

2.2 million youth impacted by national ministry ST. PAUL, MN,

[**Saint Paul, MN MonthDayYear**] – Young people are leaving the Catholic Church at an alarming rate. In fact, 13 is the average age a young person walks away from the Church (CARA, 2016). To re-engage these young people, NET Ministries, for the past 40 years, has trained over 3,000 young adults in how to proclaim the Gospel through retreat and discipleship ministry, inspiring over 2.2 million young people to love Christ and embrace the life of the Catholic Church.

This year, 148 young adults coming from all across the United States, split into 14 teams, have answered the call to mission. While serving on a NET team for nine months, missionaries, ages 18-28, lead transformative retreats and personal discipleship groups at various parishes and schools in over 110 dioceses.

With an invitation from each diocese's bishop, nine of the 14 teams lead retreats featuring small group discussions, large group presentations, prayer ministry, lively games, dynamic music, dramatic and funny skits, and inspiring talks to motivate the youth to be unafraid to accept God in their lives. Through this ministry, NET retreat teams have led over 35,000 retreats in parishes and schools all across the country.

Along with retreat ministry, the other five teams focus on discipleship, serving a church or school for nine months, in order to enrich Catholic culture and build a community of disciples that have a lasting relationship with Christ. The teams work alongside the parish or school staff to help expand the current ministry program and ultimately form those in the parish or school to be disciples in their own community.

One young person says of her experience on retreat, "I saw men and women around my age loving God, and it encouraged me to stay strong. What NET Ministries is doing is brilliant. They are encouraging, understanding, energetic, charismatic, and above all incorporate God into everything that they do."

Through peer-to-peer ministry, NET missionaries are able to be a witness to young people on a personal level and give them an example of how to live out their faith amidst the pressures of the culture today. By giving them an example, young people have been drawn back to the Church and see the beauty in the communities around them.

To find out more about NET Ministries, visit www.netusa.org, or contact Meredith Miller, Public Relations Coordinator at meredithm@netusa.org or 651-450-6833 ext. 102.

About NET Ministries, Inc. (National Evangelization Teams): NET Ministries is an international Catholic youth ministry committed to challenging young Catholics to love Christ and embrace the life of the Church. The organization's acronym stands for National Evangelization Teams. Based in St. Paul, Minnesota, NET offers training in youth evangelization and leads approximately 1,000 retreats annually. Each year, young adult volunteers are sent out in teams across the United States to conduct retreats for Catholic teens. The NET teams share their faith with 100,000 youth nationally on an annual basis. Dramas, music, games, small group discussions, and large group presentations are all used to present the Gospel dynamically. To learn more about NET Ministries, follow us on Instagram or Facebook, call us at 651.450.6833, or visit www.netusa.org.