

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

There is a hunger and a thirst among our young people today. Many of them do not recognize this hunger for what it is – a hunger and thirst for Christ – but we also know many who do. College life presents a unique opportunity to introduce many students to Jesus and to support those young people who are already seeking to live as disciples of the Lord Jesus.

After listening to college students, campus ministers, and chaplains, digesting the words of the Holy Father's apostolic exhortation *Christus Vivit*, and spending time in prayer, we have crafted a vision for college campus ministry in the Archdiocese of Atlanta. I am excited to present this vision for Catholic campus ministry as a working foundation for chaplains and campus ministers to develop pastoral strategies and plans appropriate for their campuses. We will update this vision from time to time as new situations arise. While every campus has unique contours and needs, the goal for all campus ministries remains the same – *to make, mold, and mission* disciples of Jesus Christ on college campuses and to prepare them to live as missionary disciples after college.

If you are a chaplain or campus minister, as you read through this document, prayerfully consider how the Lord is calling you to reach and shepherd all of the students on your campus. If you are a student in campus ministry now, thank you for your witness and for your desire to grow as a disciple. Lastly, to all our supporters and friends of campus ministry, please consider how the Lord may be calling you to take a next step of support, whether through time and prayer, talent, or treasure. We are grateful for your prayers and support. Thank you for all you do, and may God bless you and our campus ministries in the Archdiocese of Atlanta.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

+ 

The Most Reverend Gregory J. Hartmayer, OFM Conv.

Encounter Jesus and Live as His Disciples

A Vision for Collegiate Campus Ministry in the Archdiocese of Atlanta

Contents

Introduction: Purpose, Vision, and Goal	3
Why Campus Ministry is Important.....	4
Campus Ministry in the Archdiocese: Where We Are	5
Aspects of Campus Ministry.....	5
Range of Models and Outreach	6
Limited Resources, Much Potential	7
Various Phases or Stages of Campus Ministry	8
Campus Ministry in the Archdiocese: Moving Forward	8
The Priority of Evangelization	8
Adequate Ministry Staff and Strong Leadership Culture	9
<i>Culture of Prayer</i>	10
<i>Culture of Healthy Teamwork and Community</i>	10
<i>Culture of Active Discipleship</i>	11
<i>Culture of Service and Intercultural Competence</i>	11
A Relational and Evangelizing Model of Campus Ministry.....	12
Stewardship for the Sake of Mission	12
Minding the Transitional Gaps	13
Effective and Fruitful Ministry	14
<i>Identity and Belonging</i>	15
<i>Leading with Beauty</i>	15
<i>Outreach</i>	15
Growth and Measuring “Success”	16
Key Collaborators and Resources	16
Conclusion	18

Encounter Jesus and Live as His Disciples

A Vision for Collegiate Campus Ministry in the Archdiocese of Atlanta

“What instructions does the Lord give us for going forth to others? Only one, and it’s very simple: *make disciples.*”

-Pope Francis¹

Introduction: Purpose, Vision, and Goal

The purpose of this document is to provide a broad and unified vision for collegiate campus ministry leaders in the Archdiocese of Atlanta in order to support their planning and ministry efforts, to encourage continued collaboration and networking across campuses, and to advance the Holy Father’s evangelizing call for “a pastoral and missionary conversion”² within the context of campus ministry. Campus ministry is vital for the life and mission of the Church of the Archdiocese of Atlanta and is a significant marker (as well as entry point) along the path of discipleship. All in the archdiocese are invited to consider how to support campus ministry efforts through prayer and stewardship.

The vision of Catholic collegiate campus ministry is to be mission-oriented—to create, among students, a community of disciples who *go out, go forth.*³ All of campus and college life is a mission field. Campus ministry, first and foremost, assists students to encounter the Lord, to grow as disciples, and to discern His call and be attentive to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit. This, in turn, enables them to love and evangelize other students through relational outreach and friendship, inviting peers to encounter Jesus Christ through His Church and fostering missionary discipleship.

The goal of campus ministry is *to make, mold, and mission* disciples of Jesus Christ on college campuses and to prepare them to live as missionary disciples after college.

¹ Homily for the Holy Mass for World Mission Day (October 20, 2019). This document also finds inspiration in the *Directory for Catechesis* (Vatican City: LEV / Washington, DC: USCCB, 2020), no. 297: “There is a pressing need to frame everything in terms of evangelization, as the fundamental principle that guides ecclesial activity as a whole.”

² Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium - The Joy of the Gospel* [hereafter EG] (2013), no. 25.

³ EG, nos. 24 and 46-49.

Why Campus Ministry is Important

Collegiate campus ministry is a key part of the Church's evangelizing mission, and the Church relies on college students who are living and leading as disciples now and in the future. However, more than ever, campus ministry is a critical mission ground and perhaps, for many students, the last opportunity they will have to be introduced to the Person of Jesus Christ through His Church and to be grounded in the Catholic Faith.

Students drifting away from their faith in college is not a new phenomenon, but the current cultural climate is now causing a crisis. The 2015 study *America's Changing Religious Landscape* illustrated the continued decline of self-identified Christians, especially among Catholics, and the dramatic rise of the religiously unaffiliated.⁴ College years have been noted as especially significant, and it has been remarked anecdotally that fewer and fewer students who enter college Catholic will graduate Catholic. This only exacerbates the phenomenon of earlier ages of religious disaffiliation.

In the past, the Church could look to certain touchpoints in a family's life to reconnect with members who have drifted away, such as during preparation for the Sacraments of Confirmation, Marriage, and Baptism (for their children). This is not necessarily the case anymore. Data around disaffiliation and sacramental practice indicates that more people leaving the Church are staying away. As noted above, for a growing number of young adults, college indeed may be a last chance to keep Catholics Catholic.

Students starting college land in a perfect storm of opportunity and new-founded freedom combined with loneliness, temptation, and potential culture shock. The current post-Christian climate of many college campuses, in addition to the background of wounded relationships, weak familial bonds, and questions about identity and belonging brought by students themselves to their college experiences, all contribute to a challenging environment. Even teens coming from

⁴ Pew Research Center: <https://www.pewforum.org/2015/05/12/americas-changing-religious-landscape/>. See also *Going, Going, Gone: The Dynamics of Disaffiliation in Young Catholics* (St. Mary's Press, 2017). The rise of the unaffiliated has continued. See *The State of Religious & Young People 2020 - Catholic Edition: Relational Authority* (Springtide Research Institute), 27.

a strong youth ministry during high school can be set adrift in college without a strong community to plug into.⁵

Some students find this community in other Christian groups who pour resources into their college outreach with multiple full-time staff, an attractive building with a welcoming environment, and vibrant programs. Others drift away from religious practice and find other groups, though loneliness and isolation remain significant factors in the lives of young people.⁶

In view of these realities, Catholic campus ministry has a momentous opportunity to respond to the signs of the time, meeting college students where they are and inviting them to grow deeper in their relationship with Jesus Christ. College provides the Church a unique moment to reach an enormous amount of young people who may have never heard the Gospel proclamation (*kerygma*) in its full power and beauty. It is the perfect time and place for mission and outreach and a vital time in students' lives, when most will form lifelong friendships and solidify their values and beliefs.

When a person encounters a vibrant, loving, Christ-centered community, the experience stands out and can be life-changing. Vibrant campus ministries create an atmosphere for students to encounter Jesus Christ and to be transformed in and through Him. They foster a community of disciples where friendships are formed and where bonds are forged to encourage a life of discipleship through prayer, fellowship, service, witness, and accountability. Campus ministries prepare students to live a vibrant Christian life in a secular society, and to respond generously to the vocation to which the Lord is calling them after graduation.

Campus Ministry in the Archdiocese of Atlanta: Where We Are

Aspects of Campus Ministry: The Archdiocese of Atlanta, like other dioceses around the country, has relied on the vision for campus ministry articulated in the bishops' document *Empowered by the Spirit: Campus Ministry Faces the Future*

⁵ Transitions mark the lives of young people and often form gaps in relationships, community, and ministry. See the USCCB's [Overview of the Realities Facing Youth and Young Adults in the United States](#) (2020).

⁶ See *The State of Religious & Young People 2020 - Catholic Edition: Relational Authority* (Springtide Research Institute).

(1985) and the six aspects of campus ministry identified therein.⁷ While the document is dated, it gives evidence to the enduring importance of a style of relational ministry and accompaniment (community), the mission of evangelization, and ongoing, comprehensive formation as hallmarks of campus ministry efforts. Additional areas that have been noted as needing attention today include obstacles to evangelization (e.g., relational wounds, addiction, etc.), the transitional aspect of campus ministry, and the cultivation of a culture of vocational discernment based on discipleship. The vision articulated in this current document—to be mission-oriented in service to the whole campus—reflects *Empowered by the Spirit's* acknowledgement of the role of the baptized on college campuses, who “are called not only to bring Christian witness to the academic world, but also to exercise their baptismal prerogatives by helping to build up the Church on campus.”⁸

Range of Models and Outreach: Every campus has its own unique set of circumstances, while many share similar challenges and opportunities. This is certainly the case in the Archdiocese of Atlanta. In addition, the archdiocese has a range of models of campus ministry, from center-based (Newman/Catholic Center) to parish-based to multi-campus (based on a center) to other hybrid arrangements, with inclusion of missionary organization participation (e.g., FOCUS) at some locations.⁹ Several campuses of smaller colleges or community colleges do not have a formal Catholic campus ministry outreach, relying on the nearest parish for sacraments and ministry support. Below is a list of campus ministry centers and the campuses the archdiocese currently serves:

- Catholic Center at UGA - Athens, GA
 - Serving the University of Georgia in Athens; UGA has multiple campuses
- GT Catholic (Georgia Tech Catholic Center) - Atlanta, GA
 - Serving Georgia Institute of Technology

⁷ (1) Forming the Faith Community; (2) Appropriating the Faith; (3) Forming the Christian Conscience; (4) Educating for Justice; (5) Facilitating Personal Development; and (6) Developing Leaders for the Future. These aspects would benefit from an updating of language as well as content to reflect more strongly the call for a new evangelization, an effective response to current cultural challenges, and areas in need of pastoral attention.

⁸ USCCB, *Empowered by the Spirit* (1985), no. 23.

⁹ For more information on these various models from a national perspective, see the USCCB Secretariat of Catholic Education's report *A National Study on Catholic Campus Ministry* (2018).

- Lyke House, The Catholic Center at AUC - Atlanta, GA
 - Serves Atlanta University Center [AUC] - Clark Atlanta University, Morehouse College, Spelman College - and Georgia State University
- University Catholic Center at Emory University - Atlanta GA
 - Serves Emory University, Oxford College (Emory @ Oxford), and Agnes Scott College as a ministry of the Southern Dominican Province
- The Catholic Center at KSU - Kennesaw, GA
 - Serves Kennesaw State University and Berry College (Mount Berry, GA); KSU also has a Marietta campus
- UNG Catholic Campus Ministry - Dahlonega, GA
 - Serves University of North Georgia; UNG has multiple campuses
 - Operating out of St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic Church, with a meeting space for campus ministry (College Room at St. Luke's)
- Campus Catholics at GCSU - Milledgeville, GA
 - Serves Georgia College and State University
 - Operating out of Sacred Heart Catholic Church, with a leased residential home for campus ministry
- The Catholic Center at UWG - Carrollton, GA
 - Serves University of West Georgia
 - Operating out of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church, with a leased residential home for campus ministry and land to build upon

Limited Resources, Much Potential: As is the case around the country, Catholic campus ministry centers in the archdiocese can find themselves challenged with limited personnel and resources. Some lack the presence of a full-time campus minister and the resources needed to offer comprehensive ministry and outreach. Some lack established alumni networks who can financially support the campus ministry. Others lack the capacity or training to promote independent, sustained-giving campaigns or to advance development in meaningful ways. Over the last several years, various campus ministries have benefitted from subsidies available through the Archdiocesan Annual Appeal. However, more stewardship and development strategy and assistance are needed. Over 2.2 million dollars are spent on campus ministry expenses in the archdiocese each year. More than half of that budget serves the ministries at University of Georgia and Georgia Tech, both of which are self-sustaining and do not currently rely on the Appeal though

ongoing support is needed. Other ministries rely solely or largely on the archdiocesan subsidy coming from the Appeal. More support is needed to secure stable ministry staff and advance growth in evangelization. At the same time, the archdiocese is blessed with capable leaders and opportunities to advance creative models to move campus ministry forward.

Various Phases or Stages of Campus Ministry: Archdiocesan campus ministries (or aspects thereof) could be categorized within the phases or stages of build, sustain, and grow. Some ministries are in a “build” phase where they physically need a building and/or are just beginning a more developed ministry outreach through a part-time or full-time campus minister. Other ministries may be in more of a “sustain” phase where they have achieved a certain level of staff and resource support to sustain ongoing ministry with some reliability. Others may be in a “grow” phase where they are expanding physically and/or seeing growth in the fruits of their ministry and in ongoing support from alumni and others. An ideal is to reach a level of sustainability that is also in a constant phase of growth in terms of impact and fruits, though there may be times when ministries are called to rebuild or build anew. These are not water-tight descriptions, but they can help in self-evaluations and strategic next steps.

Campus Ministry in the Archdiocese of Atlanta: Moving Forward

It is essential to remember that the Lord is alive and active on college campuses, and our role as ministry leaders is to listen to the Holy Spirit and follow where He leads. With that understanding, there are certain benchmarks that contribute to a healthy and vibrant campus ministry. Below are select benchmarks that should continue to guide our efforts as an archdiocese. How these benchmarks shape strategies and efforts depends very much on the profile and needs of each campus ministry. The archdiocese’s Office of Evangelization and Discipleship, in collaboration with other chancery offices, is committed to assisting campus ministries in taking next steps.

The Priority of Evangelization: Everything that a campus ministry is and does should be evaluated and discerned in light of the fundamental mission of evangelization and Pope Francis’ call for a “pastoral and missionary conversion

which cannot leave things as they presently are.”¹⁰ The call to missionary discipleship has various implications for campus ministry, some of which will be treated below. The key is to keep the goal in mind and to evaluate and make changes based on the goal of campus ministry mentioned above: *to make, mold, and mission* disciples of Jesus Christ on college campuses and to prepare them to live as missionary disciples after college.

Adequate Ministry Staff and Strong Leadership Culture: An ideal ministry staff team would include at least three, full-time employees:

- Chaplain
- Campus Minister
- Administrator/Office Manager

Obtaining this staffing could take a number of years and models may vary, but this is an ideal for which to strive. Staffing strategies and needs may differ depending on the campuses and communities served. In addition, the archdiocese wants to explore effective ways to advance discipleship and stewardship support that builds on the unique nature of a campus ministry and the alumni community it generates. For some campus ministries, a staff person dedicated to stewardship and development can assist greatly in advancing the mission of the ministry. At a minimum, the archdiocese wants to see a full-time campus minister (and/or chaplain) at all locations (and to explore ways to expand campus ministry to areas in need). Along with the paid ministry staff, there should be a student leadership team who serve in various capacities.

There are a variety of ways to develop and foster a strong and healthy leadership culture (among ministry staff and student leaders) that can then influence the larger community. Borrowing from *The Amazing Parish* philosophy,¹¹ campus ministry leaders, under the direction of the chaplain and/or campus minister, are encouraged to adapt the three building blocks of a culture of prayer, a culture of healthy teamwork and community, and a culture of active discipleship in ways that make sense for the staff team and for the student leadership team. In

¹⁰ EG, nos. 25 and 119-121. See also Directory for Catechesis, no. 297.

¹¹ See <https://amazingparish.org/>.

addition, fostering a culture of service and intercultural competence is vital for modeling Catholic leadership on campuses today.

- **Culture of Prayer** - Develop and foster a culture of intentional prayer as a leadership team that encourages a deeper culture of prayer among all whom the campus ministry reaches. Suggestions include:
 - Pray every day for staff, team, and the ministry
 - Begin and end all meetings with prayer, pray over decisions, and constantly ask the Holy Spirit to guide the team
 - Consider going to Mass as a team or doing a devotional prayer together
 - Include prayers for the ministry, for encounters with Christ, and for the transformation of lives in the Prayers of the Faithful at Sunday and daily Masses
 - Make individual commitments as team members: e.g., commit to personal prayer every day; attend daily Mass; pray with Scripture; read a spiritual book; seek spiritual direction; strive to receive the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation monthly

- **Culture of Healthy Teamwork and Community** - Develop and foster a culture of healthy teamwork among the leadership team that helps build a healthy community around the campus. There are various ways to nurture teamwork and collaboration. Expectations for staff will differ from those for student leaders, but still a teamwork approach modeled by the ministry staff team and adapted for the student leadership team can bear fruit for effective collaboration around a vision and strategy. Aspects of healthy teamwork include the following areas, taken from *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*,¹² which can be adapted to the various scenarios of campus ministry.
 - *Building Trust*: Team members who trust one another are comfortable being open and vulnerable with one another, in appropriate ways, about their mistakes, weaknesses, fears, and areas where they need help.
 - *Engaging Conflict*: When trust is present, teams are able to engage in healthy debate around ideas, issues, and decisions that must be made, without taking disagreements personally.

¹² Patrick Lencioni, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002).

- *Achieving Commitment:* The ability to engage conflict well and to provide meaningful input enables team members to buy into decisions that are made.
- *Embracing Accountability:* After commitment is established, healthy teams are willing to hold one another accountable, encouraging each other as well as calling out actions that are counterproductive to the mission of the team.
- *Focusing on Results:* Healthy teams focus on collective team results, not personal objectives or pursuits. In the ministry world, the focus would be especially centered on fruits that are being manifest and cultivated thanks to the work of the Holy Spirit.
- **Culture of Active Discipleship** - Develop and foster a culture of active discipleship that becomes a model for students to help them disciple each other and invite others to fellowship and to encounter the Lord Jesus. Examples include:
 - Sharing life together in Christ; sharing about one's faith journey and committing to intercessory prayer for one another
 - Intentionally investing in each other's lives; spending time together in fellowship over a meal; going on retreat together as a team
 - "As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you must also forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God." (Colossians 3:12-16)
- **Culture of Service and Intercultural Competence:** The archdiocese is committed to supporting ministry leaders in leadership development, continued coaching opportunities, and formation opportunities for ministry and student leaders. In addition to the building blocks noted above, attentiveness to various cultural families, formation in

intercultural competency (including further understanding of obstacles to evangelization such as racism), and formation in principles of leadership and service are opportunities for growth that can be enhanced through collaboration with other archdiocesan offices, Catholic Charities of Atlanta, the Catholic Campus Ministry Association (CCMA), and others.¹³ Service to others is a key way that young people contribute to the Church and the community, and young people modeling leadership as service to other young people is a vital witness. In addition, the cultural diversity of the Church in the Archdiocese of Atlanta and of our universities is a gift as well as a task to foster effective intercultural competence and intercultural ministry.

A Relational and Evangelizing Model of Campus Ministry: A strong and vibrant campus ministry center, living out the four building blocks above, needs a vision and strategy for *going out* and serving the campus with the Gospel and Christian charity. There are various ways for fostering relational and evangelizing outreach that meets people where they are and seeks to build trust and friendships. One effective way is the partnering of campus ministries with missionary organizations such as the Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS). The work of FOCUS is meant to complement and nourish the work of a campus ministry center. FOCUS is currently present on three campuses in the archdiocese. A goal is to increase the presence of FOCUS where possible and feasible to assist the evangelizing mission of our campus ministries. The archdiocese is also open to other partnerships that foster evangelizing models.

Stewardship for the Sake of Mission: As every ministry in the Church needs to be mission-oriented, it is also clear that resources of time, talent, and treasure are necessary. Campus ministries, in particular, are in need of support, given that many do not have existing, long-term communities, active alumni networks, or independent and sustained sources of giving. Others may have more potential to advance effective stewardship and development strategies and efforts but need guidance and assistance. The Archdiocesan Annual Appeal is a major source of funding for several campus ministries, and it remains a concrete way that the

¹³ See, for example, the campus ministry recommendations contained in the *Proceedings & Conclusions of the V National Encuentro of Hispanic/Latino Ministry* (Washington, DC: USCCB, 2019), 85-86. Leadership formation opportunities for both professional ministers and students are available through various organizations.

People of God in the archdiocese contribute directly to the ministry and evangelizing mission with young people. However, further stewardship strategy is needed to build, sustain, and grow our campus ministries.

The archdiocese is committed to investing time, effort, and resources, where possible, to advance a stewardship strategy for campus ministry diocesan-wide. At the same time, individual campus ministries should also evaluate their current status and take next steps to advance stewardship and development efforts as well. For some, this may involve developing an active alumni list and network. For others, it may involve reaching out to friends and supporters of the community. The first request should always be for prayer and for ways that the campus ministry can continue to pray for the needs of its alumni. The primacy of grace and prayer is central to stewardship. Particular ministries may continue to need more significant assistance through the Archdiocesan Appeal or other archdiocesan efforts. The archdiocese wants to be especially attentive to campus ministries that are in a build phase and/or are in need of full-time campus ministry support, in addition to ministries with more limited access to other means of support. Campus ministries that have been traditionally dependent on the Appeal in certain areas but who are able to advance in development efforts can then open up opportunities for other campus ministries in need of further support from the Appeal.

The archdiocese will continue collaborating with Petrus Development and others to explore strategies to advance diocesan-wide and, where possible, campus ministry-specific stewardship and development. In addition, the Office of Evangelization and Discipleship, with the Offices of Finance and Stewardship, will continue to monitor and offer direction about areas where reduced dependence upon the Appeal may be advisable, with the hope of helping more campus ministries in the build-phase. The key is that the archdiocese wants to find ways to increase overall support for campus ministry to help it grow and thrive. With God's grace, the generosity of the people of God in the Archdiocese of Atlanta has continued to make campus ministry in north Georgia not only possible but also set on a trajectory of growth.

Minding the Transitional Gaps: Transitions are a big part of the lives of youth and young adults. In general, ministries in the Church have struggled to collaborate in

offering a clear path of discipleship. More collaboration and communication among parish youth ministries and Catholic high schools with college campus ministries can assist the transition from high school to college. The archdiocese is committed to continuing to collaborate with Newman Ministry to foster the connection of incoming college students to campus ministry life. As young adults leave college, more collaboration among campus ministries and parishes, especially young adult ministries, is important. The archdiocese, through GenerationATL.org, is committed to continuing to promote young adult ministries and leadership and to assist parishes in their ministry to and with young adults in their communities. Helping with vocational discernment during and after campus ministry is also a significant way to guide transitions, particularly if grounded in the baptismal call to holiness and discipleship, which is the basis for all other calls that the Lord offers (e.g., whether discernment of marriage, priesthood, or religious life, or one's work or form of service, etc.).

Effective and Fruitful Ministry: Love God, love others, and serve the campus. This phrase captures both the mission and the process of creating disciples. At times, the busyness of the “doing” of campus ministry can distract attention from the goal of fostering an encounter with Jesus. *Encounter Jesus and live as His disciples.* Every function, event, program, Bible study, and so forth, should be evaluated, as noted above, with that goal in mind, and viewed through that lens. But the question remains: What does effective and fruitful campus ministry look like? Campus ministry leaders themselves are best suited to discern and answer that question for their particular communities on campus. Having said that, there are a few elements that thriving campus ministries have in common, namely engaged and passionate clergy and other ministry leaders, Mass and the sacraments, fellowship opportunities, Bible studies, and retreats. In particular, allowing the Lord to speak to students through His Word (and through Eucharistic adoration) is vital, and retreats give students a chance to step away from the noise and distractions in their normal routines.¹⁴ Therefore, a concerted effort should be made to incorporate these elements into campus ministry. Below are additional aspects that assist an effective and fruitful ministry.

¹⁴ Bible studies are a key dimension of FOCUS's relational and evangelizing outreach. The importance of retreats for young adults was highlighted in a focus group study of young adults in the Archdiocese of Atlanta in 2017 by the McGrath Institute for Church Life, University of Notre Dame.

- *Identity and Belonging:* Maintaining a strong Catholic identity, where a sense of belonging is constantly nurtured, is vital in a campus ministry. “By this all people will know that you are my disciples: if you have love for one another” (John 13:35). When the Catholic/Newman Center is a place where people can gather and “do life” together—where there truly is a sense of authenticity and vulnerability, and where people treat each other with dignity and offer forgiveness—this alone attracts others to come and see what is different. The building blocks of a culture of prayer, teamwork, and discipleship contribute organically to this atmosphere, especially as they nurture an atmosphere of trust and authenticity. Greek life on campuses illustrates the natural need for belonging in students, and when possible, the Catholic Center is located near the fraternity and sorority houses or other places where community life is occurring. A paradigm shift needs to be made, where involvement in the Catholic Center is not viewed as strange or unusual but rather highlights the fullness of being human and living in fraternity with other students. Life in Christ is what students are seeking; unfortunately few understand this. Christian disciples with a desire to share the Gospel will organically meet other students. If they are living intentionally, situations will arise where they can offer them a different world view and show them a different way to live. But first, relationships must be formed, and trust earned.
- *Leading with Beauty:* The transcendentals of truth, beauty, and goodness, realized perfectly in God Himself, encourage campus ministries to strive for excellence in all that they do. In particular, the role of inviting, attracting, and proposing, especially when it comes to building relationships and introducing students to a deeper encounter with Jesus Christ and to the truth of the Gospel, is a key aspect of campus ministry life. Leading with beauty where applicable, e.g., through a social media platform to connect and reach current students where they are or through Eucharistic adoration with beautiful music and silence, is especially important today.
- *Outreach:* Outreach and relational engagement can be done according to the natural rhythms of college life, with awareness of short-term and long-term strategies. In the short-term, many collegiate professionals have noted that the first seventy-two (72) hours on campus usually determine whether a student will continue in their faith or not. Preparing for these

first 72 hours is important, and tools such as the Newman Connect app and gathering the names and contact info of incoming students can help. In the long-term, campus ministry should be involved with as many aspects of college life as possible, e.g., intramural sports, homecoming, student government, football games, formals, fraternity life, and so forth. These areas all provide opportunities for evangelization, outreach, and service. The college campus is the missionary disciple's mission field. The hard work of going out, meeting people, and building relationships is a must for campus ministry. As important as communication efforts are, we cannot expect students to come because they saw a nice poster or social media post. Partnering with missionary organizations like FOCUS help significantly.

Growth and Measuring "Success": Growth on campus occurs through spiritual multiplication, starting with the chaplain/campus minister discipling staff, staff discipling the student leadership team, student leaders discipling students, and students discipling each other. Quantifying and measuring "success" in ministry is difficult. Often, success is measured by how many people attend an event or participate in the ministry, or how many donations are received. While such metrics do offer some data to evaluate marketing effectiveness, the quality of events, and community support, they do not serve as a clear gauge for measuring the conversion of one's heart. "Success" in ministry is more about fruitfulness. What fruits are we seeing? Helpful questions to be asked revolve more around the vision and goal of campus ministry. Is there a culture of prayer? Is there a culture of healthy teamwork? Is there a culture of discipleship? Is there an atmosphere of authenticity and vulnerability? Are efforts being made among students to love one another, to forgive one another? Are students actively seeking the sacraments? Is there a hunger for the Eucharist and for Confession? Are students loving God, loving others, and serving their campus?

Key Collaborators and Resources

Promoting and implementing an effective vision for campus ministry requires collaboration and support from ministries and organizations inside and outside the Archdiocese. Below are current resources and collaborators, and the

Archdiocese continues to be open to new opportunities and support that may arise.

Archdiocese of Atlanta: First and foremost among collaborators and co-workers in the vineyard are all the campus ministries themselves. The Archdiocese's Office of Evangelization and Discipleship, Office of Finance, Office of Stewardship, and other collaborating offices, as well as the Catholic Foundation of North Georgia, support campus ministries. The Archdiocese, through the Office of Evangelization and Discipleship (OED), is committed to continuing to foster networking opportunities among all the campus ministries. OED will continue to provide monthly coaching, or "Mastermind" groups, with campus ministry leaders in order to provide ongoing training and to discuss best practices. OED also envisions hosting an annual leadership retreat for campus ministry leaders and their student leadership teams, in order to cast the vision of creating a community of students with a culture of prayer, healthy teamwork, and discipleship who see their campus as a mission field. OED will continue to be a resource to assist in all areas of campus ministry from speaking at events, to retreat planning, and all areas in between. OED also envisions further collaboration with the Office of Intercultural Ministries and the Office of Life, Dignity, and Justice in order to understand and address unique challenges within our ethnic and racial minority communities, especially the issue of racism as an obstacle to evangelization, and to advance intercultural competence. OED also envisions collaboration with the Office of Vocations in fostering a culture of discipleship and vocational discernment and looks forward to exploring further opportunities where Catholic Charities of Atlanta and other organizations can provide resources, service opportunities, and leadership formation for campus ministries.

FOCUS: The Fellowship of Catholic University Students works hand in hand with campus ministry centers to create a vibrant environment and culture of discipleship. FOCUS missionaries are dedicated to working with students and to discipling them. As they are not constrained by classes or work, missionaries spend their time investing in students. No matter which phase or stage a campus ministry finds itself (Build, Sustain, Grow), it can be continually using the FOCUS model of Win, Build, Send with students. The archdiocese looks forward to

continuing to collaborate and expand collaboration with FOCUS, keeping in mind the circumstances of each campus community.

CCMA: The archdiocese encourages campus ministry leaders to join the Catholic Campus Ministry Association. CCMA provides campus ministry leaders with professional training, support, and networking opportunities with other campus ministry leaders around the country. Please contact OED for further information.

Petrus Development: OED continues to collaborate with Petrus Development and will seek ways to advance a strategy with the Offices of Stewardship, Mission Advancement, and other collaborators for effective stewardship and development to advance campus ministry in the archdiocese.

Newman Ministry: Newman Ministry remains a helpful resource with significant potential in connecting incoming college students to their campus ministries. OED will promote the Newman Connect app and encourage all campus ministries to make use of the app as a way to connect and communicate with incoming and existing students.

Conclusion

“There is a pressing need to frame everything in terms of evangelization, as the fundamental principle that guides ecclesial activity as a whole.”¹⁵

May this vision for campus ministry in the Archdiocese of Atlanta contribute to advancing the work of evangelization on all our college and university campuses.

To all our campus ministry leaders, supporters, and friends: Thank you for your ministry, prayers, and sacrifices.

To all the People of God in the Archdiocese of Atlanta: Please pray for our campus ministry leaders and all college students, faculty, and staff, and consider how you might support campus ministry in the archdiocese by your time, talent, and/or treasure.

Come Holy Spirit!

¹⁵ Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization, *Directory for Catechesis* (Washington, DC: USCCB, 2020), no. 297.