MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendent, Principals, Athletic Directors, and Activity Directors
FROM: Most Rev. Thomas R. Zinkula, Bishop of Davenport
RE: Attendance at the National Catholic Youth Conference, November 21-23, 2019

Every two years the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry, the Catholic Church’s national voice and agency for the development of Catholic youth ministry, sponsors the National Catholic Youth Conference. This year’s NCYC, with its theme of “Blessed Broken Given, Bendito Partido Entregado”, will be held November 21-23 in Indianapolis, IN. I realize that attending this event will entail absence from school and extracurricular activities. I am writing to request that students be allowed an excused absence due to the nature of the program.

NCYC is the premier national gathering of Catholic high school age youth in the United States, drawing in excess of 23,000 youth and their chaperones from around the country. It is truly a unique opportunity for young people to gather together to strengthen their Catholic identity. They meet other young people striving to live out their faith, develop positive values, learn ways to cope with the difficult situations and choices they often face, and find that they are strong enough to do so. For many, their participation is not only life-affirming, it is life-changing.

These young people will hear presentations by leading speakers on a wide array of topics including social justice, prayer, appropriate use of technology, servant leadership, racism and cultural diversity, leadership, vocation, the sacraments, and transitioning to college. They will have several opportunities to interact with bishops and other church leaders in breakout and workshop sessions, through daily liturgy and the sacrament of reconciliation, and during guided roundtable discussions. Young people will also be engaged in a variety of service activities making a difference in the lives of the people of Indianapolis. They will grow personally, spiritually, and in their leadership abilities.

We are truly blessed here in the Diocese of Davenport. Some 750 youth and adult leaders from all corners of southeast and south central Iowa will attend this conference. These young people will take their learning back to your schools and positively impact their peers and communities. The young people, their families, their church communities, their school communities and their civic communities all benefit from this experience, making it a win-win for all concerned. Your cooperation in enabling these students to attend is greatly appreciated.

For more information about the conference, feel free to visit the NCYC website, www.ncyc.info. In addition, please feel free to contact our local diocesan youth ministry coordinator, Mr. Don Boucher (563-888-4243, boucher@davenportdiocese.org) for more details.