

RESUMO - SAÚDE E ESPIRITUALIDADE

COMMUNION IN MEDICAL EDUCATION: THE EXPERIENCE OF THE MARIAN ROSARY GROUP IN THE UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENT

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Introduction: For Catholic Christians, the prayer of the Marian Rosary is a source of peace and strength to face adversities. In the demanding context of medical school, students often seek spaces for welcoming and sharing, aiming to balance rigorous academic commitments with the exercise of spirituality. Such initiatives provide a necessary counterpoint to the high-pressure environment of

healthcare education. Objective: To report the experience of creating and consolidating a Marian Rosary prayer group among medical students at a public university, describing its impacts on the practice of faith, emotional well-being, and the formation of a support network within the academic environment across different stages of the course. Methods: This is an experience report on a student-led initiative. The prayer group targeted Catholic medical students and was scheduled during lunch breaks on the weekday with the fewest mandatory academic activities to minimize conflicts and maximize attendance. Beyond the prayer itself, the meetings were structured as a safe space for dialogue, welcoming, and mutual sharing regarding the challenges of medical routine, allowing for the practical integration of Christian faith into the rigorous university setting. Results: The initiative originated from a messaging app group created to promote the integration of faith in a university environment often perceived as detached from religious practices. Prayer meetings began biweekly and, due to increasing participation, transitioned to a weekly frequency on university premises. A steady growth in attendance and regularity was observed, consolidating the activity. The continuity of these encounters strengthened interpersonal bonds and established a robust support network, fostering dialogue on Catholicism and academic life. Participants reported experiences of deepening faith, including spiritual reconversions and the resumption of religious practices. Furthermore, subjective benefits such as stress reduction, an increased sense of peace, and a strengthened sense of purpose were frequently cited, highlighting a positive impact on both spiritual and social dimensions. Conclusion: The consolidation of the Marian Rosary group confirms that spirituality is an essential pillar of support for the medical student. This experience demonstrates that creating spaces of communion based on faith can mitigate the deleterious effects of academic stress, promoting a network of intergenerational solidarity that transcends the traditional hierarchy of medical school years. The integration of faith and academia does not hinder scientific training; on the contrary, it enriches it by fostering humanization, emotional balance, and resilience. Therefore, the prayer group proved to be a vital relational support mechanism for mental health care and an indispensable social support tool for forming physicians who are more balanced and sensitive to the transcendent dimension of human life.

Palavras-chave: medical education; spirituality; mental health; social support.