

FOCUS Chaplain and Campus Ministry

FOCUS missionaries work alongside campus chaplains and campus ministers at the college or university where they serve. In addition to these many chaplains around the country, FOCUS also has nine national chaplains who offer pastoral care and support both on campuses and from the national office.

Collaboration on Campus

FOCUS' outreach is designed to coordinate with the current programs of the campus chaplain and campus ministry. Our missionaries' goal is to meet students where they are on campus — in the dorms, on the sports fields, in the student union — and to bring them into the life of the Catholic campus community. Campus ministers often work to meet the needs of the students who come through the doors of the Newman or Catholic Center. In this way, we accomplish together the same goal of helping students encounter Jesus and the fullness of the Catholic faith. FOCUS also trains students to go out on campus to their peers, allowing the reach of the campus ministry to stretch even further across campus.

“Having FOCUS missionaries on campus is like multiplying our campus ministry by four or more. I have 14,000 students on campus, and there are only 24 hours in the day. Our Sunday Mass attendance and daily Mass attendance continue to go up.” —Fr. Mike Schmitz, chaplain at the University of Minnesota-Duluth

FOCUS National Chaplains

Fr. John Lager, O.F.M. Cap. and Fr. Doug Grandon work out of the FOCUS Denver Support Center in Genesee, Colorado. Fr. Lager, Fr. Grandon, Fr. Drea and Fr. Brendan Rolling, O.S.B. are full-time chaplains. Fr. John Ezratty, M.C., Fr. Gabriel Bakkar, C.F.R., Fr. Martin Latiff, M.C., Fr. Kevin Dyer, S.J. and Fr. Martin Mayerhofer, F.S.O. are part-time chaplains with FOCUS due to their regular ministry of preaching, spiritual direction and teaching for their religious community.

Each priest has specific duties in the organization while offering pastoral care to staff, missionaries, campus chaplains, students on campus and benefactors. They will celebrate daily Mass and other sacraments and participate in Spiritual Boot Camps, Team Director Summits, retreats, days of recollection and Interview Weekends.

Biographies of FOCUS National Chaplains



Fr. John Lager, O.F.M. Cap., has served FOCUS as the organization's national chaplain since 2013. Ordained in 1979, Fr. John has served the Capuchins as an associate pastor, a high school campus minister and as the Order's director of development and missionary activity. He has also served as the executive director of the Samaritan House of Denver, vocation director for the Capuchin Province of Mid-America and cofounder of Marked Men for Christ ministry.



Fr. Gabriel Bakkar, C.F.R., grew up in Florida. He is a priest of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal. He attended the Pontifical University of St. Thomas for studies in spirituality and the Cenacle School of Spiritual Direction in Florida. Ordained in 2007, Fr. Gabriel has served his community as director of vocations and postulancy. Over the past ten years, he has preached numerous retreats and offers spiritual direction for missionaries. He currently resides at St. Michael Friary in Paterson, New Jersey.



Fr. John Ezratty, M.C., was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He joined the religious order of Miles Christi at the time of its foundation in 1994 and was ordained in 2002. He has been a priest for 18 years. He studied philosophy at the Pontifical Catholic University of Argentina and theology at the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross in Rome. He served as the executive secretary of the Order and as a pastor of St. Helena Parish in Luján, Argentina. After many years as dean of studies, professor of philosophy and spiritual director at the Miles Christi Seminary in Argentina, he came to the U.S. in 2010. He currently lives in the Archdiocese of Detroit, Michigan, from where he travels throughout the U.S. preaching retreats and days of recollection, giving conferences and providing spiritual direction to help the laity to fervently pursue sanctification, particularly college students. In January 2017, he joined the team of the FOCUS National Chaplains.



Fr. Martin Mayerhofer, F.S.O., was born in Bavaria, Germany. He joined his community The Spiritual Family The Work in 1993. Following studies in Rome at the Pontifical Universities Angelicum and Gregoriana, he was ordained a priest in 2002. He served as an assistant priest in the Diocese of Feldkirch and within his community in Bregenz, both in Austria. Upon completing his doctoral studies in Church History, Father Martin worked as a University Chaplain in Vienna, Austria. During this period, he continued his research in the field of Church History and taught at Vienna University and other ecclesiastical institutions. He spent the 2018-19 academic year as a visiting professor in Washington, D.C. Since the fall of 2019, he teaches at the International Theological Institute in Trumau, Austria and works for FOCUS as a Chaplain for its European missions.



Fr. Doug Grandon - God bless Dan Erisman, who challenged me to read through the Gospel of Matthew and introduced me to Christ when I was 14 years old! Ever since, I've had a passion to do for others what Dan did with me. When I was 15, my first pastor helped me discern that I would one day be ordained. In my early 20s, I served as a missionary translator in Communist Yugoslavia. When I returned home, I married my wife, Lynn, a woman vastly superior to me — and a proud Swede! While attending my first seminary, I started a new church for the Evangelical Free Church and, later, served five years as an Episcopal priest. In 2003, Lynn and I became Catholic, along with our four youngest children. In 2008, Pope Benedict granted Daniel Jenky, Bishop of Peoria, permission to ordain me a married Catholic priest, under the Pastoral Provision created by Pope St. John Paul II. Since my ordination, I've served four parishes and taught at St. John Vianney Seminary in Denver. In 2015, FOCUS' founder, Curtis Martin, invited me to join the FOCUS staff as a part-time National Chaplain. And now, what a privilege it is to serve full time with FOCUS!



Fr. Martin Latiff, M.C., is a priest of the Miles Christi religious order. Born in Buenos Aires, he studied philosophy at the Miles Christi School of Philosophy in Argentina and theology at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit, Michigan. Since his ordination to the priesthood in 2005, he has preached numerous retreats and days of recollection across the U.S. and has served many high school and college students through spiritual direction and faith formation. In January 2017, he joined the team of FOCUS National Chaplains. He currently lives with his Miles Christi religious community in San Diego. He is also one of the spiritual directors at Cathedral Catholic High School in Carmel Valley, California and one of the chaplains at the University of San Diego.



Fr. Brendan Rolling, O.S.B., grew up in Minnesota. After attending World Youth Day in Denver, Colorado, he joined St. Benedict's Abbey in Atchison, Kansas and was ordained a priest in 2000. Fr. Brendan has served his community in higher education for fifteen years as the director of Residence Life, assistant dean of students, director for Mission and Ministry and chaplain at his alma mater, Benedictine College. He has been a supporter of FOCUS since 1998 when FOCUS missionaries were first sent to Benedictine College. In 2015 he joined the team of the FOCUS National Chaplains where he preaches retreats, gives conferences and offers spiritual direction to missionaries.



Fr. Kevin Dyer, S.J., entered the Society of Jesus in 1999. After completing studies at Saint Louis University and Boston College, he has served at Regis Jesuit High School in Colorado and Jesuit High School of New Orleans. Since his ordination in 2010, Fr. Dyer has served as an NST summer chaplain. This is his second year as a FOCUS National Chaplain. He will be working part time while continuing his role as Chaplain of Jesuit High School.



Fr. Michael Drea has served as National Chaplain for Mission Development since 2018. Some of his responsibilities include assisting in engagement of current and prospective benefactors; co-leading Church VIP effort; serving as a spiritual leader for MD and key volunteer groups, FOCUS Share and Campus care and expansion. He earned his undergraduate and graduate degrees from Boston College and, after an early career in development, he entered St. John's Seminary in Boston for priestly formation. He was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Boston in 2004 and has served as parochial vicar, pastor and as Catholic chaplain at Harvard University. While at Harvard, Fr. Drea invited FOCUS to work with him and the community in evangelization and outreach.