

# Open wide the doors for Christ

**Jacob Kilpatrick shares his experience of  
accompanying youth this year!**

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# “Open wide the doors for Christ.”

- St. John Paul II



We believe that young people can have a life changing experience when they “open wide” the door of their hearts to Christ. That’s why we send missionaries across the country to walk alongside young people as they grow in their relationship with God. Through relational ministry, we know that NET missionaries can have a life-changing impact on the faith lives of the youth they encounter.

This year NET has been focusing our ministry on effective accompaniment of the youth we encounter by training our missionaries on three things: 1) being more intentional in their interactions with youth, 2) listening to the Holy Spirit to guide their accompaniment, and 3) being bold, at the right time, in inviting young people to open their hearts to Jesus and respond to Him.

Jacob Kilpatrick, one of our 2022-2023 missionaries, shared his experience of intentional accompaniment so far this year, and commented on these key elements.

## Intentionality

*“I remember at training being told we were going to make disciples, and that set a fire in my heart - this beautiful desire. (You want to) keep building trust, but always be ready to take that next step (with them). You have to be bold, you have to love, and you have to understand that their soul is at risk, so you’re not going to be talking about cars or video games the entire time you’re accompanying them, unless that’s what God wants, but you have to at least try to poke and prod and see what you can learn about where they’re at. Take that next step.”*

When journeying with someone, it’s vital that we’re intentional. And one of the most important aspects is knowing where the other person is at in their own faith journey with the Lord. As Jacob mentioned, trust is key. It all starts with trust. The model of intentional accompaniment identifies a few key stages along the path towards an experience of conversion, and trust is the first step. However, it’s equally important to be able to identify when the person you’re journeying with is moving into stages of curiosity, openness, or even genuine seeking. As Jacob said, always be ready to take the next step with them.

**YOU CAN HELP US RECRUIT  
NET MISSIONARIES FOR  
NEXT YEAR!**

Hang up the adjacent pull-out page in your parish, or give it to someone who would make a good NET Missionary!



## The Holy Spirit

*"Something that stuck with me is that the accompanier is (always) asking for the help of the Holy Spirit. And I remember hearing that and thinking, do I have time for that? In the middle of a conversation, will I have time for that? And a textbook would tell me no, there's not, you have to respond and think about your response. But then in application, there is actually time. We're not machines, so long as you place the Holy Spirit on your heart it doesn't take a lot to ask Him for help."*

The Holy Spirit is the primary agent of conversion. It will never be our missionaries who change the hearts of young people, it will be the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is the still small voice that shows us the way and inspires questions and conversation topics that will lead the person being accompanied to Christ. As Jacob's answer implies, this shouldn't be an unnatural process. The more we

attune our hearts to the Spirit's guidance, the more natural it will feel. Indeed, the Holy Spirit guides us through the use of things that are quite natural! Empathy, attentiveness, and genuine care for the other person - these are organic avenues that the Holy Spirit will use to work through us.

## Invitation

*"Christ is inviting all of us into union with him. There's a quote from St Bernadette of Lourdes: 'I came not to convert but to inform.' That's the idea, that we ourselves are not the agents of conversion - that's completely the Holy Spirit - but they don't know (that Jesus wants to know them)! We have to tell them that Christ is inviting them and He wants to be a part of their life. Because they don't know!"*

They don't know. At some point in the process, a young person needs to be told that Jesus Christ wants a relationship with them. We need to tell them that he's waiting on the other side of that "door", inviting them into a relationship with Him, and then we need to invite them to respond. It's not enough to simply lead someone to that door, we need to actually make the invitation for them to respond to Christ. We can never open the door for them, nor would we want to, but it's so crucial to ask them if they want to, and to show them how to respond to the invitation of Christ.

We believe that the Lord is doing great things through our ministry, and that it starts with a better understanding of these principles. Intentional accompaniment, the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and bold invitation. Our mission is to challenge young Catholics to love Christ and embrace the life of the church, and it's through these things that we'll grow more effective at doing so.





A young man with dark hair and glasses, wearing a black t-shirt, is sitting on a ledge and looking out over a city skyline. The background is a blurred view of tall buildings.

**Young people are  
suffering without  
Jesus in their lives.**

*But how will they know He's the  
answer if no one tells them?*



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BOOK A NET RETREAT FOR YOUR YOUTH! >>>

# RETREAT MINISTRY

We're excited to announce that a travelling team will be running retreats across Canada during the 2023-24 mission year!

## EVERY NET RETREAT INCLUDES:



Small group discussions, games, and activities, and live testimony presentations.



Guided prayer time and a personal invitation to commit to Christ.



The message of God's unending love for youth.



### Learn More

Visit [netcanada.ca](https://netcanada.ca) to find more information about retreat ministry, and download our welcome packet.



### Book a Retreat

Schedule a NET retreat for your school, parish or diocese.

[schedule@netcanada.ca](mailto:schedule@netcanada.ca)



### Host the Team

Receive the team in your community and begin seeing youth's lives transformed!

# NET AT WORLD YOUTH DAY



NET Canada is going to Portugal!

Along with all NET branches worldwide (Australia, Ireland, New Zealand, Scotland, Uganda, and the United States!), we will have a booth at the City of Joy event at World Youth Day happening in Lisbon this summer! We will also be helping facilitate events during the week to lead the young people there deeper in their faith! Please pray for the young people who will be attending to encounter Christ in a profound way!

Planning on being there too? Come visit us at our booth!



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