It is unbelievable how quickly four years of undergraduate studies fly by. One minute you are trying to find friends who share similar interests as you and the next you are crying at graduation (I apologize to all seniors who are reading this). We all come from very different backgrounds, and ultimately, in the end, we will go forth and set the world on fire in different ways. Although our individual experiences at Scranton may be different, our experiences of Scranton are nonetheless the same. This University does something to you. It empowers you to make a change. The experiences that one has while attending this “miracle in the mountains,” is the unique result of a Jesuit tradition. The irony is that I had no idea what “Jesuit” meant before I attended Scranton. Now, here I am reflecting upon the invaluable experiences that I received while attending this University. That being said, I would like to take this opportunity to share with you a few, and I emphasize a few of these experiences, for they have shaped me and continue to shape me into the individual that I am called to be. In others words, each has planted something in my soul.

I participated in a service opportunity prior to my freshman year called F.I.R.S.T. (“Freshmen Involved In Reflective Service Together”). This unique program allowed for a group of roughly 30 strangers from the upcoming freshman class to get together, provide service throughout the community, and reflect upon that service later in the day. At first, I was weary of this experience. I was shy, nervous, and as the product of a public high school, reflection was not something that I experienced often. I was amazed at how quickly I was accepted into the community. I reflected with people that I barely knew, and was emotionally vulnerable in ways that I had never been before. A phrase was introduced to me on this experience and it stays with me to this day: “Faith as service in action.” It was at this point that I realized I had a passion for service. My spirituality was brought to fruition by helping those in need.

My sophomore year quickly approached and I stumbled upon the University of Ministries Office, where I was greeted by Paulette at the front desk. Her warm spirit and energy made me feel welcome. With the office’s support and a friend’s advice, I got involved in the International Service Program (ISP). To make a long story short, I was given the amazing privilege of traveling to El Salvador in the summer going into my junior year. This rich experience, instilled in me a feeling that I had never so strongly sensed before. I saw and felt God just about everywhere; ranging from the people within the villages of the country to listening to the late Dean Brackley, S.J. talk about service in action. This experience is something that I reflect upon to this day. I constantly question and reexamine the impacts that this trip had on my spiritual self.

The experiences that God has granted me have shaped me into the person that I am today. Each experience, including those not listed, has planted something in my soul. I realize now that that something is God. From service opportunities to retreats, God is present in many different forms. One must be open to God in order to experience Him. Scranton creates a unique environment in which one can truly find him/herself through God. I am reminded of Dean Brackley S.J. and his book titled The Call to Discernment in Troubled Times. In it he reflects upon St. Ignatius of Loyola. He states “Ignatius discovered that his gifts benefited others, that his passion became, and his passion always remained to help steward the flame of love that God had lit within them. God has ignited this flame within each one of us. The opportunities at Scranton allow this flame to be fully ignited, such that we may go forth and set the world on fire.

Joseph Nardella
Class of 2013
“Today our prime educational objective must be to form men-and-women-for-others; men and women who will live not for themselves but for God and his Christ - for the God-man who lived and died for all the world; men and women who cannot even conceive of love of God which does not include love for the least of their neighbors; men and women completely convinced that love of God which does not issue in justice for others is a farce.”

Pedro Arrupe, S.J., 28th Superior General of the Society of Jesus, Valencia, Spain, 1973

The Community Outreach Office provides information on Volunteer Opportunities for individuals, groups, clubs, and residence hall floors. Our office is located in The DeNaples Center, Room 205B, and our webpage is www.scranton.edu/volunteers. We are also on Facebook! Like Us!

Check out our new webpage at www.scranton.edu/volunteers for a complete list of current opportunities, agency information, upcoming events and more!

American Lung Association - Volunteers would visit local stores and ask if they would like them to paint their store front with a Christmas Seal design. The stores would be invited to make a donation to the American Lung for the painting and would be asked to offer sheets of Seals to customers for additional donations to the organization at this holiday season. Contact Donna Ray-Reifler at dreifler@lunginfo.org or call 570-823-2212

Christmas Holiday Bureau - Voluntary Action Centers needs Interviewers for families seeking holiday assistance. Volunteers will conduct preliminary interviews over the phone 1st 2 weeks, then face-to-face interviews the 2nd 2 weeks. Weekdays Nov 14-23 9am-12pm or 12-3pm, November 28-Dec 1 9am-12pm or 12-3pm, December 5-8 9am-12pm or 12-3pm. Orientation provided. Contact Nancy Post at rsvp@vacnepa.org or call 570-347-5616

The Everhart Museum of Natural History, Science & Art: Help prepare materials for educational activities for children’s classes. Friday, November 18 from 1-5pm and Friday December 2 from 10am-2pm and 2-5pm. They can provide transportation as well! Contact Jeff at education@everhart-museum.org or call 570-346-7186

Friends of the Poor - volunteers needed to stock food pantry (must be able to lift 50lbs +) and help with seasonal dinners and giveaways. Contact Sister Ann Walsh at friendsofthepoor@frontiernet.net or call 570-877-3929

Leukemia & Lymphoma Society - Holiday Gift Wrapping at the Steamtown Mall. Any days between November 25 and December 24th. 12-6pm. Contact Pamela Formica at pamela.formica@lls.org to sign up or call 610-266-8513 x10

**Exploring Prayer**

Are you interested in exploring different ways of praying? Do you want to discover the importance of discernment in your life? If yes, join us for this overnight retreat at Chapman Lake. The retreat will begin on Friday night, February 10 at 5 pm and conclude on Saturday, February 11 at 5 pm.

Sign up for this opportunity in University Ministries.
Cost is non-refundable $10.

Questions? Contact Sister Carol Tropiano, RSM at tropianoc2@scranton.edu.

**Hunger Banquet**

*Thinking about Thanksgiving dinner this year?*

*Think about this…*
1 in 7 people world-wide goes hungry every day.
Learn & Explore more through the

**Hunger Banquet**
Monday, November 21st
6-7:30PM
DeNaples Ballroom

Sign up in University Ministries by November 16th.
Questions? Email Mollie Vita – vitam3@scranton.edu

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**ADVENT LITURGY & TREE LIGHTING**

*Sunday*
November 27th
5:00 PM
Byron Complex

*Students, Faculty, Staff, & Their Families Are Welcome!*

**Thanksgiving Drive**

The Community Outreach Office’s 8<sup>th</sup> annual Thanksgiving Food Drive is underway! We are hoping to make 200 baskets this year at a cost of $35 each. Please donate! We accept Royal Card, cash, and checks made out to “The University of Scranton”. Our students will be doing table sits every Mon-Wed-Fri through Thanksgiving on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of DeNaples.

**Silent Retreat**

These retreats, rooted in Ignatian Spirituality, are an opportunity to enter into silence and create space for God in your life.

**5 Day Silent Retreat - January 24-28, 2012 Chapman Lake**

Retreat begins Tuesday afternoon and concludes Saturday afternoon. Cost is $40.00
Register in University Ministries. Deadline for registration is December 2.

Questions? Contact Sister Carol Tropiano at tropianoc2@scranton.edu
**Weekly Collection**

This week’s collection will be given to Thanksgiving Food Drive.

Last week’s collection to the Thanksgiving Food Drive was $392.

**Sunday Mass Presiders**

**Sunday, November 20**
11:00 AM: Fr. Bellafiore, SJ
7:00 PM: Fr. Roach, SJ
9:30 PM: Fr. Quinn, SJ

**Sunday, November 27**
11:00 AM: Fr. Mohr, SJ

**Advent Liturgy - Byron Center**
5:00 PM: Fr. Quinn, SJ

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**Christmas Breakfast**

The Community Outreach Office and The Fresh Food Company will be working together once again to bring our 3rd annual Community Christmas Day Breakfast to the Scranton community. We are seeking Faculty and Staff volunteers to assist on Christmas Day from 7:45am to 11am, on DeNaples Center 3rd floor.

While this event is open to all to attend, we are asking that volunteers be University employees or current students and their families only.

If you are interested in volunteering, please email Ellen Judge at judgee2@scranton.edu.

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**UNIVERSITY MINISTRIES, DeNaples Student Center 200**
570-941-7419
www.scranton.edu/ministry

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Paulette Burton, Secretary/Receptionist, University Ministries: 941-7419
Joanne Gambacorta, Secretary, Vice President for University Ministries: 941-7419
Ellen Judge, Secretary, Office of Community Outreach: 941-7429; Mollie Vita, G.A. University Ministries; Danielle Frascella, G.A. Community Outreach Office