

*Hospitality to foreign  
Students...*  
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# **HOSPITALITY TO FOREIGN STUDENTS**

*A Challenge to  
American Catholics*

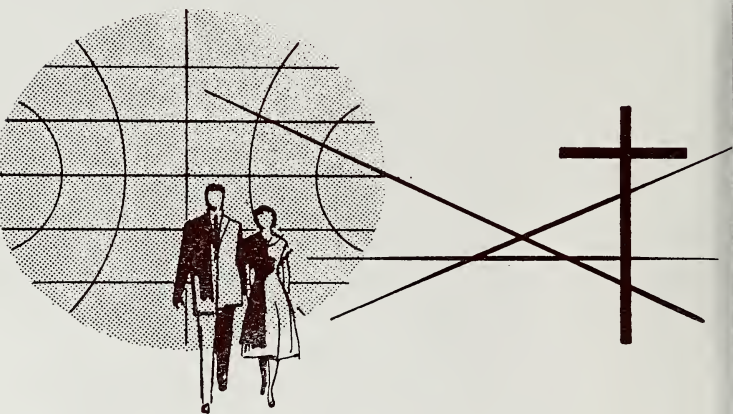


## An Opportunity

This year Catholic families in the United States will have a unique opportunity.

They will have the opportunity to meet many young visitors from abroad and to exchange with them many ideas of mutual interest. These visitors are students from practically every country in the world who are studying in almost every college and university in the United States.

The students want friends. Most of them are lonely because they are cut off from access to family life. They



need the sympathy and companionship of friends since most of them are undergoing severe strains in learning English and in adapting to American customs.

The students particularly want to meet American Catholics. Many Catholic students need spiritual help. Some need information on where to find a priest who speaks their native language. Others need such simple information as the name of the Catholic chaplain at their school or the location of the nearest Church and the hours of Masses and Confessions. Most foreign students want to know what Catholics think, to see Catholic family life and to understand the role of Catholics in the United States.

All foreign students want to see and understand the spiritual foundations of American life. Frequently their college curriculum gives the students all the facts about American society except the basic facts about what Americans believe, and particularly what American Catholics believe. Since many of the students continue to form their beliefs and values while they study in this country, their knowledge—or lack of it—about American spiritual life may seriously affect their own spiritual life in the future.

If Americans, and particularly American Catholics, are to help these foreign guests, the minds, the hearts and the souls of American Catholics must be opened in friendship to the students.

The following pages give some suggestions on how hospitality may be extended to foreign students.

## How To Begin



The first step in meeting foreign students is to find out what people in your city or town can help you. The following groups and individuals carry on programs for foreign students. They can give you first hand advice and usually they can arrange to introduce you to some students.

1. *Catholic organizations with branches throughout the United States.* The National Councils of Catholic Men and of Catholic Women, the International Federation of Catholic Alumnae, the National Federation of Catholic College Students and other Catholic organizations carry on hospitality programs for foreign students. They can advise you on how to meet the students and they can give suggestions on hospitality.
2. *Foreign Student Advisers at Catholic colleges.* They can introduce you to students studying on Catholic campuses.
3. *Newman Club chaplains* (on non-Catholic campuses). Newman chaplains can introduce you to Catholic and non-Catholic foreign students.
4. *Foreign Student Advisers on non-Catholic campuses.* These officials can also arrange for you to meet foreign students.
5. *International Houses.* International Houses have been established in many localities to provide lodging and recreational facilities for foreign students. The directors of these houses can arrange for you to meet their foreign students.
6. *Community organizations.* Many cities and towns in the United States have community-wide committees which try to coordinate the efforts of various organizations in providing hospitality to foreign students. Such committees may have their headquarters at the local Foreign Policy Association, World Affairs Council, International House, the local office of the Institute of International Education, or at some similar office. Committees of this type can be very helpful. They frequently know who and where the students are; they can tell you which students are already in touch with other members of your community.

## Some Suggestions on Ways to Meet Foreign Students

There are many ways to meet foreign students. You may want to use methods already developed in your locality. You may have thoughts of your own. You may find the following suggestions helpful in meeting the students:

1. If you have a son or daughter in college, suggest that he or she bring a foreign student classmate home for a weekend.

If your youngster is not acquainted with any foreign students at college, suggest that he or she contact the college committee of the National Federation of Catholic College Students or the committee of the Catholic Students Mission Crusade. (On non-Catholic campuses, inquiries should be directed to the college Newman Club.) The NFCCS, the CSMC and the National Newman Club Federation are carrying on national programs of hospitality for foreign students, and their campus committees or clubs are eager to find prospective hosts for foreign students.

2. If a friend of yours plans to invite a foreign student acquaintance to his home, suggest that his student friend bring along another student, preferably one newly-arrived in this country. A neighborly visit by you while the students are visiting with your friend is a very easy and informal way by which to meet the second student and make arrangements to see him again.

3. Ask the Newman Club chaplain when foreign students usually gather at the Newman Club. A visit at this time will net you many acquaintances.

4. Arrange to attend a function at International House if there is a House in your locality. You will have the opportunity to meet a large number of foreign students at these functions. See which students have interests similar to your own and arrange to have them visit you.

5. Obtain the names of several foreign students from a Foreign Student Adviser or Newman Club





Chaplain. Find an appropriate occasion such as a get-together of friends, a family picnic, or a Sunday dinner, and ask two or more students to join you.

6. If you cannot obtain the names of foreign students from any local source, write to the Foreign Visitors Office, National Catholic Welfare Conference, Washington 5, D. C. The FVO receives census data on most of the Catholic foreign students in this country and names and addresses of students in your locality will gladly be sent to you upon request.

*A few points you may want to keep in mind:*

—Friendship cannot be organized; it is a unique spiritual relationship between individual persons. This is the most important factor you need remember in meeting foreign students.

—Invitations should always be extended in as personal a manner as possible. Person-to-person contact is best; a telephone call is second-best. If you must extend a written invitation, be sure it is written by hand.

## Do's

### *In the first place . . .*

Remember that in spite of obvious differences, foreign students have the same human nature as you. This means that they, as well as Americans, value such social virtues as sincerity, tact, honesty, hospitality, friendly criticism and argument.

Remember that Americans are probably the most frank people in the world. Foreign students know this but they normally find it difficult to adjust to this American characteristic. Hence, tact and courtesy should be watchwords for any host.

Look up a few facts about your guests' homelands. They will be pleased at your interest in their country.

Invite more than one student at a time. Foreign students are embarrassed at making mistakes. With more than one present in your home each can give the other necessary moral support.

### *When your guests arrive . . .*

Try to remember the students' names; use their names when you address them. If need be, ask them to repeat their names for you when you are introduced. Using a person's name is a mark of interest and of courtesy.

Use your guests' first names only when you know them very well.

Show your foreign guests around the house when they visit. Be sure they see your kitchen. This may be their first visit in an American home and naturally they will be interested in seeing how Americans live.

Be sure to let your children meet foreign student guests. Children are the most efficient ice-breakers in the world.

### *Most important . . .*

Discuss religion and politics with students if you wish. However, use tact and discretion since students are vitally concerned with these subjects. You and your student friends can probably learn more from each other in these than in any other fields.

Tactfully offer religious assistance where it may be needed. A Catholic student who may have been neglecting the sacraments because of language or



## Hosts

some other difficulty will probably want help, but he will naturally be reserved in talking about his difficulty.

### *Consider your guests . . .*

Make it possible for foreign students to reciprocate your hospitality. One good way to do this is to let them prepare dinner for you in your own home. You may be surprised at the Oriental delicacies which a Japanese student can prepare in your own kitchen!

Remember that students' free time is governed by their school obligations. Students can always use hospitality at Christmas, at Easter and on weekends. They will have little spare time on weekdays and during examinations.

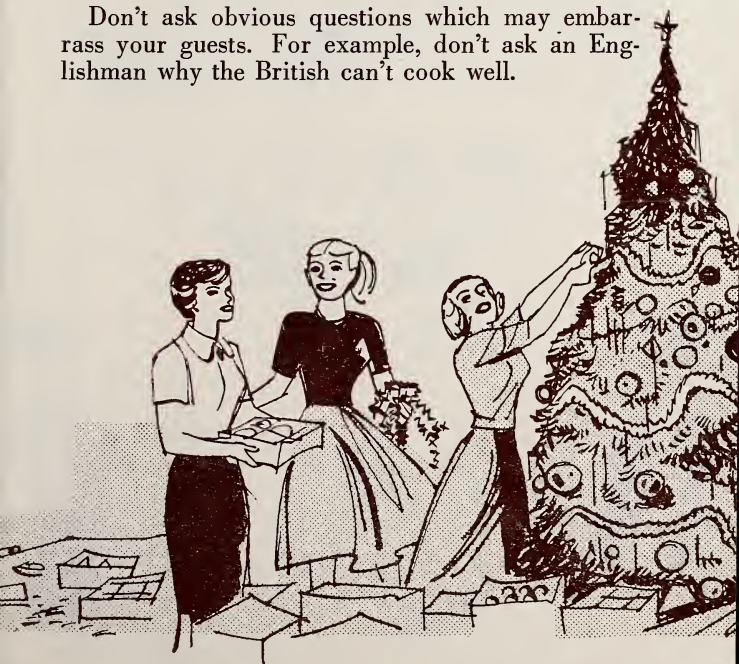
Invite the same students to your home for additional visits. It is better to have a few students consider your home as their second home than to have many students regard it as a kind of reception center.

*When in doubt on what to do, imagine that you are a student in a foreign country. Ask yourself what you would want your host to do under similar circumstances.*

## Don'ts:

### *In General . . .*

Don't ask obvious questions which may embarrass your guests. For example, don't ask an Englishman why the British can't cook well.



Don't ask your guests whether their countries have automobiles, movies, electric lights, etc. Most countries have modern conveniences today.

Don't criticize the United States unless you are able to balance your remarks with a few good words about this country.

*As a courteous host . . .*

Don't make foreign students your guests of honor when they visit; being a guest of honor is a very uncomfortable experience for anyone.

Don't give your guests the impression that you consider all "foreigners" alike. Many hosts to foreign students try to avoid using the word "foreigner" altogether.

Don't tease foreign students until you know them well. Senses of humor differ from nation to nation.

*Speaking of language . . .*

Don't talk fast if your guests are still struggling with their English. Speak clearly and slowly but don't raise your voice. Repeat your sentences if you think they do not understand you.

Don't compliment your guests' ability to speak English unless you mean the compliment.

*At table . . .*

Don't ask your guests to "help themselves" unless you are sure they will. In many countries it is not polite to take food or drink unless the host insists.

Don't forget that if your guests are non-Catholics they may have different laws of fast and abstinence. Hindus, for example, do not eat beef, and Muslims do not eat pork. It is always wise to inquire about the students' dietary laws before inviting them to a meal.

*Above all, don't worry. Common sense and experience will usually be your best guides.*





## Introducing a Few Foreign Students

*Hans Luderer from Germany.* Hans came to the United States with a scholarship from a Catholic college on the East Coast and a travel grant from the United States Government. He is studying economics here and he plans to teach when he returns to Germany.

When he first arrived in the United States Hans was amazed at how much this country differed from the image given by American movies in Germany. Needless to say, Hans was very pleasantly surprised.

During his first months here Hans was kept busy in brushing up his English and in learning the ins and outs of American college life. Now, however, he has some free time and he would like to meet some American families. He wonders how he might meet such families.

*Shu Lee from China.* Miss Lee's family was one of the many who fled to Formosa from China to escape the Communists. Last year Shu received a scholarship from a Catholic girls' college in the mid-West. Shu was especially grateful for this scholarship since she herself is not a Catholic. Her grades were so good during her first year here that the college has renewed her scholarship for a second school year.

Shu is an accomplished pianist and she spends much of her spare time in practicing. She plays popular as well as classical music and she is very happy when her American friends ask her to play for them.



*Juan Henriquez from Colombia.* Juan comes from an old Spanish Catholic family in Bogota, the capital of Colombia. His father, who is director of a large mining company, has sent Juan to this country in order to study engineering. Juan is enrolled at a Southern state university. He plans to work in his father's company when he returns home.

Although he is an intelligent young man, Juan finds his studies difficult because he cannot read or speak English well. He is particularly concerned that he has not gone to Confession since his arrival in this country. Juan is reluctant to confess in English, and he does not know of any priest who can speak Spanish.

Juan has met very few families in this country; he has met no Catholic families. He suspects that there are very few Catholics in the United States.

*Augusto Franco from the Philippine Islands.* Augusto's father is a civil servant in Manila and his family belongs to the Philippine middle class. Augusto's mother and father are very proud of him since the Philippine Government granted him an all-expense scholarship to study at an Ivy League college in the United States.

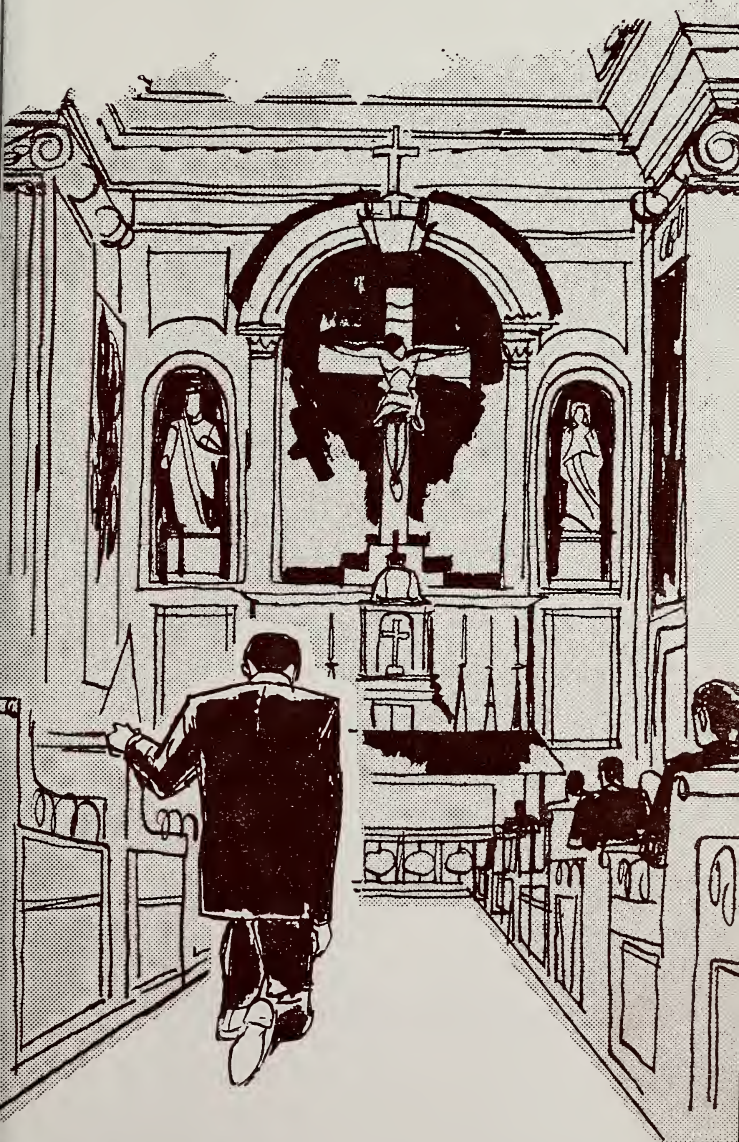
Augusto is studying chemistry and he hopes to obtain his doctorate next year. He has met several American Catholic students at the University. They, in turn, have introduced him to the Catholic chaplain. Now Augusto is a regular member in the Tuesday evening discussion group at the Catholic Club. He often praises the vigor and vitality of the Catholic Church in the United States to his non-Catholic classmates at the University.

*Sunt Rattawong of Thailand.* Sunt came to America this year with all his expenses paid by the United States Government under the Point Four program. Although he is a Buddhist, Sunt has enrolled at a large Protestant university in this country in order to take special language courses.

One Sunday afternoon recently Sunt and a classmate were bicycling in the country and happened upon a Catholic monastery. Being curious, they toured the grounds, met some of the monks, and carried on a very interesting conversation. Sunt was surprised at how much the Catholic monks resembled monks whom he had known at home. He would like to know more about the Catholic Church, but he has no friends who are Catholic and who might help him to learn.

*Chiaka O'Rourke from Nigeria, West Africa.* "I'm just a black Irishman," says Chiaka when friends ask him how he came by his last name. In reality, Chiaka's family name was adopted by his grandparents thirty years ago when they were converted by an Irish missionary named O'Rourke.

Chiaka is studying political science at a large university on the West Coast. He knows that as one of the small group of college-trained people in his homeland he will immediately be thrust into a position of leadership when he returns from this country. Chiaka likes the United States even though he has encountered discrimination in this country on several occasions. He wonders what American Catholics think about segregation.



# FOREIGN VISITORS OFFICE

National Catholic Welfare  
Conference

1312 Massachusetts Ave., N.W.

Washington 5, D. C.

Robert T. Murphy, *Director*



Additional copies of this pamphlet may be  
obtained from the Foreign Visitors Office.

