

EXTRAORDINARY CONNECTIONS

A GUIDE TO FAITH-DRIVEN RELATIONSHIPS



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It's that moment when you invite someone out for lunch to get to know them better and the conversation flows effortlessly from work challenges to deeper questions of purpose and faith. When a simple coffee meeting turns into hours of meaningful conversation, shared experiences, laughs, and vulnerability, you realize you've found someone who understands your professional ambitions and shares your spiritual journey.

These extraordinary connections feel like coming home or finding the best friend you've always been searching for—that person with whom you can be fully yourself unapologetically, talking about your faith, work, dreams, and aspirations without any explanations or resistance.

Do you struggle to find genuine and authentic relationships, do you sometimes feel disconnected from the world around you? You see bustling coffee shops, crowded concert halls, and friends exercising or eating out together leaving you wondering, 'Where are my people? Where are the connections that nourish my professional ambitions and my soul?'

You're not alone; countless others share your heart's desires for genuine community.

As young professionals, we navigate a complex landscape of networking events, career ladders, digital connections, work, and personal commitments, leaving our schedules often full. However, something deeper is often missing—genuine human connection rooted in shared values that point us toward sainthood.



FINDING REAL COMMUNITY IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Today's professional world can feel like a maze of superficial interactions. We collect LinkedIn connections like trading cards but struggle to cultivate meaningful relationships. New relationships often turn transactional, the digital age promises more connection but often leaves us in isolation with temporary dopamine hits. Young adults frequently find themselves in new cities, surrounded by opportunities yet feeling fundamentally lonely.

Studies show that Generation Z is the loneliest generation the world has ever seen, with isolation rates higher than both millennials and members of Generation X.

Another study by Mastermind Behavior found that young adults are the most vulnerable to loneliness. 30% of individuals aged 18-34 report feeling lonely every day, while about 63% of young adults are experiencing significant symptoms of anxiety and depression linked to loneliness.

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But what if there was a different path?

A way to build relationships beyond professional networking that extends to a deeper dimension of our human experience and our relationship with Christ?

Here are 4 ways to actively build extraordinary connections through a faith-driven community to curb loneliness and isolation.

STEP 1:

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Attending opportunities that allow you to connect on a deeper level with others while also helping you grow in your faith can be a great way to build meaningful relationships that nourish your soul on a spiritual level.

“A few months ago someone reached out to our YCP Boston chapter because she had just moved across the country and wanted to connect with other Catholics. I met her for Mass and brunch, and we instantly connected. Months later, we are good friends and she is now on the Boston leadership team!” - Allie Rachiele, YCP Boston



Action: Text a few friends and ask them to do a Novena with you or create a prayer group chat to keep each other accountable for your prayer goals.

STEP 2:

INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Seek out spaces and opportunities that align with your values. YCP offers a host of monthly events, meetups, and speaker series where your faith and professional world can intersect naturally. Real connections happen when we're willing to be vulnerable, step outside our comfort zones, and approach relationships with genuine openness.

“Finding like-minded friends in the city has been difficult; much less friends who want to help build a friendship around faith or even just accept my faith. I built up the courage to go to a YCP event before I went back to school for the semester, and met a lot of great women. I've struggled to find genuine friendships with other women before, and it was truly a breath of fresh air. After the event, we went to a pub and it was nice to talk to people and find out more about their stories and experiences. A few people from both the event and after party mentioned attending evening mass at Saint Joseph's and going to In Vino Veritas after Mass. The next Sunday, I went and continued to meet more people there. YCP was the catalyst for me to find my place and the faith community I was missing here in New York.” - Sarah Jo Renelt, YCP New York

Action: Commit to one community event this month and go with an open heart and open mind ready to meet and mingle with new people you haven't met before.



STEP 3:

CREATE YOUR IDEAL FAITH COMMUNITY

We know you're busy with a schedule filled with to-dos. Instead of looking for like-minded connections through a new hobby or something else you have to add to your schedule, form it yourself with something you'd most likely already be doing.

"I struggled to find Catholic friendships in my new hometown of Monterey, so I started a monthly hiking group. I already love hiking and now, I can bring other young adult Catholics in the area to hike with me. I also started a weekly Bible Study, to offer something more frequent. One of my goals for this year is to read the Bible more so I decided to invite others along with me as a weekly commitment to keep myself accountable and to build more intentional friendships. - Christine Lacayo, YCP Silicon Valley member



Action: Think about a social activity you might already be doing in a given month, can you extend the invite to other Catholic young adults in your area?

STEP 4:

VOLUNTEER AND SERVE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

One of the best ways to make new relationships is through serving. Volunteering is a beautiful way to gain a sense of purpose and helps build relationships with others who share your values. Mother Theresa of Calcutta was a big advocate for service and volunteering.

“A life not lived for others is not a life.” - Mother Theresa of Calcutta

Read about how these former YCP Presidents' volunteer engagement led to becoming best friends rooted in Christ.

“During the pandemic, several YCP Presidents gathered virtually every month for fellowship and support. As YCP Chicago's President, I loved connecting with the Presidents from other chapters around the country but specifically, I remember connecting with the President from YCP Cleveland, Sarah. We finally met in person at YCP's annual National Conference, and it was as if we had known each other forever. A month later, Sarah let me know she was thinking about applying for a job in Chicago and asked if I knew the company. I did and not coincidentally, the former YCP Chicago Director of Finance was working there, so I offered to connect her with him. Providentially, the position that she was applying for was his position, as he was leaving for another opportunity. After I heavily endorsed Sarah for the job, she landed an interview, got the job, moved to Chicago (into my apartment building), and became my best friend, all thanks to YCP! YCP is not only helping you integrate your faith and work, but they're also helping young adults find lifelong friends striving for sainthood together, and for that, I am eternally grateful.”

Q: After you initially met, is there anything that one or both of you did that helped nurture that friendship?

“Texting each other to ask for prayers before events, inviting each other to our virtual events, and emailing each other to ask questions, or for feedback on how to handle situations. I invited her over to my apartment and cooked her a huge “you’ve got this” breakfast the morning of her interview! Other than that, we’d attend Mass, YCP events, and young adults events together, and now we’re both coworkers at a Catholic Newman Center, working with college students (she’s in development and I’m in ministry).” - Becca Siar, former YCP Chicago President



Action: Reach out to your local parish and ask if there are any committees you can join as a volunteer. Consider joining your local YCP chapter leadership team.

EMBRACING EXTRAORDINARY CONNECTIONS

You're not alone in your yearning for deeper connections. Hundreds of other Catholic young adults yearn for these same relationships, feeling caught in the delicate balance of deepening their faith or growing their career network. Making new connections and relationships can feel daunting and overwhelming but it doesn't have to be. As you've read in these testimonies, faith-driven relationships can offer mutual support, spiritual growth, and intentional friendship.

This is why YCP exists.

We created Belong to surround you with a community helping you rediscover and live the beauty of our Catholic faith in your everyday life and work. Belong, combines the power of professional networking with faith-based mentorship.

Belong is more than a platform or a membership, it's your unique pathway of building the Kingdom of God through one transformative relationship at a time. Belong members aren't just transactional connections, they're friends, mentors, confidants, sometimes even become partners, each committed to turning the other's gaze toward Christ, both spiritually and professionally.

So what are you waiting for? Your extraordinary connections might be just around the corner.

[Learn more about Belong.](#)

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