



The College Experience

Bound, Beyond & Back

Bound—The Pre-College Experience

Prepare high school juniors & seniors for their college campus experience.

- ◆ Invite College Campus Ministers, students and / or parents for a **“Getting Ready for College”** Parish Presentation. Topics could include: what is a Newman Center, finances, how to find community, relationships, and prayer
- ◆ **Catholic Campus Ministry Association**
www.ccmanet.org (go to the “Getting Ready for College” tab)
- ◆ **The Center for Parent & Youth Understanding** (visit the College Transition Initiative)
www.cpyu.org/page.aspx?id=103729
Website includes articles, student interviews, and possible topics for gathered and non-gathered experiences
- ◆ **The Institute for Youth Ministry @ Princeton**
Podcast: *College Transition from Brad Griffin*
www3.ptsem.edu/offices/coned/iym/Podcast/
- ◆ **Catholic and College Bound: 5 Challenges and 5 Opportunities** by Fr. George Szewes (ACTA Publications: Skokie, 2008)
- ◆ Provide a panel discussion of “experienced” parents for those sending students off to college

Super Send Off to College—

- ◆ Consider a blessing during mass and incorporating students going to college into your general intercessions. Invite students to a picnic at the rectory in mid August.
- ◆ “Buddy up” a college student and a member of your parish council, choir, youth group or any volunteers who would like to keep in touch over the semester (the first two weeks of college is the most important time for new college students)
- ◆ Find out school or other e-mail addresses that the college students plan to check while they are away. Find out their snail mail addresses too! Consider sending occasional emails with the bulletin attached or an email from the pastor.
- ◆ Consider podcasting music or homilies from your parish that young adults may download from the parish website, Facebook page or be attached to an email.
- ◆ **Graduations: Beginnings & Endings**
Resources may be found in
Youth Ministry Access—Gathered Event for Seniors
www.youthministryaccess.com
Milestones Ministry Manual—High School Graduation (The Youth & Family Institute, Bloomington, MN, 2007)

Beyond—The “At-College” Experience (Away or Not)

While they are “away”:

- Pray for them regularly, both as a community and as a “buddy”.
- Have “buddies”, members of the pastoral staff or parents send them prayers & blessings by email, Facebook, or text.
- Ask them to send information on what’s happening at their college—you never know when a great idea might pop up that would translate to the parish.
- Consider sending a care package with snacks, holy cards, personal notes of encouragement from parishioners and the pastor. This could be a service project for a youth group or a ministry of the parish. It would help teens see that the community will support them while they are away too!
- Connect or sponsor students on an alternative service spring or winter break. There may even be a way to connect the parish to this mission by collecting items needed for the area.



When they come back on break:

- ◆ Host welcome back activities or blessings around Thanksgiving, Christmas or spring or summer breaks
- ◆ Recognize college students at Mass and invite them to a coffee hour or sundae social to welcome them home.
- ◆ Invite them to speak with youth of your parish about what it's like to be a Catholic on campus.
- ◆ Ask them to speak with the parish council or relevant committees about ideas and events happening at the campus that might transfer to the parish.
- ◆ Over the summer offer opportunities to connect college students from your parish with each other.
- ◆ Invite students to be involved in liturgical and service ministries during break times

- ◆ Include the needs of college students seasonally in the prayers of the faithful (exams, breaks, graduations)
- ◆ Offer retreats or opportunities for faith sharing during the breaks

Local Resource People

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Back— The Post College Experience

Recognize College Graduation

- ◆ Publish names of graduates in the bulletin and/or website with their major and College
- ◆ Organize “career” soirees with parishioners in the “field” where new graduates can meet others.
- ◆ Offer a workshop on interview skills and getting a job

Parish Welcome

Is the parish website welcoming, easily navigated and updated for anyone who visits it? (Ask for feedback from the diversity of your parish)

Are greeters & parish “gatekeepers” trained to welcome new people

Registering in the parish? - Can our community cultivate an atmosphere of belonging?

New to the neighborhood?

Young adult rich areas may include apartments, coffee houses, happy hours, gyms, grocery stores, and laundry mats

Design welcome fliers with Mass times

Ministry Fairs & Discernment of Gifts

Does our parish encourage new and regular involvement of all ages in liturgical, service and educational ministries?

Open House for College Seniors

Think about inviting almost graduates to a special parish event

Pertinent Articles & Books

Catholic young adults seek transition in parishes

Jean Denton
The Catholic Virginian, 10/19/2009
www.catholicvirginian.org

Googling God: The Religious Landscape of People in the 20s and 30s

Mike Hayes (Paulist Press, 2007)

Seeds of Hope: Young Adults and the Catholic Church in the United States

Tim Muldoon (Paulist Press, 2008)

The Basic Guide to Young Adult Ministry

John C. Cusick & Katherine F. DeVries (Orbis Books, 2001)

