



Building Faith | Inspiring Hope | Igniting Change

Campus Ministry Outreach Opportunity

An Evangelization Tool to Support the Transition from Youth Ministry to Campus Ministry

Summary: The Newman Connection has once again approached Catholic Extension with a generous offer, which Catholic Extension has agreed to communicate to all of the mission dioceses. The Newman Connection provides a service to dioceses, free of charge, that involves no upfront costs and no future costs to the diocese. This service, which entails data collection and dissemination, makes it easier for youth ministries to ensure that their high school seniors stay connected to their Catholic faith when they go to college. The Newman Connection collects information from young people through their local parishes and Catholic high schools, as to where they are going to college, and provides the names of students to campus ministries across the country, giving campus ministries the ability to reach out to Catholic students as soon as they arrive on campus.

The college years are a crucial time in a young adult's faith development. Studies have shown that those students who are engaged in their Catholic faith while in college are more likely to remain connected to a parish as young adults.¹ Unfortunately, many young people fall through the cracks when they graduate from high school and arrive at college. They do not connect with their college's campus ministry, even if they were active in their parish youth ministry or attended Catholic high school. While some young people do find the Catholic campus ministry on their own, the majority do not. Also, experience has shown that young adults respond best to personal invitations from their campus ministry.

Those who minister to youth and young adults are continuously trying to bridge the gap between youth ministry and campus ministry. However, many campus ministries, especially those in the mission dioceses, are limited in their ministerial efforts by small staff and small budgets, making outreach difficult to those Catholic students who are new to campus. To add to this challenge, most colleges and universities will not provide campus ministries with the names of those students who are Catholic. Campus ministries often report that it is easy to identify Catholic students who graduated from Catholic high schools. However, since less than 11% of Catholic youth currently attend a Catholic high school², that means the other almost 90% are not easily identified.

The Newman Connection mails cards directly to all of the parishes and Catholic high schools in the diocese, for graduating students to fill out, providing only their name and what college they plan to attend. The cards are then returned to the Newman Connection, which inputs the data from all participating dioceses across the country. The Newman Connection then provides a spreadsheet to each college campus ministry in your diocese, giving them the names of Catholic students who are arriving on campus. Currently, 80 dioceses across the country are participating in this program.

¹ *"The Impact of Catholic Campus Ministry on the Beliefs and Worship Practices of U.S. Catholics"*, CARA Study, Fall 2005

² *"Catholic Schools in the United States in the 21st Century: Importance in Church Life, Challenges, and Opportunities"*, CARA Study, June 2014



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The total value of this initiative is estimated at \$5,000 per diocese for the first year, and \$3,000 for each following year.*

*In subsequent years, the service continues to be free for the dioceses.

Desired Outcomes:

- A new group of mission dioceses will participate in this initiative in 2019.
- Youth ministries will help their youth remain connected to their faith when they go to college.
- Campus ministries will be able to be more effective in their outreach efforts to Catholic students.

Contributions of Each Organization

Catholic Extension:

Catholic Extension will communicate this opportunity to its network of diocesan contacts, parishes, and campus leaders in mission dioceses.

Catholic Extension will serve as the conduit for this opportunity. Catholic Extension will send to each mission diocese \$5,000, which has been donated to Catholic Extension for this opportunity, in order that the diocese can in turn send this \$5,000 to the Newman Connection when invoiced.

The Newman Connection:

The Newman Connection will provide all communication, materials, support, and administration to the mission dioceses, to implement this program.

Mission Dioceses:

Mission dioceses will provide a letter from the bishop, indicating his support for participation in this initiative, as well as an application providing additional information.

The dioceses also will identify a point person who will serve as the liaison between the Newman Connection and the parishes and schools where the material will be sent.

The diocese will send the \$5,000 that Catholic Extension provides, to the Newman Connection when invoiced.

Timeline

If invited to participate, the Newman Connection will distribute cards to the parishes in your diocese in the spring of 2019. These can be distributed at Bacculaureate Masses, graduations, etc. The Newman Connection will collect the cards and input all of the data, to provide comprehensive lists to the campus ministries prior to the start of the 2019 academic year.