



HISTORY OF GIVEN

The GIVEN Institute was established in February 2018 and has its origin in the 2016 GIVEN Catholic Young Women's Leadership Forum, organized by the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious. Sister Mary Gabriel, SV and Sister Bethany Madonna, SV, Co-Chairs of the 2016 GIVEN Forum, conceived of the idea to host a leadership forum for young women throughout the United States with the aim of helping them to “receive the gift they are, realize the gifts they've been given, and respond with the gift that only they can give.”

Mother Agnes Mary Donovan, Superior General of the Sisters of Life and an organizer of the event, said “GIVEN was conceived in the hearts of women religious and remains a significant response on the part of the Church to encourage, inspire, and mentor young women at a crucial moment in their lives. We want each of them to know they are loved, noticed, and necessary.”

The 2016 GIVEN Forum brought together nearly 300 young adult women from every state in the country, and connected them with some of the leading women in the Church. The attendees were accompanied by over 70 religious sisters from more than 25 different religious communities. Each participant developed a post-forum action plan that they implemented in a community of their choice. The GIVEN Institute was formed to continue the inaugural forum's mission of activating the gifts of young adult women for the Catholic Church and the world.

During the [2019 GIVEN Forum](#), attendees came from 30 states, Ireland, and Canada, proudly representing diverse backgrounds. The 120 attendees were paired with lay mentors and religious sisters who met with them in small groups to discuss their proposed Action Plans in the midst of the trainings and workshops. The 25 lay mentors, single and married women, shared their expertise in many sectors of society such as business, publishing, education, law, medicine, and athletics. The 50 religious sisters in attendance were from 13 different communities and many included novices still in formation.

[Discover the Gift](#) took place in June 2020 as a “taste of GIVEN” offering keynote speakers, leadership training tips, prayer with religious sister communities, and online networking. While this online event took place due to the global pandemic, great opportunities unfolded as a result. Over 2,000 women across the globe regardless of age or state in life had the chance to learn more about the mission of GIVEN and personally receive the gift that they are, realize the gifts they have been given, and respond with the gift only they can give. Participants reported that GIVEN's content was energizing and life-giving. In 2020, GIVEN launched the first season of [GIVEN Academy](#) to offer ongoing skills training for women in the GIVEN Network and GIVEN Gatherings to bring the message of discovering the gift only you can give to women all over the country.

The [2021 GIVEN Catholic Young Women's Leadership Forum](#) welcomed 130 young adults from 91 dioceses, as well as 60 religious sisters and 30 lay mentors. At the 2021 Forum, GIVEN was proud to announce that an agreement has been made with the OSV Institute for Catholic Innovation that three Action Plan projects from the 2021 GIVEN Forum cohort will move into the semi-final round of the 2022 OSV Challenge. These three women will be awarded \$10,000 in seed money by GIVEN benefactors and then will take part in the OSV Challenge Accelerator and compete to be a finalist with a chance to win a \$100,000 prize for their Action Plan. Read more about the alignment between [GIVEN and the OSV Institute](#).

GIVEN received a warm welcome from the Archdiocese of Philadelphia when the 2022 GIVEN Forum was held there for the first time. Over 200 young adults, consecrated women and lay mentors and volunteers were inspired by keynote talks by Sr. Josephine Garrett, Heather Khym, Sr. Mary Madeline Todd, Rachel Bulman and Chika Anyanwu, as well as leadership trainings on communication and boundaries, starting a business and discovering core motivations. Archbishop Nelson Perez and Bishop John J. McIntyre celebrated Mass for the group, and attendees were able to visit the St. Charles Borromeo Seminary where Archbishop Emeritus Charles J. Chaput offered a Gospel reflection.

GIVEN now hosts the Catholic Young Women's Leadership Forum, the Art of Accompaniment Mentoring Program, and the wider GIVEN Network to activate the gifts of women from the Church and the world.

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