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The Church of the Holy Angels sits in the middle of the University of Dayton campus among student houses and just a short walk from academic buildings.

It's only natural then that the University and the parish create a formal partnership for collaboration, especially in the area of liturgy and faith formation.

"This partnership is a multifaceted and unique collaboration, not a merger," said the Rev. James Fitz, vice president for mission and rector at the University of Dayton. "This partnership provides the University another opportunity to serve the local Catholic church, which is an important part of our mission and identity."

As the partnership develops, some liturgies will be coordinated between the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception and Holy Angels Church, where the Rev. Daniel Meyer serves as the pastor. Starting in the fall, a graduate assistant in campus ministry will help direct the K-6 faith formation program at the parish. University of Dayton students in the two-year Forum for Young Catechetical Leaders program will serve as interns in the parish. They will teach catechism classes and offer programming in adult faith formation and sacramental preparation. The University is also handling some maintenance at the church and school, such as snow removal, and linking the church and school to the University's networking and phone services.

"I am very excited for both Holy Angels and the University of Dayton that we have entered into this new partnership. Up until this time, we have already engaged in many activities in both the parish and school, thanks to the leadership of President Dan Curran," Meyer said. "This is a win-win situation. I am ecstatic about the possibilities."

The University of Dayton currently offers five Sunday Masses, a weekday 12:05 p.m. Mass and evening Masses in the chapels in Stuart, Marianist and Marycrest residence halls. Holy Angels offers four weekday morning Masses, two Sunday Masses and a Saturday evening one that already attracts a number of University of Dayton students. The 10 Marianist priests involved on campus preside over liturgies at the University and assist in diocesan parishes around the region.

Holy Angels serves 1,200 parishioners in a historic church that's sat on Brown Street for more than a century. The Chapel of the Immaculate Conception is the spiritual home to students, faculty and staff as well as community members.

As part of the University's master plan, the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception is slated for renovation. The project is currently in the planning and fundraising stages.

Students will benefit the most from this new collaboration, according to Sister Angela Ann Zukowski, M.H.S.H., who co-directs the Forum for Young Catechetical Leaders program on campus.

"Our students can literally walk down the street to get involved," she said. "This partnership will offer them valuable hands-on experience in pastoral work. They will become the next generation of leaders in parishes and schools."

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