

St. Pat's Youth Ministry

NEWSLETTER

FEB. 2026



Carlsbad, CA



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THANK YOU!

Some of you may remember seeing a few of our teens standing outside the church with donation buckets a few months ago, raising funds to attend NCYC (the National Catholic Youth Conference) in Indianapolis. We want to sincerely thank everyone who supported them and helped make this possible.

Because of your generosity, we were able to take a group of 30 teens and adults to Indianapolis in November 2025. We're so grateful for your support and would love to share a glimpse of that experience with you.



FROM SAN DIEGO TO INDIANAPOLIS

Our teens departed from San Diego International Airport a day before NCYC began. They were ready and well prepared for the very different weather—yes, actual cold.

Before the main event, they had the opportunity to do a bit of sightseeing and explore the city, building excitement for everything that awaited them. One of the highlights for our group was seeing four of our NYAC members take the stage—an especially proud and memorable moment for our teens.



ENCOUNTERING GOD IN THE CROWD: MY NCYC 2025

EXPERIENCE

JOSELYN HERNANDEZ

In November of 2025, I had the opportunity to travel to Indianapolis, Indiana for NCYC, the National Catholic Youth Conference, with youth and adults from my parish. This was my second time attending NCYC, so I thought I knew what to expect, but this time was completely different. NCYC 2025 touched my heart in a deeper and more personal way than I ever expected, and it became an experience that truly strengthened my relationship with God.

One of the many powerful moments for me was adoration. Seeing thousands of young people fall into complete silence and show such deep reverence for God was incredibly moving. In that moment I felt a deep sense of peace and God's presence in the room. It reminded me that even in a room filled with so many people, God speaks directly to each heart. Another unforgettable moment was hearing an entire stadium full of youth lifting their voices together in praise. The energy, joy, and love in that space made me feel deeply connected to the Church and reminded me that I am never alone in my faith.

Another moment that impacted me was meeting Pope Leo XIV virtually. As soon as he appeared on the screens, I felt an overwhelming rush of emotions, happiness, love, and comfort. Even though I wasn't able to speak to him personally, hearing his words and the guidance he shared with us as youth touched my heart deeply. In that moment, I truly felt God's presence with me. It reminded me that if youth across the nation can live out their faith, then so can I. That experience helped me grow stronger in my faith.

Another incredible memory from NCYC was watching two of my closest friends Valeria and Hector, whom I cherish deeply, give a talk about their trip to Ghana in the summer. It was amazing to see their confidence as they shared their experience and spoke from the heart. Watching them up on that stage was inspiring, and I could see how God had worked through them and how He continues to use them to inspire others. That moment reminded me that God works through ordinary people in extraordinary ways, and it encouraged me to trust more fully in His plan for my own life.

I am beyond grateful that I was able to experience NCYC 2025. I hope my story can inspire other youth from our parish to take that step and attend NCYC. At first, it may feel overwhelming or uncomfortable, but once you open your heart to God, you begin to feel Him working within you and slowly transforming your heart. NCYC has helped me find a place where I feel loved, supported, and at home, and I hope many other youth will

one day get to experience that same joy, faith, and sense of belonging.

THE MAIN EVENT

The general sessions were held inside Lucas Oil Stadium, while the breakout sessions took place at the Indianapolis Convention Center. The event was emceed by Gian Gamboa and Sister Elfie Del Rosario, FMA, who brought energy and joy to the gathering.

During the general sessions, our group heard from a number of powerful speakers. One who made a particularly strong impact was Bishop Joseph Espailat—the youngest Catholic bishop and the first Dominican bishop in the United States. Our teens also enjoyed the music throughout the event, especially the house band, including Thomas Muglia, whose music is especially popular among our Core Team members.

A truly proud moment for our community was seeing our NYAC members—Valeria Torres, Hector Saldana, Chris Rivette, and Natalie Meyers—take the stage to share their witness with more than 16,000 people.

Later that day came an unforgettable surprise: Pope Leo joined the gathering via video call from the Vatican. He answered questions from teens and concluded by giving a special blessing to everyone in the stadium.

Needless to say, this was a truly unforgettable experience for our youth—one made possible by a supportive and generous community that helped them journey to Indianapolis.



THREE NCYC'S, ONE GROWING FAITH

LEAH GIJON

I have attended NCYC on three separate occasions, and each time it feels uniquely special. My first year, I was in awe of the sheer number of people who had come from all over the country to embrace the Lord's glory. It truly was a magical weekend that opened my eyes to the beauty of our faith and the power of community.

My second year attending NCYC was just as special in its own way. I had the opportunity to participate in the live performance of the Stations of the Cross in front of 3,000 people. Being part of something so meaningful and so much bigger than myself was an incredible blessing and deepened my appreciation for serving God through action.

But my most recent NCYC experience was unlike anything before. This past year, NCYC was held in Indianapolis, where roughly 16,000 people gathered to praise the Lord. The atmosphere felt completely different—grand, expressive, and full of life. It was impossible not to be in awe and want to take in everything all at once. Seeing people from all over the country come together felt surreal and created a deep sense of connection among everyone present.

On Friday night of NCYC, I was given the opportunity to do a reading that would lead us into adoration. Our Youth Minister, Pat Clatsby, signed me up, and at first, I was terrified. I was afraid I would mess up or not be loud enough, but I decided to set those fears aside and go all in. I told myself to trust both God and myself—if I could proclaim Scripture in front of 3,000 people, then 13,000 more couldn't be that much worse. I was very wrong.

During rehearsal, I was a shaking mess. I fumbled over my words even with the Scripture in front of me. My knees trembled, and my palms grew sweaty. If I was struggling this badly when no one was watching, I could only imagine how it would feel in front of a packed stadium. In the days leading up to adoration, I constantly practiced. I ate, prayed, and slept with the Scripture in mind. I was determined to master it, yet no matter how much I reread it, I felt like I was always getting something wrong.

When the time for the reading finally came, I was still a ball of nerves. However, as I walked onto the stage, a sense of clarity washed over me. I realized that no matter what happened, I had given it my all and was proud to be standing there. I read the Scripture just as I had practiced, and thankfully, there were no hiccups—no shaking knees or sweaty palms. I truly felt God watching over me and guiding me through every word.

As adoration continued, I felt closer to the Lord than ever before—not just because I had a front-row seat next to the monstrance, but because it felt as though I was reading not only to the people, but to God Himself. When adoration ended, several people came up to me and shared how beautifully and passionately I had read. Later that night, when I called my family, my parents told me they had received a video of my reading and expressed how proud they were. Hearing that moved me to tears.

Knowing that so many people supported me and believed in me brought me comfort, especially because I didn't have confidence in myself at the beginning. I am beyond grateful for the opportunities I was given and for finding the courage to step into those roles. This will definitely be an NCYC to remember.

UPCOMING EVENTS



LA Youth Day: Our Youth Office will be taking a group of 27 high school students to a youth rally in Anaheim on Feb. 19th.



Mike Patin: Mike will be at the Parish on Sunday Feb. 22nd. This event will be open to all the community.



Monthly Youth Mass: Join us on Feb. 22 at the 5 pm. Two teens from the youth ministry will be helping the celebrant with his homily.