

# NOT YOUR AVERAGE BREAK

Even when students have time off from class during their summer, spring and Christmas breaks, many of them spend their days lending a hand through acts of service in Divine Word Missionary communities across the United States. These activities help them hone the skills they'll need to be effective missionaries and provide an opportunity for networking with members of the Society of the Divine Word.

In March, five Divine Word College students spent their spring break at St. Joseph the Worker parish in Wheeling, Illinois. They worked alongside Fr. Marcin Karwot, SVD and Frt. Boromeo Soe, SVD, who are assigned to the parish.

Frt. Engelbertus Salmon, SVD and the other students reflected on the experience after returning to DWC and said they felt that it helped them realize just how important teamwork is in parish ministry. The men learned to rely on one another and appreciate the passion and commitment that each individual contributed daily. They also had a chance to experience a multicultural environment outside of the walls of Divine Word College, since the parish is made up primarily of Spanish speakers, people of Polish descent

and Americans. "With such an array of different cultural backgrounds, we learned how to embrace these differences with respect, care, and appreciation for another culture in order to be united in community and faith," the group wrote in their reflection about the experience.



Vuong Minh Vu

"The spring break project is a great opportunity and approach for students to find out more about SVD parish ministries. Working with Fr. Marcin and Frt. Boromeo for a week gave us a better understanding of embracing a diverse community to unite in faith," Engelbertus said.

During the summer of 2021, DWC student Vuong Minh Vu lived at the Society of the Divine Word's American headquarters known as "Techny" in Chicago. He spent his days working outside on the property and helping the SVD community. He said the stories he heard from senior members of the Divine Word Missionaries inspired him. "Their stories served as examples and guidelines to help me understand and be more sure about my vocation to be among the next generation following Jesus's footsteps in the field of mission as part of the 'hero' SVDs," he said. It's not the average way to spend a break from college classes, but then again, these aren't average college students.



Ladouceur Flarissaint, Frt. Engelbertus Salmon, SVD and Kim Hoa Pham pitch in during their spring break at St. Joseph the Worker Parish in Wheeling, Illinois