This week our CYO took a trip out west for the National Catholic Youth Conference. Where thousands of other teens will gather for a weekend of talks, workshops, breakouts, and prayer. We have a group of 15 who have decided to go and it's another full circle event for me.

Though I've never had the blessing of attending an NCYC before, I have been to a handful of Catholic conferences very similar whenever I was in High School. I remember being a teen experiencing the rush and the excitement of being in the same room with 10,000 other Catholics all in prayer. I always say that I am a "lifeteen product" -- which, for me, is to say that it was that Catholic Youth Movement that led me to experience what it means to be Catholic. We went to all the Steubenville Conferences, the camps, mission trips, and the lifenights. All of that helped me grow a great love for the Eucharist. Prayer. Community. Worship. Those weekends helped me grow a great appreciation for the liturgy as well. It allowed me to begin asking myself how God might be asking me to serve him and his church in an even greater way. So if you're a parent or grandparent and you're wondering what good there is in this, I promise it's worth it.

Those that know me know that one of my many passions is walking alongside the youth, especially as they encounter faith. How beneficial it can be for them to have opportunities to pray with one another, to worship beside their friends, to understand and learn the scriptures, and discover how they themselves can approach a God who saves. I see that as preparing the next generation and handing on the tradition that we live now.

Peace to you,

Fr VM