



TO TEACH WHO CHRIST IS

A Newsletter for the Campaign for Parishes, Catholic Education and Faith Formation

October 2021

Changing Seasons Remind Us of His Plan and Promises

With the leaves shifting in color and cool autumn breeze filling the atmosphere, we can't help but reflect on the changing seasons and all of the goodness God brings us year after year. Just as we trust God to bring transformation and growth each season, we trust He is continuing to do so with the *To Teach Who Christ Is* campaign. Through all of the campaign's phases, changes and waves, God has had His steady hand in our work, bringing His plan to fruition for this campaign and the future of the Archdiocese of Chicago.

You have been a part of His plan, and we are forever grateful for your support of our mission and vision for this campaign. Whether you're entering this next season with a joyful heart, or going through a difficult time, please know God is with you, and you are changing lives through this campaign.



Young Adult Engagement Continues to Increase with Campaign Funding

The Archdiocese of Chicago's Young Adult Engagement Team (YAET) is a ministry within the Parish Vitality and Mission Office. YAET exists to build an encouraging Catholic community of young adult missionary disciples who invite other young adults to build community, make disciples, and inspire witness to help facilitate the experience of Jesus Christ and His unconditional love.

With evangelization playing an important role in the *To Teach Who Christ Is* campaign, campaign funding was used to create and staff the ministry, and continues to support programming and initiatives. We recently connected with Maria T. Palafox and Juan Pablo Padilla, coordinators of the YAET, to learn more about the team and the ways the *To Teach Who Christ Is* campaign has impacted its mission.



Pictured above is the Happy Hour Thank You event the YAET hosted for young adult ministers and leaders on September 9, 2021 at St. Paul's Catholic Church.

Q: Can you please tell us how the *To Teach Who Christ Is* campaign has impacted young adult engagement and the YAET?

A: *To Teach Who Christ Is* has been a blessing for the team. It has given us the opportunity to invest in young adults throughout Chicago and the Chicagoland area. The past year was very challenging for our team, and the pandemic created obstacles for our ministry. Regardless, we continued on and transitioned all of our programming online and young adults were able to join from all parts of the world, including one young adult who was logging in from Peru.

Continued on back



The YAET also hosts School of the Spirit, a formation program that focuses on four pillars: intellectual, pastoral, spiritual and human. Above are images from before the pandemic at the UIC Newman Center.

Some of the specific ways we've been able to reach young adults the past couple of years include:

- **School of the Spirit Formation Program (June 2020):** The ministry invited young adult ministers throughout the archdiocese to attend sessions that aimed to help them become better leaders.
- **Virtual Theology on Tap – Voices on the Periphery (July 2020):** YAET put on a five-session Theology on Tap via the Chicago Theology on Tap Facebook page. For the kick-off event, we invited Bishop Joseph Perry and Tanya Woods to speak on the role of faith and racial injustice. The event engaged over 6,000 young adults via social media.
- **Virtual Alpha Courses (February – April 2020):** Young adults from the Gage, Northside and East Little Village communities were trained by the YAET on the process of facilitating Alpha. The young adults that were trained experienced Alpha in its entirety, which was used as a training and brainstorm session of ways to implement it in the communities. These Alpha experiences have kept us in direct contact with pastors, community leaders and young adults that have an interest in evangelizing to the immediate community where their parish or parish grouping is located. Alpha has been a powerful tool in helping young adults take the next step in leadership. The team has seen many young adults begin as participants, and as YAET accompanies them in their faith journey, they begin to feel confident in leading.
- **Lenten Small Groups (February 2021):** The team hosted seven virtual small groups where young adults

connected and reflected on the Lenten season as a community. Over 60 young adults participated.

- **Young Adult Leader Happy Hour (September 2021):** Young adult ministers were invited to a happy hour as a thank you for their continued efforts in ministering to young adults. YAET's goal in doing this is to foster community amongst the leaders so that they can grow together and steer clear of ministering solo.

Q: Do you work with parishes to increase young adult engagement? Are there specific parishes that were involved in the campaign that reached out to work with the team?

A: We have worked closely with the young adult ministry at St. Rita of Cascia and St. Clare of Montefalco in Gage Park, as well as Mother of the Americas in Little Village. Our team has trained the young adult leaders to host Alpha. Gage Park leaders led Alpha in December 2020.

Moving forward our focus is to train and accompany parish young adult leaders to host Alpha, facilitate small groups, and revitalize existing young adult ministries parallel to the mission of Renew My Church.

Q: How have things shifted for the team and your outreach during the pandemic?

A: Many young adults felt alone during the pandemic and our team knew that we had to continue doing ministry regardless of the circumstances. We decided to transition all of our programming online. While it's not the same as in-person, young adults were yearning for connection and being able to interact with others via Zoom was a blessing. We have slowly begun hosting in-person events again.

To learn more about the Young Adult Engagement Team, please visit pvm.archchicago.org.

CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Overall Campaign Goal: \$350,000,000

Total Raised to Date: \$408,963,797*

Percent of Goal Pledged: 117%

Pledges Paid to Date: \$274,905,000

Percent Paid to Date: 78%

*includes cash, documented pledges and bequests

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