

# From the Pastor



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Many of us for years have asked ourselves a question: where are our young people in the Church? It's true that not only at St. Paul's or St. Boniface but across the country, if not just the whole world, we observe the decline of our young people being involved in Church life. And this is happening not just in the Catholic Church.

We observe. Church authorities observe, as well. They observe and study. They come up with some answers. Many programs have been developed. The renewal has just begun. It will take some time before it reaches parishes like ours, but I am sure it's coming soon.

Why I am so sure? - You may ask. How can we find ways to bring this young generation (so called: "millennials") to Christ and His Church? This is the topic of the Convocation of the Priests of the Diocese of Joliet. For the past few days I've been away spending quality time with my brother priests and listened to the newest developments on youth and young adult ministry.

In the beginning Bishop Cardinal Supich has given us a wonderful analysis of the present situation of the "millennials" and proposed several ideas as a response to their needs. The rest of my days, guided by two speakers, were filled with a more scientific approach - mostly statistics based on responses to numerous surveys addressed to the young generation.

Lots of information has been given, so much to digest. But one thing dominated the message to the Church of Joliet (and all Churches in general): we need to take our young generation on a new journey leading to a personal encounter with Jesus Christ. Generational handing-on the faith is not an issue anymore (although many grandparents are still doing their best). Because there is not so much religion in our young people's lives, we need to enable them to ask questions, share ideas, build friendships, and experience the love of God in totally new settings which we need to develop within the present Church structures.

We learned and we prayed. So much is still ahead of us. But we are not alone. Countless of experts and leaders filled with the Holy Spirit are coming to our aid.

*+Father Roger*