

FORMING CATHOLIC LEADERS



2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Missionaries during a training session for worship leaders

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PRESIDENT

DAVID FISCHER

“**THE ENVIRONMENT SHAPES US.**

Regardless of innate skill, talent, grit, drive, or determination, true potential can only be fully realized within an environment that encourages growth and maturity. This is no different in our faith life. I am reminded of the parable of the Sower and the Seeds (Matthew 13: 1-9), where seeds scattered on rocks, pathways, or among thorns fail to bear fruit. However, those sown on fertile soil flourish and yield in abundance.

For nearly four decades, Saint Paul’s Outreach (SPO) has committed itself to building environments on university campuses, where young men and women can explore and practice their Catholic faith to its fullest potential. **SPO is forming the next generation of Catholic leaders.** We accomplish this mission by collaborating with dioceses, bishops, priests, religious orders, and campus ministries to cultivate a thriving spiritual ecosystem, fostering deep, meaningful relationships amongst students. In this vibrant community, students are able to encounter God and develop a personal relationship with Him, elevating their faith to new heights of maturity.

In today’s society, such a mission is needed more than ever. Recent studies show that 61% of college students experience significant loneliness¹, a state that often precipitates depression and other lifelong difficulties. Further compounding the issue, a staggering

8 out of 10 Catholic college students stop practicing their faith². Our Church is hemorrhaging future leaders at an alarming rate, with 80% of Catholic young adults falling away from their faith during their college years. SPO firmly believes there’s no coincidence that this increase in loneliness and a corresponding decline in faith has become an insidious epidemic on modern college campuses.

In response to this crisis, SPO recruits, trains, and sends recent college graduates as Missionaries to universities nationwide. The objective? To preserve the next generation of Catholics, who stand on the precipice of losing their faith. SPO strives to build supportive environments that allow the ‘seed’ of faith to land in ‘fertile soil,’ taking root so that it’s strong enough to endure for years to come.

Witnessing a young adult discover a supportive community on campus is genuinely inspiring. The newfound joy, zeal, and optimism they exhibit towards the future of the Church is a powerful testimony to the transformative nature of friendships in Christ. When university students and young adults find an environment where they are acknowledged, loved, formed and spiritually encouraged, we are privileged to witness the magnificent fruit that is born: a faith that flourishes ‘a hundred times what was sown.’”

1 “Loneliness in America”, Harvard, 2021

2 National Catholic Register 2018



BUILDING

TRANSFORMATIONAL COMMUNITIES

THAT FORM

LIFELONG MISSIONARY DISCIPLES

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

We provide opportunities for students to encounter God and experience conversion through events and retreats. But we aren't satisfied with a single experience. We desire for young adults to encounter their faith in a way that transforms all of their life for the rest of their life.

We are committed to conversion; it's something that takes time and support in order to take deep root and flourish. So we build communities on campus where faith has the opportunity to come to life after the initial spark of conversion.

Our Missionaries walk with students in their journey of faith through a mission model we call:

REACH, CALL, FORM, and SEND

From the very first step of conversion to the countless ones that follow, we encourage, equip, and support college students to turn towards their faith in all that they do. Then we send them out, ready to engage the world after graduation as faithful, Catholic leaders and lifelong disciples on mission.



Learn more about our Mission Model and
read firsthand student testimonies



REACH



“AS JESUS WENT ON FROM THERE, HE SAW A MAN NAMED MATTHEW SITTING AT THE TAX COLLECTOR’S BOOTH. **‘FOLLOW ME,’** HE TOLD HIM, AND MATTHEW GOT UP AND FOLLOWED HIM.”

MATTHEW 9:9

“Through SPO, God has shown me that *I am not isolated or alone.*”



The path of discipleship begins with an invitation. Jesus went to where the apostles were, He met them in their places of brokenness, in the mundane of their everyday tasks, and He invited them into a relationship with Himself that transformed their lives.

Young people today aren't simply walking through Church doors or showing up to Campus Ministry looking to get connected. So we go to them. Like Jesus with the apostles, we REACH students and young adults by going out and meeting them wherever they are in life. We connect with them through social activities and events, and invite them into genuine friendships that are rooted in life with Christ.

MISSION IMPACT

- + 34,400 students reached
- + 16 Chapters

WHY IT MATTERS

3 out of 5 college-aged young adults experience serious loneliness (2021 Harvard study)

REACH CALL FORM SEND

CALL

**“JESUS SAID TO THEM ‘FOLLOW ME.’
...IMMEDIATELY THEY LEFT THEIR
NETS AND FOLLOWED HIM.”**

MARK 1:17-18

After meeting the apostles, Jesus called them into an intentional life of discipleship. He asked them to leave their nets behind, the life that they had been living, and to follow Him.

That is why after building authentic relationships, we then CALL students to take a bold new step in faith. Through retreats, small groups, and rich community, we provide opportunities for young adults to encounter the person of Jesus in a way that transforms their lives. Through this encounter they begin leaving behind the habitual sin or spiritual indifference of their old lives, and instead walk forward with purpose, lives centered around Jesus.

MISSION IMPACT

- + 5,880 retreat attendees
- + 1,008 weekly small group participants

WHY IT MATTERS

For every 1 person who joins the Church in America, 5 are leaving (2021 Pillar Catholic study)





“IF IT WEREN’T FOR SPO,
I would have never
encountered the fullness
of the Catholic faith or the
adventure that God has
called me to live.”



REACH CALL FORM SEND

FORUM



“Through the SPO community, God has shown me that my brokenness can be transformed into something beautiful.”

“IF I, THEREFORE, THE MASTER AND TEACHER, HAVE WASHED YOUR FEET, **YOU OUGHT TO WASH ONE ANOTHER’S FEET.** I HAVE GIVEN YOU A MODEL TO FOLLOW, SO THAT AS I HAVE DONE FOR YOU, YOU SHOULD ALSO DO.”

JOHN 13:14-15



Discipleship at its core is to live life like the teacher. Jesus called the twelve disciples and then for the next few years they lived every aspect of their lives with Him, modeling daily life like Jesus lived His and being formed by His teachings.

We FORM young adults to Christian maturity as lifelong disciples by building immersive faith environments through our Formation and Household Programs. It is in the context of this vibrant Catholic community that

students learn and practice how to live each part of their day transformed by who Jesus is and the truth of His Word.

MISSION IMPACT

- + 50 Households
- + 820 Formation Program participants

WHY IT MATTERS

- + 92% of young adults in SPO's Formation Program pray daily as opposed to only 23% of Catholic young adults nationally*

*taken from a 2021 SPO survey and a 2022 Springtide Research Institute study

SEND

“THEREFORE, GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS.”

MATTHEW 28:19

The apostles' call to discipleship didn't end when Jesus ascended into heaven. Jesus trained them how to evangelize, preach, and minister to the poor, wounded, and forgotten, so that they in turn could “go and make disciples of all nations.”

Like the apostles, we equip young adults in relational evangelization to be on mission and proclaim the Gospel. Then we SEND them out to share their faith on campus, in their workplace, in their parishes, and with their peers not just for their time in college, but as lifelong disciples and Catholic leaders in any vocation.

MISSION IMPACT

- + 214 Missionaries & Student Interns
- + 569 Student Leaders trained in relational evangelization

WHY IT MATTERS

74% of colleges in America have no Catholic ministry option. (2019 CCMA study)



“If it weren’t for SPO I would be living fully for myself, and wouldn’t know the gift that it is to serve the Lord and His people.”



REACH CALL FORM SEND



ALUMNI FEATURE

BR. AUSTIN
RIORDAN, BH

Wiffle Ball in the backyard. Family dinners. Swimming in the summer. Sledding in the winter. Wisconsin is the place to be as a kid. From the beginning I was taught to pray before bed and meals and that Sundays are for Church, family, and the Packers. But while the innocence of adolescence carries endless sentimental memories, I was not spared from the spiritual battle.

The alternatives the world had to a Christian way of life were attractive to me. So by the time I entered my Freshman year of college at the University of St. Thomas, my faith was significantly slipping away. I sat in my college dorm shaken by the realization that nothing I placed my happiness in satisfied me. So I decided to do something that was not a guarantee for me those days: attend Sunday Mass.

As I sat in the small chapel the opening song seemed to jump off the page at me, "My heart searches restlessly, until it rests in thee." The Holy Spirit used this to spark the beginnings of a deeper search for meaning and God in my life. From that moment on, I knew I would never be satisfied until I started to turn back to my faith.

It wasn't until my roommate introduced me to SPO that my life really started to change. **Through SPO I saw men and women live every moment of the day like God actually existed.** They didn't just pray empty words but they prayed and spoke as if they actually knew God. I came to see that God was alive and active in their lives and the same relationship was possible for me!

I saw through the Missionaries and friends I made in SPO a relatable, disarming, and unreserved witness to Jesus that changed the trajectory of my life. I began to have a personal relationship with God and became convinced of the need to share it with others. So I decided to forego my planned career path and serve as an SPO Missionary.

As a Missionary, my life became rooted in prayer, the sacraments, and a Gospel-oriented way of life. I finally was truly standing on something solid! The fruits were obvious: joy, peace, charity, and generosity. I now wanted to make an offering of my life to the One who gave everything for me. Serving with SPO provided me the space and tools to give God an honest shot when it came to my vocation.

Growing up the idea of being a Religious Brother never really crossed my mind. I barely knew the option existed to be honest! But I was captivated by the witness of the men I met in the Brotherhood of Hope. I saw in them a contagious joy, a true family life, and a countercultural purpose. Taking a leap of faith to join Religious life is never without fear and uncertainty, but the foundation I had from SPO gave me the courage to say "yes" every step of the way.

On July 8th, 2023, I had the singular privilege and consummate joy of making my perpetual profession in the Brotherhood of Hope. Alongside me was a fellow brother-in-arms, Br. Martin Buganski, also an SPO alumnus. Upon professing my vows to God and my Brothers, I received the Brotherhood ring with a simple cross and signed my name upon the altar. For the rest of my life, I will thank God for His mercy, the work of SPO, and granting me the utter privilege of living the consecrated life; forever grateful to stand side by side with these Brothers and on very solid ground.

LAUNCHING YOUNG ADULTS INTO THEIR **LIFELONG VOCATION**



FROM THIS PAST 2022-2023 YEAR:



1 in 4

SPO seniors started working full-time for the Church after graduation



78

alumni were married



14

alumni were ordained or professed religious vows

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Todd Covarrubias & Meredith Covarrubias

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& Katy Robles

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Thomas Strahle
Fr. Adam Streitenberger
Jeffrey Strung
Mark Thompson

FAITH ALIVE CAMPAIGN

SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED!

\$18.8 MILLION RAISED!

In 2018, we launched SPO's Faith Alive Campaign, to recruit, train, and invest in our Missionaries, students, and Households for years to come, with a goal to raise \$15 million. Thanks to the generosity of hundreds of donors we were able to surpass our goal, raising \$18.8 million!

SPO FINANCIAL REPORT | JUNE 2022 - MAY 2023

The SPO annual audit was conducted by Abdo, Eick & Meyers, LLP and is available at spo.org

INCOME \$15,572,585



● Mission Partner Development	● Other
\$6,173,231	\$1,184,326
● Benefactor Contributions	● Contributed Services
\$5,400,522	\$606,617
● Household Program	
\$2,207,889	

EXPENSES \$16,769,266



● Program	● Administration
\$13,416,802	\$1,557,048
● Development	
1,795,416	

HOW CAN YOU HELP?



PRAY

Keep our students in your prayers, that they would encounter Christ's transforming love this school year



SHARE

Tell your friends and families about SPO's mission and share our stories



CONNECT

Follow us on all social media platforms (@sponational) and check out SPO Worship on Spotify



VISIT

Meet SPO Missionaries and students at your local Late Night Live with SPO event. Find more information at spo.org/latenightlive



GIVE

Partner with us in the mission through a variety of giving options, including:

- + monthly giving
- + cash
- + stocks and securities
- + donor-advised funds
- + IRA distributions
- + estates and final testamentary gifts using mycatholicwill.com/SPO for *free*



spo.org/donate

EPISCOPAL SUPPORT

FOR THE WORK OF SPO



***"SPO IS THE WORK OF THE
HOLY SPIRIT AND A BLESSING
FOR OUR CHURCH!"***

ARCHBISHOP BERNARD A. HEBDA

Archdiocese of St. Paul & Minneapolis
Current Chairman of SPO's National Board



CARDINAL TIMOTHY DOLAN

“For more than 30 years, Saint Paul’s Outreach has worked on college campuses, producing thousands of alumni who are passionate followers of our Risen Lord, and who have remained active, faith-filled leaders in their local parish communities.”



ARCHBISHOP JOSEPH NAUMANN

“I’m so grateful to Saint Paul’s Outreach...SPO helps young people develop a relationship with Jesus Christ and a love for His bride the Church, and then they help to form them to have a deep life of prayer. We need ministries like SPO now more than ever.”



BISHOP ANDREW COZZENS

“I am so grateful for the profound impact in which the Lord used SPO to deepen my own conversion and prepared me to discern and say yes to the call to priesthood.”



BISHOP EARL FERNANDES

“I am impressed with the witness given by the young people involved with SPO. Many alumni have remained in the Columbus-area and are contributing to the vitality of our parishes and remain committed to the work of the New Evangelization.”



To read **more statements** from Cardinals, Archbishops, and Bishops sharing their support for SPO, scan the QR code to visit SPO’s website or go to spo.org/episcopalsupport

SPO (Saint Paul’s Outreach) is a canonical organization in the Catholic Church with the status of a Private Association of the Faithful, under the ecclesiastical vigilance of the Archbishop of Saint Paul & Minneapolis. It is a nonprofit corporation, tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.



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WHO IS SPO?

