

Back to School

I am more excited about meeting new students this fall than I have ever been! In the contact I have had with a few incoming freshmen already, I'm remembering all of the scary—and exciting—feelings about heading off to college: Will I make good friends? What if I don't do well in my classes? What will it be like to live away from home? The first few weeks of school can determine a lot about a student's college future: what sort of friends they make, what clubs they join, what influences they'll let into their lives. May God draw new students into his presence, and may they seek him wholeheartedly!



DePaul and Columbia students put a new twist on fellowship at Cedar Campus

Getting a Good Read

Over the summer, the DePaul InterVarsity and Gospel Choir students decided to read a book together and discuss it in a private discussion forum on the Internet. What a great idea! They chose *Faith on the Edge*, an excellent new book from InterVarsity Press on discipleship.

However, it turned out to be harder than anyone had anticipated, what with technical difficulties and people forgetting to read the book (I too fell

into that category). So what can we learn from this? 1) Our plans don't always turn out as we expect. 2) Often there are challenges when trying to build relationships between two groups. 3) God has grace for us. I believe that God will work through this to help students grow closer to him and to each other. There's already talk of restarting the book group this quarter!

Shelf Life Book Notes from Ann

Divided by Faith is one of the most challenging books I read this summer—it shook my view of Christianity and race relations.

Authors Michael O. Emerson and Christian Smith conducted extended interviews with 2,000 evangelical Christians across the U.S., and found that views on racism vary drastically depending on the interviewee's ethnicity. They venture to say that white evangelical Christians find it very difficult to acknowledge, and subsequently

address, systemic injustice against people of color.

I am stirred to consider anew: How can I challenge my students to build bridges across ethnic divides? How can I help them to understand the injustice around them, in the university and elsewhere? What steps do I need to take to grow in this area myself? If you've pondering such questions yourself, this book offers much insight. May God continue to form us into the Body of Christ!

Boyd's Eye View

Jon and I have been in and out of town so much this summer! Between serving students at Cedar Campus, visiting Jon's childhood camping grounds in Michigan, working with a graduate seminar at Notre Dame (more about this on back page), and attending a week of InterVarsity staff meetings in Wisconsin, we feel glad to be settling in at home for a while. Having finally finished our wedding thank-you notes, I have embarked on a new project of creating a scrapbook. Such fun! I've been enjoying including stories and background information to some of the photos. And many thanks to Jon for giving this newsletter an overhaul—we hope you like the new format!

Prayer Requests

Please pray for:

• Student leaders

I hope to grow in my ability to develop and challenge student leaders this year. Pray especially for the current leaders: Kate, Troy, Caryn, and Allan.

• New students

Pray for the new students we meet and follow-up on, especially early in the year. Classes begin Sept. 5; outreach fair on Sept. 9.

• Fall Retreat, Sept. 28-29

We hope this retreat will be inviting to non-Christian students. Please pray that we follow God's lead.

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Extra! Extra!

Taking Stock of Four Years with InterVarsity

In July, Jon and I spent two weeks at Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana, staffing an InterVarsity seminar for graduate students.

My job was mainly to do my own InterVarsity work during the days and then to lead a half-hour worship service every evening. I viewed my time there as a long retreat, and it turned out to be a wonderful period of reflection on my first four years of ministry.

I hoped to spend some time considering the insights I've gained from these four years and to seek vision from God for the future of DePaul InterVarsity. What ensued was a 25-page document sorting through the ups and downs of ministry, and musing on how things could change for the future. Here are a few of the questions that I generated for myself, and which I attempted to answer:

- How has my personal spiritual growth affected my work and identity?
- How do I encourage teachability in students?
- How have I grown in understanding multi-ethnicity and social justice?
- How can I develop leaders?
- How can I encourage the development of a passion for Christ in students?
- How can I connect my own growth to students'?

And, by way of example, here are some of the brainstorms sparked by that last question:

- "Deep thoughts with Ann"—sharing quotations from my current reading with students in various settings. This models how reading can bear fruit in one's life. I

could have a meta-cognitive discussion sometime, "Why do you think I share these quotes with you all?" 1) To share my growth with you. 2) To encourage you to read formationally. ("Formation reading" is a very interesting concept which I learned from a book, *Shaped by the Word*, by Robert Mulholland).

- Encourage students to take "retreats of silence" (and possibly invite them along on mine)?
- Continue to ask good questions; consider carefully how to craft good questions to ask.
- Be prepared to share stories of my growth with students in conversation. This also models vulnerability and cuts across boundaries in a healthy way.
- Investigate Scripture together and share my new thoughts with them.

This process of writing and reflecting and thinking has been very helpful for me in evaluating the ministry and seeking God's help about how to move forward. One of the main things I have re-learned (again!) from this process is how crucial Scripture and Scripture study are to students' spiritual development. My former IVCF staff worker, Ann Beyerlein, puts it well:

"Learning to feed oneself from Scripture is one of the most powerful gifts we can give a young person."

May God indeed help students (and me!) to grow in love for his Scriptures, and may these students learn to feed themselves from the Word of God. I'm thankful that this summer he has spoken to me anew about the power of his work.

For Christ & the University —