

About 'Boots Laced'

Standing in that Poland field with 2.5 million of my Catholic brothers and sisters for World Youth Day in Poland two years ago, I couldn't help but feel the excitement rise as Pope Francis was about to speak. As we'd come to learn in the years since the Holy Spirit had chosen him as our Holy Father, we never knew what he'd say, but we knew it would be clear and cut right to the point.

As usual, the Servant of the Servants of God did not disappoint.

"The times we live in do not call for young 'couch potatoes,' but for young people with shoes, or better, boots laced," Pope Francis said. "It only takes players on the first string, and it has no room for bench-warmers. Today's world demands that you be a protagonist of history because life is always beautiful when we choose to live it fully, when we choose to leave a mark. History today calls us to defend our dignity and not to let others decide our future."

I'll never get out of my head that image of the young Church, gathered with excitement and anticipation, being given a clear directive from Pope Francis.

Disciples don't get to lounge around in complacency. It's not an option.

I'm not sure how many young adults left the field that day and cancelled their Netflix accounts, but I know it haunts me every time I look at the clock and realize just how much of my life I've spent growing into a potato instead of a disciple.

This new blog will be about the young (ages 12-18) and young adult (ages 19-35) Church. In true young people fashion, it will not always read like a perfectly constructed sentence, though I do promise it will be more than 140 characters.

It will be about the sacraments and culture, about ministry and mission, about the beauty, mess and goodness that is Church. It will also be about Baltimore because I wasn't sent to Judea or Galilee, but to this "end of the earth" to proclaim Jesus.

If you want to know more about me there's a bio that the good people at the Catholic Review have on the right side of this page. I don't imagine I'll bring anything remarkable to the table for this discussion, but George Matysek, the archdiocesan digital editor, thought this was a good idea, and he's a smart guy so we decided give it a try. Plus the Church is concerned about youth and young adults, rightfully so, and if I can help give a voice or direction to that concern I'm happy to ["contribute a verse."](#)