

Description of the Initiative

Through the SacredTable Initiative, the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM) intends to fulfill our commitment to building the domestic church. We hope to unify the parish church's ministry with the domestic church's ministry through moments of encounter, intentional dialogue, and mutual support and collaboration.

Seeing the changing cultural landscape that families are facing today, the SacredTable Initiative aims to support the domestic church using a 3-pronged approach: training for parish leaders in synodal listening and strategic planning for ministries with families, direct marketing to parents to inspire them to engage their parish leaders in supporting parents in their domestic church, and seeking dialogue with and the support of US Catholic bishops through a Champion Bishop and Bishop Advisory Council.

The SacredTable Initiative has two overarching goals:

1. Inspiring, equipping, and empowering parents to form their children's faith in partnership with church leaders and ministers.
2. Inspiring, equipping, and empowering church leaders and ministers to partner with parents and caregivers in forming the faith of children.

SacredTable Deep Dive Process

The SacredTable Initiative will begin at the diocesan level through the Deep Dive Process. All parish leaders who minister with parents and families are invited to attend (priests, staff, volunteers, youth ministers, DREs, leaders of adult faith formation, OCIA, marriage prep, baptism prep, etc.).

- The Deep Dive session is 3 hours long and includes reflection on experiences of ministering with families, a presentation on the context for family ministry today in church documents and current research, and the opportunity to practice generative listening skills.
- The Deep Dive will prepare ministry leaders to engage parents in their community in dialogue about partnering in children's faith development.
- After the Deep Dive, the coach will work with the diocesan staff to support parishes in dialoguing with parents and collaboratively building ministries in the parish that serve the needs of families.

Once leaders have attended the Deep Dive, they will receive resources to assist them in partnering with parents to develop their ministries further. If they are willing, SacredTable offers 2 years of coaching assistance as parishes attempt to grow in ministering to families. For those 2 years, NFCYM will provide:

- A parent session outline that can be used as a starting point for dialogue between parents and parish ministers,
- A parent resource guide,
- A website to assist in finding curated resources from partner organizations to aid parish leaders in their ministries with families,
- A parent-facing marketing campaign to inspire parents in their role as the primary formators of their children's faith,



Where Parish Leaders and Parents Meet

- A coach to work with the parish leadership on how to better understand the needs of the families in the community and how to address those needs, and
- Online space for the parishes to share with each other what they are doing, what is working, and what they are learning.

Bishop Advisory Council

While developing this initiative, our team conducted listening sessions with bishops, ministry leaders, and parents. It was abundantly clear from those conversations that more dialogue was desired between families and bishops. For this reason, the SacredTable Initiative desires to establish clear lines of communication between parents, ministry leaders, and bishops. As such, we developed the Bishop Advisory Council with Bishop Brendan Cahill of Victoria, Texas serving as the Champion Bishop (the full list is below). This council hopes to advocate for the importance of family ministry and discern ways to open lines of communication among families, ministry leaders, and bishops.

Bishop Brendan J. Cahill	Bishop Ronald A. Hicks
Bishop Gary W. Janak	Bishop Roy E. Campbell
Bishop Oscar Cantu	Bishop James R. Golka
Bishop Arturo Cepeda	Bishop John-Nhan Tran
Bishop Joseph A. Espaillat	

Family Ministry Coalition

SacredTable has also established a SacredTable Coalition comprised of family-serving organizations that will advocate for the initiative, share resources, and share trends and innovative ideas in family ministry. More information on the SacredTable Coalition and the partner organizations can be found on the website.

Contact Us

If you would like to attend the Deep Dive in your diocese, you can register on NFCYM Connect. If you have questions about the process, please contact Brigitte Burke, Senior Project Manager, at brigitteb@nfcym.org or (771) 212-0242.