

YOUR LIFE AT COLLEGE

- 10 SUGGESTIONS - FOR LIVING YOUR CATHOLIC FAITH WHILE IN COLLEGE

college



Congratulations! You are embarking on a brand new journey! We invite you to become part of Catholic Campus Ministry and the Church through your participation in the Liturgy of the Eucharist, weekly events, programs and celebrations. Campus ministry and your parish are there to help nurture your body, mind and spirit.

Try A Relationship With GOD

You are meeting lots of new people and also trying to keep those friendships from high school. Sometimes you can be pulled in many directions. Remember the friendship that has been consistent your whole life - your relationship with God. God is ALWAYS there no matter what you do. God wants to be part of your life!

Notice the difference when you invite God into your life.

- The **Liturgy of the Eucharist or Mass** is a great time to get to know God better. Many campus communities offer a variety of times for Mass that are convenient for the hectic life of a college student. Find one that fits you.
- **Bible studies** are a great time to delve deeper into the Bible and Sunday readings. Learn about the Gospel and how it is relevant to our lives. This too can be a way to share faith with others like you.
- **Retreats** are a great time to get away for some quiet time with God. Campus Ministry programs often offer retreat opportunities to listen and share about our faith with others. Look into the ministry's offerings on the web.
- Are you interested in becoming confirmed in the Catholic Church? Do you or a friend want to learn more about becoming Catholic? Please call and talk with campus ministers about available options to celebrate the Sacraments while at college.
- Connect with websites that provide spiritual uplifts and prayer practices. They will help you set some time aside for God! (www.pray-as-you-go.org, www.loyolapress.com/3-minute-retreats-daily-online-prayer.htm, www.sacredspace.ie)

1

www.dobyouth.org

Give Of Yourself to God's Church

"Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our SERVING; he who teaches, in his teaching; he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality; he who gives aid, with zeal; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness." [Rom 12:6-8]

Mass is a celebration of community and thanksgiving to God. Being part of a community means serving out of love and thanksgiving for what we have received.

2

- Join one of the many ministries at Mass.
- Often **Music Ministry** consists of a group of students who use their voice and musical talents to serve the community. Contact your ministry's music coordinator.
- The **Lectors** proclaim the Word of God each week in the first and second readings. Please consider sharing your oratory talent with the community once a month.
- **Eucharistic Ministers** distribute Communion. There is some training involved to serve as a Eucharistic Minister. Students meet in small groups to talk about the essence of being a Eucharistic Minister which is love for God and neighbor.
- Hospitality volunteers may help to welcome people to Mass or set up refreshments afterwards.

We need you, you are the Church, talk to your campus ministry or parish staff.

Explore Your Interests

What were your interests in high school?

There are so many clubs, sports and organizations at college, that there is at least one that will fit your interest. If there is not, then maybe think about starting your own club.

- Are you interested in learning more about your faith and how it relates to your life? Try some of the programs offered by your school's campus ministry - Faith Sharing through Scripture study, a lecture series or Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA).
- What about sports - did you play in high school? Have you always wanted to play but never had a chance? Well, there may be an opportunity to play intramurals on campus. Possibly organize a campus ministry team.

3

Stay Healthy

Catholic Campus Ministry is concerned about the whole person – body, mind and spirit.

4

- Join **Intramural Sports on your campus.** Join or begin a campus ministry recreational team that builds community and has fun!
- Campus Ministry may go off campus for activities as well. Check out the local parks, farms and more. Ideas are always welcome for new adventures!
- Eat well and stay active. Link with wellness programs on campus to care for yourself. Here's a helpful link: <http://wellness.buffalo.edu/wes/nutphysical>

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Step Out Into The Hall

College is all about meeting new people, so start with the ones close to you - the people on your floor in your residence hall or your neighbors next door.

- Invite one or two of your neighbors to join you for dinner. No one likes to eat alone and the dinner conversation might be stimulating.
- There are always opportunities for free food at campus ministry activities. It may be a great way to meet other students like yourself. Check with your campus ministry site on opportunities for free food and fellowship.

5

Join a Faith Sharing Group or Small Christian Community

Get involved in a small group with other Catholics who have similar interests, are in a similar life situation, or who live in your city or neighborhood.

6

- Bible Study & Faith Sharing opportunities are an important part of the college campus experience. Contact Campus Ministry websites or campus ministers for more details.
- In between those books you are reading for class, try out a book about Catholic spirituality. Sometimes campus groups will be reading and discussing books that will be enlightening and soul-searching. Check your campus' website for more info on dates and times.

Need to Share, Want to Talk?

Find someone who you can trust to talk with. Stuff piles up pretty quickly in college - classes, papers, roommate problems, boyfriend/girlfriend fights and parental squabbles. Don't let it get the best of you.

- You are welcome to come to the campus ministry to shoot the breeze or talk about a problem you are having. They are there to listen.
- If you are feeling really overwhelmed and you do not know who to turn to, please call the Counseling Center on campus. They are trained professionals who are there to help you!!

7

Take Some Time Away For Yourself

Life on campus can be confining even though we have all this open space around us. Therefore take some time and rejuvenate yourself!

8

- Try a **Campus Ministry Retreat**. Often students partner with campus ministry to offer other young adults an opportunity to do something for yourself, spend some time with God and meet new people. Check your ministry's website for more details. If a retreat ministry doesn't exist think about beginning one.
- Campus Ministry centers often offer social activities that take you off campus or provide students with opportunities to meet people. Or think about offering your skills to organize activities to go apple picking, to see musicals at local theaters or free concerts.

Become a Volunteer

“Preach the Gospel at all times, if necessary use words.” St. Francis of Assisi

When you invest your time into something, you have ownership of it and it becomes yours. Think about devoting yourself to a Newman ministry or a service project.

- Campus Ministries often offer community service opportunities which invites students to take part in service projects around the community. Projects are usually designed to give students a broad experience and encourage students to engage in service on a regular basis.
- If you are interested in serving others, learning more about your spirituality and living in community, try **Alternative Break Experiences**. Your campus community will most likely have opportunities to dedicate some time to do service during traditional college breaks (Spring, Summer and Winter).
- Think about teaching religious education for the children of your parish or campus community. One could also create opportunities for life-long learning about faith among the adults or those seeking to become Catholic.

9

Expand Your Knowledge of Catholic Culture

Much of our faith is reflected in art, music, literature and theater. Seek out opportunities that will expand your ideas and images of Catholicism.

- When you meet and interact with other students, pay attention to the variety of ideas and beliefs and ways in which others worship.
- Invite your friends to watch movies with a message and discuss their significance.
Films with religious content include *A Man for all Seasons*, *Becket*, *Romero*, *The Mission*, *Black Robe*, *Entertaining Angels*, *Dead Man Walking*, *Babette's Feast*, *Chronicles of Narnia*, *Lord of the Rings*, *Jesus of Montreal*, *Avatar*, *Alice In Wonderland*, *Dear John*, and *To Save a Life*.
- Other films that might provoke discussion include *Schindler's List*, *The Spitfire Grill*, *Shawshank Redemption*, *Life is Beautiful*, *Shadowlands*, *Chocolat*, *Erin Brockovich*, *The Legend of Bagger Vance*, *Cast Away*, *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, *Alfie*, *Billy Elliot*, *Bruce Almighty*, *Harry Potter* and *Pay it Forward*.
- Educate yourself about other religious traditions that impact Catholic culture.
- Visit websites like www.bustedhalo.com, www.americancatholic.org, www.godspy.com

10



COLLEGE CONNECTION PROGRAM

This fall, many of you will become freshman on a college campus where your faith and moral life may be tested. Catholic campus ministries, such as the Newman Centers, offer strong support but, because of privacy laws and competing activities, struggle to connect with students like you.

The *College Connection Program* was developed to help. You may visit www.dobyouth.org and connect under Young Adults & College. Submit your name, your intended college and its location and the Department of Youth & Young Adult Ministry will forward your information to the campus ministries, who, in turn, send a welcoming packet in the summer and greet you upon your arrival. This student information is communicated to the campus ministries only and, otherwise, will remain confidential.

Welcome to this new and exciting part of your journey!

For more information contact Laurie Marshanke, Young Adult Ministry Coordinator at Imarshanke@buffalodiocese.org or 716-847-8789