

Issue February 2025

DYA monthly

know.
love.
serve.

Featuring
DYLG

DYLG TESTIMONIALS



Mid Atlantic

Attending DYLG was one of the most impactful faith and leadership experiences I've had. With the guidance of our DYA Director, Fr. Mevin Paul, and the National Team, we gained valuable insights to take back to our parishes and missions, fostering growth in faith and involvement.

Though intimidating at first, the conference allowed me to form friendships with youth leaders from across the U.S. to create a strong network. The National Team and guest speakers covered faith and leadership topics that I've since applied. My favorite session was with Abin & Melissa, where a podcast-style discussion explored the Syro-Malabar Church's history, diocesan development, and leadership challenges.



The Chicago Cathedral's priests, along with Fr. Mevin Paul and Fr. Joel, led a powerful Holy Qurbana and adoration, where the DYLG and Chicago choirs moved many participants to tears. Experiencing Syriac-English liturgy inspired participants to bring these practices back to their parishes. With the support of the volunteers and leaders, the event was well-organized and ensured a meaningful experience for everyone.

On the final day, as participants shared their graces, it was clear how deeply impactful DYLG had been. I am grateful for this experience, the friendships I've built, and the opportunity to make a difference in my community.

-- Noel Benoi



DYLG TESTIMONIALS



Midwest

Diocesan Youth Leaders Gathering (DYLG) brought together over 80 high school and college students from across the country for a weekend of formation and fellowship hosted at the Chicago cathedral. Participants from diverse parishes and missions were eager to dive deeper into the richness of everyone's Syro-Malabar perspectives. The weekend was packed with activities that helped us explore our identity and purpose as Syro-Malabar Catholics, focusing on strengthening our spiritual lives to become true servant leaders.



The conference created a warm and welcoming space where everyone shared their joys and challenges as part of the Syro-Malabar community. We were even blessed to have Mar JoyAlappatt join us for Qurbana and a working lunch, adding a special touch to our gathering! It was a powerful reminder of how far we've come and the importance of ongoing prayers to support DYA's mission. By coming together, we can nurture the hearts of young people in our diocese, spreading love, support, and prayers for all our efforts. DYLG showed us the power of community and faith, and we're excited to see the fruits of the seeds planted in the hearts of all the participants this week!



St. Thomas, our father in faith, pray for us

-- Jonathan Cyriac

DYLG TESTIMONIALS

Northeast



I went to DYLG as a representative from Bronx, NY with the intention of meeting new people and reconnecting with old friends. I ended up learning so much about what it means to be Syro Malabar, the importance of our faith, how to be a leader rooted in Christ, and above all, the unconditional love we all receive from our father in Heaven. When we arrived in Chicago, I immediately felt welcomed and supported by not only the national team leaders who graciously put this whole retreat together, but also the parish members of the Chicago cathedral who did not hesitate to welcome us into their homes.



Every day the Qurbana was so beautiful and it was amazing to see how everyone was fully participating and present. One important takeaway I got from DYLG is the impact English Quarbana can have on the youth because as I stood in the church, I was struck by how powerful it can be to sing the songs and say the prayers with complete faith and trust in the words and how easily you can start to hear God's voice throughout the Qurbana. I am so grateful for the opportunity to have gone to Chicago for this retreat, it was nothing short of inspiring and miraculous to see the Lord work in all of our lives and bring us all together for His glory.

-- Asha Kalathil



DYLG TESTIMONIALS



South

I recently had the privilege of attending DYLG, which was hosted at the Chicago Parish. Though I was only there for a short time, I learned and experienced so much. Number one being my encounter with Christ during the Eucharistic Adoration. Many will agree with me when I say this, but that particular Adoration was by far the most beautiful and eye-opening experience I have had with Christ. I don't know if it was because I was able to open my heart to the Lord, or if it was God comforting me in those vulnerable moments, but that Adoration truly had an immense impact on my heart. Secondly, there was a great community of people, whether it be the Achan's, NT team members, speakers, or participants, everyone was very inviting. Since a lot of the participants were there for the same reason, I was comfortable approaching practically anyone and having a conversation with them. Lastly, I learned about what it truly means to be a leader at church. "You can't fill the cups of others without your own cup overflowing first." In other words, in order to share God's graces with others, you yourself must be filled with His graces first.



Overall, DYLG provided me with a lot of learning opportunities, newfound friendships, and great mentors. I will forever be grateful for having been given this opportunity to interact with like-minded peers and to also experience the beautiful Chicago snow! Special shoutout to Ann Chechi- my host. Her welcoming nature and words of wisdom were another reason why DYLG was such a great experience for me. Again, DYLG was absolutely amazing and I will continue striving to become the leader that my parish needs.



-- Ann Antony

DYLG TESTIMONIALS



Southeast

I had a really great time at the DYLG conference! The sessions were super interesting and covered a lot of different topics, which helped me learn new things. The speakers were really knowledgeable, and they made their talks easy to understand and fun to listen to. I especially liked how some of the sessions allowed us to participate and ask questions, which made the whole experience more engaging.



Another highlight for me was meeting new people. Everyone was so friendly, and it was cool to talk to other people who share similar interests. I made some great connections and got to hear different ideas and opinions. The activities were also really fun and helped me get to know people more. The housing provided to me was a great experience. The host families were so nice and made me feel at home. They provided me and my roommates with everything we needed and made sure we were okay.



Finally, the Qurbana's and adoration's were very beautiful. It was so nice to experience the same Qurbana in a different way. I also loved how the adoration was. Overall, the DYLG conference was a really amazing experience, and I hope to attend again soon!

-- Navya Sunny

DYLG TESTIMONIALS







West

DYLG was an unforgettable experience! Johaan Mannanal and I had the incredible opportunity to represent our mission at this DYA conference for youth leaders held in Chicago, and its safe to say we learned a lot. We engaged with leaders from Syro Malabar missions and parishes across America, each person brining unique experiences from their own communities. There was so much to learn for these folks, and it was incredibly inspiring to witness their dedication-not only to their Syro Malabar community but, most importantly, to Christ. Throughout the conference, I grew closer to our DYA National Coordinators, our fellow parishioners in Chicago, and the other youth leaders. By the end, I truly felt like I had become part of a larger family of brothers and sisters in faith. The St. Thomas Diocese was incredibly welcoming, with the families graciously hosting and taking great care of us. The daily Mass and adoration, led by Melvin Achen and Joel Achen, were beautiful and helped me reconnect with both my faith and our traditions. I have returned with a renewed determination to see our own youth flourish and to help them discover their faith in God and their place within the Syro Malabar Church. More than anything, I now understand more deeply that we are all united in Christ.

-- Christine Therese Justin



check out the highlight video: tinyurl.com/DYLG2025











UPCOMING

↓ QOC ↓

VCU on March 20

Univ. of Houston on March 25

Florida Atlantic Univ. on March 30

UT Dallas on March 31



QURBANA ON CAMPUS

March 29, 2025 (Saturday) @ 5:30pm

Join us for Qurbana on Campus at the University of Pennsylvania & Drexel University!

Celebrant: Fr. Joby Joseph

Dinner to follow!

St. Agatha St. James & NEWMAN CENTER

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Get connected!

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Blessings from our beloved bishop and clergy!

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