

PEPPERDINE

Human Resources



Walking across main campus one recent evening, I saw a group of students gathering near the fountain on our Malibu campus. I initially assumed they were holding an event, which was only sort of true. It turned out that the event was sunset, and the gathering was a spontaneous response to a spectacular light show over the Pacific. Something spiritual seemed to happen among us as we watched the last moments of light that December day.

While sunsets and sunrises are beautiful in all parts of the world, they hold a special place for us at Pepperdine. You can't help but admire our school colors once you've seen brilliant orange skies over the blue Pacific. The sunrise and sunset moments of a given day, however, are just a microcosm of the beginnings and endings that mark our university community. The first day of a student's higher education is its own sunrise experience, and graduation is its own sunset. These are spectacular life moments that bookend the experiences of graduate and undergraduate students. Often, when I watch students walk across the stage to receive their diplomas, I note the spiritual significance of passing time, as we prayerfully launch graduates into the next steps of their life journeys.

It is on New Year's Day in particular that we similarly reflect on the passing of time in our personal lives. Tevye says it well in Fiddler on the Roof,

Sunrise, sunset.
Sunrise, sunset.
Swiftly fly the years,
One season following another,
Laden with happiness and tears.

Embedded in all of our days, weeks, and years are opportunities to grow deeper in faith and closer in community. And we often take advantage of this special, transitional time of the year to commit to new spiritual habits — to devote time to God and to our spiritual growth.

We have an astounding number of faith resources available in this community among our faculty, staff, students, and guests. So this year, I am launching a spiritual life podcast and blog that will make those resources more widely available across our five schools, in hopes that we can better support and connect to one another in our spiritual lives. It is my hope that the regular messages may encourage and teach you something new on your commute, afternoon walk, or lunch break.

Our first podcast installments feature interviews with President Andrew K. Benton and recent Wednesday chapel speaker, Pastor Albert Tate of Fellowship Monrovia Church. Our first blog post is written by Mike Cope, Director of Ministry Outreach for Church Relations. [Follow this link to engage the conversation.](#)

Happy New Year, Pepperdine. Let's grow together in faith as we make another journey around the sun in 2019.

Sara Gaston Barton
University Chaplain
