



BENGAL CATHOLICS NEWSLETTER





THE YEAR IN REVIEW

This time last year, our campus ministry was operating in the virtual realm - Masses, hangouts, bible studies, etc. We had just concluded Holy Week, the Triduum, and Easter Sunday without being able to attend in-person. Though we kept our chins up, it was clear that we needed to adopt safe & sensible measures so that our mission of evangelizing the Idaho State campus could thrive in the Fall.

This year, St. John's has experienced growth in ways beyond our own expectations. Our Mass attendance, mostly students, has been on the rise nearly weekly. We welcomed 4 people into the Church with 4 more already planning on being received next year. Our leadership team has increased to 12 students! The Holy Spirit is surely moving here at St. John's.



Even with our campus minister, David, undergoing cancer treatment, we didn't miss a beat when it came to ministering to students at ISU. We still hosted Monday Lunch & Grilled Cheese Wednesday. We shared the faith at our Dinner & Discussions and even introduced a new event on Fridays - Swing Dancing!

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

I want to tell you about 2 students who, God-willing, will become fully initiated members of the Catholic Church next Easter. I'm omitting their names for their privacy.

Our first student joined us at the beginning of the Spring semester. We happened to encounter him out the front of St. John's as we were handing out hot chocolate. We invited him to come join us that night for our dinner & discussion. He arrived early with Bible in hand. Before the event, he told me about how he had been going to a local Bible church in Pocatello and had decided the previous day to attend their campus ministry. He had a negative experience and was refreshed by the openness of St. John's to embrace someone who may hold differing beliefs. He came to Mass that Sunday and, with 2 of our FOCUS missionaries, that Wednesday attended the other campus ministry again. It didn't get better the second time round, so much so that he went back to the leader and said "You might not have lead me to Catholicism but you've definitely driven me to St. John's." He has been coming to RCIA and all other St. John's activities ever since.

The second student I'd like to highlight is a Pocatello native, a freshman. Raised as a lapsed LDS, he found community in the Fall with another Christian group. They baptized him in Bear Lake in October. We hosted an ecumenical event in February which he, and his group, attended. This chance encounter

inspired this young man to research Catholicism. His appetite for Catholicism became so ardent that he started to show up to every event - lunches, dinners, Mass, bible study - to the point where we actually started a new event to engage him further. 'Inquiry' started in March because of his desire to ask questions about Catholicism. More of our non-Catholic students have started to attend this group because the forum is simply oriented around 'What questions do you want to ask?' and discussion flows from that point.

We feel so fortunate to have these, and all our other students, striving to grow in faith, love, and community with the Lord & each other.

THE TEAM AT ST. JOHN'S

Fr. Costance has been an absolute rock for our community. He approaches everything with a spirit of humility and joy which spreads to every person he encounters. It is such a blessing to see the way in which he engages with students, whether it be in ping pong or at the pool table, his homilies and blessings, or through simply greeting students as they stop by the Center. He is definitely well loved by all the students.

Our FOCUS missionaries have worked hard all year to invest deeply in the students that they encounter on campus and at the Center. Their efforts have not gone unrewarded with



students responding positively to invitations into authentic friendship and formation as missionary disciples. We now have 12 students in positions of leadership at St. John's! We also bid farewell to two of our missionaries - Kelly & Lucy. Lucy is leaving us to join the Nashville Dominicans. Kelly isn't going far - he'll be remaining in Pocatello with Gabriella, his soon-to-be wife. We wish them all the best.

Lastly, thank you to everyone who has been praying for our campus minister, David O'Neill, as he underwent chemotherapy for cancer this past year. Your care and support for him and his family has been greatly appreciated.

Have a great Summer, and we look forward to welcoming the community back with our first Mass of the semester on Sunday, August 1st. We hope to see as many of you there as possible. **- Your Bengal Catholic Family**



SUPPORT CAMPUS MINISTRY

STRENGTHEN THE FAITH OF THE
YOUNG CHURCH

St. John's continues to exceed its own expectations when it comes to helping students encounter Christ and to live for Him daily. With this growth, we experience an even greater need for financial support.

To continue to meet the needs of current and future students at ISU, St. John's needs to build a support team of at least **100 individuals donating \$30/month (or more)**. Would you consider donating \$1 a day to strengthen the faith of the young Church?

Please know that your gift is directly impacting lives and making a difference. More students have had their lives changed through this important ministry. Your gift helps fund the following:

- Our chaplain, Fr. Costance.
- The FOCUS Missionaries.
- The campus ministry budget needed to host activities, meals, & formation.

Your gift does more than just keep the doors open, the lights on, and the heat going. It brings students into relationship with Christ and directs their lives towards a new horizon of being His disciples in the world today.

Thank you for prayerfully considering becoming a supporter of our Bengal Catholics community. We appreciate the opportunity to partner with you in this mission of strengthening the faith of the young Church. If you would like to talk more about how St. John's is impacting Idaho State University, please don't hesitate to reach out to David O'Neill at (208) 406-2290 or email director@bengalcatholics.com.



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