

Campus Ministry Notes

“Building the Dominican Spirit”

Dominican University of California, San Rafael, CA 94901

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CELEBRATING OUR NEW SPACE! ST. CATHERINE BENINCASA CHAPEL SIENA CENTER

After years of waiting, planning, working, fund raising, and dreaming, the dilapidated Edgell building has now come back to life as the Dominican Heritage and Alumni Building. The chipped, faded facade is gone, to be replaced by a bright building that has truly become a beacon on the hill! If you had the privilege of seeing the building over the Christmas season, you would realize just how beautiful the building “glowed” at night with all the lights turned on brightening the surrounding darkness.

For Campus Ministry, this is a dream come true. The dream of having a “campus chapel” goes back farther than many realize. As early as 1923, Mother Mary Louis O’Connell was raising money for a chapel. Time and circumstances dictated that smaller chapels be erected in the existing dormitories of the time. In 1990, after the fire and destruction of the Dominican Sisters original Motherhouse, the need for a worship space was filled by using a space in Pennafort Hall. In 1999, Sr. Samuel Conlan rekindled the dream of a dedicated campus spiritual center. Through the help of countless numbers of alumni, trustees, Dominican staff, and administrators, the dream was finally realized this fall with the formal blessing and dedication of the St. Catherine Benincasa Chapel in the newly refurbished Edgell building.

This issue shares with you the highlights of that moment—and is a thank you for each and every one who, in your own personal way, enabled this project to come to completion.

Thus we celebrate the *dreams* and *hopes* that have been fulfilled and shine a light on the future Campus Ministry opportunities that are now available to Dominican students, faculty, staff and alumni.



“Midnight Run” found Dominican students going into San Francisco to deliver food and personal items to the homeless on the streets late at night.



“Get-Away” days were held for first year students to help them build community amongst themselves. Here students enjoy Paradise Cove during a break in the day.



“Trick or Treat for Canned Goods” found students out collecting food for the Marin Food Bank. Over 800 pounds of food was collected from our Dominican neighbors.



“Commuter Lunches” proved to be a popular event for non-resident students. Gathering in the new Siena Center (Campus Ministry gathering space), off-campus students were able to connect with one another and the Campus Ministry staff.



“The Liturgical Choir” saw a marked growth in the last few years, thanks to the able direction of Lianni Castro, Campus Minister and Director of Music. The choir provided contemporary sounds for Sunday liturgies and special occasions on campus, such as Mass of the Holy Spirit, blessing of Edgell Mansion, and the annual Baccalaureate Mass held at St. Raphael’s Church.



Retreats were a popular event during the year, especially when they were held at the Dominican Sisters’ beach houses. Here a group of students share the view during a retreat held at the Dominican Sisters’ house in Santa Cruz.

ST. CATHERINE BENINCASA CHAPEL AND VERITAS SPIRITUALITY CENTER

A DREAM BECOMES A REALITY!



Bishop Robert McElroy blessing the congregation during the Dedication Ritual.

On December 7, 2010, years of work found its completion in the dedication and blessing of the St. Catherine Benincasa Chapel and Veritas Spirituality Center. Newly appointed San Francisco Auxiliary Bishop Robert McElroy presided over the ceremony.

The new chapel is named after the Dominican saint and Doctor of the Church, St. Catherine Benincasa of Siena. The spirit of St. Catherine's writings and life inspires people of all ages to become contemplative activists who embody love of God and love of neighbor in their lives. She is remembered for both her deep contemplative practices and passionate service of the poor and neighbor. She counseled and gave spiritual direction to those who sought her out—known for her deep respect for each person. She is also known as being one of the major church reformers who spoke

out with a clarity during a time when the church was in deep crisis.

In his homily, Bishop McElroy began by relating a situation that occurred in Rwanda during the civil war which led to genocide in the region. In one particular village, the people fled to the church as the only place of refuge during armed conflict in the town. In a very moving story, Bishop McElroy related how the pastor of the church wanted to insure that the story of the town would be told to the world, but that he, too, must stay with the people of the village, eventually being slain in the massacre. The story related how that space in the African village was similar to the space on the campus of Dominican University—it is truly a place where one can find refuge from the

“This place is a place of refuge, where students can come for comfort, care, uplift, and reflection on their lives at that moment.” *Bishop Robert McElroy*

various storms and hardships in life, as well as a place that can uplift the spirit and bring comfort and peace to those who seek a presence of the divine in their lives and hearts.

As part of the ceremony, Bishop McElroy anointed the new altar and the walls of the Chapel, signifying their special character in our search for the greater good.

Following the Mass, a reception was held

in Legacy Hall and the Garden Room, during which many of the supporters and donors to the Chapel project were thanked for their continued support. It was announced during the event that the \$8 million cost of renovating the Edgehill building had been reached, and had gone over its goal!

Community Partnerships

With the new chapel coming on-line, Campus Ministry continues to endeavor to bring more opportunities for spirituality offerings to members of the campus community. One way that we are able to do this is by partnering with various groups in the larger community. We have developed arrangements where various religious groups can use the Veritas Spirituality Center while opening their services to members of the campus. We now have several Buddhist groups meeting during the week, along with Sufi, Muslim groups, and the Marin Friends (Quakers).

Thanks to grants obtained from several sources, we are also able to provide students with “Mindfulness” seminars—helping students to take time to reflect and meditate during the week, which allows them to find more balance in their academic and social situations.

These and other programs continue to develop, all helping to make St. Catherine Benincasa Chapel and Veritas Spirituality Center the “refuge” for the campus.



SIENA CENTER
NEW HOME FOR CAMPUS MINISTRY



BASIC Bible group meets in the Siena Center on the second floor of Edgehill.

One of the greatest needs for a campus ministry program is a “home” where activities can take place during the school year. The new Edgehill building provided that space in the “Siena Center” on the second floor of the building. The name was given to the space by students, as a way to compliment the name of the Chapel which is below the Center.

The Center includes a large room and a small kitchen—which has become the hub of student gatherings since its opening in November. The center provides a “hominess” for students who need a space to meet with friends, relax between classes, or a haven from the confines of a dormitory room. It is not unusual to smell the scent of freshly made brownies or cookies coming from the kitchen at any



time of the day.

Various groups have been found in the Center as the year progressed. In addition to the many Campus Ministry activities that take place, other groups such as the E.L.S. Bible study, the International Club, the Green MBA students, the Latino Club, the First Generation College Student Group, and the Green Club have used its space as well.

Campus Ministry began a series of “Commuter Lunches,” in which commuter students are invited to come together at lunch time for a meal and to meet one another. They share some of their “off-campus” experiences and provide support for one another in various ways.

One of the more interesting items found in the Siena Center is a quilted mosaic that hangs above the fireplace. Over the past several years, students on retreats have made their own “personal” shield. These shields were collected and representative shields were given to Sue Kajawa, wife of Education Dean Ed Kajawa. Sue took the shields and quilted them together into the beautiful piece that now adorns the Siena Center. Not only do classes share their “class shield,” but students can enter into the Dominican experience by creating their own personal shield.

STUDENTS INVOLVED IN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT



Students join with Sr. Carla and Lianni Castro at St. Joseph’s University, Philadelphia, in the Campus Ministry Leadership Institute.

Thanks to generous donations, Campus Ministry was able to send nine of our students to Leadership Development workshops at the end of the academic year. Fr. Bob Haberman accompanied three students to Dominican University in River Forest, IL for the “Preaching in Action Confer-

ence” of the 17 U.S. Dominican colleges and universities. Sr. Carla Kovack and Lianni Castro led six Dominican students through a “Leadership Team Development” process at the Campus Ministry Leadership Institute, sponsored by the US Catholic Bishops, at St. Joseph’s University, Philadelphia.

As a result of the workshops, a group of Campus Ministry students will form the *Siena Leadership Team*, which will coordinate and implement the following areas: 1) Programming; 2) Communications; 3) Social Justice and Outreach; 4) Liturgical Ministry; 5) Education/Interfaith/Reflection; 6) ASDU representation; 7) Community Representation; and 8) Team Development. Excited by the new team approach, students look forward to inviting new and existing students to join in our programs.

**CAMPUS MINISTRY:
CAN YOU SUPPORT OUR
STUDENTS?**

Like all small, private educational institutions, Dominican is feeling the effects of the current economic crisis. Not only does this affect the programming of co-curricular programs, but it also has a profound effect on the ability of students to continue to remain at the University. Campus Ministry is not immune to this situation; we are very aware of the need to be conservative with our funding during this period. However, we also realize that we need to do what we can to remain a viable program, and to be of assistance to our students in any way we can.

Campus Ministry has been offering scholarships to students who then work as “peer ministers” with other students. Many times, the \$2,000 scholarship can make the difference between staying at Dominican or transferring to a state institution. We are hopeful that in the coming year we will be able to offer more scholarships than in the past. Below, you will see some additional needs. Any assistance you can provide will be extremely appreciated.

- **Scholarship** for a student “Peer Minister” (annual cost \$2,000)
- **Scholarship** for student to attend a national conference (average cost \$750)
- **Scholarship** to cover the cost of off-campus service trips, retreats and leadership programs. (average cost per student \$100 to \$500)
- **Purchase** Bibles, spiritual reading, supplies, food for “starving students”. (any amount will be appreciated)

Any and all gifts are appreciated. Please send gifts to:

*Campus Ministry Restricted Fund
Office of Advancement
50 Acacia Avenue
San Rafael, CA 94901*

(Please Note: We are **required** to have a specific Campus Ministry project/program noted on the donation for it to be used as you specify.

ST. CATHERINE BENINCASA CHAPEL STAINED GLASS WINDOW



Elizabeth Devereaux '65 created the chapel window, seen here at dusk.



When Elizabeth Devereaux met with a group of Dominican alumni, faculty, staff, and students to design a window for the new Chapel, she found the group had studied the writings of St. Catherine of Siena prior to their gathering. The committee shared with one another their thoughts about the power and movement that came from her mystical experiences of the divine. Putting those experiences into a concept design was

“an experience of a life-time.” The window represents the “Light of the Spirit,” an abstract theme that speaks to the Catholic chapel and the interdenominational space adjacent to it. Curved, the glass is hand blown German flashed red on amber, and white shaded on clear. A design pattern of iconic Mt. Tamalpais is painted with 24 karat gold luster and kiln-fired. The gold pattern is reflective at night as well as day, giving the window an aliveness at all times of day. Hand made bev-els articulate the movement of light and the Spirit—which continues the theme of movement throughout.

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