a participatory and co-responsible Church, one capable of appreciating its own rich variety, gratefully accepting the contributions of the lay faithful, including young people and women, consecrated persons, as well as groups, associations and movements. No one should be excluded or exclude themselves” (no. 206, quoting the Synod’s *Final Document*).

Participatory. Spirit-filled. Co-responsible. Appreciating diverse gifts and experiences. Inclusion. These themes helped guide the process, and we are called to share the fruits of this journey. What follows in this part are the six central lessons that emerged over the two years of synodal conversation: embrace of historical memory, active inclusion, diversity and giftedness, practice of accompaniment, formation possibilities, and an enduring hope.

We invite the reader to prayerfully reflect on each one of these lessons learned:

Embrace of Historical Memory

Open my eyes, open my ears, and open my heart, Lord, that I may see the Holy Spirit at work in this lesson. Help me discern how you are calling me to do what is mine to do.

When we celebrate the Eucharist, we are met with the words, “Do this in memory of me.” We eat the bread. We

drink the cup. We proclaim the death of the Lord Jesus Christ until he comes again. We do this often. This is a function of our memory as people of faith, what is called “anamnesis.” As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* notes, in anamnesis, “the liturgical celebration always refers to God’s saving interventions in history.”²⁰ Every Eucharist is a re-presentation of the Paschal Mystery; therefore, at every Eucharist we bring a historical mystery to bear upon our lived experiences. We continue to engage the history of our faith by living through the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, Triduum, Easter, and Ordinary Time that shape the liturgical year. These seasons connect our remembrance of the birth, life, death, and triumphant Resurrection of Jesus. Participation in life through the liturgical year invites us to “live his mystery in our own lives.”²¹ Our commitment to the Eucharist and the liturgical year indicates that we as a Church are no stranger to engaging our faith’s history and making space for it to shape and change our lives. The Catholic Tradition is rooted in acts of remembrance, yet members of our Church feel forgotten amid such remembrance.

The Journeying Together process revealed that some of the cultural families in our Church do not feel wholly seen because the Church has not acknowledged their histories. Instead, it has sought to graft them into the family without reckoning with the ways that the Church sometimes participates in the inflicting of wounds. Therefore, we lift two significant areas of concern from the cultural families, concerns that invite the Church to become full participants in the life of its members just as it expects its members to be full participants in the Church’s life. These two areas of concern are (1) the Church’s active embrace of history to connect to the trauma and wounds of its cultural families and (2) its acknowledgment of the connection between cultural ancestors and saints as markers of history.

In Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*, the protagonist Sethe introduces the concept of “rememory” when she says, “Some

things go. Pass on. Some things just stay. I used to think it was my rememory. You know. Some things you forget. Other things you never do.”²² As Sethe remembers slavery’s traumatic wounds, readers are invited to take a haunting journey with her, the ghost of her baby, and the new friends she makes along the way. This process foists itself upon readers and discomforts them as they relive that history. Rememory demonstrates the connection between the past and the present and shows how refusal to wrestle with painful memories infringes on freedom.

Through *Journeying Together*, we witnessed several cultural families’ sharing of how they have experienced the Church’s refusal to wrestle with the histories they bring with them. The BAA family asked for “continued acknowledgment of the pain and suffering, past and present . . . through the perpetual healing of memory.” The Native American family pointed us to the historical fact that many tribal nations are connected by the shared experience of colonialism, an experience that is not detached from how the Catholic Church was involved in Indigenous assimilation policy. Given this history, they requested that the Catholic Church acknowledge this in meaningful ways. They suggested that we grapple with and face our own past and feel the shame and horror of the sins of the past that truly affect the present day. The HLA cultural family gave us a sense of what this grappling could look like: “We need to be willing to have our hearts broken as we listen to the experiences of others. We show we are familia (family) when we offer radical solidarity, that is, active inclusion that stems from the practice of listening with the heart.” This cultural family reminds us that attending to each other’s experiences, a part of which means paying attention to our histories, requires that we put our hearts on the line, that we break our hearts with the things that have broken our brothers and sisters’ hearts. In doing so, we begin to bridge the gap between us and dwell much more richly as a family unit.

The second area of concern lifted during the *Journeying Together* process is acknowledging the connection between cultural families’ ancestors and Catholic saints. Many, if not most, of the cultural families pointed to the significance of their ancestors as passing down not only cultural awareness but religious traditions. The ancestors walked by faith on this plane and still impart wisdom in the next place; therefore, they exist as people whom

cultural families still esteem. The API cultural family made the connection explicit: “Like the communion of saints, ancestors continue to be a part of the living through shared stories and traditions. These stories are rich; some are complicated, and some are not easy to retell. But they are being told in order to connect the generations.” The Native American family also lifted up that Indigenous people have ancestors who have become saints, blessed, and servants of God over the centuries. And closely linked is how the BAA family offered its report “in the memory of all persons of African descent who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith, so that we, those of us on this side of eternity, may continue the work they began.” Whether their ancestors are beatified or canonized, or whether they simply live in the collective memory of the community, each cultural family recognizes a set of ancestors who give them some sense of the saintly and the sacred. These ancestors are not antithetical to the Catholic tradition of the saints; they are in communion with those saints and represent the cloud of witnesses who bring and sustain their descendants in the faith.

Attention to the continuity between cultural family ancestors and Catholic saints can help us better attend to the histories that cultural families share with the Church. Likewise, embracing the traumatic histories and historical wounds of the cultural families helps us to walk in solidarity and share the burdens they have carried. The pivot to the language of “sharing” is intentional because the purpose of *Journeying Together* is to bridge the real and perceived gaps between the cultural families and the Church. This process seeks to obliterate a narrow sense of the Church as confined to “us,” a sense that perceives other cultural families as “them.” *Journeying Together* moves us toward being reconciled and transformed into a fully inclusive church family.

Reflection Questions

1. What of this lesson speaks to my own personal experience?
2. How does the Spirit stir in me given the notion of rememory, or given the role that ancestors and saints play in my life of faith?
3. What obstacles need to be addressed?
4. What response is necessary for me to make personally? For us to make collectively as Church?

Active Inclusion

Open my eyes, open my ears, and open my heart, Lord, that I may see the Holy Spirit at work in this lesson. Help me discern how you are calling me to do what is mine to do.

Journeying Together offers a story of faith; truly, it provides many stories gathered through a common experience of encounter, conversation, and dialogue. Over several months, we heard individual and cultural family stories. A consistent theme emerged through these stories: the desire for inclusion—to be warmly welcomed, given opportunities to participate in the life of the community, appreciated for gifts shared, acknowledged as sons and daughters of God, and recognized as contributors to the life of the Church in service to humanity.

Sadly, this theme is most clearly articulated as an absence. Each cultural family expressed in its own way a deep desire for belonging that often was not realized. Person after person, regardless of cultural family, wanted to be included, to be seen and engaged as full members of the community. This profound longing for Christian community was expressed through the retelling of countless experiences of not being welcomed, seen, or trusted. Sometimes the young adults felt relegated to limiting or nominal roles—like setting up for a meeting, but not asked to participate in preparing the agenda or assisting in other decision-making moments. Numerous participants voiced hurt and frustration about how their gifts and desire to serve have gone unnoticed or, worse, been disregarded.

Inclusion is an essential aspect of the Catholic community. The book of Genesis tells us that every person is created in the image and likeness of God, referred to as *imago Dei* (see Gn 1:26-27). Our existence as human beings stems from our relationship to God, our Creator, and secures for each and every one of us an inherent worth and dignity. The concept of *imago Dei* is the basis of human dignity and thus demands respect for every person. Building on human dignity, as people of faith, we are called to love one another as Jesus loved us (see Jn 13:34-35). This call to love sets the stage for inclusion, where care and respect are lived out in community. Journeying Together, from the very beginning, sought to gather young adults and ministry leaders across cultural families for substantive conversation in which the guiding principles of inclusion and

respect for unique voices would provide space for resolute witness. The process led to an authentic encounter, encouraged empathy, and deepened appreciation of one another.

In exploring this desire, we understand that inclusion is more than a sense of welcome, yet inclusion is not possible without a spirit of welcome. Hospitality reflects a stance of welcome and openness rooted in human dignity. The notion of welcome in the Journeying Together conversations raised significant questions among participants and ministry leaders. For example: Who is responsible for welcoming? Is it only the pastor, or do all the baptized bear some responsibility? Who has the authority to welcome? Who has ownership of a place or a ministry? Does the dominant culture welcome the newcomer? In whose name do we welcome? The complexity of community is illustrated in different approaches to inclusion. While we may readily welcome the stranger or the neighbor, how do we welcome our brothers and sisters in Christ? These questions become even more relevant in today's society if that brother or sister speaks a different language, comes from a different cultural background, or is part of a different generation.

We celebrate the inherent dignity and worth of each human person with unique gifts and experiences. Pope St. John Paul II wrote, “Being a person in the image and likeness of God thus also involves existing in a relationship, . . . a prelude to the definitive self-revelation of the Triune God: a living unity in the communion of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. . . . It also means that man and woman, created as a ‘unity of the two’ in their common humanity, are called to live in a communion of love, and in this way to mirror in the world the communion of love that is in God.”²³ The Trinity, as a communion of beings bound by love, offers participants and indeed the whole Church a model of inclusion that is grounded in holy unity. As we work to create a more inclusive Church, we must respect unique voices, provide safe spaces for stories to be shared, and embrace our brothers and sisters as a clear witness of what it means to be Catholic.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* offers guidance for our response: “The dignity of the human person requires the pursuit of the common good. Everyone should be concerned to create and support institutions that improve the conditions of human life” (no. 1926). Journeying Together participants from various cultural families voiced real challenges that cry out for a response. For example, the Native American and Hispanic/Latino American cultural

families noted the tremendous impact the pandemic had on their communities. Members of the API and BAA cultural families expressed concern about increasing numbers of acts of violence toward their communities. How can we as Church work to improve the quality of life for our brothers and sisters across cultural families?

The HLA cultural family identified themselves as bridge builders reaching across cultures. Their report said that as a means to reach those on the margins, “active inclusion leads to radical solidarity with those who are hurting, oppressed, and at the margins. Pope Francis’s invitation to inclusion stems from the realities lived out in the peripheries and should always be the focus of the Church moving forward.” The principle of inclusion is more than a lofty ideal; it is grounded in respectful relationship, unity, and work for the common good as an expression of our Catholic faith.

True inclusion means claiming one another as family and supporting one another as brothers and sisters. Taking a stand for one another is taking a stand for human dignity and for the common good. Inclusion requires “defending and promoting fundamental and inalienable human rights.”²⁴ For the Body of Christ, inclusion means the unconditional embrace of our brothers and sisters, especially those in need. For this reason, the Church “maintains certain principles of justice and equity as they apply to individuals, societies, and international relations. In the course of the centuries and with the light of the gospel she has worked out these principles as right reason demanded. In modern times especially, the Church has enlarged upon them” (GS, no. 63). The intercultural encounter of *Journeying Together* reminds us of the Church’s long-standing commitment to uphold justice, right relationship, equity, and communion.

During a meeting with the Ministry Leader Advisory Group, a ministry leader reflected on the graces of *Journeying Together*. He spoke of the early Church, especially the tensions and divisions among them, as recounted by St. Paul: “Each of you is saying, ‘I belong to Paul,’ . . . or ‘I belong to Cephas’” (1 Cor 1:12). The ministry leader’s prayer was that this experience of encounter with our brothers and sisters, combined with the gift of listening to their shared stories, would teach us how to be Church anew. While preserving cherished cultural traditions, *Journeying Together* helps diminish divisions among us. Imagine how the members of Christ’s Body, living their

call to love one another through a radical hospitality and compassionate care, can revitalize the Church. The grace of inclusion leads to true communion and the fullness of unity. How can we, individually and collectively, foster the fullness of inclusion?

Reflection Questions

1. How did the personal stories heard through *Journeying Together* resonate with or challenge my experience of inclusion?
2. What keeps me from being more inclusive?
3. How is the Spirit calling me to attitudes of respect or work for the common good?
4. What response is needed to help the local and universal Church be more inclusive?

Diversity and Giftedness

Open my eyes, open my ears, and open my heart, Lord, that I may see the Holy Spirit at work in this lesson. Help me discern how you are calling me to do what is mine to do.

The lesson of inclusion captures what binds these cultural families together and reflects the ontological reality of the Holy Trinity. This reality calls us to communion and invites members of every cultural family to full participation. The nature of the Holy Trinity, however, also reflects the beauty of diversity, which we are also called to acknowledge. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—these three distinct persons remain in perpetual, loving relationship with one another, fostering infinite goodness. Fr. Carlo Rocchetta describes the generosity within the Trinity as “communion of difference.” In “The Holy Spirit and Marriage” he demonstrates that diversity is a strength, writing that the Trinity is “a communion of persons that makes of difference a source of exchange and mutual wealth.”²⁵ Similarly, Fr. Allan Figueroa Deck, SJ, notes that differences enrich relationships; they do not undermine them.²⁶ Finally, the XV Ordinary Synod applauds diversity, noting that God’s creative work “‘establishes distinctions’ within the chaos of the indistinct, imprinting on the cosmos the beauty of order and the harmony of diversity.”²⁷ Harmony is a vivid image; in harmony, distinct sounds come together to produce something more beautiful than any single note could make on its own.

Each cultural family's report highlights the gifts of its community. As we acknowledge the diversity of gifts, we must also recognize the gift of diversity. Our differences expand our notion of Catholicism, helping us to see with a richer, more complete perspective. As Catholics, we treasure each of the notes the cultural families sing as well as the harmony we collectively produce. Journeying Together affords us an opportunity to more mindfully listen for the fullness of the harmony, to share our gifts with one another, and to grow as Catholics as we accept the gifts of others. When we open ourselves to recognize the insights and strengths of a particular cultural family and to learn from it, we are able to move from "their gifts" to "our gifts." It is in this spirit that this part encourages us not only to pause and reflect upon the many diverse gifts Journeying Together has lifted up, but also to consider how these gifts might form and expand our own Catholic imagination.

In the 1987 *National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry*, the bishops of the United States wrote that with true integration, distinct "cultural values and religious traditions are to be respected. Beyond that we must work towards mutual enrichment through interaction among all cultures."²⁸ Journeying Together has allowed us to celebrate and honor our differences as well as recognize opportunities in which we may learn from others. Before any integration of another cultural family's gifts can happen, we need to first raise questions about cultural appropriation. One of the members of the editorial team remembered a lay master of divinity student raising this issue in class. The student had witnessed liturgical practices that did not come from her own culture but nonetheless deeply moved her. She wondered whether it would be cultural appropriation to employ a Catholic practice that was religiously hers, but not ethnically hers. And what about those she ministered to? Could she bring this practice to them with integrity? How do we ensure that we avoid cultural appropriation, but embrace cultural appreciation?

It is our hope that all may have an experience of Catholicism that, while culturally not their own, moves them closer to God. Perhaps we experience this at a Mass that celebrates the feast of the Vietnamese Martyrs. Maybe we hear a descendant's story about boarding schools and realize the anger, grief, and need for healing that many Native Catholics continue to grapple with. Perhaps we participate in a parish's St. Patrick's céilí dance or Oktoberfest event. We may have been touched by a story of a recent migrant

to the United States or by a refugee who recounts the ways Catholics and Catholic organizations helped his family to create a home in a new country. Or maybe we process with others, sing songs, pray, and join the feast for Las Posadas. The occasions for intercultural encounters are many, given the ethnic diversity of the Church in the United States; and the experiences of our sisters and brothers in the faith, regardless of ethnicity, should move us.

While we cannot offer an in-depth response to all the nuances and complexities of cultural appropriation, we offer some considerations. First, is the contextual depth of the object, practice, history, saint, or other place of intercultural encounter fully understood? Make sure conversations are held with Catholics within that cultural family so that the significance of the encounter is fully grasped.

Second, prior to taking this practice, saint, story, or other artifact elsewhere, consider how the home community feels about this. Someone shared an anecdote of a community of Catholics from West Africa who invited a woman to a festival. When she arrived in her Western-style pantsuit attire, her colleagues and friends commented that it was customary to dress in a special "gown" for that type of gala; she confessed she did not own an African outfit appropriate for the occasion. A few weeks later, she received a gift from the community: a traditional outfit from their region. She was invited to wear this for future pan-African celebrations. A short time later, this same woman was invited to the canonization of St. Kateri Tekakwitha. She consulted with Native leaders to inquire whether she should wear Native attire appropriate for the special occasion or attend in her Western-style clothing; they asked that she arrive in her Western attire. Staying in dialogue with each host community signals mutual respect and will likely lead to deeper appreciation.

Third, when appropriate, make the sharing of culture a mutual process. In some situations, it is appropriate simply to listen, such as when a group's experience has been marginalized and so moving forward requires recentering this experience. However, it is also important to have times when mutual sharing can occur. Journeying Together worked to ensure that Catholic youth and young adults of all ethnicities, experiences, and countries of origin entered into dialogue, which includes courageous speaking as well as humble listening.

Please keep in mind that these three guidelines are meant to be a beginning approach to discernment and are not simple tests that ensure of cultural appreciation; as with all things, proper prudence must always be exercised. With this caveat to avoid cultural appropriation and instead engage in a formative cultural appreciation, we can turn to the abundant gifts that are present within and across these six cultural families.

Our Journeying Together process illuminated the giftedness of the various communities in the Catholic Church in the United States. And with this illumination, we should feel our own sense of Catholicism expanded as these gifts are seen no longer as “their gifts” but as “our gifts.” After all, no one takes a lamp and hides it under a basket; instead, we place it on a stand where it can bring light to everything (see Lk 11:33-36; Mt 5:15-16; Mk 4:21-22).

A variety of experiences—some painful, some joyful—have shaped the way our particular ethnic group has informed our own Catholic identity. Each cultural family has come to different insights about what it means to be Catholic. These insights, when freely offered and fully received, are a grace for the Church as a whole as well as for individual persons beyond our cultural family.

We are called to share the gifts of our own personal community. The Black bishops of the United States said this very well in 1984 in *What We Have Seen and Heard*. Referring to Pope Paul VI’s 1969 homily in Kampala, Uganda, the bishops wrote, “We believe that these solemn words of our Holy Father Paul VI were addressed not only to Africans today but also to us, the children of the Africans of yesterday. We believe that the Holy Father has laid a challenge before us to share the gift of our Blackness with the Church in the United States.”²⁹ Amen! Each is called to share the gifts of his or her cultural family with the Church in the United States. We are all likewise called to “open wide our hearts” to the witness of our fellow Catholics.³⁰

In their 2018 pastoral letter *Open Wide Our Hearts*, the bishops of the United States called us to recognize the racism within our hearts, our history, and our current society. We begin by being vulnerable to the pain and suffering that people have experienced: that is, being willing to see how any of us, as good people, unwittingly act in a way that goes against our beliefs, or to recognize occasions when we remained silent in the face of personal or social sin. We

can see our own errors and become more aware of our sisters and brothers.

Journeying Together is one effort to promote healing and relationship in our Church and world. In focusing on the gifts that those outside of our cultural family offer us, we see the beauty, wisdom, and richness of other communities’ experiences; we celebrate our differences and grow in the sharing. Through thoughtful dialogue, prayer, and learning, “their gifts” truly become “our gifts.” In the end, we not only work to heal wounds and end the sin of racism but also become more deeply, broadly, and authentically Catholic.

Reflection Questions

1. When has an experience of cultural appreciation brought me closer to God?
2. Where do I see courageous speaking and humble listening taking place in my ministry?
3. When have I experienced the graces of diversity in my own life?
4. How has Journeying Together expanded my sense of Catholicism?
5. What actions are needed to heal the wounds and end the sin of racism?
6. What actions are needed to realize “their gifts” as “our gifts”?

Practice of Accompaniment

Open my eyes, open my ears, and open my heart, Lord, that I may see the Holy Spirit at work in this lesson. Help me discern how you are calling me to do what is mine to do.

The whole experience of Journeying Together could serve as an excellent example of what we mean when we speak of accompaniment and how it is experienced in the life of the faithful. Young adults representing the different cultural families in the Catholic Church in the United States shared their gifts and talents, the vibrancy of the lived practices of their faith, the richness of their cultural values, and their appreciation for diversity. They also shared their experiences of pain, disillusionment, racism, and disrespect demonstrated by church leaders and others. Yet they encountered each other, listened to one another, and became companions.

Accompaniment is one of the central themes in Pope Francis’s vision for the Church, as one characteristic in transforming the Church into a missionary Church, a “Church which ‘goes forth.’”³¹ Journeying Together participants responded to Pope Francis’s insistence that we should be companions of all and live the “art of accompaniment,” characterized by the delicacy with which the Church approaches the “sacred ground of the other.” Thus our walking together could have the healing rhythm of proximity, with a respectful and “compassionate gaze which also heals, liberates and encourages growth in the Christian life” (EG, no. 169).

During the Journeying Together process, young adults expressed an overriding desire, a need, to be accompanied spiritually, pastorally, and yes, humanly. During a deadly global pandemic—exacerbated by the social unrest of more prominent and frequent acts of racism and by frustrations of not being taken seriously in church structures—young adults voiced the need to be accompanied so they can navigate these and similar challenges with people who genuinely intend to journey with them in faith. At the same time, youth and young adults want to be seen as equal companions on the journey of elders, children, and church leaders.

Their honest and sacred encounters with one another showed the Church in the United States how to be an accompanying Church, where time spent with one another is important, where unity prevails over conflict, and where diversity is celebrated without lacking mercy, closeness, listening, discernment, and patience. How can the Church live out this universal call of being an accompanying Church in the United States? Namely, it lives out this call by recognizing that accompaniment entails journeying side by side with the people of God, not reducing or equating pastoral accompaniment to direction or to hierarchical responsibility. It means making the journey together, as companions for one another, by being with “people at every step of the way, no matter how difficult or lengthy this may prove to be” (EG, no. 24). Some more concrete ideas were mentioned:

- Empowering young adults to make the decisions that affect their pastoral and spiritual journeys
 - Materializing this trust by inviting young adults into decision-making structures and by assigning adequate budgets to respond to their human, pastoral, and spiritual needs
- Creating spaces where cultural diversity is shared, honored, uplifted, and promoted
 - Attending to the concerns of the young, which must be the concerns of the Church (see GS, no. 1)
 - Trusting in the gifts and talents of young adults in the service of faith communities

In the end, one could affirm that Journeying Together was an example of the evangelizing mission of the Church in the United States that brings people closer to God and to one another in a diverse context. Young adults have given us the model and the mindset to be companions of one another.

Reflection Questions

1. When and how have I felt pastorally and spiritually accompanied?
2. When have I accompanied someone in the journey of faith? Whom did I accompany? What did I do? Why is this memorable to me?
3. How could I replicate the Journeying Together experience to foster more accompaniment in my faith community? In the Church at large?

Formation Possibilities

Open my eyes, open my ears, and open my heart, Lord, that I may see the Holy Spirit at work in this lesson. Help me discern how you are calling me to do what is mine to do.

One clear voice, spoken across many different cultural families, called the Church to be more focused in various aspects of our human and spiritual formation. This particular call encompasses many different facets of educational programming and accompaniment. It is an opportunity to nourish not only the cultural communities themselves but also the Church.

Many saw education in the faith as a means to ground their Catholic identity while empowering youth and young adults to be evangelizers. At the same time, presenting the breadth of Catholic teaching in a way that encounters the human experience affords opportunities for personal spiritual growth and clarity in a world of many different mixed messages.

Young people believe that the Church, too, must be open to a deeper educational experience that allows parishioners and parish leaders to encounter the lives, the stories, and the religious experiences of the various cultures that compose our faith communities. Some approaches to this type of encounter include listening sessions at the parish or diocesan level, panel discussions that allow the various cultural families to describe their experiences of the Church and society, and other bridge-building activities. This kind of listening, dialogue, and relationship building can be transformative; it deepens the Church's self-understanding and allows the storyteller to find acceptance and an authentic place within the life of a faith community.

Because some people today are on the move from country to country, job to job, opportunity to opportunity, formation in the faith must also take advantage of social media and other electronic forms that allow certain portability of information, support, and spirituality. Formational opportunities that provide greater access to varied groups of people would assist a more mobile population by providing specific education and a deepening sense of the Church's presence to all her people.

As much as youth and young adults demand the use of media to broaden their understanding of the faith, they also long for opportunities to find companionship that offers both support and a mentoring spirit to assist them in the explicit journey of faith. Fellow travelers on the journey who are more seasoned, who are patient, who may exercise some form of lay or clerical leadership, and who are willing to listen are necessary to deepen formational experience in a sensitive and inclusive way.

Along with explicit educational encounters, young people from varied cultural communities ask for opportunities to have their stories heard by the rest of the Church. They long for companionship and for a mentorship that moves beyond a classroom or other formal setting to provide a nourishment that is personal. Additionally, they long for communication in and about the faith that utilizes the various means of social communication so that they may be assured of moments of mentoring, spiritual support, and greater access to the Word dwelling in our midst and journeying with us along the way.

Reflection Questions

1. What role has formation played in my own spiritual and human journey?
2. What are the obstacles to my deep and transformative formation?
3. What pastoral and strategic responses are needed to better accompany, mentor, and nourish young people?

An Enduring Hope

Open my eyes, open my ears, and open my heart, Lord, that I may see the Holy Spirit at work in this lesson. Help me discern how you are calling me to do what is mine to do.

This Journeying Together process was marked by an enduring hope. Yes, sin, pain, anger, and suffering are parts of this story. But consistently, hope has had the last word. In the cultural family reports we heard, for example, a hope for true reconciliation between the Church and Native peoples. The PCMRT family hoped for deeper encounters that lead to authentic appreciation and greater belonging. We heard a hope for recovering traditions from ancestors as well as standing firm against racism within the EA family. The HLA family witnessed to hope through its “thirst for mercy” and commitment to bridge building. The BAA family expressed a hope for healing the sins of racism that mar our Church and world. The API American family hoped for full inclusion and a greater appreciation of the diversity within its community, both from those within the community and those outside it. Finally, hope was implicit in the Journeying Together process itself; simply gathering to discuss our experiences was a statement of hope, a recognition that something greater is possible.

Colloquially, when we speak of hope, we are referring to a desire for a particular outcome. Although desiring holy, grace-filled outcomes is good, Christian hope as a theological virtue goes beyond outcomes and is more about trust. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* reminds us that desiring true happiness is a longing placed in us by God and is a good; hope is our response to this longing (see no. 1817). Hope is about putting aside our own strength and relying on the power of the Holy Spirit. This

response points us to our own growth as well as that of others. It helps us to persevere and respond with creativity when we face challenges. Hope is sometimes all we have in the most difficult moments in our lives; still, this hope can sustain us. It buoys us even when we face formidable obstacles and brings us a determination and a gladness (see CCC, no. 1818). Hope, captured well in Jesus's Beatitudes, will "trace the path that leads through the trials that await the disciples of Jesus" and bring us to the Promised Land (CCC, no. 1820).

The Spanish word *esperar* can provide insight into Christian hope, where the English understanding falls somewhat short. *Esperar* can mean "to hope," and it can also mean "to wait." When we couple these understandings, *esperar* is not just to desire something but to anticipate its arrival. It is a hope that includes trust, a faith that what has been promised will come to fulfillment. The coming of the Messiah is a vivid illustration of the ways hope and waiting are intertwined. The holy women and men of the Hebrew Scriptures lived lives that were just, merciful, and humble (see Mi 6:8). Each showed expectant hope for the promised Messiah whom the prophets foretold. Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, and the wise men witnessed angels or a star heralding the arrival of the child: a child not just hoped for, but expected. And every Advent we wait and we hope—that is, we joyfully anticipate God's faithful assurance in the promise of the Incarnation. This is the ongoing drama of hope from the earliest stories of the Bible: God promises, and we trust.

Hope, for Catholics, is ultimately grounded in the assurance of God's promises, in a deep and abiding faith that God is with us and is leading us into a life more beautiful and true than we could ever imagine. Hope is a gateway to other virtues. Hope allows us to endure events that frustrate us; it grants courage when we are riddled with doubt or lack confidence; it can spark gladness when we are weary; and it evokes justice and compassion in the face of another's suffering. Hope buoys us when we might otherwise sink into despair, sin, fear, or hate.

Importantly, hope is more than a desire; it is a choice. It is a brave choice. It is a choice to keep going when the obstacles are many. It is a choice to reach out when closing ourselves in is easier. It is a choice to work toward love, peace, justice, mercy, and Christ's in-breaking rather than

to go about business as usual. When we act in hope, we witness to our anticipation that God's promises will be fulfilled. This expectant nature of hope demonstrates much of its power. When we choose hope, we do not just dare to dream differently; we declare that God's promises are in the process of becoming.

Hope was illustrated in a vivid way on the first Easter Sunday morning when Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome were walking to the tomb to anoint Jesus' body. It was just after sunrise, and as they walked they realized that they had no way to enter the tomb. A heavy stone blocked the entryway, so they asked the obvious question: "Who will roll back the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" (Mk 16:3). Rather than turning back in discouragement, they kept going. They had a job to do. They were not sure how exactly everything would fall into place; but hope, even amid their grief over Jesus's death, prodded them to keep walking. This story illuminates hope as well as demonstrating the importance of having friends on the journey. Although we can commit to hope on our own, it is much easier to sustain hope when we are supported by a community of believers.

Hope was a hallmark of the Journeying Together process. When we shared our identity and the historical memory of our cultural families, we joined the hopes of our past to those of our future. When we came together to discuss the hardships our cultural family has endured, our willingness to identify the experiences that still cause pain proclaimed God's promise that reconciliation is possible. When we named the gifts of our cultural family—gifts that persist despite the many reasons to give up—we showed the resilience and the sense of being buoyed that our community enjoys. When we were vulnerable to those beyond our cultural family and were willing to extend love in places of pain, we witnessed to the enduring love of God. In vulnerability, in hurt, in beauty, in humility, in courage, in inclusion, God's hope abides.

As the women walking to the tomb experienced, Journeying Together also provided an opportunity for community, bringing challenge and encouragement to youth and young adults and their ministers. We buoyed one another as we actively engaged questions surrounding racial and ethnic experiences in our Church and world. As we gathered, whether in person or virtually, we gathered in the presence

of God and the grace of one another. As we spoke boldly and listened humbly, we learned, we fostered relationships, and we grew in faith and love.

The Journeying Together process is not finished, and it should not be seen in isolation.

Many who participated in Journeying Together understood it as part of a larger effort. It is our hope that the work done here will bear fruit in the participants' lives that will form the wider world as well. We inspired one another, and we know that this inspiration will extend into our Church, friendships, families, workplaces, communities, and more. We conclude by recalling the hope-filled final wish of *Christus Vivit*:

Dear young people, my joyful hope is to see you keep running the race before you, outstripping all those who are slow or fearful. Keep running, "attracted by the face of Christ,

whom we love so much, whom we adore in the Holy Eucharist and acknowledge in the flesh of our suffering brothers and sisters. May the Holy Spirit urge you on as you run this race. The Church needs your momentum, your intuitions, your faith. We need them! And when you arrive where we have not yet reached, have the patience to wait for us." (no. 299)

Reflection Questions

1. How have I witnessed God's promises in the process of becoming through the Journeying Together program?
2. How has the Holy Spirit buoyed me with hope in this process?
3. Considering the sacred stories heard through the Journeying Together process, what personal response is needed? How might my local church respond?

Alive in Christ: The Journeying Together National In-Person Gathering

Celebrating, Convening, and Creating Action Plans

After two years of virtual dialogue and experiences (from summer 2020 through spring 2022) followed by the relative safety of gathering in the latter months of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Journeying Together process was primed for an in-person encounter. After some prayer and discernment, Chicago was chosen as the host city and archdiocese, with the Marriott Chicago O’Hare selected as the event’s location.

Under the overall theme of “Alive in Christ: Young, Diverse, Prophetic Voices Journeying Together,” the focus of the national Journeying Together gathering in Chicago was threefold:

- **To celebrate** the journey up to that point and to rekindle the joy of drawing together across cultures, generations, and regions of the country, under the watchful care of the Father
- **To convene** a national dialogue around the major themes raised throughout the process, and to engage in prayerful, respectful, and relevant conversations, rooted in Jesus Christ
- **To create** action plans for moving forward as a Catholic community on a journey, and to seek ways to prophetically advance the Gospel in the world, urged on by the Holy Spirit

Planning for the National Event

The planning for such a gathering took more than a year, as various programmatic and logistic components had to be carefully coordinated to ensure the event adhered to the spiritual and thematic core of the Journeying Together

process. The national event planning process was conducted in a way that worked in tandem with the lessons emerging from the overall journey, which were concurrently discerned by the Proceedings Task Group. These key themes included the embrace of historical memory, active inclusion, diversity and giftedness, the practice of accompaniment, formation possibilities, and the fostering of an enduring hope.

On the **programmatic** side of planning, an overall programming manager worked with seven task groups to coordinate the following:

- Stage and program direction
- Sharing and workshops
- Action planning process
- Speaker coordination
- Communications and media
- Program book and screens
- Post-event/organizational cohort

Each task group had its own coleaders (often one USCCB staff member and one ministry leader or young adult). An effort was made to exemplify diversity (cultural, ministerial, and agewise) in each working group, both in leadership and membership.

On the **logistical** side, an overall logistics manager worked with another seven task groups to coordinate the following:

- Conference center and registration
- Prayer and liturgy coordination
- Development and exhibiting
- Hospitality, transport, and volunteers
- Safety and security issues
- Bishops and VIP coordination
- Special and ancillary events

The coleaders of all fourteen task groups together made up a **National Event Planning Team**, which met monthly to review updates from each area and to offer advice and direction on the various elements of the event, making sure the tasks were coordinated and not overlapping. Most task group coleaders remained in place throughout the yearlong planning process.

Any final decisions or approvals about the Chicago gathering were made by the Journeying Together **Core Coordination Team** (comprising key USCCB staff and consultants), chaired by the executive director for the USCCB

Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church, who also served as the executive producer of the national event.

The names and roles of many of these individuals are included in the Acknowledgments section. To them goes our heartfelt gratitude for the many hours, joy, enthusiasm, and expertise that each lent to this process and in particular to the national event.

The schedule and program guide for the national *Journeying Together* event follows.

"Alive in Christ"	Marriott Chicago O'Hare Conference Center			June 23-26, 2022
	Prophetic Voices	Rooted in Christ	Accompanied by Mary	Going Forth in the Spirit
TIME	<i>St. John the Baptist</i>	<i>Sacred Heart</i>	<i>Immaculate Heart</i>	<i>Thirteenth Sunday</i>
all times central	Thur June 23	Fri June 24	Sat June 25	Sun June 26
6:00 AM				Travelers Mass Grand Ballroom
6:30 AM				
7:00 AM	Production Set-Up (begin at 7:00 a.m., through 3:00 p.m.) Registration Check-In (open at 9:00 a.m., through 9:00 p.m.) Exhibitor Tables (open at 12:00 p.m., through 3:30 p.m., and 5:00-6:30 p.m.)	Breakfast <i>O'Hare Ballroom</i>	Breakfast <i>O'Hare Ballroom</i>	Breakfast <i>O'Hare Ballroom</i>
7:30 AM				
8:00 AM				
8:30 AM				
9:00 AM				
9:30 AM				
10:00 AM				
10:30 AM				
11:00 AM				
11:30 AM				
12:00 PM				
12:30 PM				
1:00 PM				
1:30 PM				
2:00 PM				
2:30 PM				
3:00 PM				
3:30 PM				
4:00 PM	Opening Mass <i>Grand Ballroom</i>	Friday Mass <i>Grand Ballroom</i>	Saturday Mass <i>Grand Ballroom</i>	
4:30 PM				
5:00 PM	Welcome Dinner <i>O'Hare Ballroom</i>	Lunch Break <i>O'Hare Ballroom</i>	Free Evening (on your own)	
5:30 PM				
6:00 PM				
6:30 PM				
7:00 PM	General Session #1 <i>Grand Ballroom</i>	Action Planning, Part 2 <i>Chicago Rooms</i>		
7:30 PM				
8:00 PM		Break		
8:30 PM				
9:00 PM	Social/Networking	Eucharistic Praise <i>Grand Ballroom</i>		
9:30 PM				
Color Key				
Provided Meals <i>O'Hare Ballroom</i>	General Sessions <i>Grand Ballroom</i>	Prayer and Liturgies <i>Grand Ballroom</i>	Breakout Sessions <i>Chicago Rooms</i>	Social Options <i>On Your Own</i>

Message from the Holy Father



APOSTOLIC NUNCIATURE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

N° 16019/22

This N° Should Be Prefixed to the Answer

3339 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20008-3610

June 2nd, 2022

Most Reverend
J. Arturo Cepeda
Chairman, Committee on
Cultural Diversity in the Church
3211 4th Street NE
WASHINGTON, DC – 20017

Your Excellency:

With your letter of March 13th, 2022, you submitted a request for a Papal message introduced on the occasion of the forthcoming meeting of “*Journey Together*” National Intercultural Encounter for Ministries with Youth and Young Adults, to be held in Chicago from June 23rd to June 26th, 2022. I am pleased to forward to you the following message, transmitted by the Secretariat of State and signed by His Holiness Pope Francis himself.

MOST REVEREND J. ARTURO CEPEDA
CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN THE CHURCH

HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS SENDS GOOD WISHES AND THE ASSURANCE OF HIS PRAYERS TO THOSE TAKING PART IN THE “JOURNEY TOGETHER” NATIONAL INTERCULTURAL ENCOUNTER FOR MINISTRIES WITH YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS. HIS HOLINESS TRUSTS THAT IN BRINGING TOGETHER A DIVERSITY OF GIFTS AND CULTURES PRESENT IN THE CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES, THIS MEETING WILL STRENGTHEN THE SPIRIT OF DIALOGUE, MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND SYNODALITY. IT IS HIS PARTICULAR HOPE THAT, UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF THEIR PASTORS, YOUNG PEOPLE WILL BE GENEROUS AND ACTIVE PROTAGONISTS, COMMITTED TO SERVING THE POOR, CARING FOR OUR COMMON HOME AND SPREADING GOD’S KINGDOM OF JUSTICE, MERCY AND LOVE. COMMENDING THE DISCUSSIONS AND DELIBERATIONS OF THIS ENCOUNTER TO THE INTERCESSION OF OUR LADY, MOTHER OF THE CHURCH, THE HOLY FATHER CORDIALLY IMPARTS HIS BLESSING TO THE PARTICIPANTS AS A PLEDGE OF PEACE AND JOY IN THE LORD.

CARDINAL PIETRO PAROLIN
SECRETARY OF STATE

Conveying my own personal best wishes for the success of the event, with warm regards, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

✠ Christophe PIERRE
Apostolic Nuncio

Program Guide for the National Event

Alive in Christ: Young, Diverse, Prophetic Voices Journeying Together
Thursday, June 23, to Sunday, June 26, 2022 | Marriott Chicago O'Hare



Hosted by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Led by the USCCB Committee on Cultural Diversity in the Church, with the Secretariats of Catholic Education; Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations; Evangelization and Catechesis; and Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth, and the collaboration of the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM) and the National Dialogue

Alive, (Christ) can be present in your life at every moment, to fill it with light and to take away all sorrow and solitude. Even if all others depart, he will remain, as he promised... he comes to you today and every day, inviting you to set out towards ever new horizons. (Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit* [CV] 125)

If we journey together, young and old, we can be firmly rooted in the present, and from here, revisit the past and look to the future. To revisit the past in order to learn from history and heal old wounds that at times still trouble us. To look to the future in order to nourish our enthusiasm, cause dreams to emerge, awaken prophecies and enable hope to blossom. Together, we can learn from one another, warm hearts, inspire minds with the light of the Gospel, and lend new strength to our hands. (CV 199)

Cultural Family Key: **API:** Asian/Pacific Islander | **BAA:** Black/African American | **EA:** European-American | **HA:** Hispanic/Latino
NA: Native American and Alaska Natives | **PCMRT:** Pastoral Care of Migrants, Refugees, and Travelers

Thursday, June 23, 2022: Prophetic Voices

On the first day, we look back at the synodal *Journeying Together* experience over the past two years. We hear from the diverse, gifted, and prophetic voices of young adults, ministry leaders, and bishops who have graced this journey with their challenges, wisdom, and enthusiasm. We reflect on the gifts and stories we have all brought to Chicago, recognizing that those are now all our gifts and stories as we are truly one, holy, catholic, and apostolic community of faith, alive in Christ and ready for the journey ahead.

Drawing together creates the conditions for the Church to become a place of dialogue and a witness to life-giving fraternity. We need to make more room for the voices of young people to be heard: listening makes possible an exchange of gifts in a context of empathy... At the same time, it sets the conditions for a preaching of the Gospel that can touch the heart truly, decisively, and fruitfully. (CV 38)

Opening Mass: Nativity of St. John the Baptist

3:30 to 5:00 p.m. CT | Grand Ballroom

Journeying Together Opening Mass, celebrating the feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist, led by the *Native American* cultural community

Emcees:	Carolina Perez , DePaul University, Chicago (HA) Vicky Hathaway , Diocese of Gary in Indiana (EA)
Presider:	Most Rev. José H. Gomez , Archbishop of Los Angeles (HA), President, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
Homilist:	Most Rev. Chad Zielinski , Bishop of Fairbanks (NA)
Music:	Pedro Rubalcava and Ensemble

Welcome Dinner

5:00 to 6:30 p.m. CT | O'Hare Ballroom

Sponsored by the National Council of the U.S. Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Inc.

General Session 1: Welcome and Opening

6:30 to 9:00 p.m. CT | Grand Ballroom

Welcome to Chicago: Beginning with a celebratory procession, we welcome all participants to the diverse experience of the greater Chicagoland area for this seminal gathering of bishops, young adults, and ministry leaders from across all cultural families in the Church.

Diversity and Giftedness: In this opening session, we will hear insights on advancing and encouraging the diversity, giftedness, and prophetic voices of the young people of the Catholic Church from every cultural family, while also exploring what gifts which we all bring to the one Body of Christ in order to showcase the diversity of our Catholic Church, especially in a nation as richly diverse as the United States

Music:	Pedro Rubalcava and Ensemble
Emcees:	Carolina Perez , DePaul University, Chicago (HA) Vicky Hathaway , Diocese of Gary in Indiana (EA)
Welcome Remarks:	Most Rev. Robert Casey , Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago (EA)
Prayer Leaders:	Sr. Joanna Okereke , USCCB Cultural Diversity Secretariat (PCMRT) Lisa Franqui , Kateri Center, Archdiocese of Chicago (NA)
Thematic Introduction:	Dr. Maureen K. Day , University of San Diego (EA)
Prophetic Witnesses:	Clarissa Martinez , Archdiocese of Los Angeles (API) James Conway , Archdiocese of Baltimore (BAA) Maka Black Elk , Pine Ridge Indian School in Pine Ridge, South Dakota (HA) Melissa Scutt , Haitian Catholic community of Philadelphia (PCMRT) Grace Gretz , The Catholic University of America in Washington DC (EA) Antonio Guzman , Archdiocese of Detroit (HA)
Keynote Speakers:	Teresa Rojo Tsosie , Navajo Nation; St. Jude Parish in Tuba City, Arizona (NA) Most Rev. Christophe Pierre , Apostolic Nuncio to the United States
Closing Remarks:	Most Rev. José H. Gomez , Archbishop of Los Angeles (HA), President, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Friday, June 24, 2022: Rooted in Jesus Christ

On the second day, grounded in our faith in Jesus Christ, we begin to develop our action plans. We explore how historical memory, healing, restorative justice, and a desire to renew our communities can help us to forge a way through potential obstacles in our path. Knowing that we cannot do anything without the love and presence of Jesus, we also spend time in celebration and adoration of the Lord in our midst.

Christ, out of love, sacrificed himself completely... His outstretched arms on the cross are the most telling sign that he is a friend who is willing to stop at nothing... No one can strip us of the dignity bestowed upon us by his boundless and unfailing love. With a tenderness that never disappoints, but is always capable of restoring our joy, he makes it possible for us to lift up our heads and to start anew. (CV 118, 119)

General Session 2: Prayer, Dialogue, and Keynote

8:00 to 10:00 a.m. CT | Grand Ballroom

Embracing Historical Memory: In this morning general session, we will explore how we can find a way forward through healing and restorative justice, rooted in the love of Jesus Christ. As Pope Francis notes, “Helping the young to discover the living richness of the past, to treasure its memory and to make use of it for their choices and opportunities, is a genuine act of love towards them, for the sake of their growth and the decisions they are called to make.” (CV 187) Grounded in our historical memory, we can strengthen ourselves for the work that lies ahead of us.

Morning Prayer will be led by the *European American* cultural community.

Music:	Pedro Rubalcava and Ensemble
Emcees:	Fr. Tony Massad , Parish of Saint Maron, Youngstown (PCMRT) Eleanor Dias , Archdiocese of Milwaukee (API)
Plenary Presider:	Most Rev. Ron Hicks , Bishop of Joliet (EA)
Prayer Leaders:	Lauren DeSmit , Bon Secours Young Adults (EA) Mike Hayes , Diocese of Cleveland (EA)
Panelists:	Young Hoang , Archdiocese of Washington (API) Rudy Dehaney , Archdiocese of Baltimore (BAA) Anna Robertson , Catholic Climate Covenant (EA)
Facilitator:	Darius Villalobos , National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (HA)
Keynote Speakers:	Dr. Nicole Symmonds , Mercer University, Atlanta (BAA) Fr. David A. Kelly, C.PP.S. , Kolbe House of Assumption, Chicago (EA)
Closing Prayer:	Most Rev. Michael Sis , Bishop of San Angelo in Texas (EA)

Breakout – Action Planning Session 1

10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. CT | Chicago Rooms

Breakout Topic	Room
Embracing Historical Memory	Chicago C
Active Inclusion	Chicago D
Diversity and Giftedness	Chicago E
Practicing Accompaniment	Chicago F
Formation Possibilities	Chicago G

Lunch Break

12:00 to 1:30 p.m. CT | O’Hare Ballroom

Breakout – Workshop Round A

1:30 to 3:00 p.m. CT | Chicago Rooms

Breakout Topic	Presenter(s)	Room
Nurturing Diverse Families: Supporting marriage and family life and intercultural expressions of spirituality in the home	Deacon Gary Nosacek and Cindy Nosacek (PCMRT)	Chicago AB
Pathways for Young Protagonists: Empowering young adults across cultural families to step into leadership in the Church structure. <i>This session is sponsored by the Catholic Apostolate Center</i>	Jessica Romero (PCMRT) and Nicholas Stein (EA)	Chicago C
Fostering Healing and Peace: Cultivating a spirituality of non-violence and overcoming personal and community trauma in diverse communities.	Maka Black Elk (NA), Eunice Park (API), and Tara Segal (EA)	Chicago D
Accompanying Young Disciples: Practicing accompaniment of youth and young adults within our intercultural communities of faith	Pamela Harris (BAA), Jocelyn George (API), and Saul Llacsá (HA)	Chicago E
Communicating the Gospel: Using the Church’s media presence as a means for accompanying youth and young adults of all cultural communities	Fr. Rafael Capo (HA), Kara Dixon (BAA), and Ryan Bao (API)	Chicago F
Journeying Through Identity and Morality: Practicing accompaniment with the diversity of young people who identify as LGBTQ+	Bp. Edward Burns (EA) and Fr. Frank Cancro (PCMRT)	Chicago G

Friday Mass: Sacred Heart of Jesus

3:30 to 5:00 p.m. CT | Grand Ballroom

Friday Daily Mass, celebrating the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, led by the *Black/African American* cultural community

Emcees: **Fr. Tony Massad**, Parish of Saint Maron, Youngstown (PCMRT)
Eleanor Dias, Archdiocese of Milwaukee (API)
 Presider: **Most Rev. Shelton Fabre**, Archbishop of Louisville (BAA)
 Music: **Pedro Rubalcava** and Ensemble

Dinner Break

5:00 to 6:30 p.m. | O'Hare Ballroom

*Prayer before meals led by the Marianist community***Breakout – Action Planning Session 2**

6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. CT | Chicago Rooms

Breakout Topic	Room
Embracing Historical Memory	Chicago C
Active Inclusion	Chicago D
Diversity and Giftedness	Chicago E
Practicing Accompaniment	Chicago F
Formation Possibilities	Chicago G

An Evening of Eucharistic Adoration and Praise

8:30 to 10:00 p.m. CT | Grand Ballroom

In celebration of the Eucharistic Revival taking place across the United States and rooting our work in Jesus Christ, fully present in the Eucharist, the source of our intercultural communion, we spend time before the Lord this evening. Through prayer, reflections, music, and silence, we let our prayers rise before our God. We also join in adoration of the Lord with Blessed Carlo Acutis, a Millennial witness whose passion for the Eucharist inspires us today and whose relics we venerate during this moment of prayer.

As in the miracle of Jesus, the bread and the fish provided by young people can multiply (cf. Jn 6:4-13). As in the parable, the small seeds sown by young people can yield a rich harvest (cf. Mt 13:23.31-32). All of this has its living source in the Eucharist, in which our bread and our wine are transformed to grant us eternal life. Young people face immense and difficult challenges. With faith in the risen Lord, they can confront them with creativity and hope, ever ready to be of service. (CV 173)

Emcees: **Fr. Tony Massad**, Parish of Saint Maron, Youngstown (PCMRT)
Eleanor Dias, Archdiocese of Milwaukee (API)
 Presider: **Most Rev. Joseph N. Perry**, Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago (BAA)
 Homilist: **Most Rev. Edward J. Burns**, Bishop of Dallas (EA)
 Reflections: **Fr. Rafael Capó**, Saint Thomas University Miami (HA)
Fr. Ajani Gibson, Archdiocese of New Orleans (BAA)
 Music: **Pedro Rubalcava** and Ensemble

Saturday, June 25, 2022: Accompanied by Mary

On the third day, accompanied by the Blessed Mother, we continue to plan for action. We explore how practicing accompaniment and engaging in active inclusion can help us to ensure full representation of all people and communities in our midst. Modeling ourselves after the example of the young virgin of Nazareth who said yes to the Lord’s call, we spend time in her company throughout this day.

In the heart of the Church, Mary shines forth. She is the supreme model for a youthful Church that seeks to follow Christ with enthusiasm and docility. While still very young, she accepted the message of the angel, yet she was not afraid to ask questions (cf. Lk 1:34). With open heart and soul, she replied, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord” (Lk 1:38). (CV no. 43)

General Session 3: Prayer, Dialogue, and Keynote

8:00 to 10:00 a.m. CT | Grand Ballroom

Practicing Accompaniment and Active Inclusion: In this morning general session, we will explore how we move towards action on this journey and how can each of us – whether as bishops, young adults, or ministry leaders – can accompany and be actively inclusive of all perspectives and all cultural families to achieve our actionable goals. As Pope Francis notes, “we can move towards a participatory and co-responsible Church, one capable of appreciating its own rich variety, gratefully accepting the contributions of the lay faithful, including young people and women, consecrated persons, as well as groups, associations, and movements. No one should be excluded or exclude themselves.” (CV 206)

Morning Prayer will be led by the *Hispanic/Latino* cultural community.

Music:	Pedro Rubalcava and Ensemble
Emcees:	Stacy M. Allen , Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston (BAA/HA) Benito Medrano , Diocese of Orange in California (HA)
Plenary Presider:	Jessica Maciel Hernandez , Diocese of Des Moines (HA)
Episcopal Blessing:	Most Rev. Oscar Cantú , Bishop of San Jose (HA)
Panelists:	Dallas Carter , Diocese of Honolulu (API) Jessica Gallegos , Diocese of Boise (PCMRT) Benito Medrano , Diocese of Orange in California (HA)
Facilitator:	Amy S. McEntee , RCL Benziger, Archdiocese of Cincinnati (EA)
Keynote Speakers:	Most Rev. Nelson J. Perez , Archbishop of Philadelphia (HA) Cecilia Marie Flores , Sacramento Area Congregations Together (API)

Breakout – Workshop Round B

10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. CT | Chicago Rooms

Breakout Topic	Presenter(s)	Room
Encouraging God’s Call: Vocation promotion strategies for priesthood and consecrated life within multicultural communities and families	Fr. Adam McDonald (EA) and Taylor Mitchell (API)	Chicago AB

Fostering Important Conversations: How Catholic communities can initiate and sustain sensitive, potentially divisive, discussions on race and culture	Joyce Jones (BAA), Kwadwo Mireku (PCMRT), and Alexander Roth (EA)	Chicago C
Overcoming Division with Diversity: How the rich diversity of the Church can inform and dispel polarization in the Church and the world. <i>Sponsored by the Catholic Apostolate Center</i>	Jose Matos Auffant (HA), Dr. Tracey Lamont (EA), and Sally Stovall (PCMRT)	Chicago D
Diversity and Sacred Spaces: Exploring cultural inclusion in the liturgical life of parish and campus communities	Sr. Christina Nantaba (PCMRT), Darius Villalobos (HA), and Clarissa Martinez (API)	Chicago E
Developing Vibrant Ministries: Fostering intercultural inclusion in the Church's ministries with youth and young adults and on college campuses	Christopher Malano (API), Doris Barrow III (BAA), and Diana Hancharenko (EA)	Chicago F
Cultivating Healthy Relationships: How the Church can form and mentor young people through building healthy friendships and dating relationships	Ashley Morris and LaSheka Morris (BAA) and Javier Orozco (HA)	Chicago G

Lunch Break

12:00 to 1:30 p.m. CT | O'Hare Ballroom
Sponsored by Catholic Relief Services

Breakout – Action Planning Session 3

1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. CT | Chicago Rooms

Breakout Topic	Room
Embracing Historical Memory	Chicago C
Active Inclusion	Chicago D
Diversity and Giftedness	Chicago E
Practicing Accompaniment	Chicago F
Formation Possibilities	Chicago G

Saturday Mass: *Immaculate Heart of Mary*

3:30 to 5:00 p.m. CT | Grand Ballroom

Saturday Daily Mass, celebrating the feast of the Most Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary, led by the *Asian and Pacific Islander* cultural community

Emcees: **Stacy M. Allen**, Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston (BAA/HA)
Benito Medrano, Diocese of Orange in California (HA)

Presider: **Most Rev. Larry Silva**, Bishop of Honolulu (API)

Music: **Pedro Rubalcava** and Ensemble

Sunday, June 26, 2022: *Going Forth in the Spirit*

On the final day, we ready ourselves for the journey ahead by committing to the prophetic action plans that are unfolding before us. We listen attentively to the creative ideas expressed by the fellow travelers on the road: young adults, ministry leaders, and bishops who accompany us along the way – and we hold ourselves and each other accountable for the promises we make before the Lord. As we go forth in the Spirit, alive in Christ, we are blessed by this time together and the joy of the Gospel burning in our hearts.

Jesus' life can prove inspiring for all those young people who are developing and preparing to take up their mission in life. This involves growing in a relationship with the Father, in awareness of being part of a family and a people, and in openness to being filled with the Holy Spirit and led to carry out the mission God gives them, their personal vocation. (CV 30)

Travelers Mass: *Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time*

6:00 to 7:00 a.m. CT | Grand Ballroom

Presider: **Fr. Ajani Gibson**, Archdiocese of New Orleans (BAA)

General Session 4: *Prayer, Dialogue, Keynote, and Commitment*

8:00 to 10:00 a.m. CT | Grand Ballroom

Formation Possibilities and Enduring Hope: In this morning general session, we surrender to the Holy Spirit for guidance as we look ahead at what creative possibilities for formation, communication, and encounter lie beyond the present moment. As Pope Francis exhorts us, “Dare to be more... Ask the help of the Holy Spirit and confidently aim for the great goal of holiness... Keep following your hopes and dreams” (CV 107) and that “our best dreams are only attained through hope, patience, and commitment, and not in haste. At the same time, we should not be hesitant, afraid to take chances or make mistakes... for no one has the right to rob you of hope (CV 142). As we take those action steps to which we are now committing, we are reminded of the lasting hope that God has in store for each one of us.

Morning Prayer will be led by the cultural communities represented by the Subcommittee on the *Pastoral Care of Migrants, Refugees, and Travelers*.

Music: **Pedro Rubalcava** and Ensemble

Emcees: **Fr. Jimmy Hsu, CSP**, The Ohio State University (API)
Stefanie Miles, Archdiocese of Washington (BAA)

Plenary Presider: **Fr. Tony Massad**, Parish of Saint Maron, Youngstown, Ohio (PCMRT)

Ministry Leader Panel: **Doris Barrow III**, Texas Southern University, Houston (BAA)
Diana Hancharenko, St. Angela Merici Parish, Youngstown (EA)
Semret Hailemariam, Ge'ez Rite Eritrean Catholic community (PCMRT)
Mar Muñoz-Visoso, USCCB Cultural Diversity Secretariat (HA)

Panel Facilitator: **Paul E. Jarzembowski**, USCCB Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth (EA)

Bishop Response Panel:	Most Rev. Oscar Cantú , Bishop of San Jose (HA) Most Rev. Joseph Perry , Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago (BAA) Most Rev. Larry Silva , Bishop of Honolulu (API)
Panel Facilitators:	Paul E. Jarzembowski , USCCB Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth (EA) Mar Muñoz-Visoso , USCCB Cultural Diversity Secretariat (HA)
Commissioning Rite:	Most Rev. Oscar Cantú , Bishop of San Jose (HA) Most Rev. Armando Ochoa , Bishop Emeritus, Diocese of Fresno (HA) Most Rev. Nelson J. Pérez , Archbishop of Philadelphia (HA) Most Rev. Joseph Perry , Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago (BAA) Most Rev. Larry Silva , Bishop of Honolulu (API) Most Rev. Chad Zielinski , Bishop of Fairbanks in Alaska (NA)

Closing Mass: Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. CT | Grand Ballroom

Journeying Together Closing Mass, celebrating the Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Emcees:	Fr. Jimmy Hsu, CSP , The Ohio State University (API) Stefanie Miles , Archdiocese of Washington (BAA)
Presider:	Most Rev. Nelson J. Pérez , Archbishop of Philadelphia (HA)
Music:	Pedro Rubalcava and Ensemble Black African American Pop-Up Choir

Dear young people, make the most of these years... Make a ruckus! Cast out the fears that paralyze you... Live! Give yourselves over to the best of life! Open the door of the cage, go out, and fly! (CV 143)

I want to encourage all of you in this effort, because I know that your young hearts want to build a better world...Please, do not leave it to others to be protagonists of change. You are the ones who hold the future! Through you, the future enters into the world. I ask you also to be protagonists of this transformation... Continue to fight apathy and to offer a Christian response to the social and political troubles emerging in different parts of the world. I ask you to build the future, to work for a better world. Dear young people, please, do not be bystanders in life. Get involved!... Don't stand aloof, but immerse yourselves in the reality of life, as Jesus did. Above all, in one way or another, fight for the common good, serve the poor, be protagonists of the revolution of charity and service. (CV 174)



**JOURNEYING
TOGETHER**
A NATIONAL CATHOLIC INTERCULTURAL ENCOUNTER
FOR MINISTRIES WITH YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS



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Task Groups for the National Event

The different task groups for the Alive in Christ National Event were co-led by and included members of USCCB staff from various departments as well as numerous external collaborators:

Programming Task Groups Co-Leads

- Plenary/Main Stage: Paul Jarzembowski, Marilyn Santos, and Sr. Myrna Tordillo, MSCS
- Speakers: Jessica Gallegos and Paul Major

- Workshops: Fr. Luke Ballman, Fr. Jimmy Hsu, CSP, and F. Javier Orozco
- Action Planning Process: Cecilia Flores, Donna Grimes, and Barbara McCrabb
- Program Book and Screens: Amy S. McEntee and Jonathan Gaworski
- Communications and Media: Miguel Guilarte and Jonathan Sitko
- Post-Event: Rudy Dehaney and Vicky Hathway

Logistics Task Group Co-Leads

- Registration Process: Yolanda Taylor-Burwell
- Prayer and Liturgy: Fr. Ajani Gibson, Clarissa Martinez, and Sr. Joanna Okereke, HHCJ
- Sponsorships and Exhibiting: Mar Muñoz-Visoso, Yolanda Taylor-Burwell, and Mary Ellen Davey
- Hospitality, Transportation, and Volunteers: Michal Horace and Madeline Watkins
- Safety and Security: Deacon Bernie Nojadera and Robert Yates
- Bishops and VIP Coordination: Fr. Michael Carson and Albert Gyan
- Special and Ancillary Events: Vince Pecchia and Terra Starr Young

Local (Chicago) Support

- Tim Weiske
- Todd Williamson

Pastoral Responses in Vignettes

During the national event of the Journeying Together process, two key incidents occurred during which the participants expressed significant intercultural concern; measures were taken immediately to rectify these situations. Despite more than a year of preparation, misunderstandings and miscommunications happened, and mistakes were made. There were likely other incidents, but these two were most prominent. What was remarkable was that, with the benefit of a multiyear process during which relationships were created, the event organizers—along with the young adults, ministry leaders, and bishops present—were able to respond in real time.

Vignettes of these incidents are included within this final report to show that not everything goes perfectly according to plan, despite the best intentions. Journeying Together was a human process and therefore was imperfect. What mattered most was how individuals and cultural communities, guided by the Holy Spirit and imbued with the lessons learned through prayerful intercultural engagement, picked themselves up from their mistakes and tended wounds as soon as possible.

African American Vignette

During the national Alive in Christ event, each cultural or ethnic family was invited to lead and add cultural “flavor” to either the daily Mass or to one of the prayer services, such as morning prayer, assigned to them. They could designate readers and other servers who represented the diversity within their groups, and they were invited to submit prayer and liturgical music that could be led and performed by the event’s professional ensemble. Some African American young adults awaited with expectation the liturgy assigned to their cultural family. Although the main celebrant and homilist was an African American bishop, as were several others performing key roles during the Mass, there seemed to have been a breakdown of communication regarding the music.

When one thinks of a Mass in the Black Catholic tradition, they should also think of music. The two intricately go hand in hand together.

So it’s easy to understand that members of the Journeying Together African American cultural family were looking

forward to the music selections for their Black Catholic-themed cultural Mass that Friday in Chicago.

“All of us were up in the front,” said cultural family member James Conway. “We were because, you know, the night before we had gathered, and we were like ‘Man! Tomorrow is going to be some soul-shaking singing! You know they sing this song, we will want to jump in.’ Everybody, you know, kind of knew what (music) group you were in. We sat down and we sang songs.”

But it didn’t take long for Conway and others to feel that something just didn’t sit right with them.

“It was how it felt from the start,” said Rudy DeHaney. “I was like, ‘Okay. I don’t know this song. Maybe you’re going to get something later and oh, you know, the music doesn’t really seem to be hitting the same way. But you know, it’s a common intercultural setting. So maybe we will get it somewhere else. Maybe we will get it in the preaching. Maybe we’ll get a song later,’ and I just keep being, you know, ‘Maybe I’ll get it somewhere along the way,’ and it just never came.”

Whether it was the song selections, the liturgy, or the homily, Conway says whatever went wrong impacted the group immediately.

“We were heartbroken, and then it kind of harkened back to how a lot of us feel that the Church doesn’t need, want, or respect us. But what hurt us even to our core was for our other African American brothers and sisters who were there, that were like, ‘This is just regular church for me,’ because they go to a predominantly other culturally Catholic Church,” he said.

So what actually happened?

Paul Jarzembowski, who works for the USCCB and was the codirector and program director of Journeying Together’s national event, initially suspected that something might go wrong when he noticed the musicians in the band that was hired to perform on the first day of the conference. While the group was culturally diverse, none of them belonged to the African American cultural family. “When I started hearing [the music], I’m thinking, ‘Hmmm. This is not what I would have expected,’” he said.

Pedro Rubalcava had volunteered to direct the music team brought together by musicians from different parts of the country. He was worried about the music for the national conference because the team had not been able to practice together prior to arriving to the national event. “I think we ended up asking if we could change some things because we just didn’t have the wherewithal to do it with the group that we had. And like I said, we had to learn lots and lots and lots of music,” he said.

Pedro also says that while there was an open call for musicians among the participants to come and practice with them, few showed up.

But despite where the disconnect happened, it still hurt feelings in a group that has often been put in the backseat of the Church here in America.

The issue was brought up during the Young Adult Advisory breakfast the next morning, which included young adults and bishops.

That was where Archbishop Nelson J. Pérez of Philadelphia was made aware of the incident.

“I don’t think there was any malice connected to it or anything like that. Quite the contrary,” he said. “But I think it really expressed the reality that when you bring cultural families together, there are sensitivities that need to be looked at, and I think they [the organizers] looked at it and addressed it straight on. I think it was actually a part of the process of learning that weekend.”

Archbishop Pérez said it didn’t take rocket science to find a solution. The answer was to allow members of the BAA cultural group to sing at the gathering’s closing Mass that Sunday.

Rubalcava met with Christian Bentley from the BAA cultural family that Saturday night to discuss songs they could play.

“I was up until like maybe two in the morning trying to get all this stuff together, and then we met before Mass and he directed the group. I was impressed with how he put that together, and we just kind of supported the musicians singing those songs,” Rubalcava said.

Rubalcava was not the only one impressed with the music the group had desperately been searching for during Friday’s Mass. According to Conway, those in attendance were also moved.

“We saw the people stand up, and there were six of us singing on display, you know, in front of everybody. But the entire room came in to join us, to be a part, and that’s what made this have such a profound effect on not just myself, but others that have been a part of the Journeying Together process,” he said.

DeHaney believed that the quick and simple decision to allow the group to sing was a lesson.

“I think it didn’t solve everything because you can always say, ‘Oh, it shouldn’t have happened in the first place.’ But you know, getting the opportunity to make it right, to really sit down and look at how you could have made it work,” he said—“if anything, it was a very teachable moment in how we work as a Church moving forward, how we should be operating as a larger body of Church.”

Archbishop Pérez agreed. “There are times that you walk in harmony and unity, and there are some times that you don’t,” he said. “And you need to somehow, someway talk about them if you’re going to move forward. It isn’t anything different really than what happens in families, right? You know, we can’t really kid ourselves that way. There are conflicts and disagreements and misinterpretations and all that stuff that happened within the context of even a loving and supportive family. And the Church is a loving and supportive family.”

As for the lessons learned by the USCCB, Jarzembowski says that it is important to not take silence as consent when planning larger conferences and that pushing deadlines, working until the last minute, and being even more intentional can help avoid problems like this in the future.

“I can think now like, ‘Oh yeah, we probably could have done that to prevent all of that,’ but at the same time, it’s like, ‘But we’re human too,’” he said. “And I think it was almost divinely ordained that things happened the way that they did, because I think the conversations we needed to have happened.”

Native American Vignette

After two long years of meeting virtually because of the COVID-19 pandemic, many young adult Catholics from across the country traveled to Chicago to meet in person for the first time as a part of the Journeying Together process.

There were a mix of emotions such as excitement and nervousness, including from Teresa Rojo-Tsosie, who was one of the opening night's guest speakers.

"I was very relieved," Rojo-Tsosie said about her mood after her speech. "And then, it just made it more exciting because everything was coming together. It was exciting, you know, to just see everybody. I was excited to just continue, to keep going and be a part of some of the process because of the workshops that we had to do. So I was excited to see how everything was."

That excitement quickly faded by the next morning when Rojo-Tsosie, a member of the Native American cultural family, and others were gathered for the morning prayer.

During virtual meetings, members of the different cultural groups would say a line in their native languages in the Journeying Together prayer—but Rojo-Tsosie says she and another member of her group, who usually participated, were not asked to help that morning.

So she stood in the audience confused, while two speakers stood on stage as the prayer was projected onto two massive monitors for the crowd to read from.

"So as I'm standing there, I'm looking and I'm like, 'Okay, no one's going up.' I don't see people going up to say the line. I believe the first line was in Spanish," she said.

"Then it came to the Native American part, and they just skipped over like it was nothing," she said. "I remember thinking, 'Okay, did they really just skip this?'"

The group leading the prayer this particular morning was the European American family. Like every other group, this cultural family had been invited to adapt the prayer. It did so by including the words "God of our Journey" in some additional European languages while dropping some non-European ones that were not representative of their heritage. However, the modified prayer and script the

readers used never made it to production team. Thus, what was projected on the screen for everyone to follow was the text of the original prayer with all the same languages used through most of the process. This situation created confusion and upset among members of the audience who noted the discrepancy.

Rojo-Tsosie wasn't the only one to notice.

Participants Alexander Roth and Christopher D. Malano were also disturbed by the skip-over.

"I was feeling really bad because that was somebody's language there, and not just somebody saying somebody's language who is present in the room," said Malano, who is a member of the API cultural family. "It was being either looked over or rushed through, you know. It wasn't given the due respect."

While the program continued to move forward, Malano couldn't help the feeling that grew in his chest to say something about what occurred.

"I've seen it so many times where something happens, and it's kind of like, 'Well, all right, it's one of these. We'll just ride it out until we go home,'" he said. "And I'm like, 'That won't be for something I was involved in.' I was very determined. Like I felt super called to make sure that did not happen with this event."

Malano and Roth used an open-mic opportunity to state what was on their hearts but and the hearts of many others who were also in the room and expressing their outrage through a text group chat.

Roth, a member of the EA cultural family, says the two years of Journeying Together allowed him the courage to speak up.

"If there wasn't trust, I don't think people would have felt safe to address it and call it out and say there needs to be an apology," he said.

It wasn't until the idea of an apology was brought up that Matt Davis, who was on stage reading the prayer, realized what took place.

“We didn’t have it,” he said about the Native American language prayer line, referring to the script for the prayer he was given to read. “But it was on the screen. I remember as I was reading, there was some kind of noise.”

Jarzembowski, the USCCB staffer and codirector of *Journeying Together*, says he too noticed the slides did not match the prayer that was being spoken aloud from the stage. After being approached by others involved with the planning, Jarzembowski knew they needed to apologize and do so soon.

“It was our own selves that we needed to just get out of our own way,” he said.

After Roth’s and Malano’s comments, Jarzembowski and Barbara McCrabb (another codirector) did just that.

“We did plug the dam for that particular two-hour period,” said Jarzembowski. “But there’s a systemic thing that’s still present—that it’s more than just a miscue in a script. It was like there’s an overwhelming conversation around languages that are difficult for others to say. There is a lack of mindfulness.”

Davis says it hurt knowing that his actions, regardless of intent, caused pain to others in the room.

“They’ve been ignored and sidelined and, you know, not been seen,” he said about some cultural families’ experience with the Church. “And then you know, as a European American, obviously in the Church in the country, the group I come from is one of the biggest movers of that—ignoring other groups, silencing other groups, and not

valuing other groups, stuff like that. So I think there’s kind of embarrassment, shame that I was part of that.”

While Davis felt shame, Rojo-Tsosie says the experience opened up painful wounds for many others.

“It just brought up, I think for a lot of people, a lot of emotional triggers and emotion,” she said. “Because then over a couple of days, there were still people talking about it, and then it was just like, ‘Wow, that happened,’ you know. And for two years, everyone came together on Zoom, and then it was like, ‘Okay, this shouldn’t have happened.’”

Rojo-Tsosie says she believes the response from the USCCB was appropriate, but she was also shocked that one came in real time and not days or months later.

Others agreed but say what happened is just a minor glimpse of bigger issues within the Church.

“It means the work for the Church is ongoing,” Davis said. “But I think it needs to grow beyond *Journeying Together*. It was great for me personally, at least a great attempt to address these things, but it goes much, much deeper than that.”

Although Catholics from all age groups were involved, it was the young adults who stood up to say something when part of the Body of Christ was hurting, and that is the way to continue to move forward.

“We’re kind of just fed up with the no response and it just being glossed over and just being ignored,” Rojo-Tsosie said.

Action Planning

The action planning step for the Journeying Together process took place in the context of the national in-person gathering, June 23-26, 2022, in Chicago, under the theme “Alive in Christ: Young, Diverse, Prophetic Voices Journeying Together.” The schedule and program of the national event are included in part 4 (above) of these *Proceedings*. The event included general sessions, workshops on various topics of interest that emerged through the process, and action planning sessions. What follows is a summary report of the action planning methodology, purpose, outcomes, and process.

Action Planning Methodology

Over the course of a three-year process, the Journeying Together work yielded six themes of significance across cultural families:

1. Embrace of historical memory
2. Active inclusion
3. Diversity and giftedness
4. Practice of accompaniment
5. Formation opportunities
6. An enduring hope

In addition to these topical themes, participants identified a deep desire to work toward *concrete* actions as Church and within the Church. In essence, participants did not simply want to discuss the topical themes but also wanted to identify ways in which issues related to the themes could be addressed, solved, or changed.

Thus, these six topical themes were the basis upon which we formed our participant working groups, as explained by figure 1. The first five themes listed above—an embrace of historical memory, active inclusion, diversity and

giftedness, the practice of accompaniment, and formation opportunities—were treated as discrete themes that participants would discuss in order to discern and recommend concrete responses. Participants were told that the final theme, enduring hope, should animate all the working groups. Each workroom consisted of approximately fifty people who would discuss, define, and work toward concrete actions to address the theme they were assigned.

The action planning process developed for the in-person gathering in Chicago aspired to achieve the following goals:

- To foster conversation and build community among participants
- To equip participants with strategies and methods to flesh out their ideas
- To identify and define paths for individual and collective action with participants

The following activities formed the practical portions of the action planning sessions. They were carried out in small groups within the theme rooms.

- **Visioning activity.** Small groups were asked to answer this question: What does the Church look like when we set out to achieve what we want to accomplish? The purpose of this activity was to engage in creative brainstorming and to allow participants to become familiar with one another and with how each person was entering the discussion space.
- **POP framework.** In a POP framework, participants are asked to define the **purpose** of working on the issue they were assigned, the **outcomes** they hope to achieve by working on it, and the **processes** they envision being used to achieve the desired outcomes. Throughout the action planning sessions, the purpose,

Figure 1. Participant Working Groups and Themes

outcomes, and processes continued to be refined within small groups, as well as within the large room.

- **Vision stand.** This activity allowed participants to reflect on how they personally and individually felt called to act on their specific issue and within their own contexts. It served as an opportunity to brainstorm concrete ideas of strategies, methods, programs, etc. that could address the issues on the ground level.
- **Wise council.** This activity enabled each participant to discuss a problem or challenge they were experiencing or anticipating related to the theme or to the work they wanted to carry out.

All these activities equipped participants with practical methods that they could implement beyond Chicago and in any ministry setting, while also affording them the opportunity to discuss their ideas within a particularly diverse group of individuals within the Church.

It is important to highlight that the most substantive work being done in Chicago was not defining purposes, outcomes, and processes. Rather, it was the hard and holy work of being together in community and engaging in conversation with an incredibly diverse group of voices within the Catholic Church in the United States. It became evident

early in the gathering that being in the physical presence of people from different cultural families, generations, vocations, and levels of authority within the Church might prove more challenging than anticipated. In such a diverse group, communication styles, liturgical preferences, and traditional practices and norms all factor into the dynamics of direct interpersonal interaction. Those elements also play into the larger group dynamics, resulting in tension as people try to work out what they are experiencing.

This tension manifested during the action planning sessions, as some participants felt called to discuss difficult and painful topics relevant to their experiences, while others—unaware of or inexperienced with these realities—felt overwhelmed or challenged by what they heard. Some participants welcomed these challenges head-on, while others needed more time and space to reflect. There was also the dynamic of intercultural and intergenerational discussion, in which communication styles tended to differ, requiring participants to work harder to understand one another or to express themselves freely.

The multitude of challenges that arose in the process is evidenced in the final reports issued by each theme room. Some rooms submitted reports that are quite detailed, while

others may appear incomplete. Nonetheless, comparing the reports presented by each room would not be an accurate assessment of the work carried out in the action planning process. The conversations conducted, the tensions overcome, the commitment to the deepening and growth of relationships—these all are real outcomes that cannot be captured by any report. This serves as a point of reflection as to why our action planning needs to continue beyond Chicago: It is only through this holy work of conversation, dialogue, and commitment to relationship that true reconciliation can be realized within our Church and in our world.

Integrated POP Document

This section combines the purpose, outcomes, and processes developed and proposed by the five action planning workrooms.

Purpose

Led by Enduring Hope, we reflect on the shared and integrated purpose that the themes of Embracing Historical Memory, Active Inclusion, Diversity and Giftedness, Practicing Accompaniment, and Formation Possibilities illuminate for the Church to contemplate.

We are called to bring honesty and awareness of the rifts and broken relationships between cultural families within the Church's history. In listening to the pain of our sisters and brothers, we can learn how to bring healing, liberation, and reconciliation to groups and individuals, as well as to the Church as a whole.

We are reminded that this requires us to go to the margins of our Church and society; we need everyone at the table, for the Body of Christ is incomplete when any member is missing.

The clarion call to recenter the experiences of those who have been historically excluded is a prophetic and life-giving invitation and obligation. This recentering would allow Catholics who are not familiar with faith expressions originating outside of their own cultural family to participate in different and resplendent ways of being Catholic, being formed in the beauty of devotions and rituals that have sustained many Catholics for centuries.

We enrich one another individually and collectively as we grow in deeper faith, greater wonder, and tireless love.

As Catholics, we are our brothers and sisters' keepers. We continue our intrepid walk with one another, giving and receiving love, challenge, and community as we move through this life, journeying together.

Outcomes

The Catholic Church is recognized as a Church of inclusion, welcome, understanding, healing, and communion. Acceptance and fellowship are given to all. The Church clearly communicates that all are welcome, served, and loved by God.

The church community fosters unity as it facilitates personal relationships and recenters cultural diversity. The tradition and wisdom of the Church leads to a deeper understanding where Jesus and the Good News are shared with others.

Leaders within the Catholic community model honesty, awareness, and acknowledgment of the suffering experienced by diverse cultures caused by dominance and oppression. Leaders encourage the church community to recognize and dismantle systems of racism, violence, and marginalization wherever they occur.

Leaders actively work toward reconciliation, holistic education, and integral formation that embraces all cultural families through authentic storytelling.

The Church prioritizes our sacramental life, celebrating and centering our cultures and histories through faith formation that leads to communion with Christ and with one another.

Processes

Engagement and communication are essential at all levels of the Church. Find creative ways to tell our stories and acknowledge cultural elements that shape our lived reality while honoring the faith we collectively share.

Personal relationships must be fostered. Safe space for conversation needs to be created. Bridges that close the gap between generations must be built.

As Church, we must: empower people to step forward and speak up, hold intercultural listening sessions and other events that are both personal and pastoral.

Recommendations

For Bishops and Church Leaders

1. Create a diocesan or parish-level accountability structure that is culturally and generationally diverse to continue the work of inclusion, embracing historical memory, and accompaniment across the cultural families.
2. Restructure parishes for greater inclusion. Discern obstacles to communion and address them. Draw on the breadth of experience, including the marginalized as well as the mainstream, for perspective, decision-making, and implementation.
3. Leadership and consultation should reflect the diverse experiences present in the universal and local church. Hire staff and appoint consultants accordingly. Share and amplify the witness and testimony of inclusion.
4. Mandate holistic and integral formation that moves from the current multicultural modality which emphasizes the universality of the Church as undifferentiated common humanity toward a particularity that centers on the historical memory and experience of the distinct cultural families within the United States of America. These distinctions allow for deeper exploration into particular experiences and invite a more relational encounter as stories are shared and better illuminate the wholeness of the Catholic experience. Require seminarians, diocesan staff, and ministry leaders to participate. Eventually offer diocesan-wide programming, engagement of parishes/communities with oral histories.
5. Designate a date/week/month to liturgically celebrate the breath of cultural diversity within the Church. Empower more effective and relevant preaching to engage local communities. Create a cultural/linguistic competency training for diocesan liturgists and other interested ministers.

For Young Adults and Ministry Leaders in Collaboration

1. Build relationships by sharing stories and welcoming the stranger, the newcomer, and those returning to the Church. Create safe spaces to hold courageous conversations and increase opportunities for integral formation and collaboration that embrace all cultural families. Learn to recognize and dismantle systems within the Church that perpetuate racism, violence, and marginalization.

2. Help youth to grow in faith and to both recognize and celebrate their gifts. Develop a parish-to-parish (nationwide sister parish) network for young adults.
3. Develop a formation curriculum that moves from the current multicultural modality which understands the universality of the Church as undifferentiated common humanity toward a particularity that centers historical memory of the distinct cultural families of the USA. Engage seminarians, diocesan staff, ministry leaders, and the faithful. Provide resources for eventual diocesan-wide programming, engagement of parishes/communities with oral histories.
4. Continue intercultural encounters. Support regional gatherings for ongoing dialogue. Encourage pilgrimages that explore cultural realities and incorporate the lived experience of different cultural families. Form supportive communities to sustain the work and strengthen networks.
5. Move from multilingual to multicultural liturgy. Create a cultural/linguistic competency training for dioceses and those interested. Integrate stories from our different cultural communities within our sacramental understanding.
6. Replicate the Journeying Together process in the local community utilizing the resource material created.

For Individuals and Participants

Recognizing the responsibility each of us shares for a more inclusive and culturally aware Church, this list of actions and attitudes offers a means for everyone to continue the hope-filled work of encounter.

1. Seek greater understanding of different cultures and explore cultural rituals.
2. Learn from the local community and accompany them through presence and engagement.
3. Address personal bias.
4. Value and embrace diversity.
5. Foster curiosity.
6. Listen with compassion before acting.
7. Create and/or participate in cultural dialogues. Invite others to participate in talking circles.
8. Demonstrate courage, risk taking, continual discernment, and problem solving.
9. Break down barriers and prevent exclusion.
10. Be a bridge. Build relationships. Get to know people one on one. Truly see people.

Acknowledgments

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These individuals produced the original Journeying Together Intracultural and Intercultural Proceedings in preparation for the national event; those documents make up parts 1 to 3 of these final Proceedings. Titles reflect roles and responsibilities at the time.

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Young Adult Multicultural Advisory Team

The Young Adult Multicultural Advisory Team was formed for the purpose of advising the Journeying Together process through its different stages. After the national event, the group decided to continue gathering for their own purposes and to advise the USCCB Committee on Cultural Diversity in the Church on various matters. Our heartfelt gratitude goes to the original members of the Young Adult Multicultural Advisory Team: Stacy M. Allen, Dallas Carter, Arletta Chambers, James Conway, Cecilia Flores,

Katie Gleason, William King, Tina Leung, Jessica Maciel Hernandez, Manuel Martinez, Kwadwo Mireku, Lee Moquino, Brenda Noriega, Vince Pecchia, Teresa Rojo-Tsosie, Jessica Romero, Luis Peña, and D'mitri Winkeler. And to all those who joined later even if their names might not be listed here. You know who you are. The original Young Adult Advisory Team was formally accompanied by USCCB staff Rev. Michael Carson, Mar Muñoz-Visoso and Madeline Watkins.

Ministry Leaders Advisory Group

The Ministry Leaders Advisory Group was formed for the purpose of accompanying the Journeying Together process through the different stages. Thank you to Kelly Adamson, José Julián Matos Auffant, Robert Barbry II, Maka Black Elk, Maka Clifford, Fr. Frank Cancro, Vicente del Real,

Lisa Franqui, Pamela Harris, Fr. Jimmy Hsu, CSP, Joyce Jones, Mark Mann, Clarissa Martinez, Gyta Martin, David C. Okonkwo, Eunice Park, Katie Zeigler; with USCCB staff Paul Jarzembowski, Barbara McCrabb and Marilyn Santos; and Darius Villalobos representing NFCYM.

Special Thanks

Special thanks to **Rev. Ricky Manalo, CSP**, for composing the beautiful “Prayer for Journeying Together,” which was prayed during each Journeying Together session and provided us with a guiding light for the journey.

We owe a big debt of gratitude also to the members of the two main advisory bodies that helped to set the direction for and guide the whole Journeying Together process: the **Young Adults Advisory** and the **Ministers Advisory**.

Our heartfelt gratitude goes also to the more than fifty **bishops, archbishops, and cardinals** who engaged in this dialogue with the young adults and ministry leaders and accompanied the various steps of the process. Special thanks to **Archbishop Nelson J. Pérez** of Philadelphia, the former chairman of the Committee on Cultural Diversity in the Church, who—undaunted by the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic—decided nonetheless to launch this initiative and encouraged the staff to get creative in finding ways to move the process online until such a time when it was feasible to gather in person. His passion for young people and his commitment to include young adults in consultative and decision-making ecclesial bodies knows no boundaries. A big shout-out also goes to

Cardinal Christophe Pierre, the Apostolic Nuncio to the United States during this period, who actively participated in all six intercultural dialogues and joined us for a portion of the national gathering. Cardinal Pierre represented the closeness of the Holy Father, Pope Francis, to young adults and those who minister to, with, and alongside young people; he was a shining example of what true pastoral accompaniment looks like.

A big, big thanks to all the **sponsors, exhibitors, and collaborators** who made possible Alive in Christ, the national gathering for Journeying Together. May the Lord repay your kindness and generosity abundantly.

Finally, thanks to the **USCCB staff** and to **all who volunteered their time, talent, and expertise over several years** to the different steps of the process. The bonds of love and friendship that were formed during the national Journeying Together process transcend cultural and generational boundaries. These bonds have endured the test of time and give us hope toward the construction of more fraternal and just relationships in the Church and in society.

APPENDIX A

God of Our Journey: A Prayer for Journeying Together

God of Our Journey,
as we gather together
we lift up our voices
to give praise and thanksgiving to your name,
the God of encounter
who, by the power of the Holy Spirit,
makes us one in Christ, our Savior.

God of Our Journey, *Dios de nuestra jornada* [Spanish],
as we journey together with Christ, your Son,
who walks alongside us day by day,
may we embrace your presence within us
and discover your presence in the people
whom we encounter along the way.

Optional/Alternate Languages for “God of Our Journey”

- **Chinese (Mandarin):** 同道偕行的天主 (Tóng dào xié xíng de Tiān zhǔ)
- **Creole:** Bondye nan vwayaj nou an
- **German:** Gott unserer Reise
- **Igbo:** Chineke onye ndu anyi
- **Korean:** Uli yeohaeng-ui sin
- **Polish:** Bóg Naszej Podróży
- **Portuguese:** Deus da nossa jornada
- **Swahili:** Mungu wa safari yetu
- **Vietnamese:** Thiên Chúa của đường đời chúng con

God of Our Journey, *Diyos ng ating paglalakbay* [Filipino],
as we journey together in the power of the Holy Spirit,
enlighten our minds and our hearts in our
intercultural encounters
with one another and with all cultural families,
so that we may become better listeners
and bearers of your faithful Word.

God of Our Journey, *Wakǰaŋǰaŋka oomani awaŋuŋkičiyankapi kiŋ* [Lakota],
as we journey together with all members of the
Body of Christ,
instill in us the presence of your love and compassion,
so that we may persevere in faith,
trust in your goodness,
and place all our hope in you.

God of Our Journey, *Dieu de notre voyage* [French],
as we journey together as disciples of Christ,
set our missionary hearts ablaze
and transform our lives by your grace,
so that we may go forth into the world
to proclaim the Good News
and to build up the reign of your love
through our acts of justice, compassion, and mercy.

We ask this through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,
who, by the power of the Holy Spirit,
brings forth a world of harmony and peace,
one God, for ever and ever. **R/. Amen.**

“Prayer for Journeying Together” was composed by Paulist Father Ricky Manalo for Journeying Together: A National Intercultural Encounter for Ministries with Youth and Young Adults, hosted by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

“Prayer for Journeying Together” © 2020 United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, DC.

APPENDIX B

Collaborators and Co-Conveners

USCCB Secretariats and Committees

Catholic Education

The Committee on Catholic Education provides guidance for the educational mission of the Church in the United States in all its institutional settings. The committee guides, directs, and coordinates this task, working closely with the Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis.

The mandate includes the following areas of responsibility: Catholic elementary and secondary schools, federal advocacy on private school policy issues, Catholic higher education and Catholic campus ministry, and certification standards for lay ecclesial ministry.

Clergy, Consecrated Life, and Vocations

The Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life, and Vocations promotes, supports, and educates about the Church's pastoral needs and concerns for the priesthood, diaconate, and consecrated life within culturally diverse communities of the United States. The committee develops foundational documents and appropriate resources that promote the effective ministry of the clerical state, consecrated life, and vocations. The committee collaborates with other USCCB committees and national organizations in matters related to the clerical state, consecrated life, and vocations.

Cultural Diversity in the Church

The Committee on Cultural Diversity in the Church works collaboratively with USCCB committees, bishops, and their dioceses to bring Catholics from various culturally diverse communities into a fuller participation in the faith, life, and evangelizing mission of the Church.

The mandate includes the following areas of responsibility: pastoral care of Hispanic and Latino Catholics, African American Catholics, Native American Catholics, Asian Catholics, African Catholics, Pacific Island Catholics, Catholic migrants and refugees, and people on the move.

Evangelization and Catechesis

The Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis assists the bishops in fulfilling their role as evangelizers and chief catechists in their dioceses by addressing all aspects of evangelization and catechesis for adults, youth, and children. This includes fostering the distribution and implementation of foundational documents related to evangelization and catechesis, the development of guidelines for both, and especially the evaluation of catechetical materials for their conformity to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. The committee supports initiatives that focus on the Church's world mission mandate and on stewardship.

This mandate includes the following areas of responsibility: evangelization of all persons, including outreach to the unchurched and to inactive Catholics; catechesis for adults, youth, and children; use of the *Catechism*; world mission awareness education; and stewardship awareness education.

Laity, Marriage, Family Life, and Youth

The Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life, and Youth advances the vocation and mission of the lay faithful, of married couples and families, of lay ecclesial ministers, and of young people. Through emphasis on the articulation and application of anthropological and theological principles, founded on magisterial teaching, the committee assists the bishops as they promote—in a culturally diverse Church—the evangelization, faith formation, and public witness of these persons, leading them toward a deeper commitment to Christ and his Church so as to transform culture and society.

This mandate includes the following areas of responsibility: laity in the world and the Church, including the concerns of women and men; the promotion and protection of marriage and family life; natural family planning; lay ecclesial ministry; lay apostolates and movements; and the Church's ministries with youth and young adults.

Collaborating Organization

National Federation of Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM)

NFCYM, as a membership organization, seeks to support and strengthen those who accompany young people as they encounter and follow Jesus Christ. NFCYM commits to advancing the field of pastoral ministry to young people

by forming, equipping, and supporting ministry leaders in their service to young people and their families; modeling and fostering a ministry of acompañamiento among young people of all cultures, languages, socioeconomic, and geographic realities; and partnering with parents and equipping families of young people as they witness to Jesus Christ in their daily lives.

A message



A Message from Pope Francis:

"His holiness Pope Francis sends good wishes and the assurance of his prayers to those taking part in the "Journeying Together" national intercultural encounter for ministries with youth and young adults. His holiness trusts that in bringing together a diversity of gifts and cultures present in the Church in the United States, this meeting will strengthen the spirit of dialogue, mutual understanding and synodality. It is his particular hope that, under the guidance of their pastors, young people will be generous and active protagonists, committed to serving the poor, caring for our common home and spreading God's kingdom of justice, mercy and love. Commending the discussion and deliberations of this encounter to the intercession of Our Lady, Mother of the Church, the Holy Father cordially imparts his blessing to the participants as a pledge of peace and joy in the Lord."



APPENDIX C

Cultural Families

Asian and Pacific Islander (API)

The API cultural family consists of individuals of Filipino, Vietnamese, Chinese, Korean, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, Indian, and Japanese descent, as well as members of other communities. APIs now make up 6 percent of the overall US population. As migration increases their numbers each year, APIs are among the fastest growing minority groups impacting American society and the Catholic Church.

Black and African American (BAA)

For the purpose of the Journeying Together process, the BAA family consisted of individuals who self-identify with an African American heritage. For pastoral care purposes they are grouped under the USCCB's Subcommittee on African American Affairs. The subcommittee attends to the needs and aspirations of BAA Catholics regarding issues of pastoral ministry, evangelization, social justice, worship, development of leaders, and other areas of concern. There are more than three million African American Catholics in the United States.

European American (EA)

For the purpose of Journeying Together, Catholics of European descent in the United States were convened primarily through ministries with young adults coordinated by the Secretariats of Catholic Education and of Laity, Marriage, Family Life, and Youth. This process provided an opportunity to reflect on the cultural, religious, and immigrant heritage, some of which is known and some of which has been lost over generations. European immigrant families came to this country at different times, for different reasons, and settled in varied regions across this country.

Hispanic/Latino American (HLA)

In Journeying Together, the HLA family sought to affirm the gifts and contributions of HLA youth and young adults, accompanying them in their faith journey and generating opportunities for their ongoing leadership development and formation as protagonists in the life of the Church and its evangelization mission. Under the Subcommittee on Hispanic Affairs, the HLA family is directly responsible for reaching out to HLA youth and young adults and for working closely with the Subcommittee on PCMRT, while encouraging collaboration with the Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano (CELAM).

Native Americans and Alaska Natives (NA)

In the Journeying Together process, the Native American family brought together individuals who self-identify with diverse original peoples native to the United States and its territories. They include descendants of many and diverse Native American/Indian tribes, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiian peoples, as well as Mayan natives from Central America who have recently emigrated to the United States. These groups fall under the pastoral care of the Subcommittee on Native American Affairs. The mission of the subcommittee is to enhance the relationship of the Catholic Native American/Alaska Native communities with Jesus Christ and his Church in the United States.

Pastoral Care of Migrants, Refugees, and Travelers (PCMRT)

Often described as a community of communities, the PCMRT family includes three groups of peoples:

1. Ethnic families and recent immigrants to the United States, including African, Brazilian, Caribbean, Haitian, and European immigrants; and members of Eastern Catholic Churches, including Chaldean, Eritrean and Ethiopian Ge'ez Rite, Our Lady of Lebanon and Maronite Eparchies of the United States, and Our Lady of Deliverance Syriac Eparchy
2. Refugees/victims of forced migration
3. Communities on the move, including circus and traveling show communities, migrant farmworkers, seafarers and mariners (served via Stella Maris, Apostleship of the Sea), and Irish Travelers

APPENDIX D

Taking the Journey Together: A Snapshot of the Process

Journeying Together was a process of dialogue and encounter focused on the Church’s ministry with youth and young adults that fostered understanding and trust within and across cultural families to achieve a more welcoming and just a community of faith.

The Journeying Together planning team, with the support of the bishops of the USCCB Committee on Cultural Diversity in the Church, discerned a process that unfolded as circumstances and needs emerged. The six steps built upon one another as the journey continued.

Step 1: Beginning the Journey

In this introductory kick-off, the bishops, young adults, and ministry leaders engaged directly on this important effort and envisioned the process ahead. The kick-off took place in July 2020 over a virtual platform because of the conditions imposed by the pandemic. More than 390 people stepped forward for that first meeting and said “yes” to embarking on an intercultural and intergenerational journey.

Step 2: Intracultural Conversations

Each cultural community met to begin discussing some common questions and raising issues that it wanted to bring to the intercultural table. These conversations were also a chance for each cultural community to gain the self-awareness and confidence (and in some cases, humility) to share their cultural stories with others. These sessions took place from August to December 2020. Cultural communities were grouped in six distinct families:

- Asian and Pacific Islander (API)
- Black/African American (BAA)
- European American (EA)
- Hispanic/Latino American (HLA)

- Native American (NA)
- Pastoral Care of Migrants, Refugees, and Travelers (PCMRT)

Each cultural family had one or more intracultural conversations during this period. Some, like the PCMRT communities, held multiple sessions with distinct subgroups before meeting as a “family,” given the great diversity of communities grouped under them.

Step 3: Intercultural Conversations

In the intercultural conversations, all cultural families met together once a month for a brief presentation (led by one of the cultural families) and small cross-cultural group discussions about each community’s contributions, unique issues and areas of concern, and discernment of adequate pastoral responses. Monthly intercultural dialogue sessions, as part of the USCCB’s Journeying Together intercultural encounter process, took place as follows:

- NA community: January 13, 2021
- BAA community: February 21, 2021
- API community: March 6, 2021
- PCMRT community: April 21, 2021
- HLA community: May 27, 2021
- EA community: June 24, 2021

Step 4: Deepening the Dialogue

This step consisted of five concurrent components:

- **Going local.** Developing resources to replicate the journey on the local level.
- **Intracultural conversations, part 2.** Revisiting cultural family conversations.
- **Deeper dive.** Deepening the dialogue on particular topics of interest that emerged during the process.
- **Proceedings and preparatory document.** Analyzing and developing the narrative.
- **National event planning.** For Step 5.

Step 5: Gathering Together

In Alive in Christ, the in-person national gathering of Journeying Together, bishops and representatives from each cultural family gathered to formulate action steps, develop strategic collaborations, and chart a path forward together in the Church’s ministry with and engagement of

young people in this country. It was also a celebration of each cultural community's gifts and contributions and of our "journey together." The Journeying Together national intercultural encounter event was held in Chicago, Illinois, from June 23 to 26, 2022.

Step 6: Proceedings and Implementation

This document gathers the *Proceedings* of the national Journeying Together process as well as the suggestions that emanated from the action planning conducted during the National Gathering. They are offered to dioceses, schools, Catholic organizations, apostolic movements, and others, as tools for dialogue, follow-up and implementation at the local level.

The companion *Journeying Together Handbook* serves as a resource for local intercultural encounters. In it you will find

- A step-by-step process to empower young adult voices while intentionally engaging as many cultural communities as are represented in your community.
- A young adult-focused process that includes inter-generational support, recognizing the importance of having older generations listen to the faith and cultural experiences of young adults in the community and seek to understand their lived experiences in the Church.

APPENDIX E

National Catholic Youth Conference 2019: Engaging Our Youth—Intercultural Listening Session with Teens

The USCCB Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church hosted an intercultural listening session for teens and their chaperones during the National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) on November 22, 2019. A key goal of the listening session was to elicit input from youth regarding their perceptions about the influence of the Church in their lives. The Secretariat, in partnership with NFCYM and the USCCB’s youth and young adult ministry coordinator, sought to augment the findings of the Synod on Young People, the National Dialogue on Catholic Youth and Young Adult Ministry, and the V Encuentro on Hispanic/Latino Ministry in the United States—specifically to incorporate input from young people from diverse cultural communities. The initiative was also intended to provide a multicultural faith reflection experience for the participants. The occasion also provided NCYC with an opportunity to reach out to Catholic teens of diverse cultural and ethnic families, many of whom were participating in NCYC for the first time. Below is a summary of the written and oral contributions of the nearly one hundred teens who participated in the consultation.

1. What are the important positive aspects of Catholic teens’ lives?

For the most part, teens reported that what was important was the relationships in their lives, particularly relationships with family and with the Church. Very few reported material objects or possessions as important in their lives.

With the Church, the teens expressed that their faith and relationships are strengthened through participation in the sacraments, especially Confirmation, but also in church activities such as retreats, immersion trips, Bible study, etc.

2. What are the significant negative aspects of Catholic teens’ lives?

Teens shared about events that have brought them stress and sadness in their lives. For many, watching their peers involve themselves in self-destructive behavior—including drugs, alcohol, sex, bad decision-making, and disrespecting faith-centered people—brought questions into their own lives.

Many reported having experienced tragedies, such as family members having died or been deported, not having enough to eat, or suffering through a mental illness such as depression. Many of them look for the Church to help them get through life’s difficulties.

3. What helps teens in their faith?

Teens reported that their relationships are the most important factor to maintaining and developing their relationship with God. Teens stressed the importance of maintaining strong relationships with family, faith leaders, and the community at large.

They also related how the sacraments are crucial in maintaining their faith and spiritual lives. They strongly expressed how important it is to be involved in the Church and especially involved in church ministries such as music ministry, altar serving, lecturing, and outreach ministry. They talked about how church involvement is important not only to the community of believers but also to their own lives of faith. They lament how sometimes they do not feel welcomed to participate. They stated how much a welcoming environment in the Church means to them.

They also included references to social media as being both a help to their faith and a detriment to faith. This dual image of social media reflects on how it is both perceived and used by teens.

4. What brings teens away from their faith?

The teens stated that the most important barriers to faith stem from their peers, family members, and other members of society who do not share their faith. Along with external factors, they also listed internal factors such as greed, anger, prejudices, and laziness. Many of the factors listed dealt with being authentic to themselves, to others, and to God. Several mentioned the negative impact of over-relying on their cell phones.

5. How can the Church help strengthen the faith of Catholic teens?

Teens stated that what they want most is for the Church to do a better job in supporting youth ministry. They spoke about the need to empower young voices and to help youth to be involved in the church community.

They also repeated the need for the Church to focus more on youth, especially with youth-centered activities such as retreats, youth community outreach, and youth-led social justice projects.

Most especially, they talked about the great need for evangelization to their friends and to the world. To accomplish this task, it is important to be able to communicate with youth, to speak their language, in terms of both the message and the methodology.

6. How can what they reported be used at the Journeying Together: National Intercultural Encounter for Ministries with Youth and Young Adults?

- Search for common ground. Are there common elements for teens and young adults? How can teens and young adults work together for common goals?
- Build a partnership with young adults, especially those responsible for youth ministry.
- Develop ways that youth and young adult voices can be heard in the Catholic Church, so that their opinions may be sought and their needs, concerns, and ways of living and expressing faith may be welcomed and better understood.
- Create opportunities for meaningful participation of teens in the life of the community.

It will be important to incorporate these findings in current formation program and materials for young adults and leaders of youth and young adult ministries.

APPENDIX F

Kick-Off Event— July 2020

Basic Agenda and Flow

Saturday, July 25, 2020 | 3:00-5:00 p.m. ET
For young adults and Catholic ministry leaders

Hosted by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Committee on Cultural Diversity in the Church (CDC), in collaboration with the Secretariats of Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth (LMFLY), Evangelization and Catechesis (EC), and Catholic Education (CE), and the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM)

NOTES: This gathering is for selected delegates from each cultural family; *all times below are Eastern.*

WHEN?	WHAT?	WHO?
3:00 PM	Welcome and Greeting	Archbishop Nelson Pérez of Philadelphia and event emcees
3:10 PM	Opening Prayer	Facilitated by the Journeying Together prayer team, featuring young adults and bishops
3:25 PM	Small Group Introductions	Intercultural small groups
3:35 PM	Purpose and Vision of Journeying Together <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are we doing here today?• Who has been invited?• How will this process unfold this year?• Why does it even matter?	Interactive panel discussion with young adults, ministry leaders, bishops, and USCCB staff
3:55 PM	Musical Interlude/Reflection	
4:00 PM	Small Group Conversations	Intercultural small groups
4:25 PM	Large Group Discussion	Open to all participants, facilitated by the emcees

WHEN?	WHAT?	WHO?
4:45 PM	Wrap-Up	Abp. Pérez and the emcees
4:50 PM	Closing Prayer	Facilitated by the Journeying Together prayer team, featuring young adults and bishops

Prior to the July 25, 2020, kick-off event:

- Participants were sent the login link to the digital kick-off event.
- Participants were invited to view some video messages from bishops, young adults of various cultural backgrounds and ministry leaders inviting them to participate in the session, and they were encouraged to read *Christus Vivit*, Pope Francis' 2019 apostolic exhortation to youth, young adults and ministry leaders.
- Participants were asked to pray and reflect on the reality of their culture and the country, as well as their perspective on life and faith as a young person or pastoral leader engaged with the young.

APPENDIX G

Presentation to the USCCB Plenary Assembly— November 2022

On November 16, 2022, Most Rev. Arturo Cepeda, then auxiliary bishop of Detroit and chairman of the Committee on Cultural Diversity in the Church, and young adult ministry leaders, Rudy Dehaney of the Archdiocese of Baltimore and Cecilia Marie Flores of the Diocese of Sacramento, California, together addressed the Fall General Assembly of the US Catholic bishops to present the lessons learned through the Journeying Together process, its national gathering “Alive in Christ” in Chicago earlier in the summer, and their hopes for the outcomes moving forward. What follows is the transcript of their historical address.

Most Reverend Arturo Cepeda, Auxiliary Bishop of Detroit, Chairman of the Committee on Cultural Diversity

“If we journey together, young and old, we can be firmly rooted in the present, and from here, revisit the past and look to the future. . . . Together, we can learn from one another, warm hearts, inspire minds with the light of the Gospel, and lend new strength to our hands” (CV 199).

Such are the words of Pope Francis in *Christus Vivit*, which inspired the participants in the “Alive in Christ: Young, Diverse, Prophetic Voices, Journeying Together” event earlier this summer [2022] in Chicago.

In fact, for the past several years, we have done just what Pope Francis suggests: We have rooted ourselves in the reality of the present as it is being experienced by young adults and those who minister among our young people

now; but we also explored the historical memory from the perspective of every cultural group and dared to dream of where can go in the future.

This process included mutual learning and listening, intentionally creating safe and “sacred” spaces where young people can feel listened to and the warmth of belonging, the inspiration of our faith tradition, and actively working on future-focused projects.

Over the course of two years, from mid-2020 through mid-2022, we met regularly over Zoom for hard, but necessary, conversations about faith and life, about the joys and sorrows afflicting young people today, their relationship with the Church, about the need for inclusion of young voices in all our deliberations, and about the valuing of the gifts young adults bring to the Church and, on behalf of the Church, to the society and communities where they live and operate. We also had an opportunity to dive deeper into the issues that young people raised up to our attention and that were of deep concern to them: immigration, racism, climate issues, and social justice work.

Despite the new wave of COVID cases around the country and the massive flight cancellations and delays of the early summer, 335 young adults, ministry leaders, and bishops were able to come together for a four-day in-person encounter experience in Chicago.

We had a planned schedule, to be sure. However, the synodal nature of the process allowed us to adapt the program as challenges arose—which they did—and to address the issues with directness and pastoral responsiveness. This was, to me, one of the highlights, and one great outcome of this synodal model. It isn’t perfect but is effective. Or, in the words of Archbishop Nelson Pérez, during the closing homily, “it was real.”

We prayed together, broke bread together, learned skills together, and worked on action planning together. The trust we had built up over two straight years of Zoom meetings helped us navigate any rough waters we encountered.

Journeying Together demonstrated that there is a strong thirst for inclusion, addressing historical trauma and current wounds, an acknowledgment of gifts, and for innovation in formation and accompaniment of young people. It also revealed that young adults of all cultures

are serving and want to serve and be an integral part of our Catholic Church.

We discovered that there is excellent leadership currently among the young within all our cultural communities—and we didn't have to dig far to find it through the Journeying Together process. In most cases all they needed was to be seen and heard, an invitation to serve, and a word of encouragement.

We also learned that young adults are not all in the same place. They have different needs and lived experiences. Spaces need to be created in faith communities at the local level to cultivate a sense of belonging for all.

Perhaps most importantly, we saw what Pope Francis has been telling us all along: that young people are not a commodity or goals on a strategic plan. Rather, they are protagonists in the history of our faith and in the Church's mission of evangelization, working side by side with us as their shepherds.

In that spirit, I will stop talking and yield my time to two young adults who have been actively engaged with the bishops in this process. Let me introduce to you Cecilia Flores from the Diocese of Sacramento and Rudy Dehaney from the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

Mr. Rudy Dehaney, Archdiocese of Baltimore, Director/Campus Minister, Faith Formation Center, Northeast Catholic Community/ Notre Dame, Baltimore, Maryland; Co-Chair, Journeying Together Post Event Task Group

Thank you, Bishop Cepeda and the conference of Catholic bishops, for this opportunity to speak at the plenary session today about this Journeying Together process. I want to start today with a story. This story begins with my personal background and ends with a response to one of those real moments in Chicago mentioned and what we can take from that experience. As a young adult lay minister born and raised in Baltimore to Jamaican parents, I carry my faith and culture everywhere I go. I love different aspects of my work and life, but for those who know me, one of my greatest passions is music.

Most recognize me as the guy who is always wearing his headphones and who is singing a song for any and every occasion. It is these moments that I am happiest. Growing

up, I was exposed to many different types of music, but on Sunday mornings, gospel music could be heard at home or at church later, at my home parish of Blessed Sacrament. I still like to sing my favorite hymns to clap to at random moments in a week or share my passion and love with others as part of campus ministry at Notre Dame Maryland. Gospel, a style of music shared with other faith-filled African Americans, holds great cultural, historical, and faith significance to me and has greatly shaped who I am today.

For many fellow young adults from the Black Catholic cultural family, it holds that same significance. So as we were in Chicago and casually gathered together as a group on that first night, we were speculating and anticipating what songs we would hear the next day at Mass and started to sing a few of our favorite songs. You could hear us at the hotel bar area singing very loudly songs such as "Total Praise" or "Hallelujah, Salvation and Glory." As we would sing together and remember the songs we grew up on, there were genuine moments of joy we had in our hearts together that night.

And so when we did not hear the following day those songs that we thought represented our culture and our history at Mass, we felt disappointed over the missed opportunity of authenticity. This is not the first and only time we have felt this way being in church spaces, as this type of thing happens all the time. It's not even unique to our culture. You can say that you get used to it, but you never really do. You do learn to somewhat live with the expectation that nothing will really change. But is it something that can be fixed? In this instance, would it be possible? Turns out, it was. All the relationships needed to make it happen were already in place.

A group of young adults from the AA/Black cultural family invited Cecilia over that night in the hotel bar area to be a listening ear on how we felt. She heard us lament and sing another round of renditions of songs such as "Total Praise" and "Hallelujah, Salvation and Glory" again for all to hear. And so Cecilia, as the good person she is, told her good friend Archbishop Perez, who could also hear us singing, what she heard from us. And through those built relationships, we were given the opportunity to sing at the closing Mass, in which Archbishop Perez was the celebrant. With only thirty minutes of rehearsal, what were we to sing? That's right: "Total Praise" and "Hallelujah, Salvation and Glory." We have been rehearsing all of this

time, it seems, and we were ready and willing to step up in the moment for an authentic encounter that we felt true to our culture and faith and made for a powerful experience to all who were there and a part of our Journeying Together experience.

This story is a representation of some of the “dreams” young adults—active in both their faith and culture—envision and work towards: honesty, awareness, acknowledgment, inclusion, and healing.

In these dreams and others are why Cecilia, I, and young adults from across the US engaged in this process of Journeying Together with many of the bishops here. My story and this experience are but one of many. We all carry our own experiences, histories, challenges, and gifts from God that we bring to this Church. Waiting to be in a relationship with someone to be heard. To truly know that all are welcome, served, and loved by God. To see the recognition and dismantling of systems of racism, violence, and marginalization wherever they occur. Hearing our stories told and acknowledging cultural elements that shape our lived reality, while honoring the faith we collectively share. We spent time in Chicago to talk about these dreams and how we can make it happen together, to be Catholic in the truest sense of the word.

Thank you for this time, and now I will turn it over to Cecilia.

Ms. Cecilia Marie Flores, Diocese of Sacramento, Community Organizer; Chair, Young Adult Multicultural Advisory Committee, Journeying Together

Thank you to the USCCB and in particular to the Committee on Cultural Diversity for convening the Journeying Together process and persevering through the pandemic, and all of the bishops and others who journeyed together with us along the way.

As my brother Rudy shared, throughout this process, there were moments of joy, but also moments of hurt and tension—which perhaps appeared and felt chaotic.

In the midst of it all, the Holy Spirit revealed to me a greater reality happening that brought me great joy and hope. It was the joy of seeing shepherds being shepherds, and disciples of the Lord being disciples. As young adults

expressed their pain, elders listened and supported them, and bishops tended to their flock in real time. This isn't the Church we experience every day—more often we experience rejection, division, and clericalism. But the Church that we long to have and be existed during this process, in those spaces, and in those moments.

I was reminded of a principle heard often in community organizing in difficulty: turn to wonder. I wonder what it would be like if we could live Church like this every day? I wonder what could happen if young adults felt seen, loved, heard, fought for, and trusted? And I wonder what it would take for us to get there?

The issues that surfaced from the Journeying Together process echo and deepen what we young adults have been saying over the past several years and can be summarized in two points:

1. Our stories, our cultures, and our lived realities are important and must be considered when discussing our pastoral care.
2. Creating sacred space for conversation, fostering personal relationships, and intergenerational dialogue is desperately needed

Journeying Together provided us the opportunity to address these issues, and from the process emerged a new community of leaders with a desire to embark on mission to share their gifts with the Church and the world. Perhaps you are all asking, So what happens now? Often when church leadership has not provided what we needed, we have taken the steps to meet our own needs. We who participated in this process are committed to giving our all to meet the needs surfaced by our brothers and sisters. This has already started and is taking on many forms: creating virtual communities, holding post-event gatherings, forming regional support groups, and providing resources to replicate the process we underwent.

But most importantly—we are committed to model and embody the community that we wish to build in the Church, recognizing that the change starts with us. With me, with all young adults, with our elders, but also with you, our shepherds, our fathers.

My bishop, Jaime Soto of Sacramento, once said during a college baccalaureate Mass: “To converse is human.

To converse well is divine. God created the world with a conversation. We are part of God’s ongoing conversation with the world. He has something to say to the world, and that is why we are here. May your conversations be an extension of God’s creative work. May they build up and not destroy.”

We have all heard that young adults are leaving the Church. However, there are also amazing ministries being led by young adults throughout the US. And though we may seem jaded and discontent with church leadership, the reality is that this reveals something deeper—that we have a deep desire to be in relationship and conversation with you all, our shepherds, our fathers. To be known by you. To be loved by you. To be called by our names, fought for, and guided by you. There are countless young adults who deeply love our Lord and our Church, who are ready and willing to step into leadership, that need guidance, mentorship, and support. Your support. Your encouragement. Your trust.

On behalf of all the young adults that Rudy and I represent, I now invite you, our shepherds, our fathers, to turn to wonder: What would it take for the young adults under your pastoral care to feel seen, loved, heard, fought for, and trusted by you? How can you enter an ongoing conversation with them? And how can that conversation be part of a collaborative and co-creative relationship with the Divine?

Our journey together is not over—and we look forward to continuing it with all of you. Thank you.

Bishop Cepeda’s Closing Remarks

Thank you, Rudy, and Cecilia. Thank you for your witness. Thank you for your questions, and thank you for your service to the Church. I am happy to hear all the emerging ideas that are coming forth from this process. And thanks to all who participated both in Chicago and in the virtual process for your collaboration in this shared mission with us, your bishops.

In this process, we have learned that we cannot make plans for ministries with youth and young adults—or any ministry in the Catholic Church, for that matter—without also looking at the rich diversity of cultures, communities, and expressions of faith present in our young Catholic population, and we must be more attentive to the wounds and what still needs healing and reconciliation. We also came to learn that this dialogue, and any planning for ministry, needs to be done in an intergenerational way.

The Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth, which has been collaborating with us on this initiative, is currently working on a draft of the Conference’s National Pastoral Framework on Youth and Young Adults, which should come before you in the coming year. We hope that lessons learned through *Journeying Together* and the wisdom of young people will be integrated into this important document.

However, another important lesson is that we need to connect and make room for young people in all the activities and work of the Church in this country, whether they relate to ministries with youth and young adults. In each of our Catholic communities and in every one of our initiatives, there must be a radical infusion of young voices from all cultures.

Finally, let’s not forget the call that Pope Francis made in his message to all participants in the *Journeying Together* process and especially to us as shepherds. It is the Holy Father’s hope that “under the guidance of their pastors, young people will be generous and active protagonists, committed to serving the poor, caring for our common home, and spreading God’s kingdom of justice, mercy, and love.”

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Journeying Together: Proceedings



“If we journey together, young and old, we can be firmly rooted in the present, and from here, revisit the past and look to the future. . . . Together, we can learn from one another, warm hearts, inspire minds with the light of the Gospel, and lend new strength to our hands” (CV 199).

For three critical years (2020-2023), several hundred young adults of diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, nearly 50 Catholic bishops and several dozen youth, young adult and campus ministers, engaged in a synodal process of dialogue, reflection and mutual accompaniment called *Journeying Together: A National Intercultural Encounter for Ministries with Youth and Young Adults*.

Inspired by Pope Francis’ apostolic exhortation *Christus Vivit*, the participants rooted themselves in reality, as currently experienced by young adults and those who minister among young people; they also explored the joint historical memory from the perspective of each cultural group and dared to dream of where we can go together moving forward.

The process included mutual learning and listening, intentionally creating safe and “sacred” spaces where young people can feel listened to and the warmth of belonging, the inspiration of our faith tradition, and actively envisioning and working together towards the future.

Journeying Together demonstrated that there is a strong thirst for inclusion, for an acknowledgment of gifts, and for innovation in formation and accompaniment of young people. It also revealed that young adults of all cultures are an integral part of our Catholic Church. They are not a commodity or goals on a strategic plan. Rather, as Pope Francis reminded us, they are ‘protagonists’ in the history of our faith and in the Church’s mission of evangelization, working side by side with their shepherds.

The *Journeying Together Proceedings* report gathers all the wisdom that emanated from this process—adding to the initial proceedings of the intracultural conversations and intercultural dialogues the learnings and outcomes from the national gathering, *Alive in Christ: Young, Diverse, Prophetic Voices Journeying Together*.

These *Proceedings* are intended to serve as memory and inspiration, both for participants and for similar processes of intercultural and intergenerational dialogue at the local level. We recommend that these *Proceedings* be consulted and used in conjunction with its companion resource, *Journeying Together: A Handbook for intercultural Encounter*.



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