

FALL 2024



*Fall Retreat 2024*

## From the Director's Desk

The Fall 2024 semester has been amazing! We have welcomed many new students to campus and our ministry. We already feel the difference that they are making in our community!

We hosted our overnight Fall Retreat at the Saint Clare of Assisi Retreat Center in Hampton. This proved to be the perfect place for students to step away and reflect on how God transforms their lives. Andrew DeCelle was our keynote speaker and provided wonderful insight as well as great stories from his time at ODU!

For Family Weekend, it was a joy to meet those who are important to our students. Seminarian William Yearout also joined in the festivities and met with the men of CCM to discuss vocations.

We are so blessed to have spent time together in prayer and fellowship throughout the semester through Mass, Soul Food, game nights, service projects, and more.

The CCM House really is a "home away from home" for Catholic Monarchs on campus. We are so grateful for your support with our Summer House Refresh Campaign. Through your generosity, we have been able to update quite a bit in the House and make it feel fresh and homey.

We are so thankful for our greater Catholic Monarchs community, from parents, alumni, and community members. Your prayers and support means the world to us.

May you and your family have a blessed Advent and a joyous Christmas!

*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  
NORFOLK, VA 23505  
**CATHOLICMONARCHS.ORG**



# Friendship & Community

BY SARAH RYAN, CLASS OF 2026

It's not easy to leave home for the first time, but it's a necessary step to growing up.

My first few weeks of living on campus were spent navigating new classes, settling into my dorm room, and most importantly, finding the quickest way to the dining hall. Amid all the chaos, socializing and friend-making was low on my list of priorities. The one thing I did prioritize was making it to Mass

every Sunday. One of my biggest concerns about college is how I could continue to practice my Catholic Faith. As soon as I found out that CCM hosted Sunday Mass on-campus, I was thrilled and relieved. I felt secure knowing that whatever had happened during the week, I had a safe space to reconnect with God and fellow Catholics.

That safe space only expanded after I went to the 2024 Fall Retreat. I wasn't a hundred percent sure if I was going to go at all, but after some encouragement from fellow CCM members, I registered last-minute. That was probably one of the best decisions I've made this semester.

I made a ton of new friends and got closer to people I had already met, but more importantly, I got closer to God. A certain Bible verse comes to mind: "The Lord God said: It is not good for man to be alone." (Gen 2:18a). The transition into college life can be a lonely one, but it doesn't have to be. With CCM, I found friendship, family, and a community that has solidified my faith.



Fr. Gerry Kaggwa of Blessed Sacrament serves as our Sacramental Priest.



Student Leaders tabling at the Fall Involvement Fair on Kaufman Mall.



Emelyn & Leah painting our CCM Crown on Kaufman Mall for Homecoming.



Catholic Monarchs at Blessed Sacrament's All Saints Trunk or Treat.



A night full of mysteries for our Halloween party.



Leadership Team with our new sign for the CCM House.





Students practicing Lectio Divina in the Chapel at Fall Retreat.



Fall Retreat free time on the beach.



Andrew DeCelle, our Fall Retreat Keynote Speaker.

## Transformation

BY ISAAC AVIS, CLASS OF 2026

This year's Fall Retreat was special to me. I went into the retreat mentally preparing for an upcoming heart surgery. With all of the chaos and work throughout the fall semester, the retreat was needed for a mental reset and a reconnection with my faith. Since senior year of high school, I was diagnosed with WPW (Wolff Parkinsons White) syndrome with frequent SVT (supraventricular tachycardia) episodes. Before the diagnosis, I was an athlete with varsity soccer and varsity tennis. My life changed drastically after hearing that I would need heart surgery to fix the issue. Unfortunately, the first surgery was not completely successful as I went into another episode 17 days after the surgery. My mentality was crushed, and God became a necessity in my entire life from that day on. Now, three years later, I built up the courage and strength to choose to have a second surgery with the hope of ending the condition once and for all.

This retreat was about transformation, which is a concept that is very difficult for most people, especially me. It is an extremely scary subject to talk about, but our lives need transformation through God and His guidance. God helped me keep my passion as I am now pursuing a degree in Exercise Science to further study in a graduate DPT program to become a physical therapist. He has helped me conquer many of my fears, including the fear of never being able to play sports and exercise efficiently. I was blessed to receive the sacraments of Anointing of the Sick and Reconciliation at Fall Retreat. These sacraments and the time spent with God helped strengthen my shaking fears and worries about the coming surgery. My second procedure went very smoothly as I am now back on my feet playing sports and exercising again like I used to do in high school. In this way, I view my life as being transformed through God's guidance as I turned all of my attention towards Him. I learned to love Him for the good things and the bad things that happen in my life. I place my confidence in

Him because I am strong enough to claim that God has saved my entire life both physically and mentally. I was blessed to have gone to Fall Retreat this year because it reinforced every single value I held in my heart.

At the retreat, Father told me something I will never forget: say out loud, "Jesus, I trust in You" every time I experience doubt, worry, or anger. He encouraged me to proclaim it with confidence to myself multiple times until my heart understood it at the current moment. Through taking a leap of faith, I learned that I will forever stand with the Lord through all that comes my way. I encourage you to also begin searching for transformation with the Lord's guidance!







Bonfire during Welcome Week.



New students joining the fold.



Tabling at the Fall Involvement Fair.



Welcome Week Table in the Webb Center.



Baking casseroles for those in need.



Fall Retreat Free Time.



Jem & Selena chatting at Fall Retreat.



Emelyn & Arely at Fall Retreat.



Lunch at Fall Retreat.



Lunch at Fall Retreat.

## 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.

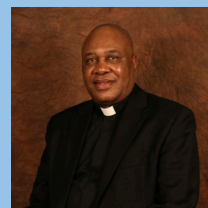


CATHOLICMONARCHS.ORG/GIVE

## 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!

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