

Division of Mission + Ministry Executive Annual Report 2025–2026



Contents

03 Message from the Vice President

04 Get to Know Us

05 Mission in Action

Advancing Mission Across the University 06

Engaging the DePaul Community in Service 07

Building Community Across Differences 08

Nurturing Faith, Meaning, and Purpose 09

Preparing Students for Meaningful Lives and Careers 10

Seeking Wisdom, Applying Knowledge 11

12 Looking Ahead



Message from the VP

What does mission look like in action?

It looks like a colleague receiving a Shared Coin in recognition of their Vincentian spirit. It looks like students serving their communities in Chicago and abroad, and faculty coming together around Vincentian pedagogy. It sounds like lively interfaith dialogue, heartfelt worship, a memorial for a beloved colleague, and conversations that build understanding across differences. It feels like compassionate pastoral care, meaningful formation experiences, and a community grounded in purpose.

At a time when higher education and our world face significant challenges, DePaul University continues to draw strength from its Catholic and Vincentian mission. That mission calls us to accompany those on the margins, cultivate human dignity, and build a more just and compassionate world. In the words of St. Vincent de Paul, it inspires a love that is “inventive to infinity.”

This report highlights some of the ways the Division of Mission and Ministry helps bring mission to life, forming students, faculty, and staff to lead lives of meaning, service, and impact. We are proud to help foster a culture where our Catholic and Vincentian mission is not simply something we talk about, but something we experience every day.



Mark Laboe, D.Min.

Interim Vice President, Mission and Ministry

Get to Know Us

Divisional Mission

The Division of Mission and Ministry (DMM) **animates, deepens, and sustains** DePaul University's Catholic and Vincentian mission. Through our work, we help to shape not only the present character of DePaul, but the future expression of its mission in the world.

Values

Grounded in the Catholic and Vincentian tradition, we are guided by **human dignity**, justice, community and belonging, **faith and spirituality**, reflection, service, and **solidarity** with those who are excluded or denied full participation in society.

How We Work

Mission and Ministry is organized around three interconnected areas: **student engagement** (Catholic Campus Ministry and Vincentian Service Office and the Interfaith Ministry Office), **faculty and staff engagement**, and **Vincentian scholarship**. While each has distinct areas of focus, we work collaboratively across the university to help people understand DePaul's mission and discover how it can inform their learning, leadership, relationships, and service to others.

To broaden our impact, we employ a **distributed leadership model**. Through a network of student leaders, Mission Ambassadors, university partners, and community collaborators, the reach of DePaul's mission extends far beyond the Division of Mission and Ministry into classrooms, offices, student organizations, and neighborhoods across Chicago and beyond.

Mission in Action





4,258

NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO PARTICIPATED IN
A DMM PROGRAM IN AY 2026

21

NUMBER OF ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS
REPRESENTED BY MISSION AMBASSADORS

Advancing Mission Across the University

Throughout the year **more than one in four undergraduate students** and **over 30% of full-time faculty and staff participated** in Mission and Ministry programming.

The **Meet Me at the Mission: Vincentian Heritage Initiative** partnered throughout the institution with peer-led events and workshops **involving 2,345 students** to foster mission understanding and action planning. Mission becomes most powerful when people make it their own.

DMM also engages institutional leaders whose decisions shape the university. Recent cohorts of the **Vincentian Mission Institute** included the majority of DePaul deans, as well as other senior administrators and athletics leadership. Together with **Mission Ambassadors** representing 21 college and vice-presidential areas, these individuals help embed mission into the daily life of the institution.

Through programs such as the **Managers Forum**, mid-level leaders can explore how Vincentian values can inform decisions and support employees.

The division also extends mission education through **existing touchpoints** like new faculty and employee orientations, Chicago Quarter courses, student leadership programs, and customized workshops for colleges and departments. Through the **Vincentian Endowment Fund**, DMM financially **supported 15 projects** advancing food security, civic engagement, student success, and Vincentian scholarship.

“

The mission is a reminder of what our priorities should be in our lives as well as our work. The mission should guide leadership to consciously identify how dignity, access, and inclusion appear in their decision-making. In my work, the mission is a north star to help myself and others understand why DePaul is worthy of investment.

– LUNCH WITH VINCENT PARTICIPANT





1,876

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS WHO EXPERIENCED
DEPAUL'S LEGACY OF SERVICE THROUGH CHICAGO QUARTER
AND VINCENTIAN SERVICE DAYS

2,840

HOURS OF SERVICE PROVIDED BY WEEKLY DCSA
SERVICE GROUPS

Engaging the DePaul Community in Service

“

The service itself changed how I see things. Standing in the Father McKenna Center, serving breakfast to men experiencing homelessness, having conversations during food distribution—I came in with knowledge about poverty from textbooks. I left with faces and stories.

That is a different kind of knowing. Capitol Hill stopped me completely. I grew up in India, but there I was advocating for the ROAD to Housing Act on behalf of people I had just spent a week serving alongside....

I came into this experience thinking I was contributing something by driving. What I did not expect was how much I would receive... in community, in perspective, and in understanding of what it means to show up for others without hesitation.

This was not a trip. It was a turning point.”

— WASHINGTON, D.C.
SERVICE IMMERSION
PARTICIPANT

Through weekly **DePaul Community Service Association (DCSA)** service groups, **Service Immersion** opportunities, **Vincentian Service Day**, and **Faculty/Staff Service Day**, students, faculty, staff, and alumni connected service with reflection and action.

DCSA engaged with **11 longtime community partners** throughout Chicago in weekly or monthly service, while the Seton Soup Kitchen, supported by Catholic Campus Ministry, recorded nearly **1,500 volunteer hours**. Ninety-five students participated in domestic and international service immersions that challenged them to connect social realities with questions of justice, vocation, and responsibility.

Service at DePaul is never simply about volunteering. It is about **recognizing our shared humanity**, understanding the root causes of social inequities, and developing the commitment to work toward lasting change.





200+

NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO ATTENDED THE INTERFAITH
SPRING RITUAL IN THE STU ATRIUM

274

NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO ENGAGED IN DIALOGUE EVENTS
HOSTED BY THE BRIDGEBUILDING FELLOWSHIP STUDENTS

Building Community Across Differences

At a time of deep polarization, DMM's Bridgebuilding Fellowship (BBF) helps students build the skills to engage across religious, cultural, and ideological differences. For 2026 BBF Fellow Umar Ryan, the experience reinforced that **"people aren't just their opinions, they have entire backgrounds and stories that lead them to those opinions."** That insight has shaped how he approaches disagreement: "While you might not agree with their opinion, if you just judge them based off that... it can lead to further polarization and divide and conflict." After completing the program, Umar and 48 other Fellows put their learning into practice by leading dialogue programs of their own, extending the program's impact across campus.

Bridgebuilding participants overwhelmingly agreed (93%) that **bridgebuilding is a vital expression of DePaul's Catholic and Vincentian mission**. The division also sought to strengthen involvement across difference through its service and student engagement programs. By intentionally focusing outreach

on historically underrepresented populations, for example, DCSA increased participation among Latiné students, African American students, commuters, and male students.

Across the division, Mission and Ministry continued to foster **belonging and dialogue**. DMM leaders were among those recognized with the Provost Award for Inclusive Engagement for advancing university-wide dialogue initiatives, while other staff brought mission-centered perspectives to committees and initiatives throughout campus.

Supported by a grant from [Interfaith America](#) and in partnership with BEAM (the Division of Belonging, Engagement, and Mission), **a four-session Religious Pluralism program engaged faculty and staff** in learning about antisemitism, Islamophobia, and strategies for interreligious dialogue. Students engaged similar themes through programs such as the **Interfaith Iftar**, hosted in partnership with the Student Government Association and recognized as the campus event of the year by the Office of Student Involvement, as well as programs hosted by the **Interfaith Scholars** and a new one-day **Interfaith Service Immersion**, which included a partnership with Chicago's Sikh community through Gurdwara Sahib.



Through each visit, I not only learned about different religious traditions, but I also saw a shared commitment to uplifting others—something that resonates strongly with my own values and the Vincentian mission of DePaul University.

— SERVICE IMMERSION PARTICIPANT



4,796

NUMBER OF ATTENDEES AT STUDENT SUNDAY MASSES

\$20k

DONATION TO DEPAUL JEWISH LIFE GIFT FUND TO SUPPORT KOSHER OPTIONS, JEWISH PROGRAMMING, AND ADVOCACY

Nurturing Faith, Meaning, and Purpose

“History’s visiting you now. What’s your assignment?”

During a service immersion in Montgomery, Alabama, a student encountered **civil rights activist Doris Crenshaw, a mentee of Rosa Parks** and someone who challenged the institutions that limited her during the civil rights era. Her question above prompted the student’s deep reflection:

“It was a call to action, to life, to challenging institutions that limit me and other marginalized groups. History is visiting me now. I’ll ponder my assignment.”

Students arrive at DePaul with different beliefs, traditions, identities, and questions. Mission and Ministry seeks to accompany them as they explore what gives their lives meaning and purpose.

“

I see God within the people I serve.

I see God at every Supper N’ Stories through the students wanting to learn more about faith or starting their faith journey.

I have gained so many valuable friendships through my time having a leadership position, and I know that was God’s doing.

– CATHOLIC CAMPUS MINISTRY STUDENT LEADER

Accompaniment can take many forms. Students gathered for **Catholic Mass**, Friday **Jumu’ah Prayer**, **Diwali** celebrations, and **Shabbat** services. They participated in retreats, small faith communities, discussion groups, and met with staff for pastoral care and support.

Catholic Campus Ministry’s **Tepeyac** program partnered with DePaul’s **Center for World Catholicism** on the *Cultura, Comida y Catolicismo* speaker series focusing on the Latiné/Latinx experience of faith and culture, while deep conversations were held in the **Jewish and Muslim Life Centers** and at **Sankofa Black Student Leadership** meetings.

Reflection remains central to DMM’s approach. Whether through weekly service, service immersions, or leadership programs grounded in the **Vincentians in Action (VIA) pedagogy**, students are invited to connect their experiences with larger questions of vocation, responsibility, and contribution. Elements of DMM’s purpose exploration curriculum were also integrated into Discover and Explore classes, helping students consider not only what they want to do, but who they hope to become.

Across traditions and worldviews, **students found communities that challenged them, supported them, and encouraged deeper reflection** about who they are becoming and how they hope to contribute to the world.



132

NUMBER OF DMM STUDENT LEADERS WHO COMPLETED ONE YEAR COMMON MISSION FORMATION ON VINCENTIAN MISSION AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

881

NUMBER OF GRADUATING STUDENTS WHO SIGNED THE DEPAUL PLEDGE TO COMMIT TO SOCIAL JUSTICE AND VINCENTIAN VALUES AFTER LEAVING DEPAUL

Preparing Students for Meaningful Lives and Careers

Mission and Ministry is known for its **excellence in student leadership development through a distributed leadership model**. Students who begin their involvement in one program often emerge as leaders in many others. Vincentian Service Scholars, for example, often go on to become Resident Advisors, Premiere Orientation leaders, and Thriving Cultural Center leaders. Within DMM they assume leadership roles within DCSA, the Service Immersion program, Community Peacemakers, and Vincentian Service Day. They also serve as leaders in Catholic Campus Ministry, Sankofa, and UMMA, strengthening the entire division while developing the skills, values, and experience needed for **mission-driven leadership**.

“

The experience of UMMA leadership has shaped me a lot more than I initially imagined. Through planning events, managing responsibilities, working with different personalities, and learning to lead with patience and intention, I developed many skills like good communication, teamwork, problem-solving, but most importantly, accountability—while also learning that leadership in Islam is ultimately an act of service.

Today, I feel much more confident stepping into leadership professionally and personally, while carrying with me the understanding that the best impact comes from using what God has given you to serve others with a sincere intention.

– UNITED MUSLIMS MOVING AHEAD (UMMA)
STUDENT LEADER

Through Common Mission Formation, students deepen their understanding of Vincentian values while developing practical **leadership skills rooted in empathy, collaboration, reflection, and service**.

For many students, these experiences influence not only who they are at DePaul, but who they may become after graduation. As one Service Immersion participant shared, “**This experience reinforced how I can contribute by using my skills and abilities**. As someone who is currently majoring in marketing, I am now thinking more critically and discerning how narratives are shaped and how I can help people share their voices that are often overlooked.”

Continuing DePaul’s **longstanding commitment to access and student success** by offering practical support, DMM’s modest Vincentian Assistance Fund provided one-time emergency financial support to 59 students facing unexpected hardship, helping them remain enrolled during times of crisis.



66,100

NUMBER OF PDF [VINCENTIAN STUDIES](#) JOURNAL ARTICLE
DOWNLOADS RECORDED WORLDWIDE

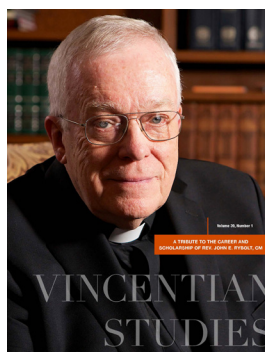
149,900

NUMBER OF LIKES ON INSTAGRAM AND FACEBOOK
FOR POPE LEO XIV'S VIDEO MESSAGE TO DEPAUL ABOUT
THE DEATH PENALTY

Seeking Wisdom, Applying Knowledge

Mission and Ministry contributes to DePaul's intellectual life by connecting faith, ethics, scholarship, and contemporary challenges, and helping students see the wonder and beauty in the world.

The **Vincentian Studies Institute (VSI)** continued to support research and publications that deepen understanding of the history, spirituality, and living legacy of the Vincentian Family. Scholars around the



world can access nearly five decades of articles and a vast array of other research materials through the Institute's [Digital Commons website](#) for free.

This year, DMM helped sponsor the **World Catholicism Conference**, "Pope Leo XIV: From the Americas, For the World," while the Vincentian Studies Institute convened ten scholars for

a pre-conference symposium exploring the relationship between "Vincentians and the Papacy."

Questions of justice also remained at the center of the division's educational work. During the annual "Sr. Helen Week," **Sr. Helen Prejean challenged students and community members** to reflect on human dignity and the continued impact of the death penalty.

This year's program commemorating the 15th anniversary of Illinois' abolition of capital punishment featured former **Governor Pat Quinn** and a special [heartfelt video message](#) from **Pope Leo XIV** (whose parents attended DePaul), affirming the university's longstanding commitment to human dignity.

Students engaged these same questions through programs such as **UMMA Connect**, **Women in Torah Lunch & Learn Series**, and **Catholic Campus Ministry's Supper N' Stories**, which invite participants to explore faith, ethics, justice, spirituality, and contemporary social issues in community with one another, often under the guidance of diverse guest facilitators.



Looking Ahead

The year ahead promises new opportunities to deepen DePaul's mission and expand its impact.

Mission and Ministry will **engage the university community** in a NetVUE-supported exploration on the roots and contemporary meaning of DePaul's Catholic and Vincentian identity. We will **welcome colleagues from across the country** for an Abrahamic chaplains conference, launch a new mission dashboard to better assess mission effectiveness, and **continue contributing** to university-wide efforts focused on dialogue, belonging, and thriving.

We are also excited to be part of an inaugural DePaul team beginning a partnership with the **Vatican's Borgo Laudato si'**, expanding opportunities to connect faith, sustainability, and action. And in October, the year-long **Opus Prize** journey will culminate as DePaul and the Opus Foundation announce the next Opus Prize laureate, whose organization will receive a \$1 million award in recognition of extraordinary faith-

inspired social impact.



As we look ahead, we remain **inspired by the possibilities before us** and committed to helping the DePaul community live its mission in ways that are inventive, courageous, and transformative.

Where to Find Us

blogs.depaul.edu/dmm

instagram.com/depauldmm

youtube.com/user/depaulmission

linkedin.com/company/depauldmm

mission.depaul.edu



Loop Campus

Faculty and Staff Engagement

DePaul Center 11008-11010

1 E. Jackson Blvd.

Chicago, Illinois 60604

[773.325.7902](tel:773.325.7902)

Administrative Offices

14 E. Jackson Blvd., Suite 800

Chicago, Illinois 60604

[312.362.7940](tel:312.362.7940)

Lincoln Park Campus

Student Engagement Area

Student Center, Room 311

2250 N. Sheffield Ave.

Chicago, Illinois 60614

[773.325.7902](tel:773.325.7902)

Catholic Campus Ministry and Vincentian Service

Student Center, Room 104

2250 N. Sheffield Ave.

Chicago, Illinois 60614

[773.325.4134](tel:773.325.4134)