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March 28, 2001

An Open Letter Regarding A Women's Retreat

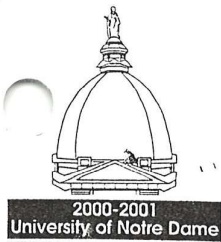
Rev. Richard V. Warner, CSC
Director of Campus Ministry
114 Coleman-Morse Center

Dear Rev. Richard Warner:

The Gender Issues Committee of the Student Senate has worked this year to identify the resources available to promote interactions between men and women and to offer insights as to how these resources can be improved and refined to better serve the needs of the Notre Dame community. Campus Ministry has done commendable work in encouraging students to foster positive relationships with other members of our community through programs such as Freshman Retreats, Notre Dame Encounter Retreats, Emmaus faith sharing groups, and specialized retreats for minority students. We are grateful to Campus Ministry for your willingness to accommodate students of all faiths in their desires for new opportunities to enhance their personal and spiritual growth.

We noticed that there does not currently exist a retreat geared exclusively for Notre Dame women, focused on how we may live as women of faith with a unique spirituality. It is for this reason that we met with Father John Herman, the Director of Retreats, about the creation of a women's retreat. Fr. Herman was quite enthusiastic about the prospect of expanding the retreat programs currently offered by Campus Ministry. He shared our belief that a retreat developed and led by women, in service to their peers and in sharing their faith, has the potential to build community among women as nothing else can.

This concept of community is tied to another aspect of gender issues that we have addressed this year, that is, the relationship between the women of Notre Dame, Saint Mary's, and Holy Cross. The women of our campuses have recently had limited means of positive and meaningful interaction. We feel that establishing a women's retreat that would invite the women of the University of Notre Dame, Saint Mary's College, and Holy Cross College communities to participate will bring women together in a spirit of openness and sharing, guided by a common faith.



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Thank you for your kind consideration of the development of this retreat. We would also appreciate if you could consult the Campus Ministry offices of Saint Mary's and Holy Cross for the planning of this retreat. If you have any further questions or need any further student support or assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

In Notre Dame,

Brooke Norton, Chair
Student Senate

Kristen Caponi
Gender Issues Committee

Colleen Clarke, Co-Chair
Gender Issues Committee

Luciana Reali, Co-Chair
Gender Issues Committee

I, Brooke Elizabeth Norton, Chairman of the Student Union Senate, do certify that Resolution S0001-41 was considered, debated, and passed according to proper legislative procedure with twenty-five Student Senators voting in the affirmative on Wednesday, March 28, 2001.

Brooke Elizabeth Norton

Now, therefore, I, Brian Patrick O'Donoghue, President of the University of Notre Dame's Undergraduate Student Body, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution of the Undergraduate Student Body of the University of Notre Dame, have set my hand this twenty-eighth day of March, in the year of our Lord two thousand and one.

Brian Patrick O'Donoghue