

12-23-2008

Commitment to Community

Follow this and additional works at: https://ecommons.udayton.edu/news_rls

Recommended Citation

"Commitment to Community" (2008). *News Releases*. 1629.
https://ecommons.udayton.edu/news_rls/1629

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Marketing and Communications at eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in News Releases by an authorized administrator of eCommons. For more information, please contact frice1@udayton.edu, mschlange1@udayton.edu.

University of Dayton, Ohio (url: <http://www.udayton.edu/index.php>)



Commitment to Community

12.23.2008 | Catholic

On Dec. 6, after spending the fall term in prayer and Marianist formation, two student faith communities made personal and communal commitments to being beacons for Christ's light and leaven for the Marianist family.

Joan McGuinness Wagner, director of Marianist strategies, met once a week with each community of eight students and held two formation retreats.

It's the third year for the Marianist communities, which pledge collectively to bring Christ's message into the world by promoting peace and justice and building community. Individually, the members of the Beacons and Leaven communities committed to spiritual growth, kindness, service, community, prayer, study, openness to God's will, a better understanding of the Marianist charism, and a willingness to model Mary's faith.

The hope is that these communities will flourish not only while they're at UD, but also after they've graduated, said Wagner, who helps all the groups with formation but has a special bond with the first, called Branches, for which she and her husband, A.J., are considered "spiritual companions."

The first groups — Branches, Brook, Embers, Wellspring and Summons — continue to meet at least twice a year for retreats and spiritual formation. Usually, they gather "live," but when distance and schedules didn't permit, one group met "virtually" for formation online through the North American Center for Marianist Studies.

The laity is an important part of the Marianist family, and the Society of Mary considers the formation and support of these communities a priority, Wagner said.

"It's the partnership between the lay and religious that forms the foundation of the Marianist family," she said. "It has always been that way. Father William Joseph Chaminade's initial communities, the sodalities, were the laity."

Among the first seven communities, which vary from eight to 18 members, Wagner has seen very few people miss meetings. That, to Wagner, is an affirmation of the concept's value.

"I always get more from working with young adults than I give," she said, "and one of the things I get from it is a sense of hope from these young adults who are willing to give such a sense of witness in their lives. Here, we have 16 young people who are willing to make this commitment for a year and then more. It's so wonderful."