



May the Peace of Christ be with you!

Thank you for your inquiry about the 2006 National Conference on Catholic Youth Ministry (NCCYM) scheduled for November 30-December 3 in Las Vegas. Please note that the NCCYM is a conference for *adults* involved in youth ministry and should not be confused with our biennial national youth conference (NCYC) which will be held in November, 2007 in Columbus, OH.

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Las Vegas was selected to host the 2006 NCCYM for a number of reasons, the chief among them were its geographic location and affordability. NFCYM does its best to move this conference around the country and it was time for it to be held again in the west. We looked at many cities and found that Las Vegas offered the most reasonable airfares, hotel rates, and food costs. These are extremely important factors during this time of tight and shrinking budgets in parishes and dioceses.

In addition, Las Vegas is one of the fastest growing Roman Catholic dioceses in the country. Bishop Pepe and his diocesan staff are working very closely with NFCYM to insure that our conference is a memorable and faith-filled event for all attending, including directing participants to numerous family-friendly free time activities, sightseeing options and shows. While NFCYM cannot control the city's reputation, we can and will support the rich diversity and vibrancy of our Church in the area. We expect that NCCYM will counter the negative messages associated with Las Vegas with a conference full of attendees who are solid witnesses to our faith.

Because our conference is expected to attract more than 2000 adults, NFCYM is limited to sites large enough to host our general sessions as well as the numerous breakout space requirements, which limit us to the larger hotels, all of which also house casinos (as does the airport and many other venues in Nevada). One of the reasons we chose the Riviera hotel, located two blocks from Guardian Angel Cathedral and the diocesan pastoral offices, is that its conference center is completely separate from the casino and show area. In fact our contract requires the hotel to remove all advertisements and materials that our participants might find offensive while we are there.

Finally, according to the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Bureau NFCYM stands with many other national Catholic organizations in holding meetings in the city. Following are just some of those who have previously met in Las Vegas:

- Catholic Charities USA
- Catholic Daughters of America
- Catholic Health Association of the USA
- National Black Catholic Congress
- National Catholic Committee on Scouting
- National Catholic Development Conference
- National Organization for Continuing Education of Roman Catholic Clergy
- American Cardinal's Dinner supporting Catholic University of America

In this age of technology, one does not need to travel to Las Vegas to be tempted. Negative images and messages along with a thousand other vices are available at the push of a button. It is not the place, but rather the person who ends up choosing the path that is traveled. We invite you to take a moment to examine the path that our conference will be taking participants along by visiting our NCCYM website at: <http://www.nfcym.org/nccym/2006/program.htm>. We are confident that the 75 speakers and faith-based topics, countless opportunities for prayer and networking and numerous family and marriage-friendly events and programs will far outweigh any negative perceptions associated with the conference's location.

In Christ's Peace,

Michael Theisen
Director of Membership Services

Serving Those Who Serve The Young Catholic Church

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