

Campus Ministry in the Diocese of Georgia

The 2006-2007 academic year has been one of tremendous growth and excitement for our new campus ministry at Georgia Southern University, and it only promises to get better. This year, the Diocese installed the Rev. Lonnie Lacy to serve as the Episcopal chaplain at GSU and assistant rector at Trinity Statesboro. In September, we began our weekly Tuesday night meetings where students of all backgrounds now come regularly for Holy Eucharist, thoughtful conversation, and a warm home-cooked meal. In December, we sent two of our students to New Orleans for a national ecumenical student leadership conference cosponsored by the Episcopal Church. And in early winter, our very own campus ministry website (www.ecmgsu.org) was featured nationally by the Episcopal Church USA website as a model for web-based student ministry.

As we now look toward the spring semester, we have much to be excited about. We have one student beginning discernment for ordained ministry, another student being baptized, and several planning to spend their spring break in the Gulf Coast for mission and relief work. And thanks to a generous grant from the diocesan Commission on Christian Formation, we will also begin creating plans for a peer ministry program whereby several students will have the opportunity to explore vocation and leadership in the Episcopal Church while also broadening the scope of our ministry at Georgia Southern University.

This was also another wonderful year for campus ministry at Valdosta State University. In February, four students accompanied former VSU chaplain, the Rev. Mary Demmler, to Diocesan Convention in Savannah where they had a booth to promote their campus ministry. This time served as a great way for VSU students to meet people in the diocese as well as students active in UGA's Episcopal Campus Ministry. In April, three students joined Mary on a road trip to Camp Mikell, the Diocese of Atlanta's camp and conference center. There they participated in Vocare #1, the equivalent of Cursillo and Happening for people 19-29 years of age. The weekend focused on discernment, and the students worshiped, studied, and played with young adults from across the South East. This fall saw movie nights, outings, and more Tuesday night dinners and worship with the college students. Then, in early November, Mary left Valdosta to answer a call in the Diocese of Virginia. "The students surprised me with a cake on my last Tuesday and lots of hugs," Mary said. "It was my blessing to spend three years with the students, and I pray for many good things in their future and in that of the ministry."

Submitted by the Rev. Lonnie Lacy