I'm finally finishing my first year of college at the University of Illinois. My major is Community Health. With my major, I'm trying to get into Nursing School. I'm going to apply for it my sophomore year and hopefully get in by junior year.

In this paper, I talked a lot about the religions Christianity and Catholicism, which are basically the same religion, because that is my religion. I was raised in a religious family that goes to church every Sunday and say our prayers before every meal. I'm very passionate with my religion, and I love going to church. When I go to church, you would usually see me participating with the songs and the prayers. I love going to church because it gets me away from the stressful parts of school and homework. I love being able to connect with God.

This paper will be dealing with religion on campus and the university. It will specifically deal with if students that were raised in a religious family go off to college, and if they still go to church. It will also deal with the history of Christianity and Catholics, which in the paper is basically the same, and Islam. The paper will also be talking about the history of the Catholic Church on campus and the Mosque on campus. Students participated in a survey about religion, and a particular person that was interviewed was a girl who just graduated from the university last year. She was asked about if it was hard to go off to college, and still go to church. The paper also deals with a couple of many reasons why students don’t go to church. Such reasons that are in the paper are alcohol and drugs and not enough churches on campus. This will show what students truly think about religion on campus.

The point of my research and what I want to learn from interviewing my sister is if it was hard for her to go to church when she was in college, knowing that my mom and dad were not around to tell her that she had to go. I want to know if she thinks it is important for students to go to church when they are alone at college without their parents there. How did she felt when she was alone at college and going to church? I think it is also important to know what other people on her floor at the dorm thought of her going to church. I want to know if they made fun of her or thought it was neat for her to be alone at college and still attend church. I think it is very important for students who
come from a religious family, and then go off to college to go to church. I tend to believe that it is very important to go to church when a student is alone, but I don’t judge them for not going to church. I believe that people could do right actions that involve helping people or similar actions that Jesus did without going to church. I just know that when I go to church I feel like I’m a better person, Not just because that I love going to church, and I consider myself a very religious person.

My sister, Denise, is a great person to be interviewed for my topic. She is very intelligent and knows what she is talking about when it comes to a topic that interests her and relates to her and her personality. Denise is similar to me when it comes to talking about religion. She likes to go church and be active in the church. She likes to sing and participate when we go to church every Sunday. She knows the difference between right and wrong. Denise has her beliefs in the Catholic Church, and she follows the many traditions in the Catholic Church. We are similar because we were both raised to go to church.

Denise is great to talk to about interesting topics. She has really good points that could make anyone change their mind about a certain topic that could be debated on. She is a very beautiful woman and very smart. She is tall, around 5’9, and she is skinny and muscular. Denise has long blond hair and blue eyes. She has a nice smile that could bright anyone up even if that person is having a bad day. I know this because there were many times where
I would have a hard and stressful day and once I see her she would try to cheer me up and it mostly worked. Even though she is four years older than me, we are still very close and we are best friends. Some people may not be close to their siblings because there is a huge age gap, but we are different. I could tell her anything, and she would listen to me. She is a very friendly person and really is never mean to anyone. She has great knowledge that could lead her to succeed on anything she attempts to do in life and could talk about religion and anything for hours.

She is one of the best people I know. I look up to her as a role model, and I would do anything to be just like her. Denise is like a second mom to me. She takes care of me when I’m not myself, and I know I could trust her. She taught me many things about life in the past, present, and will continue to teach me things about life in the future. She is one of the reasons why I continue to go to church when I’m at the University of Illinois even when I know that my parents are not around to tell me to go. Her faith for the Catholic Church and Jesus is strong, and this one of the reasons why I want to be just like her. Besides my parents and my middle sister, she knows me the most out of anyone that I know. She knows when I’m upset about something and knows when I’m in a good mood. Denise could make me laugh for hours on end. With this interview, she knows how important religion is to me. She knows how I feel about the Catholic Church and knows that I’m faithful to the church. I am so grateful to have a person like Denise in my life to teach me about our religion. We were in the living room when we did this interview.
She was on the couch, with her long, blond hair in a pony tail, still in her pajamas, and eating breakfast, and I was on the floor.

Me: Okay so the first question that I want to ask you is when you were in your first year of college, was it hard to go to church knowing that you were alone without mom and dad to tell you to go?

As I finished asking the question, she smiled her nice and gentle smile and said.

Denise: You know I was talking to Jonathan on the ride home from Champaign, and we had a long talk about religion. I thought it was a lot easier because I felt that when I was at home, I was more forced to go to church. But when I was at school, I went because I wanted to go. Um…I felt like church was a place where I could make my faith stronger. Um…It was a place where all my stress went away from the academic life. It was nice to go to church because St. John’s was a very beautiful church. It was also really cool that at St. John’s the people there participated in the songs and the prayers, whereas at home at Sacred Heart, people there just listen and not participate as much. So that also made it easy to go to church because it was fun that people at St. John’s actually like to participate in being part of the mass. That made it easier to participate in the mass at St. John’s than at Sacred Heart, even though I still do participate at the mass at Sacred Heart. I don’t care what people think of me if I participate and sing in mass. That is what people should do when they go to mass. Mass is a place to worship and pray to God, and that is what I do at church.

Me: Uh huh…Yeah…You probably already answered the question that I’m about to ask you in the last question, but what made you realized that you should go to church?

Denise: Like I said before, it was a place where I could relieve my stress from school, and just relax. I think that it was a great way to keep my faith strong and I wanted to keep it strong. At times, when I had a long night of going out before and had minimal sleep, it was hard to get out of bed to go to church, but once I got there, it felt good and I liked it. I think that if I didn’t go to church every Sunday, I would feel very guilty and felt like I did something.

Me: When you told people on your floor that you were going to church, what did they say?

Denise: I usually would wake up early, and they would ask me where I was going? I would say that I am going to church, and they would say ‘that it is awesome’ or ‘that is so good that you go to church every Sunday. I really should start going to church’.
Me: Yeah I know…I could remember a couple of weeks ago when I got back from church, and this one girl on my floor asked me where I was and said ‘don’t you look cute’. I said that I was at church, and she said ‘Well aren’t you a good girl’. I got a lot of those comments.

Denise: Yeah me too…People would say similar words and they thought it was great that I go to church. But some people in my hall would even join me on going to church. At the time Matt came along and we would go together too.

Me: Uh huh…Yeah…Okay and the last question I’m going to ask you is what do you think about students coming from a religious family, and then coming to college and having the choice of going to church or not?

Denise: Do you mean on the students choice?

Me: Well yeah…I mean what do you think of students who really do not go to their church?

Denise: Well I don’t like to judge people who do not go to church. I think it is really up to them whether they should go to church or not. But there are also people that I know who go to church sometimes or rarely at all, and they still have a strong faith towards their religion. There are people who may not go to church as much, and their actions improve for that. There are many people who do not go to church and still have similar actions of what Jesus did. They try and want to help other people out who are less fortunate or in danger. So I think that people could also have a strong faith in their religion outside of the church by their actions.

I realized in this interview that Denise made many great points that made me realize that going to church does seem easier when I’m off at college alone. I feel that when I’m alone at college, I don’t feel like I’m force to go to church by my parents. When I’m off at college, I feel more like I want to go to church. I want to see the beautiful white and marble church and participate in the mass. The songs, the prayers, and the readings that our performed at church are very beautiful and meaningful to me. I don’t see why people would not go to church, but like Denise said it is really up to them to make a choice of going to church or not. I know that some people think that it is not a big deal of not going to church every Sunday, but it is to me. When a person
that I know decides to go to church, and they have not been there for awhile, I’m very pleased that they decide to go. I think it is great that people who have not been to church for awhile is trying to reconnect with God. I realized from this interview that people could still follow similar actions of what Jesus did without going to church. The interview finally showed me that some students do keep their faith strong even though that their parents are not around telling them that they should go to church.

**Question:** When a student is raised in a religious family, do they still go to church when they are off at college?

What makes them decide to go or to not go to church?

What are the main reasons why students do not go to church?

**Plan:** My plan for this research paper is to first talk about the history about two main religions on campus. Then I’m going to get opinions from other students on campus of what their reasons of why students do not go to church. I’m also interviewing my sister, Denise, if she had a hard time of being alone at college and going to church. I’m also going to ask her about what is her opinion on why students do not go to church.

**Data:** I surveyed several students on my floor at the dorm. Half of them responded back to me and half of them did not.

**Discuss:** I found out from my surveys that half of the people that responded back to me said that they were raised in a religious family and still go to church when they are off at college and the other half said that they were born in a religious family, but don’t go to church when they are at college. Everyone said that one of the main reasons why students do not go to church is because they stay out too late the night before and can’t wake up to go to church. Everyone also said that having not enough churches on campus is not a problem of why students don’t go to church.

**EUI Links:** [http://hdl.handle.net/2142/1796](http://hdl.handle.net/2142/1796)

**Reflect:** With surveying and interviewing my sister I found out their opinions why students don’t go to church. Staying out late the night before and not being able to get up for church is the main reason, but there are also many other reasons why students don’t go. Some reasons could be that they have too many unanswered questions about their religion or they want to wait to pick up religion later in life. Students also said that since their parents are not around to tell them to go to
church, they feel like they don’t have to go. Working with an online environment was rewarding because you get to look at what other students’ research papers were about, and also realizing that your paper might be on Ideals someday too.

**Recommendations:** I think that the university should find ways on how to get more students more involved with their religion. Such ways are to have more organizations that might spark an interest for a student.