Student Affairs Annual Report  
Appendix C  
Campus Ministry Annual Report 2014-2015  
Dr. Lynn Myrick, Director of Campus Ministry

1. **Introduction:**

The Campus Ministry’s mission is based on the virtues espoused by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur: we honor the dignity and sacredness of each person; strive to educate students to serve justice and peace in the world and commit themselves to community service; embrace the gift of diversity; strive to create community among those with whom we work and those whom we serve; develop holistic learning communities that educate for life; and proclaim more by our lives than our words that God is good.

We offer **spiritual development** in the forms of retreats, spiritual reflections and practices, and sacred places for worship and meditation. We bring to the campus **worship services**, Masses, and interpretive presentations of faith in different art forms. Students may join **the Gospel Choir**, both a communal experience and an offering of praise and worship, while also earning one college credit for participation. Campus Ministry promotes and facilitates **social service initiatives**, be they long-term, as in the Alternative Spring Break, or weekly, as in the afternoon or morning service trips to the city. In both instances, Campus Ministry strives to connect students with under-served populations and to explore and process the effects of their service work. We also offer **Catholic education** in the form of the Rite of Initiation for Catholic Adults (RCIA), beginning in the fall and culminating in the Easter Vigil service when the catechumens and/or candidates are baptized and/or confirmed in the Catholic Church. Finally, students working together with common goals, coming together to discuss their faith or pray together, or joining one another to debate their ideas about art, film, or lectures will inevitably find **community** with one another, and it is hoped, create lasting friendships.

Achievements this year on Sr. Mary Ellen Dow’s watch have included highly successful attendance of the Billiart Center for Social Justice presentations, as well as the continuation of the Soup with the Sisters, both of which will in the future be designated under the aegis of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. The hiring of a student intern continued to make a difference in the turnout of students for weekly service, notwithstanding some ebb and flow due to the change of campus ministers. Alternative Spring Break, the Gospel Choir (which performed off campus as well as on this year), and the Cunneen Fellowships are three programs that had a strong start and continued to do well. I was able to offer guided imagery meditations also in the spring, thanks to the cooperation and publicity offered by residential housing.

**II. Dashboard Data:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Student Participation** | **2011-2012** | **2012-2013** | **2013-2014** | **2014-2015** |
| Weekly Service | n/a | 85 | 195 | **(Feb.-April)** 21 (average 3-5 per week, usually same people) |
| Alternative Spring Break | 8 | 7 | 10 | 10 |
| Gospel Choir | 10 | 12 | 15 | 22 |
| Student-led Retreat | N/A | 12 | 15 | No retreat |
| Spirituality Advisory Board | 6 | 6 | 6 | No Board |
| Sower’s Seed Lecture | 100 | 250 | 150 | Will take place in Fall 2015 |
| Cunneen Fellowships | 7 | 5 | 2 | 3 |

Total program attendance as known, given the change in leadership in Campus Ministry is 297. This is with not counting religious services in the fall such as Thanksgiving and Advent. Last year’s was 1158, which counted the Billiart Center, Sower’s Seed Lecture (which did not occur this year), and the Soup with the Sisters.

**III. Progress on Goals**

Goals stated by Sr. Mary Ellen Dow and their progress:

1. Ongoing development of programs and increased student participation in programs sponsored by the Billiart Center. This program was a tremendous success: good publicity, excellent attendance, relevant subject matter.
2. Guided imagery/meditation as ongoing programs of spiritual awakening across Trinity’s populations. This program was popular before I arrived and was well attended in Cuvilly Hall. I also perceive an interest in praying the Rosary as a spiritual practice.
3. Strengthen student objectives, outcomes, and assessment for the ASB service trip. I attended the preparation sessions and the seminars offered before the trip enriched the students’ capacity to understand the roots of poverty and prejudice in history and in the present. The bonding among the students began before the trip and intensified throughout the trip. Reflection exercises reinforced the students’ learning.
4. The goal to investigate and establish an Alternative Winter Break (AWB) was unfulfilled, but will be part of 2015-2016 goal.
5. The goal to increase student numbers and sites for weekly service, with the assistance of the student intern, was satisfied, and I added more sites (Reading Partners, the Stuart Center, the Catholic Volunteer Network) to the volunteer opportunities. This goal will continue through next year.
6. Increase student participation in the Gospel Choir (including older working students) by scheduling rehearsals at an early evening time frame. This goal was achieved, since more evening students and working adults participated. Continued goal is to find more venues for the Gospel choir; the shuttle is available for student use. The Provost has provided an added incentive for students wishing to join the choir: one hour of academic credit is awarded for participation.
7. The goal to strategize/propose daily use of the Notre Dame Chapel as a “sacred place” for Trinity’s campus is a goal that I did not see realized. I will need to investigate this goal further.
8. The Food pantry publicity and utilization goal is no longer a part of Campus Ministry’s purview.
9. Ongoing evaluation of procedural guidelines for weddings and other spiritual/cultural events in the Notre Dame Chapel in conjunction with the Director of Conference Services could be an ongoing goal for this year. Perhaps open the Chapel for more weddings?

Dr. Myrick’s initial goals including hosting a well-attended Ash Wednesday service, as well as coordinate and direct an Easter play, also well attended. These will be offered again next year.

Dr. Myrick was able to direct a student to participate in a six-week program designed to help young people learn how to create and sustain their own non-profit. She was accepted into the program and with all her expenses paid for.

**IV. New Goals for 2014-2015**

1. Education and Interfaith Discussion.

Catholicism:

Continue to work with Dr. Minerva San Juan to attract and educate new Catholics in the RCIA program. Ask the new Catholics to encourage and share their spiritual experiences with the catechumens and candidates.

Begin a Catholic campus ministry club that has its own program/itinerary. Offer to talk about special topics, but encourage student-driven meetings.

Investigate the possibility of re-establishing a Sunday night Mass for the students.

Protestant, Muslim, or Secular Humanism clubs with their own itinerary and social calendar.

Interfaith and Social Service discussion groups: once a week, in the morning or early evening, invite a speaker to talk about his or her own faith or non-profit. We could meet informally in a lounge setting (basement), in the residence halls, or outside the chapel. I would like to start by inviting a Muslim chaplain to talk with students here.

Publicize all religious holidays either on the campus ministry bulletin board or on our website.

Have an all-faith symposium sponsored by campus clubs, where students come together to share their personal spiritualities. Call it the God-app.

Ask a group of Muslim women to work with re-invigorating the prayer room as a project.

1. Service and Social Justice

Streamline the publicity of volunteer sites for students to choose from; partner with the faculty so that the volunteer service is relevant to the students’ interests and coursework. Vet more volunteer worksites over the summer. Encourage faculty and staff to volunteer with students. Use the Campus Ministry website and the bulletin boards on campus, including residence halls.

Have a service day for the students when the Trinity shuttle takes students on a “volunteer tour” of the D.C. area so that they can actually visit those places where they may choose to volunteer.

Create a forum for students to process and reflect upon their service activities, maybe a site on the campus ministry website. Give the forum a catchy acronym or name for the process. Create a form that students can fill out effortless that starts them on the process of reflecting on their experiences serving others.

Service sites Trinity already works for:

Capital Area Food Bank—Fridays

Martha’s Table—two days a week

Christ’s House (skipped spring semester)

Reading Partners

Service sites that have connected with Trinity (asked for us to work with them):

The Women’s Collective

L’Arche of Greater D.C.

Catholic Volunteer Network (draw on this group to encourage students to spend summers volunteering in other cities and states)

The Homeless Children’s Playtime Project

Proposed: Home for Trafficked Women

Children’s National Hospital System

Programs in Place

Alternative Spring Break (to Selma) and the Cunneen Fellowships

Proposed: Alternative Winter Break (in D.C.)

1. Worship Services and Presentations

Create a Student Advisory Board that oversees worship services and celebrations:

911 Memorial Service

All Souls’ Day (Latina population) leading

Thanksgiving service

(holiday for Muslim students)

Festival of Lights, all faiths included at Advent

MLK service

Ash Wednesday service

Easter play

Explore alternative ways to worship and express one’s faith with dance, art, and drama. Invite ministers of all faiths to come talk. Use the Gospel Choir for our services. Draw on student, faculty, and staff talent for song, art, and dance.

Institute a weekly all-faith service, supported by different faith groups, clubs, or other organizations. Invite professors and staff to talk. Give talks about 1) a decision that changed my life, 2) a person who changed my life, 3) how I found God in my life, 4) the worst experience that I ever had and how I survived. Invite guests to come, as well as asking organizations to step forward to present programs (fifteen minutes long).

1. Spirituality

Honor the personal spirituality of each student while encouraging exploration of personal spirituality through different practices and devotions. Expand the guided imagery meditation by partnering with Alecia Duncan-Thomas (with the mentoring of Carlota Ocampo) and working with campus housing RCs and Head of campus housing, Cat Hopkins. Also, create a booklet with different meditation exercises.

Create support groups, such as prayer or meditation partners, companions in prayer, and intercessory prayer groups.

Meet the sisters: invite the sisters to talk with students about their personal decision to give themselves to God. Explore the idea of the sisters’ mentoring the students in some way.

Have a student-led retreat off campus. Have a retreat in a Benedictine monastery. Take the Trinity shuttle to go to the L’Arche second Tuesday of the month dinner and simple liturgy. This retreat would involve all Trinity (faculty, students, and staff)

Students in Campus Ministry would create a map of “sacred spaces” at Trinity where one may go, be alone, and feel close to God or one’s inner self

1. Solidarity and Community

Film nights with food and talk afterward, Cook for the Sisters night (twice a year), Trips to the Basilica and the National Basilica. Positivity Day: write positive notes to all your friends (post-its or have a passport book), Create a group to see the Pope when he comes to D.C.

1. Programs for next year:

“Songs of Peace and Freedom” with the D.C. Labor Chorus and Trinity’s Gospel Choir

Week of November 15, before Thanksgiving, with Food Drive for Capital Area Food Bank

Matt Bates’ Social Movement class will organize the publicity and the two choruses will

present the concert. Campus ministry will organize the food drive.

Cunneen Fellowships: Start publicizing earlier next year so that students will be primed to begin writing their applications.

Alternative Spring Break: Begin publicizing earlier so that students may apply more readily.

Sower’s Seed Program: This program is celebrating its tenth year. Kelly Dunn, the founder and benefactor, wants to award the Greater Good award at the “Sower’s Seed Lecture event,” and wants the selection committee to be more diverse. She also wants to give more funding to the Gospel Choir so that it can expand and sing in more venues. She also wants to fund a symposium, which will be discussed in greater detail with Trinity at a later date. She is seeking ways to promote social service and social justice at Trinity.

Screening of the film *Adelante*, a film about the merging of two cultures, one Irish, one Hispanic, into one vibrant congregation in a church that was about to disappear. The film celebrates diversity. This film is an award-winning documentary from PBS. Invite a priest from a diverse congregation to talk about the film and his experiences with diversity in his congregation.

Always, always support our Gospel Choir and help it to grow. Use funds wisely from the Sower’s Seed program to promote the choir’s development.

In conclusion, Campus Ministry would like to work with students from all schools to deepen the spiritual lives of all persons. It is only in collaboration with other departments and with members of the Trinity community that Campus Ministry can do its work do encourage all to find their own connection with the Divine and with other human beings (and all creation).