



**Travelling
Retreat Teams
are Back!**



Changing Hearts

**Hear Claire, Jonas, and Theresa
share about their NET year...**

NET MISSIONARIES SHARE THEIR STORIES

We asked three 2021-2022 NET missionaries to share about their NET year. Read about the amazing ways that God has worked in them and through them and their teammates.

Claire Mackness

FRASER VALLEY EAST TEAM



Tell me about your year. What did ministry look like?

Our team was stationed in Abbotsford and we went to St. John Brebeuf high school. Four days a week we'd spend the whole day at the school with the students doing relational ministry and we were also a part of three different local parishes. We would help run youth group nights and get to know some of the students at youth group in those parishes. Then, at one point during the year we became a retreat team and we traveled to Alberta and other places to put on retreats.

What was an unexpected blessing from your year?

Going into this year, I thought that it would be us ministering to the youth and us giving to the youth, but I didn't know how much I would receive from them. I received so much from them and it was just a huge blessing that came out of this. It's hard because you leave people behind, but you carry them with you in your heart too. So the biggest blessing was all those

friendships and encounters with the youth and seeing them grow. It was so beautiful and I'm never gonna forget them.

Can you tell me a story of a youth who experienced conversion?

There were a lot, oh my goodness. There was this one student and she was in grade nine. At the beginning of the year we met her and she was super bubbly and ener-

“you're going to come out so different and so much better, and you'll never have an opportunity like this.”

getic at the youth groups and everything, but she was hesitant with her relationship with Jesus and a little bit confused. I remember one day we went to the chapel together and we prayed and she cried and she really encountered Jesus. From then on, slowly throughout the year, we'd see each other and check in. Then we did Alpha together and I just saw her grow in boldness in her faith, and she start-

ed sharing with her friends too. At the beginning of the year, I didn't see that, and then by the end she was just on fire. You definitely saw a whole deepening in her faith throughout the year.

What would you tell someone who's considering doing NET, but isn't sure it's something they should do?

Seriously, apply. It will be good just to do the application and to go through those questions and to see where your heart's at. And then, if God's calling you, you'll know. It will be kind of scary and you won't know what to expect, but what you get out of it is so much greater than what you give. He truly gives a hundredfold of what you think you're giving and you're going to come out so different and so much better, and you'll never have an opportunity like this. So don't waste it.

Jonas LaForest

FRASER VALLEY EAST TEAM

Can you tell me a story about a youth who experienced conversion?

There was one guy who hadn't gone to adoration before, but he ended up coming this one time. Afterward, he said it was the most peace he ever felt and he wanted to come back again next week. We were both kind of not the most outgoing people, and we related to each other on a base level where we knew "you're chill, I'm chill, and

“he said it was the most peace he ever felt and he wanted to come back again next week.

we can just talk.” We were able to build a connection that way through talking and then going to the Eucharist together, going to adoration and then talking to each other, having like a dialogue afterwards. Sometimes I'd see him in class and we'd talk about accountability and these different things and stuff he wanted to improve on. We both needed growth and we related to each other in that.



What are some of the biggest ways that you grew? Either things that you learned or ways that you saw yourself grow?

I think ways that I've grown, definitely trust in the Lord. There's lots of uncertainties, on NET and for me in the future. And sometimes I just gotta let go and be like, I've got no idea what's going on. It's just so great. You know, like not having to stress about every little thing. I was like, it was meant to be, it's going to happen. And sometimes it doesn't work like that, but it's just this freeing feeling, like it's like a weight lifted off your shoulders just to just have more trust in God.

What would you tell someone who's considering doing NET, but isn't sure if it's something they should do?

Just jump in. I was so unsure of doing it this year, but sometimes you've got to say, "fine, God, I'll just go". There will be growth, and there are lots of things that you'll find that you just wouldn't expect to find. I had no idea I was going to find community. I didn't realize I was lacking community and I didn't realize I had this deep longing for community and that's what I found.



Theresa James

VANCOUVER TEAM

Tell me about your year. What did ministry look like?

We would mostly just go and be in the classes. We would talk with the students and build relationships with them. And slowly, from that, when the relationships got stronger, they all knew we were there to talk about the faith. Because they knew that, they would ask us questions, or sometimes we would bring up topics that were more difficult or more about the faith and we would go more in-depth with them.

What was an unexpected blessing from your year?

The amount of amazing friendships that I made. Not just with my team, but even with the students. There were some students that I would think, "I know you're a student, but I really do see you as a close friend." I think I will cherish those relationships that I've made.

Can you tell me a story about a youth who experienced conversion?

Oh, there are so many stories, but the one that just popped into my head right now was at a retreat in Alberta. I remember walking in there and going to a group of students, and they all seemed pretty apathetic to the faith. I remember one student in particular caught my eye. And she seemed very much to have the attitude, "I'm here because I have to be," because it was a school retreat. I started connecting with her in the fun and the games and the talks. And then we went to a more serious time of prayer and there was a drama. And after that, we went to the students and asked if they wanted to be prayed over. I remember I went to her and she was just crying. I prayed with her, and afterwards she came and she thanked me for praying over her. She didn't even have words to tell me what she was experiencing because she was just so emotional.



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 **RETREAT TEAMS ARE BACK!**



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EVERY NET RETREAT INCLUDES:

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Learn More

Visit netcanada.ca to find more information about retreat ministry, and download our welcome packet.



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schedule@netcanada.ca



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Heather Penney

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