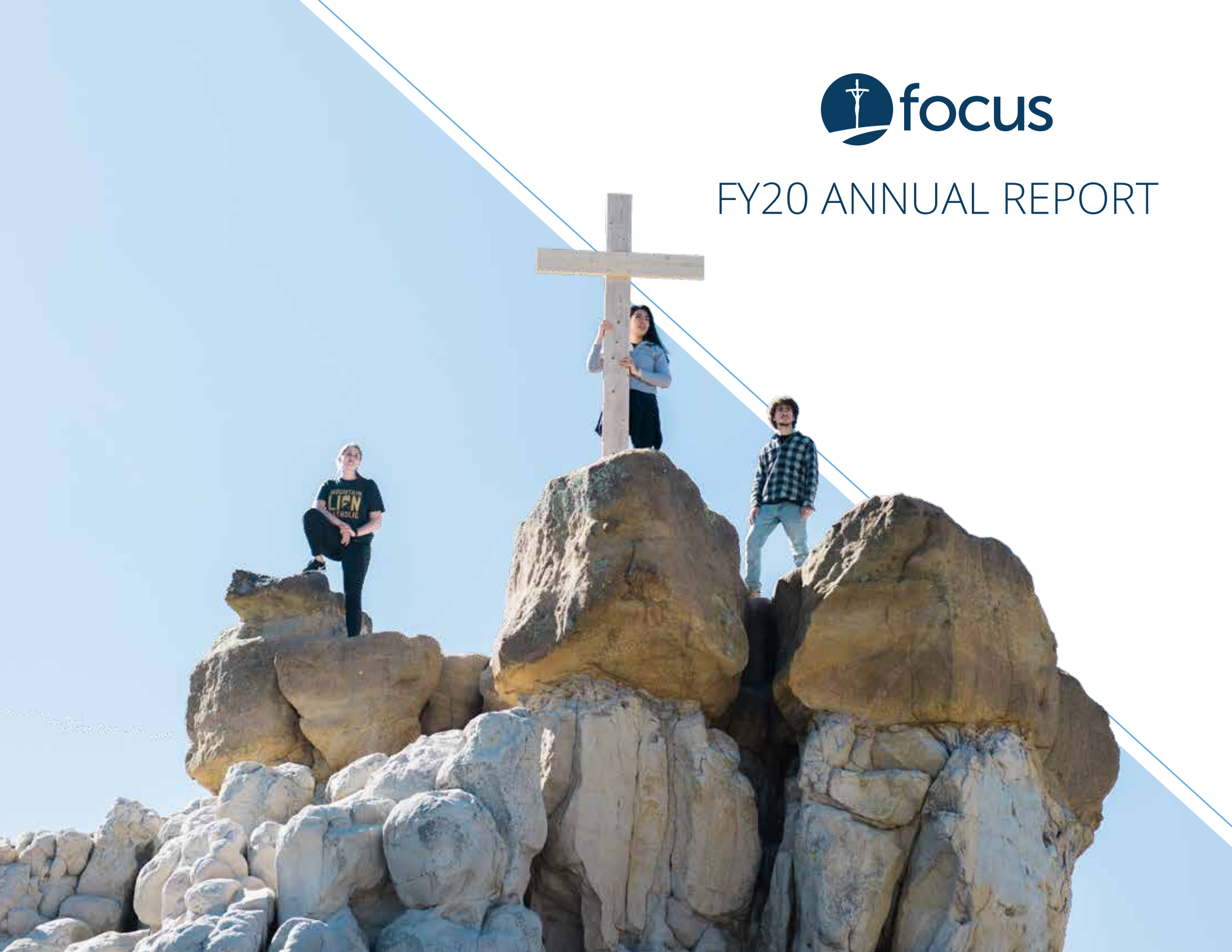




FY20 ANNUAL REPORT



Dear Friends,

One of the more obvious things that sets Christians apart is that, no matter what troubles the present moment may bring, we know our future is secure. We can't predict what each day will bring or say for certain how the chapters of our lives will unfold; even so, we stand on solid rock. Our Lord has won the ultimate victory. And that's why we always have a reason to hope — because through faith, we know that what we hope for is real, true and eternal.

This year brought a difficult season of a global pandemic, combined with social unrest that followed in its wake. These challenges have only underscored the need for spiritual renewal in our lives and the restoration of hope in our culture — a hope meant for all humanity. In his encyclical "Spe Salvi," Pope Benedict XVI reminds us that we are a community of faith. We can't keep our hope to ourselves: To fully experience our hope and live out our Christian identity, we have to share it with others, with as many as we possibly can.

This past year, we dedicated ourselves to sharing this hope with students on campus, on retreats, on mission trips, at events and more. We invited students into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and built them up as missionary disciples, who then brought this hope to every part of campus and beyond. And when the COVID crisis struck in the middle of the spring semester, closing schools, churches and Catholic centers, we were still able to respond in hope: By the grace of God, our 700+ missionaries were able to move almost seamlessly from on-campus discipleship to digital outreach!

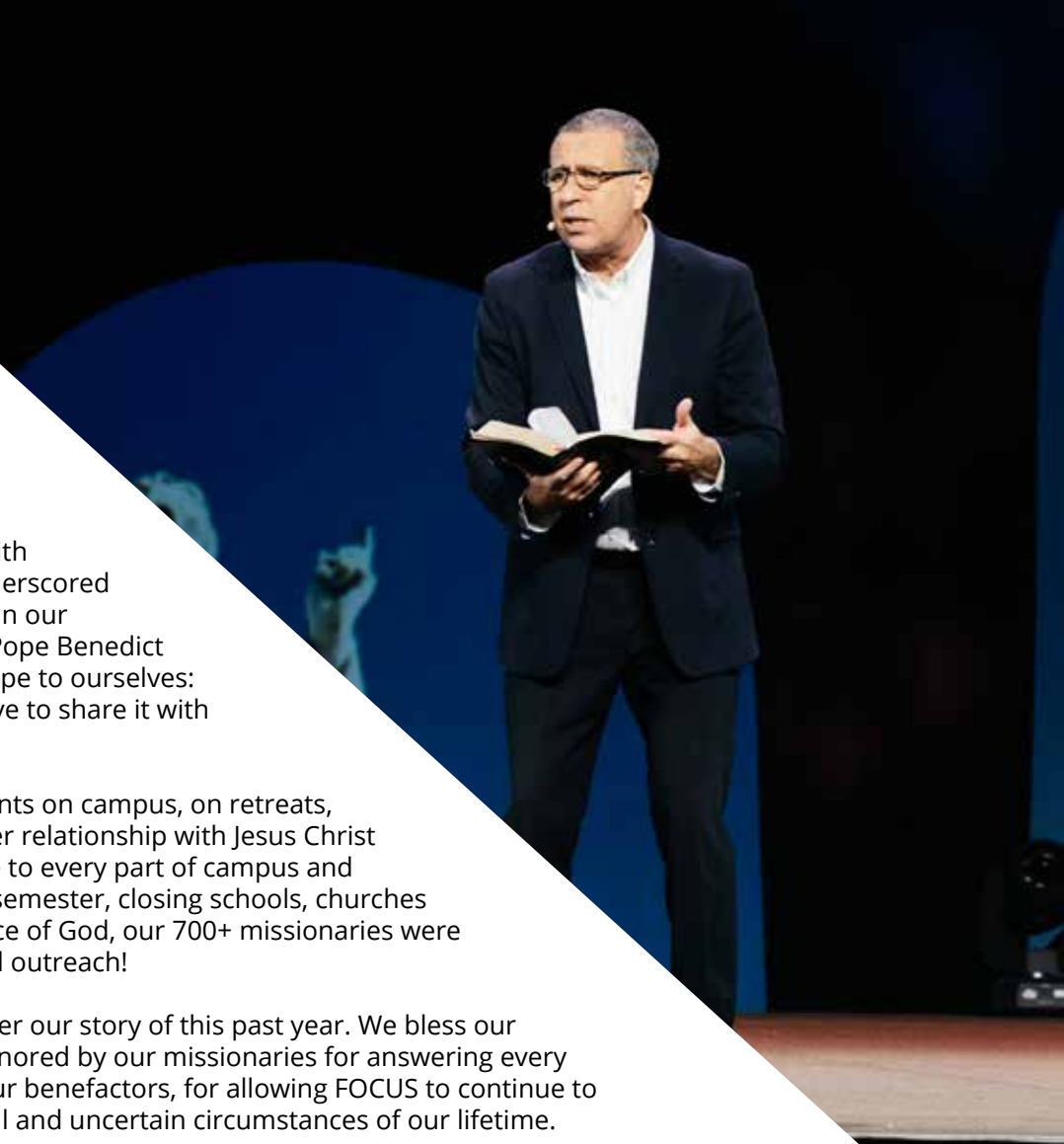
I hope you're encouraged as you turn the next few pages and encounter our story of this past year. We bless our generous Lord for His grace and guidance in every struggle; we are honored by our missionaries for answering every challenge with dedication, joy and hope; and we are grateful to you, our benefactors, for allowing FOCUS to continue to advance the work of the Church, even in the midst of the most unusual and uncertain circumstances of our lifetime.

Please know of our daily prayers for each of you, for your families and all your intentions. Thank you for staying on mission with us and being instruments of hope to our world!

Sincerely in Christ,



Curtis A. Martin
Founder & CEO



“THE ONE WHO
HAS HOPE LIVES
DIFFERENTLY.”

—POPE BENEDICT XVI, “SPE SALVI”



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HOW WE LIVE DIFFERENTLY



FOCUS (Fellowship of Catholic University Students) exists to share the hope and joy of the Gospel on college campuses, in parishes and beyond. Through Bible studies, outreach events, mission trips, retreats and discipleship, FOCUS missionaries encounter college students in friendship where they are, inviting them into a relationship with Jesus Christ, building them up in the faith and sending them out to share the good news with others. *This is how we live differently.*

MISSION STATEMENT

TO KNOW CHRIST JESUS
AND FULFILL HIS GREAT
COMMISSION.

THE MAIN THING

LAUNCHING COLLEGE
STUDENTS INTO LIFELONG
CATHOLIC MISSION.

METHOD OF EVANGELIZATION

- WIN** Building authentic friendships that foster an encounter with Jesus Christ, which draws people into a covenantal relationship with God.
- BUILD** Forming people with the hearts, minds and habits of joyful, disciplined followers of Jesus.
- SEND** Inviting people to imitate Jesus and to be Spirit-filled evangelists by going on to win, build and send others.



THREE HABITS OF SPIRITUAL MULTIPLICATION

DIVINE INTIMACY

The fruitfulness of the mission finds its foundations in our deep, personal encounter and relationship with God and our commitment to live as the first disciples did, dedicated to the “apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers” (Acts 2:42).

AUTHENTIC FRIENDSHIP

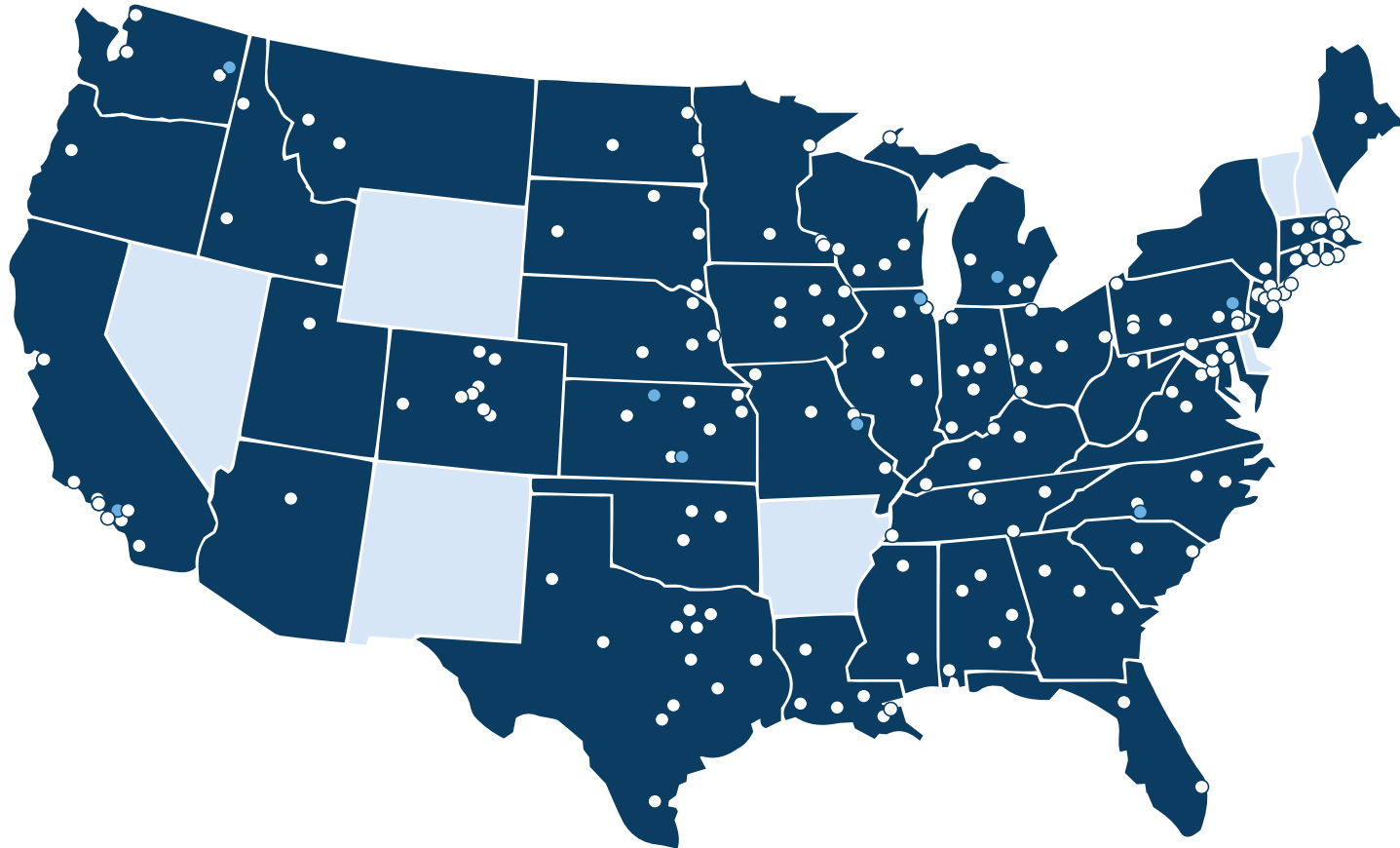
We live as sincere gifts to those we accompany by investing deeply in them and inspiring them toward the greatness to which they are called in Jesus Christ.

CLARITY AND CONVICTION ABOUT SPIRITUAL MULTIPLICATION

This is the method of “win, build, send” by which we imitate Jesus, who invested in a few and commissioned them to do the same.

WHERE WE LIVE DIFFERENTLY

OUR CAMPUSES: ACADEMIC YEAR 2020 - 2021



KEY

- COLLEGE CAMPUS
- PARISH MISSION

CAMPUS
STATS

42

States
(including the
District of
Columbia)

187

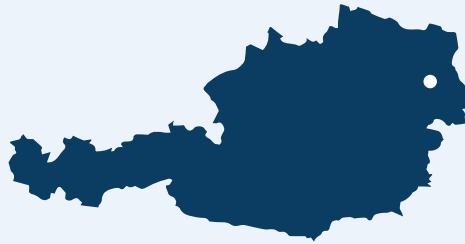
Campus
& Parish
Locations

FIVE INTERNATIONAL CAMPUSES

IRELAND
Dublin



AUSTRIA
Vienna



GERMANY
Passau
Düsseldorf



ENGLAND
Southampton



From Ivy League schools and military academies to liberal arts colleges, technical institutes, international universities and beyond, FOCUS missionaries meet students wherever they are, inviting them into a deeper relationship with Christ and challenging them to pursue lives of virtue and excellence. Our missionaries also serve in parishes across the U.S., encouraging others to embrace the sacraments, Scripture and missionary discipleship.

LEARN MORE AT
[FOCUS.ORG/ABOUT/CAMPUSES.](https://focus.org/about/campuses)

171 National
Campuses

5 International
Campuses

11 Parishes

17 New FOCUS
Campuses for
2020 - 2021

THOSE WHO HAVE HOPE

See our full list of FOCUS missionaries at www.focus.org/give/all-missionaries.

OUR MISSIONARIES

NEARLY
800

NATIONAL CAMPUS
MISSIONARIES

20

INTERNATIONAL CAMPUS
MISSIONARIES

13

PARISH MISSIONARIES

NEARLY
35,000

FOCUS ALUMNI



Nick Williams

Second-year FOCUS missionary
University of Florida

“While I was in college, my life was radically changed. I was a student-athlete on the Georgia Tech football team. I believed my identity was built on my value as a football player; I was blessed to have teammates who helped me discover my identity as a son of God. I decided to enter the Catholic Church during my sophomore year, and it was the greatest decision I ever made. Upon graduating I felt a gentle tug from God to go back to the college campus and invest in student-athletes the same way I had been invested in. Today, I get to form authentic friendships with many students — the same type of friendships that changed my life.”



Tina Augustine

Eighth-year FOCUS missionary
Philanthropy Officer—Europe
Düsseldorf, Germany

“You ever have a moment when God completely rocked your world? For me it was during a summer pilgrimage to Spain. My heart was wrestling for deeper conversion: to know Him more personally. Well, God answered that prayer in a big way. He put it on my heart to serve Him as a missionary, to bring the Gospel to the furthest corners of a college campus and invite others into lifelong discipleship. He was asking me to finally, for the first time, live out the call of my own daughterhood and come alive in His call. As a missionary, I am reminded daily of my continued conversion, and what a joy it is to follow the will of God!”



Jimmy & Melissa Chang

FOCUS parish missionaries
St. John Neumann Catholic Church
Charlotte, North Carolina



Brittany Anderson

FOCUS missionary alumna
Coordinator for Discipleship, St. Francis of Assisi Parish
Grapevine, Texas
Financial Planner, Fidelity Investments

“Our greatest desire is to awaken people to their purpose and mission in this world. We’ve been forever transformed by Jesus, and as a family we want to bring that truth, beauty, hope and joy to others by introducing them to the life-changing message of the Gospel and inviting them to accept the invitation to live out their God-given mission. Jesus evangelized the world by investing in a few through whom He trained to do the same. In doing so, He imparted both faithfulness and fruitfulness. By imitating Christ, investing deeply in a few and training them to do the same, together we can raise missionary disciples to reach the entire world for Jesus Christ!”

“Through my relationship with a FOCUS missionary in college, I found so much freedom in giving my life to Jesus, and I want that for everyone. Our mission has to flow from relationship with Jesus. He is the source and summit, and the Spirit is the agent of the New Evangelization. He doesn’t ask — He TELLS us to go and make disciples. Relationships are the foundation: We have to get elbow deep in the mess of people’s lives! Authentic friendship opens the doors for accompaniment on the path to Jesus. There are a lot of people in your parish you’ll never reach unless you train others to reach them with you. Just get started!”

WHY WE HAVE HOPE

FRUIT FROM CAMPUS

ON CAMPUS



FOCUS missionary Andrew Noah with student disciples Parker Schlenker (left) and Jase Zebrowski (right) after their Confirmation Mass on May 3, 2020 at St. Joseph's Parish in Spearfish, South Dakota.

"The amount of joy Parker has exhibited since his 'yes' to the Lord has been incredible. He has a deep desire to share his faith and his journey with not only his fellow students, but also his professors and coworkers. While he is still new to the faith, he has a great desire to learn more and surround himself with brothers who are also striving to grow in their love for the Lord."

Andrew Noah | Third-year missionary | University of Utah

"I met Andrew outside the library on campus. I have learned so much from him, not only from his example but also from all that he knows. I don't think I would be Catholic right now without him in my life. He helped me grow in my faith and led me to see the man I was created to be. Through FOCUS, I've met so many people who truly, honestly care about me and who I am.

This journey of faith is hard and is 100% out of my comfort zone. Despite that, becoming Catholic has been the most important and amazing decision I've made. I can honestly look into my own heart without being afraid because I know God already knows what's going on, and why. The best part is He always loves me for who I am, no matter what is going on. It's amazing to know that I was created for a reason and that I am loved unconditionally."

Parker Schlenker | Student disciple | Sophomore, Black Hills State University

AND BEYOND



"I praise God for FOCUS on our campus. Through discipleship with FOCUS missionaries, I began to dive deeper into my interior life. Seeing the profound relationship with the Lord the missionaries enjoyed through their prayer life inspired me to pursue divine intimacy. Through FOCUS, I have been able to realize and love my own poverty, which urges our Father to compensate me with His great and merciful generosity. It is that same generosity that makes me capable of following His call for me to join the Carmelites."

Paul Punnoose | Student disciple | Junior, Boise State University



"FOCUS filled my need to be set afire for mission, encouraged me to be generous with God and helped me understand my dignity as a beloved daughter of God. Bible study leader formation and discipleship with FOCUS missionaries gave me an opportunity to guide other women closer to His heart and receive the gifts God was giving them. FOCUS gave me courage and strength to know that God will love me no matter what vocation I choose — that I am climbing a mountain of joy, not of fear, and that the bitterness of the cross never comes without the sweetness of our Lord. Keeping my eyes on Christ, I will be joining the Servidoras."

Kaitlin Ouyang | Student disciple | Senior, University of Maryland

959

DECISIONS TO PURSUE VOCATIONS (1998-PRESENT)

224

WOMEN

735

MEN





WHY WE HAVE HOPE

“Seeing so many devout young people congregated together encouraged me to realize that we are embracing a reality — alive, concrete, comprehensive, more relevant than anything else could be. SLS20 convinced me more deeply, at the heart level, of truths I have long believed. I recognized the extraordinary urgency of helping people come to faith while gaining confidence in the Gospel message.”

Ruby Shao | SLS20 Collegiate Track participant



SLS20

YOU WERE MADE FOR MISSION.

SLS20 welcomed nearly 9,000 attendees from 19 different countries to Phoenix, Arizona for a five-day event centered on Jesus Christ and His Church, prayer, fellowship and a chance to learn how to live out the faith in truth as missionary disciples.

NEARLY
9,000
ATTENDEES

MORE THAN
300
BISHOPS
AND PRIESTS
CONCELEBRATED
MASS

NEARLY
4,000
CONFESSIONS
HEARD

NEARLY
700*
PARTICIPANTS

42*
TRIPS

26*
COUNTRIES
SERVED

**2019-2020 FOCUS Missions Impact Prior to COVID-19*

"I wanted to pass along my gratefulness to everyone involved with FOCUS Missions in getting my daughter home. Emily was on the Lithuania trip, and as worried/nervous for her as I was (from a mom's standpoint), I knew she was in good hands. All it took was to hear her voice and my anxiety started to subside. She was so happy and having a great time and I knew she was safe. I also wanted to thank everyone at FOCUS Missions for their constant communication and efforts in getting the students home after the travel ban announcement was made. You all do tremendous work while on these mission trips and additionally handled this situation with professionalism, efficiency and great concern about getting all missionaries home. Thank you so much, your efforts are deeply appreciated!"

Jamie Keiter | Parent of FOCUS Missions participant

MISSIONS

FULLNESS OF FAITH, AROUND THE WORLD.

FOCUS Missions allows mission trip participants to step away from the noise of daily life and to pray, serve and bring the Gospel to those they encounter. Our 2019 - 2020 mission year was interrupted by the COVID crisis, resulting in many spring break trips being cut short or not even happening at all — and yet, despite the change of plans, the experience of serving on mission and being united to the universal Church in such a profound way touched lives and transformed countless hearts. No matter the challenges ahead, FOCUS Missions will continue to serve the poor and share the Gospel with people from all corners of the globe.



"My mission trip to El Salvador is not something I will soon forget. I experienced so many blessings throughout my time there, but one thing made my trip so memorable. Many months ago, I asked my non-Catholic roommate, Brittany, to come with me on this trip. She was there to ask questions I have never thought of, and her presence allowed me to look at my faith from an outside perspective and really seek the answers I had been too afraid to ask. With every question, Stephie, my friend and a FOCUS missionary, was there to answer it. Her answers made so much sense; they made me less afraid to ask questions myself and all the more confident in this beautiful faith of ours."

Natalie Pfeifer | El Salvador spring break mission trip participant

WHY WE HAVE HOPE

DIGITAL OUTREACH



FOCUS' Digital Campus was founded in 2012 so FOCUS could accompany students, no matter where they were. Eight years later, we found that linking traditional methods of incarnational evangelization with contemporary technology had a greater purpose than we could have ever predicted.

At the start of 2020, when the COVID crisis shut down campuses across the country, our missionaries were able to continue serving students without missing a beat. Thanks to Digital Campus' field-tested methods and resources, FOCUS' entire missionary staff was able to transition online and organize video Bible studies, digital discipleship check-ins and so much more for students who wanted to stay connected with their friends and their faith.

In addition to Digital Campus, FOCUS' social media presence has become a greater tool for evangelization in reaching millions more who aren't on campus. Today, we're more committed than ever to keep innovating and finding even better ways to reach, engage and guide students in their journey as missionary disciples.

SOCIAL MEDIA

"I have been following FOCUS on its social platforms for the past three years, and I must confess, I fell in love with all that has been accomplished and shared with the world by your organization."

Vista

FOCUS Instagram follower | Windhoek, Namibia, Africa

DIGITAL CAMPUS

16 DIGITAL CAMPUS MISSIONARIES
196 DIGITAL CAMPUS STUDENTS SERVED
164 CAMPUSES REACHED



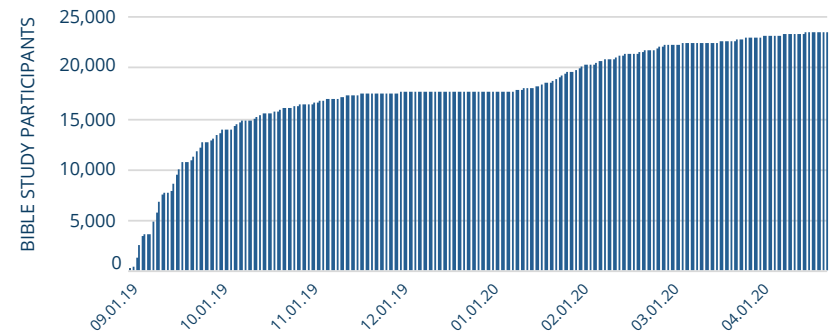
“This year I had to return home to finish school, and I know that without Thuan’s guidance the transition would have been much harder. Through our weekly meetings and Bible studies, he has motivated me to never stop living out mission, even when I’m simply back at home. In our discipleship and Bible study groups, Thuan has facilitated the growth of authentic friendship between himself and the seven of us disciples. Today we know each other on a more personal level. We have a powerful source of support in whatever we strive to accomplish. Digital Campus provides us with all the resources we need to live out Christ’s mission, even when we are unable to physically meet. This in itself has been a wonderful gift that I will always be grateful for.”

Steve Heine
 Student disciple with FOCUS Digital Campus | Senior, Jefferson College

COVID-19

The below graph shows the running total of students who took part in Bible studies at least once during the 2019 - 2020 academic year. Despite campus closures and quarantines that took place in early spring due to COVID-19, the number of students who participated in Bible studies actually increased from March through the end of the semester. Whether our missionaries worked with students in person or online, our mission and our impact didn’t change — and students were still able to encounter Christ, enjoy community and experience hope through this challenging time.

FY20 BIBLE STUDY PARTICIPANTS



“When COVID-19 started to spread and campus was closed, I had to adapt. My online Bible study, for example, is still filled with fruitful discussions and opportunities to dive deep into Scripture. During this time, I’ve realized we aren’t limited to just being on campus. What we’re living through right now is what my life will look like post-graduation: I won’t have the same community or positive environment to encourage me to live out my mission. Now is a great time to live out mission because there are people out there who need a community and need to be reminded of who God the Father is.”

Jenni Nguyen
 Student disciple and Bible study leader | Senior, University of Kansas

PLATFORMS WHERE FOCUS HAS A PRESENCE:



more than
28 MILLION
 impressions

nearly
1.6 MILLION
 engagements

nearly
230,000
 total followers

HOW WE'RE ABLE TO LIVE DIFFERENTLY

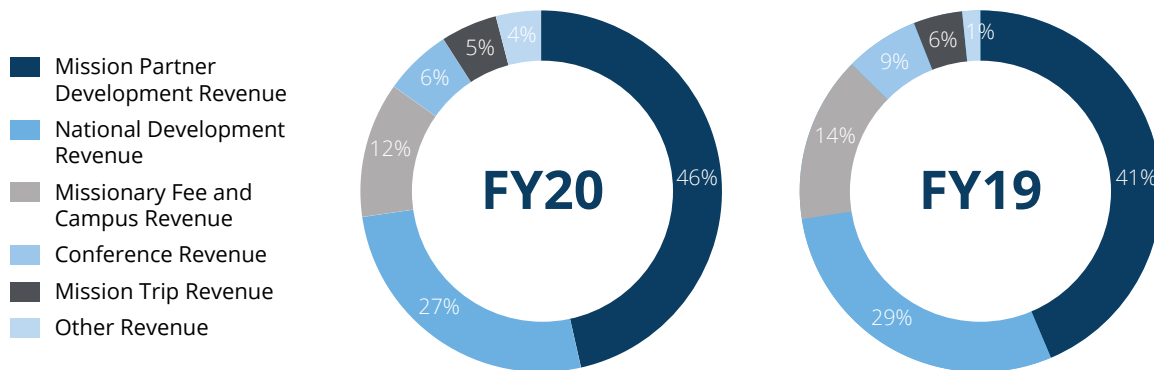


WHAT WE RECEIVED

	FY20	FY19
Mission Partner Development Revenue	\$39,856,590	\$33,704,985
National Development Revenue	\$22,705,695	\$23,355,409
Missionary Fee and Campus Revenue	\$10,603,078	\$11,495,482
Conference Revenue	\$5,223,920	\$6,999,738
Mission Trip Revenue	\$4,070,147	\$4,678,777
Other Revenue	\$3,597,463	\$913,359
Total Revenue	\$86,056,893	\$81,147,750

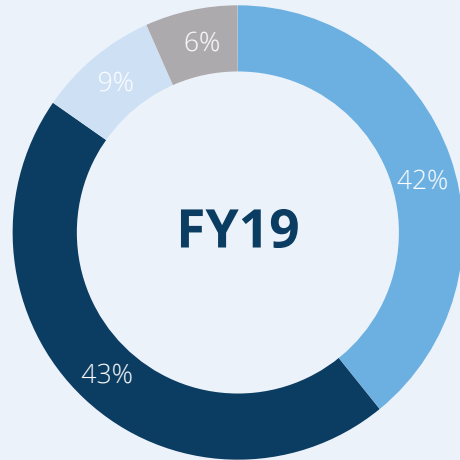
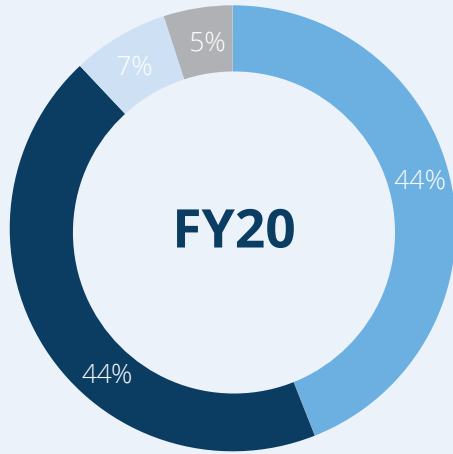
FOCUS benefactors make all the difference, supporting our mission in so many ways:

- Praying for students and missionaries on campus
- Joining an individual missionary's work
- Giving to FOCUS national initiatives
- Sharing FOCUS resources with others
- Telling friends and family about our apostolate
- Funding scholarships for FOCUS national events and mission trips
- Naming FOCUS as a beneficiary in their estate plan



HOW WE USED IT

	FY20	FY19
Missionary Salaries and Expenses	\$34,192,884	\$32,363,736
Campus and Other Outreach Expenses	\$34,050,637	\$32,600,661
Conference Expenses	\$5,464,349	\$6,627,244
Mission Trip Expenses	\$4,089,896	\$4,636,288
Total Expenses	\$77,797,766	\$76,227,929



- Missionary Salaries and Expenses
- Campus and Other Outreach Expenses
- Conference Expenses
- Mission Trip Expenses



THE NEED FOR HOPE: CATHOLIC FORMATION ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES



ANNETTE & GEORGE STRAKE

“Young people need formation.”

Native Texan George Strake Jr.—85 years young—finds his greatest satisfaction in giving back to Catholic causes making a difference. And FOCUS is high on his list.

“It’s important for Catholics to be represented in colleges,” said George. “Young people need formation.” It’s as simple as that for George: he sees a need, and he is there to help. It’s a lesson he learned early in life from the example of his parents, Susan and George Strake Sr.

“My father’s parents both died before his eighth birthday, and it fell to his

“FOCUS came in there, and it was a game changer.”

older sisters to raise my dad and his siblings — eight in all. They lived not in a three-bedroom apartment, but a three-room apartment. Dad’s first job was as a Western Union runner, earning ten dollars a week, but he still put two dollars in the collection basket every Sunday. He was determined to be successful.”

And so his father was, despite coming to Houston in 1929 with nary a penny in his pocket. The discovery over the Conroe oil field helped him become one of the most successful businessmen in Texas.

“My father always said he wanted to give away his last dollar the day before he died,” said George, who inherited his father’s philanthropic spirit. “The more you earn, the bigger your responsibility is. I learned that from mom and dad.”

After studying economics at the University of Notre Dame and earning an MBA at the Harvard Business School, George joined his father in the oil business and eventually started successful businesses of his own.

Catholic causes remain at the center of George Strake’s philanthropy, with a special interest in nurturing the faith

on college campuses. And FOCUS is a perfect fit.

“They are unabashedly Catholic,” George said of FOCUS missionaries. “And they are active on college campuses all over the country. Lord knows we need that. It’s the right philosophy and the right approach.”

FOCUS is active at 11 schools in George’s home state, including the University of Texas - Austin. “FOCUS came in there, and it was a game changer,” said George.

“I think FOCUS is doing great work,” he added. “In today’s world, we need courageous people to say they’re Catholic. It’s a blessing to be able to help.”

By Scott Wahle

George Strake Jr. and his wife, Annette, have supported FOCUS since 2006. They have been blessed with six children and 17 grandchildren. They currently reside in Houston, Texas.

WHO GIVES US HOPE

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Anonymous (23)

Mrs. Carol F. AuClair
Dr. & Dr. David and Catherine Bain
Benedictine College
Mr. & Mrs. Edwin and Kathy Bernau, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. John and Colleen Boselli
Mr. & Mrs. John and Carmel Brand
Mr. & Mrs. J. Paul and Frances Breitbach
Mrs. Cathy J. Brummer
The Burleigh Family Foundation
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Drs. Paul and Janine Carson
Mr. & Mrs. Bob and Joan Catell
Mr. & Mrs. Gary and Nancy Chartrand
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Mr. & Mrs. Timothy and Wendy Connors
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The Saeman Family Foundation
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Sioux Chief Manufacturing
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Mr. Noah Southerland
St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church
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Strake Foundation
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Mr. & Mrs. Carlos and Carmen Usme
Viola Foundation Inc.
Mr. & Mrs. Jeffrey and Melissa Waters

Mr. & Mrs. Timothy and Susan Watkins
Mr. Ernest P. Waud, III
Mr. & Mrs. Don and Barbara Western

\$12,000 - \$24,999

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Mr. & Mrs. Todd and Sharon Alton
Archdiocese of San Antonio
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Mr. & Mrs. James and Kelley Basta
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Deacon & Mrs. George and Marilyn Loegering
Mrs. Kathleen M. Lund
Mr. & Mrs. Phil and Nancy Lundman
The Malama Ohana
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Ms. Janet Noonan
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Mr. & Mrs. David and Karen Perez
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A WITNESS OF HOPE: SAVING SOULS FOR ETERNITY



THOMAS & GLORY SULLIVAN

*“Evangelization is
the focus and the
results are in.”*

For Thomas and Glory Sullivan, there's little doubt about the most important thing in this life: to get through the narrow gate to heaven. With strong Catholic roots and a deep appreciation for Catholic education, they know how serious it is for Catholics to be set on fire with their faith.

“There's so much to gain and so much to lose,” said Glory. “Life is short, and the life to come is eternal.”

In 2002, when Archbishop of Denver Charles J. Chaput recommended that Tom and Glory support a nascent apostolate called the Fellowship of Catholic University Students, they agreed. Gradually, Glory and Tom came to learn more about FOCUS' mission. They saw firsthand the positive effect FOCUS missionaries were having at the nearby University of North Florida campus — and it's an effect they have since seen spread to other campuses.

“Evangelization is the focus and the results are in,” said Tom. “Holy Catholic young people are going to convents, to the priesthood, to happy marriages to raise beautiful children and instill in them the Catholic faith and the discipline [to trust God] to save their immortal souls for eternal happiness.”

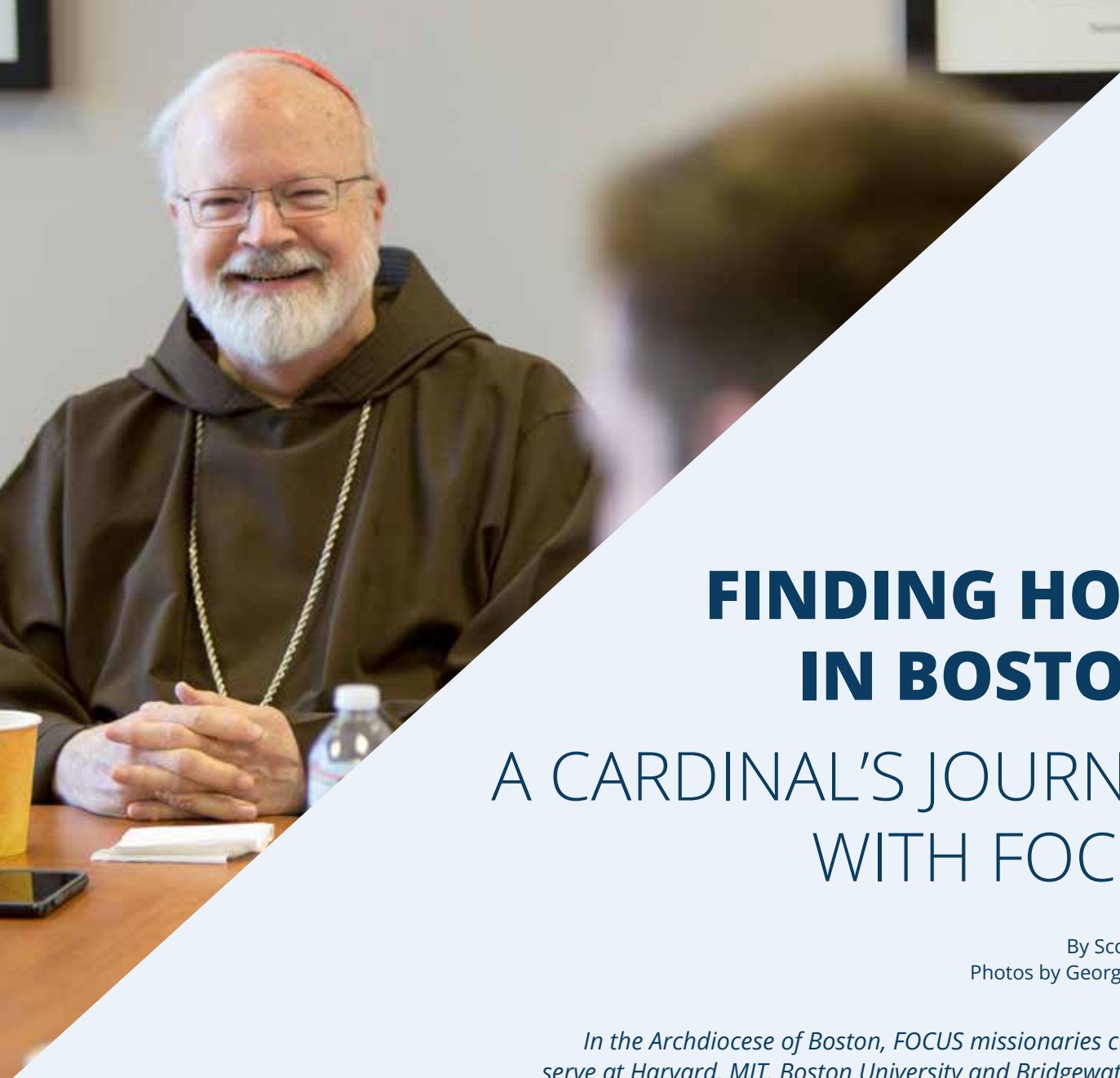
Curtis Martin invited Glory to serve as a member of the early FOCUS Board of Directors, a position which she held for seven years. “My heart was just taken,” said Glory. “The young people we met through FOCUS — the students, the missionaries — were just outstanding people. The whole effect that FOCUS has had on everyone they have touched is just wonderful and so Christ-filled. That is the best part.”

In Tom's and Glory's eyes, FOCUS missionaries choose to live in a radically different way — with a central focus of serving and saving souls — which is what they believe sets FOCUS apart from other charitable organizations. “The results of FOCUS are amazing and are the reason we continue to invest in FOCUS' mission,” said Tom. Seeing the steady growth and the lasting impact FOCUS has had on young people involved in the apostolate has given them hope for the faith.

“We are stewards of our resources, and we have a very strong responsibility to invest those resources properly for the sake of God's kingdom,” explained Tom. “We believe our support of FOCUS is a great investment.”

“FOCUS is one of the best things that we have ever come into contact with,” added Glory. “It's phenomenal for what it is and what it does.”

Thomas and Glory Sullivan have supported FOCUS since 2002. Tom and Glory founded successful businesses in Environmental Law and Energy Publishing, Education and Commercial Real Estate. Glory was a valuable member of FOCUS' Board of Directors from 2007 to 2014. In 2018, they made a bequest to FOCUS through an estate gift. Tom and Glory have been blessed with three children and seven grandchildren. They live in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida.



“The one-on-one contact is such a powerful way to witness the Gospel and share our faith. This is where FOCUS missionaries are doing such an extraordinary job.”

FINDING HOPE IN BOSTON: A CARDINAL’S JOURNEY WITH FOCUS

By Scott Wahle
Photos by George Martell

In the Archdiocese of Boston, FOCUS missionaries currently serve at Harvard, MIT, Boston University and Bridgewater State University. Archbishop of Boston Seán Patrick Cardinal O’Malley, O.F.M. Cap, shares his thoughts on FOCUS’ outreach and its impact in his own archdiocese and throughout the world.

How long have you known FOCUS?

I’ve known FOCUS through the founder Curtis Martin and the Capuchin friars who have been involved from the beginning. Receiving FOCUS missionaries in Boston over the last few years has allowed me to become more involved and know the mission more intimately.

What is your impression of the enthusiasm of the missionaries you’ve encountered over the years?

It’s so encouraging to meet with them, both here in Boston and at different national meetings. These people are on fire with their sense of mission and vocation. Everywhere you go, you hear about the wonderful work FOCUS missionaries are doing and how effective their peer ministry to young people is. This is a time for young people to appropriate their own faith, to have a sense of belonging ... they’re looking for values and meaning for their own lives, so it’s a wonderful ministry.



You rightly described FOCUS as a “peer ministry.” How important is it that the model calls for young people to engage with other young people?

I think there’s a trust factor there — someone who speaks their own language, who has had similar experiences, who understands what they’re going through. Through all that, they see their faith, the witness of their lives, because many are looking for meaning and they find in the faith of these missionaries something that gives them hope.

This intersects nicely with the pope’s theme of evangelization.

Yes — going out, not waiting for people to come to us. Universities are often very secular in their outlook, and having the opportunity to carry the Gospel message into a university setting is a greater opportunity for us.

Have you been able to measure the impact FOCUS has had specifically in the Boston archdiocese?

I think one of the wonderful things is the sea of vocations that have come out of FOCUS. I have a retreat every year for university students centered on vocations discernment. So many of the participants come through FOCUS groups, and out of that retreat come most of our vocations for the seminary.

FOCUS’ model is essentially a Christian model — sharing good news with friends.

In “Evangelii Nuntiandi,” Pope St. Paul VI says the evangelized person is an evangelizer. I think we forget that part of being evangelized means embracing the mission and then doing something about it. I always say that, when Jesus commissioned the first disciples to “Go, make disciples of all nations,” they went out, and most died as martyrs

— but if they had stayed where they were, we wouldn’t be here today. Now it’s our turn to embrace that mission. That’s what our FOCUS missionaries are doing. They’re living that vocation, sharing the good news that they have received. And the one-on-one contact is such a powerful way to witness to the Gospel and share our faith. This is where FOCUS missionaries are doing such an extraordinary job.

It does seem like FOCUS is greatly inspired by the zeal of those early disciples, who spread the word by word of mouth. There was no social media in those days — and yet it spread like wildfire!

That’s the experience of our FOCUS missionaries, as well, building up a sense of community that so many of our young people are longing for, who feel very isolated. They can discover a community of faith in the Church, a shared mission and identity. It’s

“One of the wonderful things is the sea of vocations that have come out of FOCUS.”

just an extraordinary and enlivening experience. So many young people have not had a strong catechetical formation, so the Church really needs to concentrate on how to bring the Gospel message to them. The universities are an important part of this equation. FOCUS serves that young demographic throughout the country and the world. If the Church can be present at that important moment in their lives, there’s a much better chance they will live their faith throughout their entire lives.

**“Always
be ready
to give an
explanation
to anyone
who asks
you for
a reason
for your
hope...”**

—1 PETER 3:15



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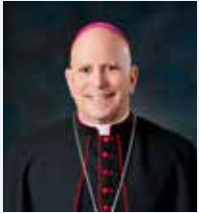
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“In due season we shall reap, if we do not lose heart.” —Galatians 6:9

There is little doubt: Right here, right now, is an extraordinary moment in our history. Fearful and isolated by the coronavirus, many people — especially young people — are desperately seeking answers, hope and genuine friendship. Torn apart by the sins of racism and crimes of violence, America is struggling in the battle for its very soul.

And yet, in this time of national crisis and intense anxiety, God has given us a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to bring in a bountiful harvest for His Church. **And FOCUS is prepared to seize this opportunity.**

FOCUS is more than ready for the college environment of the coming years. More than two decades of successful evangelization across 170 campuses has helped us develop the necessary innovation and flexibility to teach, train and manage our mission remotely. These are not new skills for us: We’ve been able to support students both on and beyond campus through both face-to-face friendship and distance technology. Every day, we are reaching and forming more young men and women across this country.

That is good news because our country needs strong Catholic leaders in every walk of life. It needs young people deeply rooted in Scripture, Church teaching and Catholic values. FOCUS is helping to create courageous young leaders who will boldly drive the faith forward in this season of uncertainty.

But these brave young people need you. Courage is contagious: As we draw courage from the work of FOCUS missionaries, they draw strength from your support and prayers. With our help, they will win, build and send thousands more young Catholics to transform the face of this nation. They will enter the priesthood and other religious vocations. They will be strong Catholic witnesses in professional fields, in elected offices, in communities and in parishes across America. They will pass on the faith to their families and others whom they encounter. Their courage will renew the world.

This is indeed an extraordinary moment — and on behalf of FOCUS, thank you for your partnership and generosity. If we are faithful and courageous and continue to work together — and if we do not lose heart — God will use us to help Him reap a bountiful harvest!

William Mumma
Chair of the Board





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