



# CATHOLIC MONARCHS

CATHOLIC CAMPUS MINISTRY AT OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

SPRING 2025



*Summit 2025*

## *From the Director's Desk*

What an amazing semester Spring 2025 has been. While it has flown by in what feels like a blur, we have been blessed by so many wonderful experiences as a community.

We started off the new year with a small group attending the SEEK25 Conference in Washington, DC. In February, we joined with the Diocese of Richmond for Summit. Both of these conferences proved to be a wonderful experiences and times of personal growth for those who attended.

For Alternative Spring Break, we joined with VCU at the Saint Clare Retreat Center in Hampton. We worked incredibly hard to prepare the grounds for spring and for upcoming renovations. We were able to end the

week with a beautiful time in Adoration led by Deacon Dave Reaves.

This year, we were blessed to walk with three students as they prepared to receive sacraments at the Easter Vigil - two catechumens and one confirmand. It has been a joy to walk with them and to see our Faith through their eyes.

Throughout the semester, the community has grown in both faith and friendship through Mass, Soul Food, service, and even just hanging out in the CCM House.

Our Catholic Monarchs community is like no other. From parents, alumni, family, and friends, your prayers and support are incredible. We are so grateful!

May you and your family have a wonderful summer!

*Marissa Neil*

## **MISSION**

CATHOLIC CAMPUS MINISTRY AT OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY IS A CHRIST-CENTERED COMMUNITY THAT SEEKS TO BE A TRUE WITNESS TO THE CATHOLIC FAITH. THROUGH THE SACRAMENTS, RELIGIOUS FORMATION, PRAYER, AND CAMARADERIE, WE STRIVE TO LIVE OUT CHRIST'S CALLING FOR OURSELVES BOTH NOW AND IN THE FUTURE.

1306 W. 49TH STREET  
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**CATHOLICMONARCHS.ORG**

# Complete

BY EMELYN LAZO MEDINA  
CLASS OF 2025

My first year of college did not start off great. I faced many challenges that left me feeling upset with God, which distanced me from my Faith. As an off-campus student, I would go straight from class to home, uninvolved in campus activities. I was not even aware that Mass was available on campus until two of my close friends invited me. Although I attended Mass, I was not actively participating in CCM until I attended Summit that year.

Having attended NYC multiple times in high school, I knew Summit was

something I wanted to be part of during college. After that first Summit, I began building a community as I started meeting or getting closer with many of the people at CCM. At the end of my sophomore year, I was encouraged to apply for a leadership position. After praying about it, I took a leap of faith and applied. I was honored to serve as Vice President during my junior year and now as President during my senior year. Being on the Leadership Team has been a rewarding experience-not only has it helped me develop valuable leadership skills, but it has also deepened my Faith and strengthened my relationship with God.

work, and life's many responsibilities can be overwhelming, but CCM has been a key factor in my Faith journey these last four years. It has served as a constant reminder that the only one who can make me feel complete and bring me true joy is God. I am beyond grateful for the opportunity to be a part of CCM. It has been a blessing to have such an incredible community to pray with, support me, and help me grow closer to God.



As a college student, balancing school,



Snow Day at CCM



UCA Service Night for the Monarch Pantry



SEEK25 Conference in Washington, DC



CCM & Blessed Sacrament at the Eastern Vicariate Rite of Election



Madison and Elliot being baptized during the Easter Vigil at Blessed Sacrament.



Aron, Elliot, and Madison after receiving Sacraments at the Easter Vigil.



Summit 2025



Waiting for the General Session



Cynthia & Emelyn at Summit



# Summit

BY JOEY VALMEO  
CLASS OF 2028

Attending Summit was an inspiring and transformative experience. From the moment I arrived, I was surrounded by a community of passionate believers, all seeking to deepen their faith and grow closer to God. The speakers were engaging and thought-provoking, offering wisdom on living out Catholic values in

everyday life. The worship sessions were especially powerful, filling the space with a profound sense of unity and devotion. Whether through adoration, confession, or simply connecting with like-minded individuals, I felt spiritually refreshed and encouraged.

One of the highlights of Summit was the sense of fellowship I encountered. The breakout sessions and discussions challenged me to reflect on my relationship with God and how I can

be a better witness to my Faith. Leaving the conference, I felt a renewed sense of purpose, inspired to bring the lessons I learned into my daily life and to continue growing in my Faith.



Natalie & Gloria after raking leaves in the gardens of the retreat center



ODU & VCU joined together for an Alternative Spring Break trip!



Phillip & Raphael digging for a new drainage pipe

# The Best Option

BY RAPHAEL AFRIM  
CLASS OF 2026

Going into spring break, I had a plethora of thoughts running through my mind. What was I going to do during this block of free time? Did I want to go home? Did I want to catch up on assignments? Perhaps I could use this time to work on school projects? Or was this the time to catch up on my physical workout? While these options were noble in their own right, I however went in a different direction. In hindsight, this new

direction turned out to be the best option.

I joined the Alternative Spring Break (ASB) trip after some timely reminders, for which I am grateful. The trip proved to be an amazing time. Although the daily tasks were not necessarily the most exciting, I did however enjoy meeting and working with new people. The new friends and acquaintances as well as the experiences we shared made the ASB trip worthwhile.

Also, it was such a fulfilling moment to look at the outcome of our work after

the five day period. The place looked quite different compared to day 1. I am proud of being a part of the team that made those changes possible. Overall, I am happy that I partook in this year's ASB activities and I am looking forward to the next one.



# ODU Day at Nationals Park

SUNDAY, JUNE 8, 2025 | FIRST PITCH - 1:35 PM

Calling all Alumni, Current Students, and Families! Join CCM for ODU Day at Nationals Park in DC! More information can be found at [catholicmonarchs.org/dc](http://catholicmonarchs.org/dc) including how to purchase the special ODU tickets.



Phillip & Raphael working hard at ASB



Creating a path in the gardens at ASB



Jackie, Emelyn, & Arely at Summit



Singing at the beginning of the Evening Session at Summit



Natalie & Phillip representing ODU at the NYC College Fair



Day of Service at St. Charles Catholic Church in Cape Charles, VA



David & Jai pulling weeds in the garden



Natalie & Sarah mulching the beds

## YOUR SUPPORT MATTERS

Your Monthly or One-Time Gift can ...

\$50 - Provide for a week of liturgical supplies for both Sunday & Daily Masses.

\$100 - Provide dinner and speaker stipend for one of our weekly Soul Food events.

\$250 - Provide for needed updates to resources and supplies in the the CCM House.

\$500 - Enable our students to attend life-changing retreats & events.

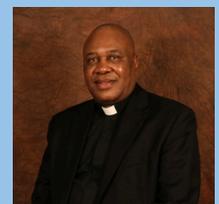


[CATHOLICMONARCHS.ORG/GIVE](http://CATHOLICMONARCHS.ORG/GIVE)

## CAMPUS MINISTRY STAFF



MARISSA O'NEIL  
DIRECTOR



FR. GERRY KAGGWA  
SACRAMENTAL PRIEST



## PRAYER REQUESTS

THE CCM STAFF AND LEADERSHIP TEAM WOULD LIKE TO PRAY FOR YOU AND YOUR INTENTIONS!

[CATHOLICMONARCHS.ORG/PRAYERS](http://CATHOLICMONARCHS.ORG/PRAYERS)