

Wonderful Winterfest

Our annual February weekend training conference was a big success for DePaul InterVarsity. We had a record 13 students attending – only four of whom are current leaders. I was so pleased at the way the new students soaked up the training. I heard them say things like, “I’ve read Ephesians before, but I never understood it like I do now after this Bible study training track,” and “I feel for the first time like God might be calling me to be open about my faith with my roommate.” Thanks be to God for his work in it each year!

I enjoyed being part of the worship band, teaching a few Spanish-language songs, and still being able to bounce around pretty well at eight-months pregnant.

Give It a Rest

Our region is gearing up to launch our annual training weeks at Cedar Campus. I have been busy gathering materials to resource staff who will coordinate the midweek “sabbath” days. A few years ago, our region decided to set aside Wednesday at Cedar Campus as a sabbath – both to give students a break from the vigorous training schedule of the week, and to give them an opportunity to experience rest and replenishment as part of their spiritual growth. Through gathering art materials, offering suggestions on cards for reflection and contemplation, and organizing the logistics of these days, I hope to create space for staff and students to receive God’s rest in the midst of a week of intense spiritual learning.

They call me the “Sabbath Dean.” Isn’t that funny? I still think it’s Lord who’s the Dean of the Sabbath.

Shelf Life

Book Notes from Ann

Heading Home With Your Newborn by Laura A. Jana and Jennifer Shu.

In my enthusiasm about Baby’s impending arrival (and my awareness of my lack of experience with newborns), I have been reading practically any book I can get my hands on regarding baby care. I particularly appreciate Jana & Shu’s balanced perspective on typical baby struggles. One favorite example is their encouragement to remember two facts about breastfeeding:

1. Millions of mothers before you have been able to breastfeed their babies successfully.
2. The first couple weeks of breastfeeding are by no means representative of what your entire breastfeeding experience will be like.

This book isn’t the most comprehensive I have seen, but it is one of the most measured and reassuring. Definitely useful for an excited first-time mom!

Boyd’s Eye View

Jon and I are joyfully awaiting the arrival of Baby Girl any day now! We are both in full-fledged “nesting” mode: Jon filed our taxes a month early, and I’ve been knitting, reading voraciously, and cooking. I recently made a triple-batch of chocolate truffles, which are waiting patiently in the freezer for Baby’s birth-day. Jon set up a website



Here I am, scooped about as close to my desk as I can get!

for our updates and reflections at boydsnest.org/news/, and I’ve been enjoying publishing there.

I continue to feel content and healthy — sleeping well, feeling comfortable, and enjoying Baby’s frequent wiggles. I’ll be taking a 6-week maternity leave once she arrives, and then transitioning back into work. I continue to appreciate your prayers and financial gifts throughout this time! Your support is so important to our family.

Prayer Requests

Please pray:

- for Latina and the seniors as they choose next year’s leaders
- for our Cedar Campus training weeks to be fruitful and restful times of spiritual growth
- for a safe & healthy delivery (around Apr 16, Easter Sunday)

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Extra! Extra!

The More Students Change...The More They Change

Recently, someone asked me an intriguing question:

“What one piece of advice would you give to parents of college students?”

I was somewhat surprised at how quickly I was able to come up with a response: “Be curious about your children. Expect them to change rapidly. Ask them sincere questions, and keep on getting to know them. They’re not done yet.”

I’m constantly amazed to see how God transforms undergraduates in the few years they have in college. Just recently, I was talking with a DePaul student about her own transformation from a non-believing and timid freshman into a strong Christian leader.

What are some factors that can lead to such dramatic change? Here are a few of the most significant ones, from my experience:

- **New responsibilities.** When students go to college, they are confronted with lots of new, “adult” responsibilities – everything from waking up for class on time by themselves to paying their bills. This often brings up questions like, “What kind of person will I be?”
- **New ideas.** At the university, students are challenged to sort through a variety of ideas that may be new to them. Between professors’ views and late-night talks with friends, they are freshly challenged to decide what they think about issues ranging from religion and politics to their favorite pizza topping.
- **New opportunities.** In a new environment, students have an opportunity to shape their identity and the way others perceive them. They are invited to explain who they are and what opinions they have, and often they dis-

cover that they don’t necessarily agree with things they’ve assumed about themselves for years.

One of the joys of working with undergraduates is their openness to learn and make decisions on their own. I believe that God uses this time of openness to invite students into a deeper relationship with Christ. I love to see students expressing joy about understanding Scripture better or experiencing God’s presence through prayer in a new way. It is a privilege to be part of these spiritually transforming moments.

I feel like God has given me many gifts in the nine years I’ve been on staff. One of them is the experience of watching students change rapidly! I hope that this reality stays with me throughout my years as a parent, so that when my daughter is home from her first Christmas break in college, I can ask her, “How do you feel like you’ve changed over the past few months?” I am thankful that my continued work with college students will keep me on my toes with my own children, even as they change in their toddler years!

For Christ & the University —

Ann

P.S. For this month’s “web extra,” let me just refer you to Boyds’ Nest News at boydsnest.org/news/. We’ll get back to our regular Ann-a-Gram programming with the next issue!