



ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA OFFICE FOR COMMUNICATIONS

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ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA ANNOUNCES KEY LEADERSHIP APPOINTMENTS TO FURTHER ITS NEW MODEL FOR MINISTRY AND EVANGELIZATION WITH YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS IN THE FIVE-COUNTY METROPOLITAN AREA

*Mrs. Marisally Santiago appointed Director of the Archdiocesan Office of Ministry with Youth;
Mr. Matthew Davis appointed Director of the Archdiocesan Office of Ministry with Young Adults*

Contextual Background

In July 2020, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia announced that Archbishop Nelson J. Pérez had formed a task force shortly after his arrival to study ministry to youth and young adults in the five-county Archdiocese of Philadelphia and its level of effectiveness. As a priest, pastor, bishop, and episcopal advisor to the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM), the Archbishop has played an active role in ministry to youth and young adults at various levels and witnessed its changing nature first hand.

The task force contained representation from the local and national levels and used three documents to guide its work—*Renewing the Vision* and *Sons and Daughters of Light* from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops as well as Pope Francis’s Apostolic Exhortation to young people, *Christus Vivit*.

During the course of its work, task force members consulted with senior leadership of the Archdiocese. It also surveyed pastors, youth ministers, and young adults throughout the five-county region to identify the needs and desires of the youth and young adult populations from various angles including multi-cultural communities and serving those with disabilities. Its ultimate recommendation called for the formation of two distinct and new offices—one focused youth ministry and one focused on young adult ministry each with its own director.

In order to provide for consistency in approach, adherence to the recommendations set forth by the task force, and alignment with Archdiocesan goals, the work of both offices will be overseen by Mrs. Ann Menna, Deputy Secretary for Catechetical Formation in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, and Reverend Steven DeLacy, the Archbishop’s Delegate for Youth and Young Adult Ministry.

Additional information regarding that announcement can be found [here](#).

Today’s Announcement

Today, following the recent celebration of the 35th World Youth Day (Sunday, October 25th), the Archdiocese of Philadelphia is pleased to announce that Archbishop Nelson J. Pérez has appointed

Mrs. Marisally Santiago as the Director of the Office of Ministry with Youth and Mr. Matthew Davis as the Director of the Office for Ministry with Young Adults.

In making these appointments, Archbishop Pérez said, “Over the last several months, dedicated members of the task force have worked tirelessly to re-envision ministry to our youth and young adults and identify the best qualified leaders to make the vision a reality. I am grateful for their efforts and ask the people of the Archdiocese to join me in prayerfully congratulating Mrs. Marisally Santiago and Mr. Matthew Davis as they prepare to assume their new roles in service to the Church in Philadelphia. I am confident that their experience and innovative spirit will ignite the spirit of our young people and help to accompany them as missionary disciples of Jesus Christ.”

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) defines “youth” as young people ages 12-18 in junior high school or high school. The mission of the Office of Ministry with Youth is to equip and support parish leaders and parish communities to animate young people in this age group as missionary disciples of Jesus Christ.

The mission of the Office of Ministry with Young Adults is to meet their varied needs. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) broadly defines young adults as people aged 19-39 who are single, married, divorced, widowed, in college, working, unemployed, incarcerated, or in military service. The office will work to equip and support parish leaders and communities as they engage and accompany young adults as missionary disciples of Jesus Christ.

Background on Mrs. Marisally Santiago

Mrs. Santiago, who is fluent in Spanish, previously served as the Associate Director for Hispanic Youth Ministry (Pastoral Juvenil Hispana) and Young Adult Outreach for the Archdiocese of Newark. In this role, she worked to rebuild the Archdiocesan programs and increase the engagement of youth and young adults throughout North Jersey.

Since 2015, Mrs. Santiago has served as Youth Minister for Our Lady of Mount Virgin Parish in Garfield, New Jersey. In that role, she directed all aspects of youth ministry, including regular meetings, outings, retreats, leadership formation, pilgrimages, and additional activities for youth in 8th grade through high school.

Prior to working with the Archdiocese of Newark and Our Lady of Mount Virgin Parish, Mrs. Santiago served as a Youth Minister at Holy Family Parish in Union City, New Jersey, and a Retreat Facilitator and Team Mentor for Cathedral High School in New York City.

Mrs. Santiago holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Graphic Design from the University of Central Florida; a Masters Degree in Pastoral Ministry with a concentration in Spiritual Direction from Immaculate Conception Seminary, Seton Hall University; and a Certification in Digital Evangelization, issued by La Universidad Juan Pablo II located in Costa Rica. Mrs. Santiago is also a member of the National Catholic Network de Pastoral Juvenil Hispana (La RED) and the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM). Her appointment is effective December 7, 2020.

Background on Mr. Matthew Davis

Mr. Davis previously served as the Director of the Office of Life and Justice Ministries and Vice Chancellor of the Diocese of Camden. In those roles, he worked with the clergy and laity to promote a consistent ethic of life rooted in scripture and tradition.

Prior to working for the Diocese of Camden, Mr. Davis served as Director of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia’s Office of Pastoral Care for Migrants and Refugees. During his previous tenure with

the Archdiocese, Mr. Davis spent seven years supporting and collaborating with the priests, religious, and lay leaders of 38 parish communities offering Mass in 18 different languages. His work helped to ensure that the temporal and pastoral needs of a diverse migrant population was met effectively.

Mr. Davis, who is fluent in Spanish, has also served as English as a Second Language (ESL) in Philadelphia, Boston, Saint Louis and the Dominican Republic. In addition, he served as a Youth Coordinator at the Saint Jane Community Center in Saint Louis, a Campus Minister at the Catholic Student Center at Washington University, and a Second/Third Grade Combination Class Teacher at Roosevelt Elementary School in Compton, California.

Mr. Davis holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Religious Studies from Washington University and completed course work as a Pre-Theology Seminary Student at the Kenrick Glennon Seminary, Saint Louis University. He is expected to complete his Master of Science in Church Management at Villanova University in May 2021. His appointment is effective November 16, 2020.

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Editor's Note: Photographs of Mrs. Santiago and Mr. Davis are attached for publication purposes with credit to the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.