



STRENGTHENING OUR FAITH JOURNEY

by Kathleen Molaro, OFS

National Franciscan Youth and Young Adult Commission Chair

I recently enjoyed conversing after Mass with several young adults who were home for the semester break from college. One of them shared that he felt a bit lost off at school without his family and the friends he'd grown up with. He was especially concerned that his faith life had come to a standstill.

"It's hard to talk myself into going to Mass by myself," he admitted. "I spent my life going to Church on Sundays, and now I feel like a deer without my herd."

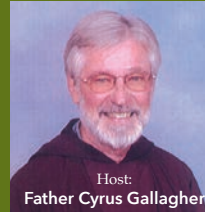
"I know what you mean," his friend added. "Our family attended everything! Mass, Reconciliation, pancake breakfasts, Lenten soup suppers... you name it. I can tell you all the Catholic Church rules and rites, and I still go to Mass, but I get so bogged down during the week, that I'm not sure what Church has to do with real life! I feel like it's just an obligation."

"I had an interesting experience," a third young person shared. "One of my new friends invited me to her church service. There were lots of people our age. They had awesome music and a great sermon. The pastor asked us to think back to when we last talked to God. That made me uncomfortable. I guess I haven't really been praying on my own. My friend talks about her 'personal relationship' with God. What does that even mean?"

The comments I heard from these college-age Catholics validated one of concepts the Franciscan Youth and Young Adult (FYA) Commission promotes: that if we focus on only one aspect of faith, we deprive ourselves of the fullness of faith. We need a personal life of faith; a formal system of belief; and shared faith experiences. None of us can survive in our faith if we grow in and strengthen only one area. For young people, this is especially important, considering their lack of experience, a bombardment of overwhelming changes, and a new, more mature look at faith's role in their lives.

This is one of the topics the FYA Commission will address at the Quinquennial in August. We will also shed light on why we need to connect with young people and how best to approach that challenge. We will also give you a chance to participate in a multigenerational activity. Jesse Manibusan, a popular musician and speaker, will offer a session for the young adults in attendance and entertain us all with an evening concert. Young adult YouFra members will conduct the service project and one of the evening prayer experiences. We invite you to join us and relish the gift of their presence with us. "Come to the Q: Celebrate and Renew!" Use the event to practice our Franciscan call to bring the gospel to our younger Catholics.

A Pilgrimage / Retreat to Rome, Assisi & San Giovanni Rotondo November 1 - 11, 2022



Host:
Father Cyrus Gallagher

Fr. Cyrus will be sending a spiritual reflection by email each month in preparation for our pilgrimage/retreat. In addition to daily Mass, there will be an optional brief presentation of Franciscan Spirituality, when possible, each evening.

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Rome

Greccio Sanctuary
Shrine of our Lady of Divine Love
Papal Audience in St. Peter's Square
St Peter's Basilica • Basilica of St. Mary Major
Sistine Chapel • Catacombs of St. Callixtus.

Assisi

The Church and Convent of St. Damiano
The Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels
Papal Basilica of St Francis • Basilica of St. Clare

San Giovanni Rotondo

Padre Pio • St. Marie delle Grazie

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