

**March 7, 2013**

### **The President's Perspective – A Brief Reflection**

Spring Break. It carries a multitude of meanings and levels of significance, depending on our individual perspective.

For undergraduates it's a week away from the routine of the semester. Some students return home, sleep late, and enjoy a favorite meal. Others join with classmates for an adventure of their own choosing, which usually means heading south to warmer weather. Still others join with classmates for a planned event—perhaps serving with a Global Partnership team, or traveling with the softball or baseball teams, or touring with the Gospel Choir on the west coast. (Graduate students likely experience this more as a “reading week.”)

This is a week during which each student hopes for at least a taste of spring and every undergraduate is sure of a break.

Our perspective is a bit different. The week brings a “break,” but this doesn't mean a full stop to routine responsibilities.

I spoke yesterday with a colleague on the faculty at Boston University. She doesn't call it “spring break.” Rather she refers to it as “no-classes-week.” There's a clear change in her routine, but this doesn't mean she leaves town with a full shut-down of work responsibilities.

I imagine most of us respond in a similar way. There are no undergraduate classes scheduled next week, which means most students will leave the campus. Yet the campus is still open (unlike the week between Christmas and New Year's Day). We still have work to do.

Nonetheless, we look forward to “spring break” because it allows a change in our routine.

For some this involves a special focus on preparing class sessions through the rest of the semester, or gearing up to begin a new course for Quad B. For others, because we're sure of less student traffic through our workplace we've planned a “to-do list” of tasks previously set aside for another day.

Allowing for some latitude of interpretation we can embrace spring break as a Sabbath rest. Not necessarily a time to fully stop from our daily responsibilities, but at least a time to pause, to change our pace by redirecting our attention.

One way to redirect our attention is to spend just a bit more time with our colleagues—perhaps someone we see each day but don't often enough sit with for a shared cup of coffee, or someone we once worked next to but haven't seen often since we moved to a

new part of campus, or someone we met earlier in the school year but haven't taken time to reconnect with.

Next week is Spring Break at North Park. Pause and enjoy!