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with Latino youth and young adults
since 1994*

May 6, 2021

**CRYSTAL SERRANO-PUEBLA NAMED ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF THE THRIVING
CATHOLIC PARISHES PROJECT AT INSTITUTO FE Y VIDA**

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Crystal Serrano-Puebla, M.A., has been named Assistant Program Director of the Thriving Catholic Parishes Project at Instituto Fe y Vida. She has served as Associate Director of Young Adult and Campus Ministry for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend and as National Formation Coordinator for *Pastoral Migratoria* with the Archdiocese of Chicago. The appointment is effective June 14.

“Crystal Serrano-Puebla is a highly respected leader in youth and young adult ministry and *Pastoral Juvenil*,” said Dr. Carmen Cervantes, Executive Director. “The experience and energy she brings to the Thriving Catholic Parishes

Project will greatly enhance our mission and will be a gift to the leaders and members of the parishes served by this project.”

Thanks to a grant from Lilly Endowment, Inc., the Thriving Catholic Parishes Project at Instituto Fe y Vida aims to help parishes with a significant Latina/o population to grow and flourish through a dynamic, integrative, and continuous ministry with young people, including parishioners from other ethnic groups. The key is to offer bridging pastoral care from adolescence into young adulthood thus changing the Confirmation-graduation fall-off and fostering the lively and creative integration of young people into the full mission of the Church.

A native of Illinois with immigrant parents from Mexico, Serrano-Puebla earned a Master of Arts in Theology at the University of Notre Dame and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology at Lewis University. Through the Echo program at Notre Dame, she was formed as a lay leader in the Diocese of Lafayette, Indiana, integrating work, study, and a life of faith to serve the Church and explore a career in ministry. While working there in the Office of Family Life and Hispanic Ministry with Dr. Dora Tobar, she lived, learned from, and served the evangelizing mission of the Church.

As Director of the Project, Juan Escarfuller values her joining the team: “Crystal is the next game changer at Fe y Vida: a talented, fully bilingual, and dedicated professional lay minister eager to respond to the signs of the times especially as a member of the fastest growing segment in the Church and society, US-born, English-speaking young Latinas and Latinos with parents of a different culture and language of origin.”

Serrano-Puebla is eager to serve and walk with young people and their families at the intersection of faith, human formation, and pastoral care in a systematic, parish community-based setting through the Thriving Catholic Parishes Project. She notes why she accepted this position: “I am thrilled to work with Fe y Vida on the Thriving Catholic Parishes Project to be able to share the gift of the Gospel just as it was shared with me. I have been in the shoes of youth that will be served through the project and have had mentors, professors, and friends who have helped me find the well of living water. I am excited to be able to accompany young people and their families to have a lived relationship with Christ.”