

A CORC Profile

By Frank Callaghan



About five years ago, through a series of events certainly funnelled by Christ, I chanced upon being in the room while a handful of youth and our Diocesan Youth Director, Father Norbert, were brainstorming over the idea of a youth team and what they might possibly be able to do and accomplish within the diocese. Sometime throughout that conversation CORC was born. At the time, I did not know exactly where it was headed (I don't think any of us did), and we certainly did not realize what it was going to become. Still, I knew this was something I wanted to be a part of. I realized it was somewhere I could not only share my faith with others, but perhaps learn a great deal more about it: something I was yearning for. On top of that, I saw the potential to find other people my age who were searching desperately for the same thing. That was important to me. All of these things I was searching for and I found, to a much higher degree than I had expected.

The first public role of CORC was to lead small group discussions for our annual diocesan youth festival, SONfest. It was the second SONfest and CORC helped out a great deal throughout the event. It was here that I met, and got to know the other CORCs, those who would become CORCs, as well as many other amazing youth from all reaches of our diocese.

Afterwards, the handful of us met regularly at St. Anne Parish in Peterborough where we had talks and spiritual readings that strengthened our knowledge of the faith and gave us a chance to get to know each other better. I certainly found myself within a spectacular group of people with whom I still find myself today. Eventually, we moved to the Cathedral rectory where we continued our gatherings and directed much of our efforts towards the next SONfest. CORCs now play a major role during this event in cooperation with other groups and people within VEYO. CORCs help with everything from facilitating talks, music, skits, moving equipment, and doing many little tasks to help the event run more smoothly.

Now operating out of the VEYO Centre, CORC is steadily growing and starting to take part in other activities across the diocese. CORCs, along with other youth, began hosting Morning Watch evenings where we move from parish to parish monthly and have all-night Adoration with the local parishioners and whoever else attends. The event begins with the parish's Saturday night Mass and comes to conclusion in the Sunday morning Mass. Through the night there are readings, music and periods of silence. Participation at Morning Watches is one of my favourite parts of CORC. Having the opportunity to spend ample amount of time with Christ throughout the night is a really blessing for anyone's faith even if all you do is sit in the pew. Along with that, you see all the other youth who are willing to give their Saturday night to Christ. What a terrific group of people.

CORC does not host, but takes part in, the annual Way of the Cross re-enactment, where youth from the diocese bring to life the final hours of Christ's agony in a powerful

procession through the streets of Peterborough. I have had the ability to take part in it each year so far. It is a moving experience.

CORC has also led retreats for grade 7 and 8 classes throughout the diocese, helping students prepare for Confirmation. Many of us have, also, assisted with the LifeSaver retreats, joining other youth teams These have certainly been a success and are wonderful to take part in.



While being a CORC, one has many opportunities to develop different skill sets. Public speaking is almost developed without a choice as members lead different parts of retreats. Acting skills grow as we perform our skits but one of the more difficult skills is singing! Every new member of CORC certainly hasn't thought they could sing in public and most do not even think they can sing at all. It takes a while but I've seen those who once only lip sang produce awesome voices within

songs. I am certainly one of those people who began to find my voice within CORC. I enjoyed singing before, but only with myself. While a CORC, God has graced me with the courage to do a great many things I would not have before. I now find myself leading songs, playing the guitar, and I have even taking a liking to writing my own Praise and Worship songs. It's truly amazing what you will discover about yourself when you are surrounded by a good group of friends and learn to allow Christ to work in your life. I have seen many great things come from members of CORC and they, as well as myself, have only just begun to tap into what God has in store for us. I am truly excited!

Finally, each new school year CORC elects a new Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary, firstly, to relieve the old ones of their office and secondly to see what new things a fresh set of people might bring to the table. This year, I find myself taking on the role of CORC Chair. This is an undertaking I am thrilled about. I have spent the last two years out of the Peterborough Diocese at school, and certainly missed youth ministry while I was away. This was exactly the thing I was yearning for. As CORC Chair, I facilitate weekly meetings along with Fr. Norbert and others from the VEYO Office. At meetings, CORCs spend time in prayer (a most important piece of the meeting) and prepare for upcoming events we are either hosting or taking part in.

CORC has fuelled my life in awesome ways. It has provided me with the atmosphere and company to dive into the vastness of what Catholicism has to offer. That may be an overwhelming thought for sure, but it is a vastness like no other; a vastness very worth exploring. It is not a looming, dark vastness but, rather, one which has the ability to captivate anyone who might just take a few minutes to glance in its direction.

CORC has shaped who I am and without a doubt it was for the better. I have had people tell me that there is something a little different about me, an energy and happiness most people are without. I know my faith is the reason behind this and I would not have found

it without CORC and all that goes with it.

For any youth who feel now as I did some years ago and are searching for some answers, I recommend checking CORC out. There is no signing your life away on the dotted line or trap to stay, but it may have some of the answers you are looking for. There are many other youth searching for the same thing. Only just this month, a large group of eager youth in cooperation with CORC and VEYO set up a satellite CORC group in the northern part of our diocese, proof that our faith is alive and youth want to live it out.

I am thrilled to have been able to share with you a piece of what CORC has done for me. This is only my tale, there are many others to hear.

Frank is a parishioner of St. Luke's Parish in Downeyville. He completed a 50 day bike pilgrimage across Australia with friend Brendan Quigley in preparation for World Youth Day 2008 and recently obtained his license to drive the VEYO bus.