

About the Presenters



Katherine Angulo As the Program Director of the Thriving in Ministry Initiative supported by Lilly Endowment Inc., Katherine works to prepare pastoral leaders for long-term ministry in the Church and also directs the Bishop John M. D'Arcy Program in Priestly Renewal.

Born in Mexico and raised in Colombia, Katherine received a B.A. in Modern Languages in 2000 from King College in Tennessee and an M.A. in Pastoral Ministries in 2005 from St. Thomas University. She has more than 21 years of experience in youth ministry. She began as a Youth Minister at St. Mary's Church in Johnson City, Tennessee, where she later became the Director of Pastoral Ministries. After nine years, she became the Director of Youth Ministry for the Diocese of Raleigh. Before coming to the McGrath Institute, Katherine served for four years as the Associate Director of Youth Ministry at the Office of Formation and Discipleship for the Archdiocese of Atlanta. Angulo was the creator and Editor of [The Mark](#), a Catholic teen magazine, and the Executive Producer of the volunteer training program, [Called to Accompany/Llamados a Acompañar](#). Currently, she is part of the Board of Directors for the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM).

Hosffman Ospino, PhD is an Associate Professor of Theology and Religious Education at Boston College, School of Theology and Ministry where he serves as department Chair and Director of Graduate Programs in Hispanic Ministry. Dr. Ospino is the principal investigator for several national studies on Hispanic Catholics. He is currently advancing a national study on Latino Catholic vocations. He has authored/edited 13 books and more than 120 essays, academic and general. Dr. Ospino serves on the boards of several national organizations, including the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) and the Academy of Catholic Hispanic Theologians of the United States (ACHTUS).



Anita Houghton is the Associate Director of Evangelization for the Archdiocese of Detroit and a part-time faculty member at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit, teaching courses in Sacred Scripture. Anita has over 20 years of catechetical ministry experience and is the author of *Kerygma 4 Kids*, a children's evangelization tool that proclaims the Good News of Jesus Christ in a unique and engaging way and *As For Me and My House: A Practical Guide for Leading Your Kids to Christ*. Anita is married and has three young adult children. She and her husband, Deacon Mike Houghton, live in Bruce Township, Michigan.

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Veronica Quintino-Aranda obtained a Master's degree in Social Work with a minor in youth ministry. She currently is a candidate for Theology of the Body certification program. She is the Theology of the Body Spanish speaking speaker for the Quinceañera Formation program and the Marriage preparation formation program through the Hispanic Ministry in our Catholic Diocese of Grand Rapids.

Veronica has experience working with families, including pregnant women through the medical setting, in different capacities. Her experience includes Developmental Ages and Stages and Social Emotional Health from preconception through two years of age; as well as, middle and high school age teens.

José R. Astúa was born in Costa Rica, and grew up in a Catholic family. As part of the Comboni Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus he studied philosophy and theology at Universidad Católica de Costa Rica Anselmo Llorente y La Fuente. José lived and ministered in Mexico for two years with the Comboni Missionaries. After his work in Mexico, José was sent to Chicago to finish his theological studies at CTU (Catholic Theological Union). José worked at St. Francis de Sales Parish in Holland for three years as Youth Director and at St. Patrick-St. Anthony Parish in Grand Haven for 16 years in several roles. He is currently the Assistant Director for Marriage and Family Ministry at the Diocese of Grand Rapids.



Whitney Cunningham is a Catholic young adult who is passionate about ministry, Eucharistic Adoration, great coffee, and living life to the full (John 10:10). She just completed her sixth year as the Coordinator of Middle and High School Youth Ministry at Holy Family Parish in Caledonia, MI. She and her little pup, Milo, live on the NE side of Grand Rapids and enjoy being close to her Alma Mater, Aquinas College. When Whitney isn't doing youth ministry, she can be found playing with her two energetic four-year-old nephews or grabbing a cup of coffee with friends.

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Teri (Teresa) Burns, is the Pastoral Associate for Faith Formation at St. Robert of Newminister. She holds Bachelor's Degrees in Theology and Sociology from Aquinas College and a Master's in Pastoral Theology from St. Mary of the Woods. She is married to Deacon Jeff Burns, and they have two adult daughters and two grandsons.

Luz Margarita Aguirre-Poot, is originally from Cd. Obregón, Senora, Mexico. She did her studies in Mexico and Guatemala and lived 12 years of missionary religious life in some states of the Mexican Republic and Central America. Luz Margarita has been working at Holy Name of Jesus Parish for 13 years as Director of Religious Education and serves in different ministries there. She currently lives in Grand Rapids, MI with her husband of eight years and is the stepmother of a 22-year-old man. "Life is full of wonderful surprises, right?"



Fr. René Constanza is a member of the Missionary Society of St. Paul the Apostle (Paulist Fathers). Fr. René serves in the Diocese of Grand Rapids as the executive director of the Catholic Information Center, rector/pastor of the Cathedral of Saint Andrew, ecumenical/interfaith officer of the diocese and as a member of the diocesan presbyterial council.

Luis Carlos Cano Vélez was born in Medellín in Columbia on January 16, 1989. After completing his college studies, he began his vocational discernment with the Institute of Foreign Missions of Yarumal community to which he entered in 2008. There he studied Philosophy. In 2011 after finishing his novitiate he made his first vow of Obedience and continued his studies in Theology at the Pontifical Bolivarian University of Medellín. In 2016 he received his diaconate and was sent to Toronto-Canada to study English with the Scarboro Parents. In December of the same year he was ordained a priest at the age of 27 and was sent on the Cambodian mission in Asia.

There he began his first 3 years of Priesthood in an Insertion stage consisting of language learning (Khmer) and culture. After this period Father Luis Carlos went to Colombia to enjoy his vacation and for reasons of the pandemic, he has not been able to return to his mission place.

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Fr. Eugene Batungbacal was born and raised in the Philippines. He has been a priest for 9 years and was ordained in Houston, Texas on October 2, 2010.

Fr. Batungbacal is a member of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, commonly called The Redemptorists.

He is 3rd of 4 children and an uncle to 7 beautiful children. In 1994 Fr. Eugene migrated to the country and settled in the State of Texas. Prior to coming to the Diocese of Grand Rapids, I was director for 5 years at the Newman House Catholic Campus Ministry in Murray, Kentucky.

Currently I serve as Assistant Director for Youth and Young Adult in the Hispanic Ministry and a resident priest at St. Alphonsus Parish.

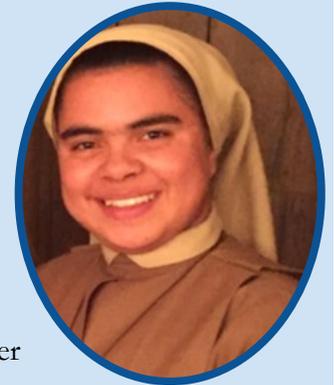
Sister Maryud Milena Cortes Restrepo was born in Yarumal, Antioquia, Colombia, on September 23, 1988, the 1st of 9 siblings.

She joined the Congregation, the Sister Missionaries of the Divine Spirit on January 30, 2006, her religious profession was held on March 19, 2010 and her perpetual profession on June 8, 2014.

She studied missiology in union between the Urbanian University of Rome and the pontifical missionary works of Colombia and earned her degree in Psychology with Atlantic International University, then her master's degree with Boston College in applied leadership studies and she is currently finishing her doctorate in psychology.

She has a 14-year missionary experience in different places in the Colombian geography; she has served as a missionary in Ecuador and the United States. She currently performs her missionary work in the diocese of Kalamazoo Michigan in the company of three other sisters from her congregation.

Her life motto is inspired by Galatians 4; 19: "I suffer pains, until Christ has formed in you"



Pedro Gomes Pedro was born and raised by a Mozambiquen refugee family, living in post-Apartheid South Africa. He studied and began a career in finance before feeling a strong pull to serve the most needy in a more direct way.

Having always been inspired by the lives of the great missionaries and saints of the church, he chose to step aside from his position and spend 6 months volunteering with the Salesians of Don Bosco in the Brazilian Amazon. That experience cemented in his mind a desire to work and serve the church as a lay man. On his return to South Africa he worked both in a home for street children as well as in educational projects with the Salesians of Don Bosco.

Today, Pedro is completing his Masters in Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership at Grand Valley State University. His biggest dream is to help catalyze the creation of the best Catholic university in Africa in post-war Mozambique.