



A year for firsts by Joe Chau

November 2013

Each year we hold our Fall retreat in Spofford, New Hampshire, a short one hour drive from our campuses. And each year we are so blessed to see God moving. This year we have a lot to celebrate. It is a year of many firsts.



This fall is the first time we've see over 100 people at our fall retreat. It's taken 3 years of prayer, but in joy we see that it is this year that our sovereign God has granted our request. Praise God!



We also saw God bring students from over 10 different campuses. Likewise, this is the first year we've seen Cru, Epic, AIA and Destino represented at our Fall Retreat! This is a key milestone as we trust the Lord to reach all the students of western Massachusetts. We pray, long and labor for the day when every student in our scope will have an opportunity to respond to the amazing love of our great God.



This is also our first retreat that we've sought to include professors! In our hope and vision to build a community on our campuses that will take the gospel from the whole campus to the whole world, we invited Dr. Nicholson and Dr. Harper to be part of our retreat, including giving a seminar on how to be a Christian in Academia. Imagine and pray with us for such a community, where professors and students labor together to reach every professors and students at UMass, Smith College, Amherst College, Mount Holyoke College, and more.



I also got a chance to announce our summer plans at our fall retreat. Please pray for a team of students to come with us on the Breakthrough summer project.

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A year for firsts (cont.)

Lastly, this year we had more students who are exploring Christianity come with us on the fall retreat than ever before. For a handful, it was their first exposure to a Christian community ever. Their response was overwhelmingly positive. "It's a glimpse of light in the darkness", one student confided in me. "It's the first time I've ever felt truly clean", confided another student. And a few days after the retreat, as our staff and student leaders met with our seeking attendants, a good number of them, placed their faith in our wonderful Jesus.



Thank you for your generous, faithful and fervent prayer and financial sponsorship. 🐑

"I love the three day Fall Retreat. We went camping in NH two hours ride from UMass. It is really fantastic to get away from school life, deadline and all of the social media. We stopped refreshing our Facebook and Twitter. People gathered around the bonfire, we sang worship songs and birthday song for Adora. Men's activities are exciting, we were canoeing in the lake, unfortunately, we capsized. If I was the only one on the ship, I will definitely swam to the lake side and waited for rescue. But we have four wonderful guys, we pushed the canoe to the lake side, turned it over and kept going. This is the teamwork!"

Basketball, (ultimate) frisbee, dodgeball, ping-pong... I had a great time with EPIC guys. I was thinking we should play some outdoor games in China instead of going KTV all the time. Listen to the nature, have fun with friends, talk to Jesus, build the personal relationship with God, he will see.

Holy Father, I am here to pray that you can bless my family and friends. Especially for my grandpa. I hope he can be healthy again. Thank you Lord to bring me here to listen to your words.

Thank you, Jesus, for dying on the cross for my sins so I may have eternal life. In Jesus name, Amen."

- A new brother in Christ

Prayer Corner

1. Please pray for Joe and Jenny, that we would continue to experience God's overwhelming love. That we would make every effort to stay in step with the Holy Spirit.
2. Pray for us to lead our team and our students in wisdom, boldness and compassion.
3. Pray for our team and students to live out the gospel and experience God's grace and truth in community.
4. It's official! We've been assigned to go on the breakthrough summer project. So we will be heading to a large Muslim city in the Middle-East for the summer of 2014. Please pray for us as we prepare. And pray for our family as we will need to raise quite a bit of extra funds as well as prepare for our children's many food allergies. Also please pray that a team of students from UMass will join us this summer!
5. Praise God for all that he is doing and the new believers we are seeing added to our midst, seemingly on a weekly basis. Please pray that they will mature and be rooted in their new faith.
6. Please pray that many students will take the opportunity to be part of our Winter Conference.
7. Please pray that the Lord will lead us to new financial partners who will partner with us to reach lost students in western Massachusetts



Joseph & Jenny Chau

Cru @ UMass, Smith College, Mt. Holyoke College, Amherst College, Western MA

162 Farview Way, Amherst, MA 01002
joseph.chau@cru.org , jenny.chau@cru.org
413-230-0189

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