

## CRS AND NFCYM INVITE CATHOLIC YOUTH MINISTERS TO TRAVEL TO EL SALVADOR THROUGH THE CALLED TO WITNESS PROGRAM

"Our faith calls us to work for justice; serve those in need; to pursue peace; and to defend the life, dignity and rights of all our sisters and brothers."

- *Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry* U.S. Bishops 1997

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*Called to Witness* is an overseas program co-sponsored by Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM). It is designed to provide a short-term, firsthand experience of the developing world for adults serving and working in Catholic youth ministry. This experience will, in turn, serve as a foundation for a global solidarity action plan as well as youth ministry resource development focused on Catholic Social Teaching and global solidarity. As the official relief and development agency of the U.S. Catholic Church, the mission of CRS includes the commitment to "educate the people of the United States to fulfill their moral responsibilities in alleviating human suffering, removing its causes and promoting social justice." Through *Called to Witness*, CRS provides parish, diocesan and national youth ministers with a global experience to help them call and empower young people to an active commitment to working for solidarity, peace and justice.

*Called to Witness* participants visit a variety of CRS programs and begin building solidarity with our brothers and sisters overseas *all within a spiritual context, reflecting on Catholic social teaching and specific teachings on global solidarity*. Effort is made to emphasize CRS' work that assists young people and to provide opportunities for interaction with CRS staff and partners in the host country. The *Called to Witness* experience does not aim to be a direct service program, but rather an opportunity for meeting people, developing relationships, and learning about the work of the Church around the world with the hope of enhancing faith formation and youth ministries. Although participants may have the opportunity to visit some historically significant sites of interest, *Called to Witness* should be considered a "study trip" with an emphasis on learning, prayer and reflection.

The 2012 *Called to Witness* is tentatively scheduled for May 7-17, 2012. These dates include a 1-day orientation in Baltimore, and travel to and from **El Salvador**. Among the many situations and realities explored, the trip will give particular attention to peacebuilding, youth violence prevention programming, water security and integral human development.

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Applications can be downloaded by visiting CRS Education (<http://education.crs.org>) or the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (<http://www.nfcym.org/programs/ctw>).

**Applications are due no later than Monday, January 9, 2012.**

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