

Friday, February 8, 2008

Hunger Banquet to help spread awareness

By Sarah Malczynski, student writer

In an effort to spread awareness to the OU community about the hunger that plagues millions of people around the world, the St. John Fisher Newman Group will be holding a hunger banquet on Wednesday, Feb. 13 at 6:30 p.m. in the Oakland Center Gold Rooms.

Millions of people suffer as a result of hunger and poverty. The World Bank has estimated that there were an approximately 982 million poor people in developing countries who live on \$1 a day or less. Poverty is the number one cause of malnutrition and hunger. Over 16,000 children die each day from hunger.

The hunger banquet will feature a unique style of dining. Participants at the event will be eating in proportion to how the world eats. One person will dine extravagantly on steak, a few will dine on sandwiches, but the majority of the participants will be eating rice and beans on the floor. The purpose of the banquet is to spread awareness about hunger around the world and to encourage people to offer assistance.

Lisa Brown, pastoral associate at St. John Fisher, helped organize the event. She commented, "There are a lot of feelings that arise when one is participating in an event like this. Watching someone eating steak at a high table while you are eating rice on the floor really makes you think about the current world situation. The event may invoke feelings of shock at the large number of people who suffer every day. It really makes you grateful for the blessings we have living the way we do."

Brown also expressed her hopes for the banquet to motivate people to offer aid for those suffering from hunger and poverty. "If the answers are going to come from anywhere, they will come from people who listen and are aware and can come together in a creative way to address these issues," she said.

Alan Epstein, special instructor of political science, will be delivering a special presentation at the banquet. His lecture will focus on the causes of hunger on a macro level and what can be done to improve the conditions for countries that have little aid.

The banquet is free and open to the public. Donations will be accepted. All proceeds will go to the Oxfam American Hunger Relief, an affiliate of Oxfam International, a confederation of 13 organizations working together with over 3,000 partners in more than 100 countries to find lasting solutions to poverty and injustice.

St. John Fisher Newman is the OU student organization that is associated with the ministry at St. John Fisher Church, a Catholic institution located across the street from OU on Walton Boulevard. It is community of young adults and college students that meets several times a month for a variety of spiritual, social and service events. For more information on St. John Fisher Newman group, visit the **OU Campus Ministry** Web site.

SUMMARY

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