

NCYC

National Catholic Youth Conference

Indianapolis, IN

November 20-23

I AM



On Thursday, November 20, 16,000 high school students and young adults visited Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis, IN for the opening night of the National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC), among those 16,000 students were 5 teens from Blessed Sacrament Parish: Addison Duling, Danielle Folkenroth, Brynn Haddad, Isabelle Meir and Anya Stachowiak. This was a first trip not just for the students but also for me as their adult leader..

We would like to say thank you for all your prayers and support on this pilgrimage to Indianapolis. The Blessed Sacrament community's support made this faith experience possible for us. Thank You to the parishioners of Blessed Sacrament for supporting the students in this experience. It is impossible to explain all of the memories of NCYC, but we hope to show you a glimpse of our experience.

~Addison, Danielle, Brynn, Isabelle, Anya and Melissa

What are you taking back from NCYC?



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

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

I am so grateful and blessed that I was able to strengthen my faith, and deepen my connection to God. I made a ton of new friends and met so many people from across the country. I am so lucky to be one of the 16,000 or so people who not only got to experience the conference, but be able to see Pope Leo live. He had great words of wisdom and I learned so much from him. One thing that he said that really stuck out to me was how friendships rooted in your faith are much more valuable and important than friendships that are not rooted in faith. They'll help you grow your connection to God. ~Isabelle

I was nervous about going in the first place but now I wish I had signed up to go years before. I not only got closer to God, through this trip, but with other teens from my church, also. Going around the exhibition and main sessions was so much fun, it was a mix of serious spirituality and easy going spirituality that helped you stay energetic about growing in your faith. I wish other teens could experience the sheer awe of seeing 16,000 other Catholics gathered together. It finally clicked for me on Friday night while all of us were singing "Praise" that everyone there shared the same beliefs and values. At home I know about 20-30 Catholics my age that are as invested in their faith, as I am, but realizing there was 16,000 of us gathered there is something I will never forget. I really enjoyed hearing the speakers and going to the breakout sessions, they gave me new thoughts and perspectives that I wouldn't have gotten from just my church. ~Anya.

I am taking back so much knowledge and wisdom from NCYC. In a time when my faith felt dull, NCYC brought my priorities into focus. I will be taking back my want to share my faith and God high with my family and friends. I hope I will always remember that God and Jesus will always be there no matter where we are in our journey... they are always talking to us, supporting us, and the one thing in our lives that will never walk away, never say we aren't good enough, and especially never give up on us. I wish kids my age could experience meeting the Pope because that was so impactful it didn't even feel real... Addison.

