Crossings: A Newsletter of The Crossings Project  
Fall 2003

A Crossings Point-of-View  Michael G. Cartwright, Executive Director

On more than one occasion during the past year, members of the Steering Committee of The Crossings Project have used construction metaphors to describe the activities associated with the first year of our work. There is no question that the flurry of activity and conversation that constitutes the Crossings “construction company” in the “Office of Ecumenical and Interfaith Programs” has been a creative disruption throughout the year. At the same time, the restructuring of the campus ministry program through The Crossings Project has been reinvigorating for all concerned.

Not all aspects of the Crossings Project are as visible on campus as the “Restructuring Campus Ministry Initiative,” nor has it been self-evident to all parties involved how the various parts connect to the whole that is “under construction.” Indeed, I think it would be very difficult at this stage for someone outside the steering committee to be able to connect all the pieces. Some initiatives have made significant progress while others have encountered unforeseen obstacles or the launch had to be deferred until we can put together the infrastructure that will be needed to support them. As I suggested at the “year end review” meeting of the thirteen-member Steering Committee on May 15th, the image of “a pyramid under construction” is an apt metaphor to display what has and has not been accomplished during the first full year of The Crossings Project.

There are several senses in which this is the case. Certainly the image of a pyramid helps make sense of our uneven progress in the eight different initiatives that comprise The Crossings Project. When one thinks of the initial stages of the construction of a pyramid, it is not unusual to see segments of a structure that do not immediately connect with one another, but that ultimately will be connected as the walls draw together. To the casual observer, the overall scale of the project will not be immediately visible in the midst of all the construction that is taking place at and around the base which will appear fairly broad but by no means integral. The image of a pyramid is also fitting in the sense that in order to “lift up” the already existing curricular programs of the Lantz Center for Christian Vocations, around which we intend to build these other initiatives, we have had to give more attention to adjacent programs that surround the Christian Vocations program. Finally, the pyramid analogy helps to illumine the work yet to be done in order for this project to succeed according to the vision stated in the proposal that we submitted in October 2001, which noted the “spiral effect” of the interaction of the various initiatives – spiritual formation, liberal arts, and community partnerships -- in fostering a campus culture in which theological exploration of vocation can thrive in the context of the university’s mission of “education for service.”

Copies of the Annual Report of The Crossings Project are available at the desk at Krannert Memorial Library for anyone interested in reading the full document.
PROJECT UPDATES

Crossing Thresholds: Six new United Methodist Youth Leader Scholars have enrolled at the University this fall. Laura Copper (Lagro, IN); Victoria Korn (Bloomington, IN); Hilary Conklin (Rushville, IN); Danielle Poland (Hammond, IN); Amber L. Golden (Portland, IN); Nicole A. Jonas (Indianapolis, IN). These students join the six students who were selected to be UMY Leaders last year. . . . After last year’s “interim staffing” arrangements, we are pleased to have hired two new persons to serve on the ecumenical campus ministry team alongside the Rev. Dr. Lang Brownlee, University Chaplain and Assistant Professor of Philosophy & Religion. Both of these newcomers will be contributing to the work of the Crossings Project in notable ways. Sr. Jennifer Horner, O.S.B. brings a unique set of gifts and experience to the positions of Associate University Chaplain & Director of the Lantz Center for Christian Vocations. “Sister Jennifer” was born in Zambia and raised in South Africa. After the Horner family was expelled from South Africa in 1978 (her father was a vocal opponent of apartheid), Jennifer completed high school in Idaho where her father served as a Presbyterian pastor. While a student at Boise State University, where she completed the Bachelor of Arts of Elementary Education (1985), Jennifer participated in the campus ministry offered through the Newman Center. After a period of discernment, she decided to join the Catholic Church, and still later, she began to explore monastic spirituality. In 1989, she joined the Sisters of St. Benedict. As part of her monastic formation, Sister Jennifer completed a Master’s degree in Theology (1997) at the School of Theology at St. John’s University in Collegeville, MN. Her studies at St. John’s emphasized spiritual formation. From 1998-2000, she served as the Director of Spirituality at the Benedict Inn Conference & Retreat Center in Beech Grove, IN. In that position, Jennifer directed the Spiritual Direction Internship Program. Given her Protestant-and-Catholic background, Jennifer has much to offer to ecumenical endeavors. From July 2001 to July 2003 Sr. Jennifer served as the Pastoral Lay Associate at St. Paul the Apostle Catholic Church in Greencastle, IN. (In the Roman Catholic tradition, the pastoral lay associate has full responsibility for the life of the parish, exclusive of the sacramental duties of an ordained priest.) As part of her ministry in Greencastle, Sr. Jennifer served as the Catholic Chaplain on the Religious Life staff at DePauw University. As a member of the ecumenical “campus ministry team” at the U of I Jennifer will play a different set of roles, directing the Lantz Center for Christian Vocations and engaging in ministry alongside University Chaplain Lang Brownlee. In addition to teaching courses in the Christian Vocations curriculum and conducting a year-long review of the Christian Vocations Curriculum, Jennifer will serve as the convener of the Interfaith Activities Council. . . . Mr. Micah Weedman joined the staff of the Office of Ecumenical and Interfaith Programs in the position of "Resident-in-Ministry" (see below for explanation of title/position) in August. Micah is a graduate of Milligan College in Johnson City, TN, and has completed a Master of Divinity degree at Emmanuel School of Religion, seminary of the Christian Church/Churches of Christ also located in Johnson City. He comes to us very highly recommended by members of the faculty at both institutions. Micah is currently a candidate for ordination in the Christian Church/Churches of Christ, a process that he expects will be completed sometime in the coming year. Micah was hired following conversations with the staff of the Religion Division of Lilly Endowment about amending the Crossings grant by convert the seminary internship in campus ministry into a "residency-in-ministry" position. (One of the trends in the world of theological education in recent years has been to create mentoring opportunities for additional training for persons who have completed their seminary studies and who feel called to particular roles in ministry. These "residency in ministry" initiatives are loosely modeled on the kinds of "medical residencies" that have long been a part of the education of physicians.) During the period of his residency-in-ministry, Micah and his wife Jo Ellen and four-month old daughter Emmaline will be living in a duplex apartment here at the University, where Micah will have his "office" and from which he will launch his ministry. In addition to his (half-time) ministry alongside the university chaplains (Brownlee and Horner), Micah will also have a 1/4 time role working with the staff of Residence Life to create a new series of programs that will
foster vocational reflection. Micah has been hired for one year in these two capacities. At the end of this first year, he and the university will have the option to renew either or both arrangements for the 2004-2005 academic year. . . . Now that all members of the ecumenical campus ministry team are in place, we are ready to implement the Campus Ministries Undergraduate Internship, one of the opportunities made available through the “Pre-Theology Initiative” for students who want to explore the prospect of Christian ministry in a church-related comprehensive university. For the next two years, The Crossings Project will be able to mentor one intern each semester. Interns will be paid $800 per month for 12 hours of work and 6 hours of theological reflection each week. Information and applications for this internship will be available later in September.

Crossing Intersections for Service: After being considered by a subcommittee of the Crossings Project Steering Committee and the Provost, three EduServ Faculty Mini-Grants totaling $10,000 were awarded for at the end of Semester II. 1) James Ream was awarded a grant for the Theatre Non Nobis project that will bring students and members of the Central Indiana community together in order to serve God by creating drama that nourishes, encourages, and enlightens theatre-goers minds and hearts. Theatre Non Nobis will give students a creative and dramatic way of using their gifts for God while they learn from Christian theatre professionals. 2) James Stephens was awarded a $2,500 grant for his proposal for a “Ethics, the Practice of Code of Conduct” project that will invite students from the School of Business course on “Human Resource Management” to learn about ethical policies in not-for-profit, profit and government entities. Stephens will serve as mentor to students in this course as they reflect on ethical questions and learn to articulate their own moral beliefs in such matters. 3) Greg Clapper was awarded a grant to provide release time for him to finish writing a book on Christian Vocations that will ultimately be published by Upper Room Books. Prof. Clapper’s book is tentatively entitled “I’m No God at Being Noble:” Christian Vocation and Human Freedom in a Culture of Cynicism.

Crossing into Community Partnerships: This summer, eight students and alumni from the University of Indianapolis participated in the first Disciples House for Youth training at Christian Theological Seminary. Several of these students are also enrolled in the University’s Youth Ministry Training Program that has been created in collaboration with Christian Theological Seminary. . . . Michael Cartwright has convened a group of interested persons from the University of Indianapolis and the Southside of Indianapolis to work on a proposed event for the upcoming Spirit & Place Festival 2003. The tentative title for this set of events focusing on the historic religious and ethnic communities “south of Washington Street” is “Remembering and Reconciling on the Southside of Indianapolis.” The planning process has involved various individuals, congregations, neighborhood associations, and civic groups. The afternoon events will include a bus tour of various sites significant for the religious and ethnic communities of the Southside of Indianapolis. In addition, Kevin Corn is putting together a “virtual tour” about the Southside of Indianapolis. That evening, the university will host a “pitch-in” dinner to be held in the Dining Hall of the University followed by a panel discussion of Indianapolis-area religious and cultural historians who will discuss perspectives and myths of the Southside of Indianapolis.

Resources Available: Crossings Paper #2 by Micah Weedman -- “A Freshman’s Tale, or How My Vocation Found Me” -- will be available by the end of September. Copies of Weedman’s reflections will be available free upon request from The Crossings Project Office in SC 203 or call Lois Stead at x2106. . . . Once again, Vocare funds are available from the Office of Human Resources for faculty and staff of the university who are interested in going on retreats, attending personal development workshops or otherwise exploring their vocations.
Coming Attractions!

The *EduServ Faculty Seminar #2* originally scheduled for this fall, has been re-scheduled for second semester. More details will be available following the Fall Advisory Board Meeting.

**The Crossings Calendar:**

- **9/11-9/13**  Second Gathering of the St. Brigid’s Methodist-Benedictine Consultation in Collegeville, MN.
- **9/20/03**  Covenant Discipleship Workshops led by Dr. David Sutherland, Associate Provost and Associate Professor of Mathematics at Hendrix College, Conway, Arkansas
- **9/26/03**  Advisory Board Meeting to review the first year of *The Crossings Project*
- **9/27/03**  Youth Ministry Convocation (9-4:30 p. m) will be hosted by the U of I in collaboration with Christian Theological Seminary.
- **10/31/03**  Third round of Proposals for EduServ Faculty Mini-Grants are due to be submitted to Provost Freeman

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