



## 30 Under 30 Young Leaders Application

**Introduction:** Henri Nouwen was a Dutch-born Catholic priest, professor, psychologist and prolific writer. He taught psychology at the University of Notre Dame and pastoral theology at the Divinity Schools of Yale and Harvard before leaving academia to become the pastor at L'Arche Daybreak, a community for people with intellectual disabilities. A master communicator, Nouwen wrote and spoke with great openness and vulnerability about faith, spiritual formation, prayer, social justice, and other themes related to the spiritual life. He wrote thirty-nine books that sold over one million copies in his lifetime and were translated into more than thirty-five languages. Today, book sales have surpassed 8.5 million copies. Books drawn from Nouwen's archives continue to be published. Nouwen died unexpectedly of a heart attack in 1996. He was 64 years old.

In 2026, the Henri Nouwen Society will commemorate the 30th anniversary of Nouwen's death with a three day conference. In the year leading up to this conference, the Society will offer a leadership and mentoring opportunity to 30 young leaders under the age of 30.

This cohort of 30 young leaders will be invited to prepare a creative project integrating the life and/or work of Henri Nouwen in their own context. Each young leader will be paired with a mentor with whom they will meet a minimum of once per quarter. Full Cohort zoom meetings will take place monthly to encourage peer learning. The program will culminate with the young leaders attending the 2026 conference (travel, accommodations, and registration provided) where they will have the opportunity to meet the other young leaders and present their projects.

The top project will receive an additional \$1,000 award.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Student:    Yes    No    Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Tell us about your **spiritual journey**:

Tell us about your interest in the **30 Under 30 Young Leaders Program** – why would you like to participate?

Tell us about someone who has been a **spiritual mentor/leader** for you. This person could be someone you know personally or whose writing has been particularly formational for you.

Were you familiar with Henri Nouwen prior to hearing about the **30 Under 30 Young Leaders Program**? If so, tell us about your encounter with **Henri Nouwen**.

Share with us any preliminary thoughts you have about what you would do for your Henri Nouwen project? (Examples: Something in the area of the arts: poetry, music, script for a play. Something in the area of book study: take a small group of youth through one of Henri's books using materials you create. Something in the area of theology: write a paper on an aspect of Nouwen's theology that connects to your own sense of vocation or ministry. Something in the area of spirituality: prepare a spiritual retreat for young people using Nouwen's work.) We encourage you to be as creative as possible and to engage other young people if possible.

### References:

Please provide two references who can speak to your spiritual maturity and suitability for this leadership cohort.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

We will receive applications until **March 31, 2025**.  
Successful candidates will be informed by **April 15, 2025**.  
First Cohort meeting will be held in **May 2025**.

Submit your completed application to:

**Wendy VanderWal Martin**  
**wwanderwalmartin@henrinouwen.org**