



THE MISSION OF SAINT MARY MAGDALENE

Article on Campus Ministry - Part 1: Introduction

*“But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed?
And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard?
And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him?”*

Romans 10:14 (NRSV)



(Source: <https://www.stmu.ca>)

An anonymous, but wise, person once posed the following riddle:

*“Question: How can you make God laugh?
Answer: Tell Him your plans.”*

How true - especially considering what He has to say on the subject (Jeremiah 29:10; NIV):

“For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the LORD, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’”

For all who are endeavouring to discern and follow our Lord Jesus' holy ways - DAILY - in this life, particularly teens and young adults (that is, high school and university aged males and females who are still very much in the process of preparing for their futures), trying to muster up the patience to live for each day, as it comes, can be a daunting proposition to say the least, irrespective of Jesus' loving guidance (St. Matthew 6:34; NIV) to do so:

"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

Hence the need for solid, Holy Scripture-based Christian Education (mixed in with a generous helping of interpersonal communication, friendship, and humour) as the foundation - and compass - for a successful ministry geared toward young men and women on our high school and university campuses.



(Source: DLE Archives)

According to Mark Wallace, Resonate Global Mission Leader for Campus Ministry for the Christian Reformed Church:

“...campus ministry seeks to develop and sustain transformational communities of students, staff and faculty at colleges and universities.

“Dr. Michael Fallon, Campus Minister at McMaster University describes it this way: ‘At the heart of Christian Reformed Campus Ministry is the conviction that Christ is in the process of reconciling “all things” to himself and that we are called to join him as co-workers in regaining his Kingdom. As such, we affirm an everyday, concrete spirituality that sees every person on campus as a potential agent of re-creation and every sin-tainted philosophy – every thought and academic discipline – as instituted in God and worthy of transformation.’

“What this looks like, and how it is implemented, varies from campus to campus. One thing is for sure, it always involves food, fellowship, thoughtful discussion and meaningful activities and outreach. Leadership development is a key focus with a view not only to impacting the campus, but providing leaders for the wider community and Church.

“Campus Ministry isn't a safe place to protect one's faith, but a safe place to grow, be challenged and transformed as vocations are discovered and pursued. It is a place you can invite others to join you in being a follower of Jesus Christ and to experience the challenges and joys of working alongside God in this world.”

InterVarsity Christian Fellowship (for which I worked as a counsellor with its “InterSchool Christian Fellowship” high school division at Cole Harbour High School in Cole Harbour, NS in the early 1990s), follows a similar mandate in: “helping young people meet Jesus,” as emphasized on its webpage (<https://ivcf.ca>):

“By students for students’ has always been the theme of the ministry of InterVarsity. Birthed out of the student movement in the United Kingdom in 1929, we began as a small group of students and recent

graduates, committed to one thing: sharing the message of Jesus Christ with student-aged Canadians. The mission of InterVarsity is to change radically the globe with that message, carried by young people to every corner of Canada and the world At InterVarsity, we want to partner with the Holy Spirit at high schools, universities, summer camps and around the world."

The key to a successful campus ministry, in addition to copious amounts of food, music, friendship, and activities (including outreach), is **prayer**, and LOTS of it – not only on the part of the students themselves, but, rather, involving everyone affiliated with the life of the young person him or herself (such as parents, siblings, other relatives, friends, teachers, administration, and facility staff, to name a few).

Because, simply put: **PRAYER CHANGES THINGS.**



(Source: <https://ivcf.ca/pray/>)

As InterVarsity asserts on its “Prayer” page (<https://ivcf.ca/pray/>):

“When you pray with us, you join the teen leader at summer camp who’s talking to a camper about Jesus for the first time. You’re there on campus as a student shares their struggles with our staff.

“Please pray:

- † that more students and campers would boldly ask questions and investigate Jesus;*
- † that every young person in Canada would know God’s love and presence;*
- † that our yearly mission partnerships would expand our students’ perspectives; and*
- † that the kids and young adults who are part of our ministry would go on to be influential leaders wherever Jesus calls them.*

Truly a sentiment that we should all, as “members in good standing” of Jesus Christ’s “One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church” seek to share in doing our part to both raise and equip the next generation of Christ-focused leaders for our country and world. Indeed, we all have a role to play.

In this way, then, may we all (young and “not-so-young” alike) also seek to share in the joy that must have been theirs when the dovelike Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus’ disciples on that first Christian Day of Pentecost. For the disciples had with them the continual – and the eternal – reminder that *Jesus was indeed alive, and victorious, and reigning at the right hand of the Father*. And this, might I add, continues to be the Holy Spirit’s message today, a message that needs to be delivered to a desperate and hurting world.



Dearest Reader in Christ:

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