

CALL College Scholarship Winning Essay
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St. Gregory of Nissa once famously said, "He who climbs never stops going from beginning to beginning ... He never stops desiring what he already knows." St. Gregory knew the importance of continuously improving oneself through learning and further cementing that knowledge by implementing it in one's own life for the future. The formation in the topics that I received from CALL are important towards my future and the future of my peers because we are the generation that will wear the mantle of responsibility someday.

Everything that I have learned has shaped me into the young Catholic that I am today, and it has taught me about what I need to understand about the Catholic faith in critical areas. It is vital for those of my age to inform themselves about the church's stance on contemporary issues such as how we should view ourselves and others spiritually, marriage, abortion, etc. If it were not for this program, then I would have never had the opportunity to grow in my faith and in these topics. Learning about these topics from one trusted source is much more convenient than having to scour the internet and multitude of doctrine in hopes of having enough context to piece together an answer. Instead, we are able to learn information that builds off what we learned in the previous years. What we learn does not go to waste because even if what was talked about seems inapplicable to our own life at that moment, it may still be prevalent to the life of someone close to us, or possibly to us later in life.

My formation did not stop as an attendee because I still continue to learn as a CALL mentor. I am still able to take something new away from each class and apply that in ways I never thought of before. My personal journey as a CALL mentor began much earlier than most as I was asked to consider being one just before beginning my second year of CALL. I prayed in contemplation for the answer and what I heard was that I needed to say "yes". Thus, began my continuous formation in the faith as a mentor that introduced a new level of responsibility that was foreign to me, but that allowed me to grow as an individual in more ways than one. Most importantly, being a mentor has allowed me to apply my newfound knowledge towards the edification of others. The people who I mentor often question the importance of the seminar and I have become more willing to reiterate the importance of the lecture and how their attention is essential. I am able to do this now because my experience as a mentor has boosted my confidence in public speaking and removed my hesitation from answering questions. Some students get confused about what exactly was said and I try to expose the topic in a different light to help them draw the correct conclusion.

Apart from using what I have learned to help other CALL students, I have tried stepping up more in leading others to truth in my daily life. I have always attended public school and there are many kids who think the opposite of what I do, but when my own views on a certain topic comes up I have become more comfortable in providing an answer as to why it is that I believe something. For example, most of my peers are in support of

abortion as they believe that a woman should have the choice in deciding what happens to their child. I try to help them understand how a life is still a life no matter how small it is and we should not support something that we ourselves would not do as we know that taking the life of another is morally wrong. CALL has instilled that confidence in me by giving me the knowledge I needed to defend why I think a certain way and although I might not change the minds of others, I still guided them more towards the truth in hopes that they take something good away from what I said. My ability in being able to lead others in truth would not have been possible were it not for the formation in the topics taught in the CALL program and me being a mentor.