

Greetings from Gross Catholic!

It is with gratitude and joy that we send this message to inform you of the impact you have made on our community by awarding us a Catholic futures grant last year. We received \$1500 to assist with scholarships and transportation to the SEEK and Steubenville Conferences. Thanks to your generosity, we have maintained our SEEK attendance and grown the Steubenville attendance from 8 to 30 students in one year's time!

We used funds from the Catholic Futures Fund to support students who economically could not afford to attend the conferences, to assist with the cost of chaperones' fees, and to reduce the cost of transportation for all pilgrims.

The return on your investment has been overflowing graces! As I stated above, the number of students who have committed to attending this summer has exploded so much that we have had to cut-off sign-ups. Furthermore, while we were at Steubenville this summer, we discussed ways to share our faith once we returned to school. Here are ways we have begun the evangelization process:

At our Fall faculty/staff retreat, we shared Sr. Josephine's talk about the woman at the well (Steubenville '23). In addition, the Winter retreat and all faith enrichment for the 24-25 school year are based on the Kerygma and the concept of accompanying our students on their faith journey. These ideas were born from talks at Steubenville.

We have created weekly men's and women's faith sharing groups. *Rooted* and *Flourish* discuss timely issues that impact our students' abilities to act as Christian young adults in a secular world. In addition, we challenge students at each meeting to live a specific virtue in a specific way. Then, over the course of the next week, each student and his/her accountability partner tries to live virtuously and with discipline.

We have three young men actively pursuing the priestly vocation, and two girls considering consecrated life. Our young men are in regular attendance at events planned by the Vocations Office.

Our Steubenville student group from last summer created and led an Advent prayer service and Adoration for our school and again for the community at large. We intend to continue to offer these experiences to the community at large as we feel it is important for adults to see young people leading prayer.

Our students have shared personal graces from the conferences as well. Grace N said, "I have learned that I don't need to earn God's love, that it is freely given to me. I have also learned from so many people knowledgeable about the faith about so many of the church's teachings. For example, I learned from Fr. Gregory Pike about friendship and how to be friends with God. This week I also

found a love for adoration and just spending time with God in silence." Peter G shares that he learned to grow in his love for our Holy Mother which has helped him as he discerns his vocation. Lucy L has found comfort in knowing that other young people also love the Lord and being able to live her faith out loud at Steubenville has given her strength to do the same when she returned to school.

Thank you for your support of Gross Catholic students! Your generosity has changed lives.