



## CATHOLIC BRAVES

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To whom it may concern:

It is our pleasure to write this letter on behalf of the Evangelical Catholic and their work with parishes and campus ministries across the country. Our Newman Center's partnership with the EC provides crucial support for our staff and students in our efforts to create a culture of true discipleship and evangelization in our community and on our campuses.

Due partly to small staff size, our ministry relies heavily on the commitment of student leaders to ensure that we are following Jesus' command to make disciples of all nations. While this is a beautiful way for them to actively participate in the life of the Church, it does come with challenges. Since beginning our partnership with the EC in 2022, we have seen a significant increase in their desire to lead others into relationship with Christ and the confidence to do so. Essential to this growth is the focus on personal relationship and intimacy with Christ as the foundation. We have heard from many of the students that their prayer routine went from virtually nonexistent to almost daily by the end of training group formation. Instead of being told that reading scripture is important, they are given the Prayer Companion as a guide and discussion of scripture passages is modeled each week in the training group and one-on-ones. The materials provided allow our Campus Ministers to focus intentionally on the students in front of us instead of spending time creating our own program of discipleship formation.

An unexpected blessing has been the gratitude of the students who have been trained so far. We initially expected the students or staff to find the time commitment burdensome. Instead, they look forward to the weekly meetings and we now have students asking to join the groups before we even invite them! This excitement caught the attention of St. Mark parish (located next door) and we were able to onboard point people for the parish side. The zeal of one of their first training group participants led to over 90 parishioners participating in Lenten small groups this past spring.

We highly recommend partnering with the Evangelical Catholic and would be happy to answer any questions as your ministry discerns! We can be reached at [office@ncbu.org](mailto:office@ncbu.org).

Sincerely,

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Director and Chaplain, St. Joseph Newman Center – Peoria, IL

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