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# SPOTlight

Saint Paul's Outreach  
ENGAGING UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN A LIFE OF CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

Saint Paul's Outreach  
**Household Edition!**



## A Day in the Life of an SPO Missionary

The alarm clock rings for Morning Prayer with my household. I drop to my knees when I get out of bed to ask for grace and strength to live this day in love. Morning Prayer starts off my day and without it I would not be able to function. Hearing the beautiful voices of my sisters chanting the psalms reminds me why I am living this life—we were made for it, we were made to pray. It is in this hour of prayer that I am renewed and fulfilled so that I may overflow into those I meet this day.

After prayer, I begin my day of school. As I walk out of my house in the middle of this college neighborhood, I am surrounded by students dragging their feet to class. Some seem so lost—and not just the first-time freshmen. I look in the faces of my peers and many times I see no hope, no joy. I see the weight of the world in their eyes, and my heart aches. And then I say a prayer.

Sometimes it is difficult not to separate the life of the missionary and the life of the student—both are busy and require much attention. During my classes, even though I am not preaching the name of Jesus Christ to these students, I try to love them like Christ does—perhaps it is the only love they will receive all day. After class is over, I grab coffee with one of the girls who is part of a small group I lead. Having invested in strong friendships with these girls, I am able to speak out of love and offer some insight into difficult areas of their lives.

Later in the day, I will go back to the SPO women's household and share a meal with my housemates and a couple of guests. These women who are striving after Christ bring me joy and strength. This community of support is an integral part of my service—I cannot do this alone.

After dinner, I'm on my way to an outreach activity like women's night, where we discuss what it means to be a Christian woman. While giving a talk, I can see that these women are hungry for truth and willing to deepen their understanding and sense of mystery of what it means to be a woman. On other nights, I go to SPO prayer meetings, where students come together for an evening of worship and fellowship. In offering prayers of praise and thanksgiving, we meet the Lord in a profound way and deepen our relationship with him.

Within this incredibly busy but beautiful life, I try to laugh and to rejoice in the call that I have been given, even when I sometimes can only see the cross. Through this work, I learn something about Jesus Christ in each person I meet, and I am able to love Jesus in them. I hope they will see the love of Jesus in my actions and begin to know Him more deeply within the community of SPO.

*Jenna Krause leads a SPO Women's Household and serves as a Mission Leader for SPO at the University of Minnesota.*

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## As Iron Sharpens Iron

College is tough. No matter how mature, social, or academically gifted you are, becoming an “independent adult” is not an easy process.

Many young people, many of my peers, spend their college years seeking independence in frat houses, one-night stands, and atheistic classrooms. They say things like, “This is my life, I can do what I want,” “You only have one life to live,” and “It’s my truth.”

I’ve made a different decision. Why? Because I know that the Lord Jesus has a different idea for my life. Instead of having my own apartment with a guy I barely know and losing myself in the party culture surrounding campus, I live with 10 men who are committed to their faith and to each other. No, this is not a monastery. This is a Saint Paul’s Outreach Household near the University of St. Thomas.

At 6:40am, instead of enjoying more sleep, I’m eating cereal with other young men who want to live radical lives for Jesus Christ. Each day after breakfast we walk to the parish next door and once again dedicate our lives to Christ in Morning Prayer. After a hard day of classes, homework, and part-time jobs, we come home for dinner with our household, where

we take turns trying out our moms’ best recipes. We all pitch in with chores on Saturday mornings for an hour to keep a clean house, and we participate in various campus outreach activities several evenings each week. Many of us also help out with local youth groups, and yet all of this isn’t the most radical part of our lives.

What makes us radically different from our peers is that over 8 short months, we have become brothers. We live a life of brotherly commitment to each other that involves pushing one another to grow in the Lord. Proverbs 27:17 says, “As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.” By “sharpening” one another through daily activities and relationships, we help each other live God’s plan for our lives. We’re all called to holiness, and living with 10 other men who want that not only for their sake but for yours makes a difference. It makes such a difference that young people from all over the country are noticing and gladly giving up convenience and selfishness for lives of radical holiness.

*Patrick Quillan is the assistant leader of a SPO Men’s Household at the University of St. Thomas, the Mission Leader of a local youth group, and a graduate student in the new SPO Master of Arts Program.*



*Where are you living next year?”*

*That’s the question freshmen are usually asked before they leave campus for the summer.*

*“In Household,” I reply, trying to contain a huge smile.*

*“Oh, sophomores can live off campus?”*

*“Well it’s a dorm Household...,” I begin to explain.*

This is the point where I begin to explain Saint Paul’s Outreach and the Women’s Household we’re building at Ohio Dominican University (ODU).

I should start by confessing that I was not looking for any of this when I came to college. I was simply looking for friends, some girls I could hang out with, confide in, and share my sorrows and joys with. Instead, I found sisters. I was blessed to meet women who would not only become my friends but who would pray with me, challenge me, and encourage me on my path to holiness. Incidentally, these women all belonged to Saint Paul’s Outreach.

As I became more active in SPO, it became evident to me that I really believed in their mission. Like those already involved,

I had developed a deep passion to bring others closer to Christ. As the SPO missionaries at ODU noticed how enthusiastic I had become, they asked me to prayerfully consider living in the Women’s Household that was starting up in the dorms. At first, I was unsure what exactly a dorm Household would look like. I knew that at other SPO Households, students would pray together, share meals, do chores, and host events, but how could we do all of that in a small dorm room?

As I began to discern whether or not the Lord was calling me to live in Household, I faced a difficult decision. I was offered a position as a Resident Advisor and had the opportunity to receive room and board for free. However, as soon as I began discussing the possibility of Household with a few of the other girls who wanted to live there, I knew that I had to be part of it. I was sure that my faith would grow because of this decision to abandon myself completely to the Lord.

Our women’s Household in the dorms made history this year as the first one at Ohio Dominican. All of us have committed to live a holy life centered on prayer and to fulfill our responsibilities as Catholics. We pray every morning, eat dinner together every week, attend SPO functions as often as possible, and yes, even do chores. We have also made other commitments such as going to confession at least once a month, going to daily Mass at least once a week, and donating to charities. We are more than roommates – we are sisters in Christ and missionaries to our campus.

Our Household is not the only place God is working at Ohio Dominican. The Catholic community here is increasing tremendously, and I am inspired to see the growing numbers of people attending daily Mass and Morning Prayer. It is our hope that this Household will not only promote growth in the dorms, but all over campus, inspiring others to seek Christ!

*Erica Christman is a sophomore at Ohio Dominican University and a founding member of the SPO Women’s Household there.*





"The harvest is plentiful and the laborers are few, pray that the Lord of the harvest would send more laborer's into his vineyard." (Luke 10:2-3)

In his apostolic letter on the role of laity in the Church, Pope John Paul II explains to the Catholic faithful that *"the vineyard is the whole world"* (cf. Mt 13:38), which is to be transformed according to the plan of God in view of the final coming of the Kingdom of God." John Paul II exhorts the Catholic faithful to respond with generosity to the call of our Lord to labor in his vineyard. "A new state of affairs today both in the Church and in social, economic, political and cultural life, calls with a particular urgency for the action of the lay faithful. If lack of commitment is always unacceptable, the present time renders it even more so. **It is not permissible for anyone to remain idle.**"

What is this new state of affairs? Amongst the next generation it is the general state of spiritual and moral decline. We don't like to dwell on the negative; but the situation of young people in the Church today ought to deeply concern us, for they are the future of the Church and the world. The coming generation is clearly not doing well. They are not doing well in faith (only 15% of Catholics 18-25 attend weekly Mass). They are not doing well morally (by age 20, 80% have compromised the gift of their sexuality). If young people dur-

## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

GORDY DeMARAIS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ing those most formative and decisive college years are not grounded in faith, formed in character, and taught to chose moral living, the consequences for themselves and for others can be devastating.

The need is great, the harvest is plentiful. I suspect many of us are troubled by the news of economic downturn and political unrest, and rightly so. As people of faith with spiritual sight however, we recognize the opportunity to help others invest in those things that really matter. This is our mission, to train and send young laborers into this vineyard. As is evident in the articles and stories in this newsletter, our Household program is making a tremendous impact on the lives of college students around the country. Currently, we have over 100 students living in 20 households nationwide, and those numbers are only going up. In fact, we find ourselves working very hard to keep up with the need.

On behalf of the staff, missionaries, and college students in SPO, I want to take this opportunity to express to you our gratitude for your partnership in our mission. The faith and generosity of so many is an essential part of this mission. I pray that the articles and stories of faith in this newsletter are a source of inspiration and encouragement to you as you too respond to the Lord's call to labor in his vineyard.

both suffering and success. Hope teaches us, as it taught St. Paul, the "secret of being full and of going hungry, of having too much and having too little" (Philippians 4:12). While comforting us in times of trouble, hope also reminds us that worldly joys are deceiving and cannot ultimately satisfy our hearts. Even the genuine goods of this life – when they become the ultimate object of our hope – can hinder us towards our true end.

We live in a world which knows all too well the extremes of despair and decadence, great suffering and great success. In the face of both, Christian men are called to live as a witness to hope, to proclaim with our lives that "It is not the laws of matter, of evolution" which ultimately govern the world, but a personal God. Let us be transformed by the hope of eternal life, and let us always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks us to explain the hope that we have in Christ (1 Peter 3:15).

### Field Report: Benedictine College

Greetings from Atchison, Kansas! My name is Matt Vettel and I am excited to share with you the great work God is doing at Benedictine College through Saint Paul's Outreach.

My part of the story starts when I transferred to Benedictine College last year with the hope of finding a strong Catholic community to encourage me in my faith. Sadly when I arrived in August of 2008, that community was nowhere to be found. Though I met many Catholics on campus who wanted to live for Christ, they were all trying to do it on their own.

That's where Saint Paul's Outreach comes in. Living in a SPO Summer Household and participating in the School of the New Evangelization equipped me with a vision for SPO on my campus. Together with a handful of students and supporters on campus, I am seeing that vision become a reality.

As I write this letter, there are about twenty students involved with our men's and women's households, and the dynamic Christian life we have embraced is attracting more. God has worked powerfully through our weekly Thursday prayer meetings, Morning Prayer and Lord's Day Meals to build a vibrant Catholic community at Benedictine. It is our hope that through this community every student at Benedictine College will leave this place knowing Christ and ready to share his love with the world.

We praise the Lord and thank Him for giving us the opportunity to bring SPO to Benedictine. Thank you so much for your prayers and support of this work. Truly, your dedication to this ministry is what keeps us going from day to day. May God bless you and pour his grace upon you!

Sincerely in Christ,  
Matt Vettel

## MEN ON A MISSION

BUSINESS MEN ENGAGING THE MISSION OF SPO

The following is a summary of a talk given at Men on a Mission -

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Violence in Africa and the Middle East. The economic downturn. Poverty, hunger, and oppression worldwide and in our own country.

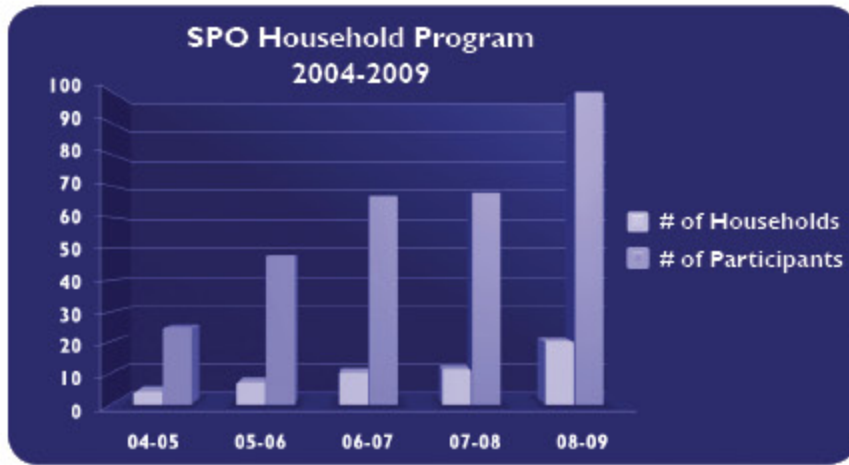
What is the Christian response to this difficulty and darkness that surround us?

Hope is our response, and Christ is our hope. There is no shadow, no matter how dark, that can cloud the light of Christ; and thus our hope never falters, not even in the face of great social and economic crises. The Christian response to adversity, to difficulty, to trial, and to disappointment – in all its forms and darkest expressions – is hope.

What is Christian hope? Hope is a virtue, a disposition of awaiting with expectant faith God's gift of eternal life. Hope is a habit of trusting in God and in His promises no matter what befalls us. Hope is a gift from God, but it is a gift that requires our response and our cooperation. Hope is rooted in a longing for the fulfillment which can only come from God.

Christian hope enables us to live with godly detachment from

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**Within the last 5 years,  
Saint Paul's Outreach  
has grown from  
20 participants in 4 Households to  
100 participants in 20 Households  
That's a 500% increase!**

**WE'RE GROWING!**