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The Fields are White for Harvest: Welcome to College Ministry

The Department of College Ministry held its inaugural event, *"The Fields are White for Harvest: Welcome to College Ministry"* on Saturday, 18 August 2012, at Holy Trinity Church (OCA) in Yonkers NY. Feedback from amongst the 20 participants included *"amazement,"* that it was *"energizing"* and one clergyman went so far as to call it *"the best conference I've ever attended."* Participants overwhelmingly commented that they appreciated the *"straightforwardness," "practicality"* and *"thoroughness"* of the event.



In conjunction with Andrew Boyd (Director of the OCA's National Department of Youth, Young Adult, and Campus Ministries) and Edward Ryan (a student at the University of Connecticut), the goal of the conference was to lay the groundwork for interested clergy, college students, and laity of all jurisdictions to engage in college ministry.

Father David Cowan opened the day with prayer, welcoming everyone to his parish. He read a message from Bishop Michael conveying his greetings and encouragement; His Grace was unable to attend due to a previous commitment elsewhere in the diocese. Deacon John Diamantis (Chairperson, Diocesan Department of College Ministry) offered an introduction and overview of why college ministry is so important and the exciting possibilities for it to flourish throughout New York and New Jersey.

The conference was divided into four sections. Edward Ryan offered his testimonial about *"The Impact of Campus Ministry on College Students."* Andrew Boyd spoke about *"Challenges and Strategies in Ministering to College Students."* Deacon John Diamantis spoke about *"How to Begin College Ministry"* and *"The Effects of College Ministry in a Parish."* Each speaker fielded a litany of questions from eager conference participants following their presentations. Attendees were then invited to ask the three-man panel questions about anything related to college ministry.



In addition to the information shared by the presenters, conference participants returned home with a folder of useful information and tools including forms to help identify colleges with which they might engage themselves, detailing items they should bring to campus to engage in this work.

