

## My Campus Ministry highlights

A reflection by Sister Adele Thibaudeau

After 27 years of ministry at Cardinal Stritch University, I am looking back on what that meant to me.

I have thoroughly loved the students, staff and faculty with whom I have had the privilege to walk with for that time! Campus Ministry included partnering with such fine colleagues as diocesan priests Father Bill Kohler and Father Jim Lobacz and, most recently, with Father Jim Gannon, OFM. This has been one way of continuing the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi 100 or more years of service to the Milwaukee archdiocesan seminary and bishop's residences. Together, we creatively served students with retreats; pastoral counseling; a student organization and annual discernment of gifts for the next year's leadership; peace and justice education and action; Franciscan Values reflection; Soup with Substance lunches and so much more!

Some of the highlights together were:

- **Annual Global Awareness Week:** Faculty would select the free speakers we offered on international topics given by returned missionaries who came and stayed for a week. Students were fascinated and Mass took on an international flavor with homilies opening us to cultures and the Universal Church. Many faculty looked forward to this and planned with us on our theme for each year.
- Upon realizing the educators, missionaries, and church leaders were offering a more enlightened approach to the coming of **Columbus to America**, with a faculty committee, we scheduled about a year of programming sustained by grants. Included was a library display from the Smithsonian explaining the plants that came from Europe to the New World and vice versa. A series of lectures were presented over the course of the year that included songs, treaties and legal rights of native peoples. We also celebrated a day with Native Americans, sharing their spirituality, which included a Mass with an opening smudging ceremony with dried spruce and a homily by Father Ed Cook, the pastor of The Church of the Great Spirit. After a meal together, a powwow took place in the field house to which the entire campus was invited to join in with the help of our guests.
- The **National Catholic Student Coalition Conference**, affiliated with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, became a time to travel together, network with students from across the country, be inspired by keynote speakers, and bring back new ideas to campus. This is how I met current Alumni Director Joel Cencius and his sister. Two memorable places we traveled to: Washington, D.C., and Denver. Stritch student leadership surfaced as we became involved in state and national leadership. Father Jim Lobacz was honored for his keen leadership at this level at an annual banquet to the delight of our students.
- Introducing a pilot program in **service learning** to the campus, working with Sister Florence Deacon, OSF, of the history department, was only the beginning of efforts to establish this experiential approach to faculty. Students showed tremendous enthusiasm for their projects at our cross-discipline, brown-bag lunches. As time went on the Rev. Dr. Trinette McCray assisted us with a grant to create a Faculty Scholars In-depth study of the topic. We re-named the work: Academic Service Learning and it remains a work in progress today.