



St. Mary's Catholic Campus Ministry
at Stephen F. Austin State University



JUNE 2016

ST. MARY'S @ SFA NEWS

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

My Dear Friends in Christ,

As the middle of summer approaches, I hope you all are enjoying the Texas sunshine, with it's advantage that we don't have to start a fire to BBQ, because the sidewalk and the hood of our cars are quite hot enough! I hope you are also able to find a little time for rest and relaxation and also time for reflection on how you might help build up God's kingdom, particularly in our family here at St. Mary's Catholic Campus Ministry.

I wish to thank our outgoing Campus Minister, Jodi Phillips, for all of her leadership, hard work, dedication and creativity in building up the Kingdom of God. Her contributions have played a large part in the great group of leaders which have been formed and trained and I have experienced during my time here. I only anticipate more great leaders from our group of wonderful students from the foundations which have been built during Jodi's three years at St. Mary's.



Now my greatest desire, with the help of our dedicated students, is to carry out a mission of "spiritual multiplication"- to bring our friends to be friends with Jesus. This brings to mind one of our recent Gospel readings, the story of the paralytic being brought on a stretcher by his friends to Jesus. Thanks to the faith his friends had in Jesus, the man's life was changed forever! The great thing is we, ourselves, also have the opportunity to bring our friends into friendship with Jesus and to have them experience His healing and peace in their lives. One of the best ways of doing this is take an active part in RCIA- bring your friends and even be a sponsor. The greatest gift you can give your friends is the gift of the wholeness and joy that a relationship with Jesus brings.

Now, my staff and I are reviewing plans for the upcoming academic year and I believe it will be another year with more exciting activities and more opportunities to build up the Kingdom of God and grow in our relationships with Him.

I would also like to thank our benefactors. Because of their great generosity we have been able to carry out the renovations on our Chapel and create a more prayerful atmosphere for all to worship our Savior.

So let us enjoy this season of sunshine, but also contemplate how God may be calling us to build up His Kingdom, particularly by bringing our friends into a relationship with Him.

May God bless y'all abundantly!
Father D

Not Goodbye – See Ya Around

About 6 weeks ago, toward the end of the Easter Season, we read a passage from the Acts of the Apostles that deeply struck my heart. As St. Paul completes his third (and final) missionary journey, he passes by Ephesus and addresses the elders a final time before he returns to Jerusalem. "So be vigilant," St. Paul tells these elders, "and remember that for three years, night and day, I unceasingly admonished each of you with tears" (Acts 30:31). As my time at St. Mary's Catholic Campus Ministry came to a close, I was constantly reminded of this passage. While I cannot begin to compare myself to St. Paul in many ways, I immediately connected to his farewell to Ephesus in such a simple way. Three years. St. Paul was with the people of Ephesus for three years, and I was with all of you at St. Mary's for three years. It seems like such a short time to have spent with such incredible people, but for me, as it was for St. Paul, it was life changing. For three years I have loved the young men and women of SFA; I have laughed with them, prayed with them, and even cried with them (and for them!). For three years I have shared all that I knew of Christ, while constantly learning yet more of his infinite love and mercy from the students and community who surround the ministry.



It is, indeed, with a sorrowful heart that I leave the community at St. Mary's; and yet, once again like St. Paul, I know that I am "compelled by the Spirit" to be serving the young men and women of UT Tyler at John Paul the Great Catholic Campus Ministry. I am overjoyed to remain in the Diocese of Tyler and know that I will still see many familiar faces through our joined efforts in sharing the Gospel of Christ with the people of East Texas. The Lord knew that I need to remain close to all of you!

I want to thank all of you for all of the ways you have supported me these past three years - your kindness and prayers have been infinitely fruitful in my own life, as well as the lives of all the students we served at St. Mary's. I ask that you continue to pray for me and all of the great evangelization efforts in our diocese; know that you will continue to be in my own prayers. "And now," to once again use the beautiful words of St. Paul, "I commend you to God and to that gracious word of his that can build you up and give you the inheritance among all who are consecrated (Acts 20:32)."



The SFA FOCUS Team 2016/2017

We FOCUS missionaries at Stephen F Austin State University have been hard at work preparing for the 2016-2017 academic year. At the beginning of July, we found ourselves returning home from a month in Ave Maria, Florida for New Staff Training. During this time, we received top notch training from Catholic leaders like Dr. Scott Hahn, Dr. Johnathan Reyes, Dr. Edward Sri and Curtis Martin (our CEO and founder). We received the formation necessary to bring Christ to college campuses across the nation. We also met our new team for the coming year.

Dorian Arellano and Megan Callaghan will be returning for another year at SFA. The two new additions to the team are 2nd year Herman Cornejo and 1st year Amanda Graves. Herman and Amanda are both Texas natives hailing from the Dallas area. The remainder of our summer will be spent raising our support, planning for the coming year, and praying and fasting for the students of SFA. We look forward to this being the most fruitful year SFA and St. Mary's have seen yet!



