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# 2020 Cultural Diversity Youth and Young Adult Ministry Encounter

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## CONVENERS

Committee on Cultural Diversity in the  
Church, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops  
Youth & Young Adult Ministries, Secretariat  
of Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth,  
U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops  
National Federation for Catholic Youth  
Ministry (NFCYM)

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## Goal

The **Cultural Diversity Youth and Young Adult Ministry Encounter** (the “**Encounter**”) will be a special gathering and process featuring an intentional and culturally-competent dialogue *with* and accompaniment *of* Catholic youth and young adults from all the cultural communities across the United States. In collaboration with national ministry networks that offer complementary gifts and capabilities, the Encounter will implement a pastoral process to identify, empower, form, and connect representative leaders of youth and young adult ministries of the Catholic Church in the United States.

The pastoral process will also be informed and inspired by Pope Francis’ Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christus Vivit*, signed March 25, 2019 and released April 2, 2019, on the anniversary of the death of Saint John Paul II.

## Date, Location, and Audience

The **Encounter** will take place between May and August 2020 at a centrally-located Catholic university in the U.S.

The primary audience of the **Encounter** will be Catholic pastoral leaders working in youth, campus, and young adult ministries within the six cultural communities:

- African-American
- Asian-Pacific Islander
- European-American
- Hispanic-Latino
- Native American
- Migrants, Refugees, and People on the Move

The **Encounter** will also be a place to gather young adults (age 18 to 39) of various ethnic and cultural backgrounds who are emerging leaders in the Catholic Church within their ecclesial or cultural context. In addition, bishops and key nationally-recognized leaders in these ministry fields will be invited by the host organizations.

## Objectives

The **Encounter** will provide a space and a process through which all participants will be able to:

- Discern adequate responses to identified pastoral needs
- Meet, engage, collaborate and celebrate one another
- Experience and practice evangelization and intercultural leadership skills
- Be inspired to act after reflecting on the Holy Father’s Exhortation *Christus Vivit*
- Connect with the wider Church leadership and engage in nurturing and open conversations with bishops

## Process and Content

The **Encounter** will include the following elements:

- **Pre-Encounter Process** (Fall 2019 to Spring 2020): Consultation and Discernment (at NCYC and the Local Level)
- **Encounter Gathering** (Summer 2020):
  - Participation of about 350-400 Leaders
  - Prayer and Liturgical Experiences
  - Keynote Speakers and Panels
  - Breakout Sessions and Cultural Presentations
  - Small Group Dinner Sessions with Bishops
- **Post-Encounter** (Fall 2020 onward): Collaboration opportunities with wider Church structures to address the pastoral needs of youth and young adults from an inter-cultural perspective

## Background

In 2010 the Committee on Cultural Diversity in the Church convened, for the first time, a gathering of the Catholic Cultural Diversity Network. The 2010 Cultural Diversity Convocation played a crucial role in allowing the bishops and the USCCB Secretariat on Cultural Diversity in the Church (CDC) to chart a pathway toward intercultural communion in the Church. It provided a Catholic theological and ecclesial framework to build unity in diversity and led to the creation of important resources and initiatives such as the *Training Guidelines for Building Intercultural Competence for Ministers* and *Best Practices for Shared Parishes, So That They All May Be One*.

Since then, the CDC Committee has continued to promote intercultural dialogue and awareness, raising the need to build a culture of encounter, communion and missionary discipleship among Catholics of all cultural and ethnic families in the United States, including youth and young adults.

Encouraged by other national and international significant pastoral processes of consultation and discernment focused on young people (in particular the 2018 Synod of Bishops on *Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment*, the *Fifth National Encuentro on Hispanic/Latino Ministry*, the *National Dialogue on Catholic Pastoral Ministry with Youth and Young Adults*, among other recent initiatives), Catholic leaders from across the cultural spectrum have also raised the need to identify, empower, form, and integrate more youth and young adults of all cultural communities into ministry and leadership roles within the wider Church.

The USCCB Committee on Cultural Diversity in the Church, in consultation with its subcommittees, the Youth and Young Adult Ministries division of the USCCB Secretariat of Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth (LMFLY), and the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM), believe the signs of the times are calling for a new convening. This time, the focus is to empower and integrate the diverse youth and young adults in the life of the Catholic Church. The 2020 **Cultural Diversity Youth and Young Adult Ministry Encounter** will facilitate a pastoral process for the Church to address these needs and take action locally and nationally.

