

THE HUNTINGTON NEWS

The independent student newspaper of the Northeastern community

Home **Campus** v City Sports Arts v Opinion v Photo Galleries Political Blog

CAMPUS

Students find solace at Northeastern's Catholic Center

Written by Caroline Boschetto x December 1, 2016

By Caroline Boschetto, news staff

Tatiana Bujnoch's world was shaken during the spring of her freshman year when her father unexpectedly died. She was angry, she said, and struggling to get through the semester. During her grieving process, Bujnoch found solace in the spiritual community at Northeastern's Catholic Center.

"It was a really difficult time," Bujnoch said. "[The Catholic Center] was a place where I could reach out where people were open, welcoming, would talk to me, were constantly checking in on me."

The fourth-year pharmacy major said that she was raised Catholic, but did not feel that faith was personal until recent years.

"I didn't view it as critical or necessary until I came to college and then definitely losing my dad was kind of a big turning point for me," she said. "That was the time my faith really developed."

The Catholic Center, located on St. Stephen Street, is run by the Brotherhood of Hope, an order of priests committed to fostering Catholicism on secular campuses.

Bujnoch said Brother Sam Gunn, the director of the Catholic Center, mentored her in both spiritual and practical matters through her time of hardship. Gunn helped her grow her faith rather than retreat from it, as many people do during difficult times, she said.

"I didn't want to talk to anyone about it and, for me, I found someone that I felt comfortable talking to and who was very supportive," Bujnoch said.

Gunn said that he was pleased to see the level of support the Catholic Center members gave Bujnoch.

"She was uniquely courageous in letting her needs be known," Gunn said. "A lot of the credit goes to her and I feel very privileged that we were able to play a part in the healing she was experiencing."

Nearly three years later, Bujnoch still attends weekly Mass, hosted on campus by the Catholic Center, and regularly attends the group's service events, meetings and lectures. One of the key events that Bujnoch especially enjoys is the peanut butter and jelly walk.

"We basically make peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and walk around Boston, pass them out to homeless people and have conversations with them," she said. "And let them know that people

care about them and people love them.”

Catholic Center President Carl Uchtyl, a junior mechanical engineering major, said over 100 students participate on some level in the group’s activities. Uchtyl said the center offers students a supportive community that fosters meaningful relationships.

“There’s something different about this community, based on our faith in Christ, that leads toward a lot deeper support than you might be able to find elsewhere,” Uchtyl said. “It lends to that deeper trust, that deeper friendship building.”

Father Paul Helfrich, a chaplain at the Catholic Center, wrote in an email to The News that he believes college students, especially on large campuses, can find a home away from home through Catholic groups.

“I find that when young adults do get involved with the church they often find it very meaningful and helpful to them in their own lives,” Helfrich wrote. “Also, they add so much to the church by their participation, perspective and service.”

Practicing Catholicism on a secular college campus isn’t always easy, but Uchtyl said it allows for an exchange of ideas and perspectives.

“I wouldn’t say it’s necessarily a drawback just because people are also really open to a lot of different points of view,” he said. “I think if you’re able to be real and talk about what your experience is, people are really open to that.”

Bujnoch said students sometimes assume that all Catholics are Republican and conservative, which she said is not the case for her and some of her friends. While she was hesitant at first to bring up her faith, she said she learned that talking about religion with peers can be a positive experience.

“For the longest time I didn’t really mention I was in the Catholic Center. I kind of kept it quiet,” she said. “I find that now when you mention it I find myself constantly surprised [...] It brings up conversations and you learn things about people and their faith by being open about your own.”

Photo by Lauren Scornavacca

Tags: [carl uchtyl](#) × [Caroline Boschetto](#) × [Lauren Scornavacca](#) × [News](#) × [sam gunn](#) × [Tatiana Bujnoch](#) × [the catholic center](#)

Written by **Caroline Boschetto**

Caroline is sophomore pursuing a combined major in international affairs and human services and a minor in journalism. She is from Doylestown, PA. After serving as a staff writer at The Huntington News last semester, this is her first semester serving as co-editor of the News section. Writing has been a lifelong love of Caroline’s. In third grade, she would read her fantasy stories aloud to her class. Caroline also has a passion for exploring the world and has travelled to 17 countries. Last summer, she participated in a dialogue in China where she studied Mandarin. Caroline adores her cat and her American Eskimo dog, and she tolerates her snaggletoothed Chihuahua. She also enjoys reading, writing, volunteering with children, meditating, SCUBA diving and Game of Thrones. Her aspiration is to one day use journalism to champion human rights in Asia.

2 Comments

Pingback: [buy cheap NBA 2K17 MT](#)

Pingback: [Buy Dofus Touch Kamas](#)

Leave a Reply

You must be **logged in** to post a comment.