



MAGNIFY

**THE CATHOLIC CENTER
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA**



SPRING 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

01

A Message from Fr. Brian

13

Sunday Night Dinner

03

Our Student Ministries

15

Bridging Generations

07

A Year in Review

17

Spring Retreat 2025

09

The FOCUS Impact

19

Vocations in Motion

11

Adoring Our Lord

21

Stories of Conversion

magnificare

(v.) to make great

In today's society, there are a lot of things that attract our gaze. Notifications and advertisements attempt to persuade our attention. Our focus can easily be steered in any direction. We are very capable of being influenced by flashy lights and quality engagement. Sometimes, our focus can go into an exile; sometimes, our attention can become lost. When our soul's direction is off-script, we feel it in our days.



Magnifying the Lord is the opposite of aimlessness. For our soul to magnify the Lord, our hearts must be directed towards Christ. The fruit of this is a profound worship or magnification of God. To magnify the Lord means to make great the Lord's name in the world. To have Christ at the center of our lives produces a witness that magnifies the Lord.

Referencing St. Irenaeus of Lyons, the Catechism says that the glory of God is man and woman fully alive (CCC 294). We become fully alive by magnifying the Lord through our lives, by orienting our souls towards Christ. By being open to God leading and guiding us, the Spirit takes us on a journey.



Mary magnified the Lord in her “yes” to God’s will. The angel Gabriel reaches out to her in affection, inviting her into a vocation of selflessness. Mary magnifies the Lord by being open to where He is leading her next. She displays the Lord’s deep faithfulness and committed love through her words and actions. She stands at the foot of the Cross, watching her Son give His life for a ransom for many, and she nonetheless magnifies the Lord in that moment. She magnifies the Lord by living out her vocation of motherhood to Jesus.

We are able to magnify the Lord in our lives. Through our vocations, we are able to become selfless and gift ourselves to others. Throughout our weeks, we are able to magnify the Lord by allowing the radical goodness of God to flow through our lives. Our actions and words are how we bear witness and testimony. All of us are invited to spread the love of God and hence magnify the Lord with our souls.

Like Mary, I see our students striving to magnify Christ each day through their hunger for the Eucharist in Mass and in adoration. I see it in their leadership, in running ministries and attending service events. I see it when they enter into a place of vulnerability in small groups and FOCUS Bible studies, sharing their hearts, struggles, and questions for support. I see it through their authentic display of fellowship; they know how to have fun in a wholesome way. And I see it when they welcome friends from class, clubs, other faith organizations, or new faces that wander in. They magnify the Lord by being a witness to His love, light, and receptivity.

In a culture that aches for truth, may we make great the Lord’s name and glory, He who is our surest hope, peace, and protection. He is what every human heart desires.

May God’s blessings be upon you,

Fr. Brian McNavish
Director of The Catholic Center at UGA



Our STUDENT MINISTRIES

The Catholic Student Association (CSA) is our student-organized community here at The Catholic Center. We celebrate our students' involvement and leadership within these ministries!

ABLAZE

Ablaze, which meets biweekly on Tuesdays, welcomes all students to enjoy dinner, a talk from a guest speaker, and small group discussion.

SEEKING WATER

Seeking Water, hosted on alternating Tuesday nights, provides a space for students to praise and worship before the Blessed Sacrament.

IGNITE

Ignite is our ministry uniquely for freshmen to build fellowship and receive formation. Every Wednesday, they meet for dinner, a talk, and small groups led by upperclassmen.

SPECIAL EVENTS

The Special Events team puts on fun events for students, from casual hangouts like a board game or movie night to bigger occasions like dances or the annual Mr. Catholic Center pageant.

SERVICE

Our Service ministry coordinates service opportunities for students to be the hands and feet of Christ in the Athens community.

RETREAT

Our Retreat ministry plans a weekend retreat each spring, as well as a retreat to welcome new students and a Senior Retreat to send off our graduates.

OUTREACH

To proclaim the Good News and invite UGA students to The Catholic Center, Outreach encounters students on campus through tabling and other initiatives.

MEN'S AND WOMEN'S COMMUNITIES

With ministries specially devoted to strengthening fellowship among men and women, students learn to embrace their identities as sons and daughters of God.

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

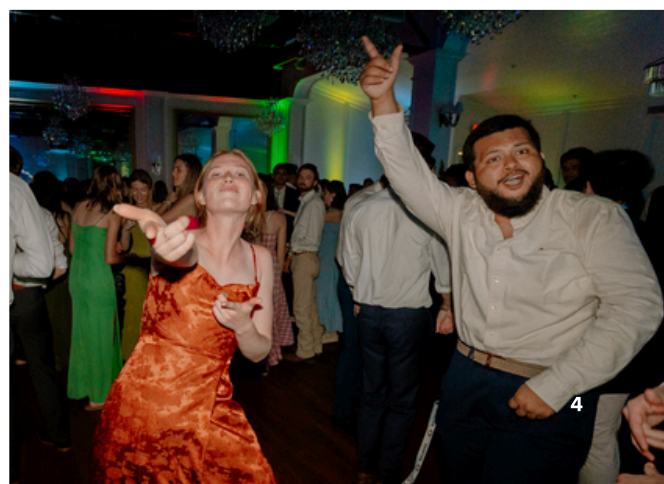
Diversity & Inclusion aims to create a welcoming atmosphere at The Catholic Center and celebrate our different cultures and languages amidst a shared faith.

MUSIC

Wellspring Music Collective, our student band, glorifies God in song at our 5pm Sunday Masses, Seeking Water nights, and Spring Retreat.

MARKETING

Students on the Marketing team use their gifts for design, photography, videography, and communications to promote Catholic Center happenings and evangelize on social media.





IGNITE

“Ignite was the greatest gift I received from the Lord during my freshman year. I was so incredibly blessed to encounter the people whom I now call my deepest friends through this ministry. Ignite also provided a space for me to grow alongside those who were also intently pursuing their own faith and sainthood. I consider Ignite to be one of the best parts of my freshman year and would advocate to any and all freshman to open not only their minds but their hearts to the beauty that is Ignite!”

SEEKING WATER

“Seeking Water is my favorite ministry at The Catholic Center. I first truly met Christ in high school during adoration and praise and worship on a retreat. It was there, sitting face-to-face with my Lord, that I discovered His love and still continue to dive deeper into it. In adoration, we look at the Lord, and He looks back at us. In praise and worship, we pour out our prayer in song, and we give the Lord the opportunity to show us the infinite longing He has desperately desired to show us. St. Carlo Acutis says that the same way you become tan from sitting in front of the sun, you become a saint from sitting in front of the Eucharist.”



SERVICE

“On CSA Service team, I have been able to participate in events like Walking with Moms in Need, the Athens Area Diaper Bank, and Our Daily Bread, which has allowed me and other members on our team to practice the corporal works of mercy: feeding the hungry and clothing the naked. Events like these have been pivotal in my faith journey, for they have taught me and others to see Christ in every person and serve others with love and care. The CSA Service team is a wonderful place to work on being the hands and feet of Christ out in the Athens community!”

SPECIAL EVENTS

“The events The Catholic Center puts on have been a wonderful way in my life to experience God’s love in a real, tangible way. The people here are absolutely awesome and truly live up to the mantra ‘all are welcome.’ I’ve felt right at home at every event. There’s always an amazing opportunity to experience fun things with super cool and kind people!”



LIAM STEVENS
CLASS OF 2026



DANELY CRUZ
CLASS OF 2027

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

“My favorite thing about the Catholic Church is how it is universal, and because of this, it is also extremely diverse with people from different cultures falling under one Church. At The Catholic Center, we get a glimpse of this diversity, having students from every single walk of life. The Diversity & Inclusion ministry strives to create events that foster community and make everyone feel seen. I have had the privilege of seeing new faces at the CC find their friends and find their place. This is the mission of the D&I ministry: to create a community where everyone feels welcomed and at home, and I’m very happy and blessed to see this happening.”

MUSIC

“Coming to UGA at the start of my sophomore year, I felt a little bit behind in finding my place at this university. But the Lord tugged my heart in the direction of serving Him through music and singing, which led me to Wellspring! This ministry has brought me closer to Christ and with individuals that challenge, support, and grow with one another spiritually through the simple act of praise. Worshiping the Lord and leading others closer to Him through music has been one of the biggest privileges I’ve had during my time as a Catholic Dawg. As Fr. Michael might say, it’s been an excuse for God to love me more!”



ANDREW CARTER
CLASS OF 2026

A YEAR IN REVIEW

NUMBERS FROM THE 2024–2025 ACADEMIC YEAR



81

STUDENT
LEADERS



82

STUDENT
EVENTS



30

SERVICE
HOURS



43

STUDENTS
ASSISTING
RELIGIOUS
EDUCATION

200



STUDENTS FED
WEEKLY AT
SUNDAY NIGHT
DINNER



GRADUATES
COMMITTED
TO MISSION

CHRIST IN THE CITY
CON-SOLATIO
DAMASCUS • FOCUS
SETON TEACHING
FELLOWS

448

SUNDAY AND
DAILY MASSES



WORSHIP &
SACRAMENTS

200

HOURS OF
CONFESSION

400

AVERAGE ATTENDANCE AT
SUNDAY STUDENT MASS

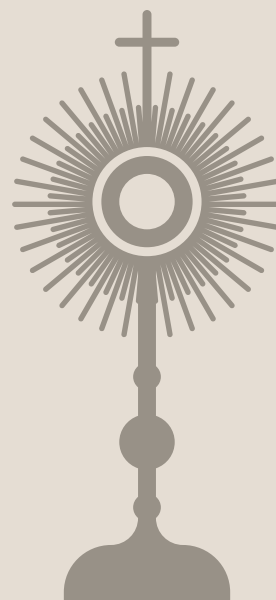
100

AVERAGE ATTENDANCE
AT DAILY MASS



450

HOURS OF
EUCCHARISTIC
ADORATION



BUILDING THE
BODY OF CHRIST

25

CATHOLIC
CONVERTS

21

CATHOLICS
SEEKING
CONFIRMATION

23

STUDENT
SPONSORS

The FOCUS Impact:

MISSIONARIES INVITE STUDENTS
INTO COMMUNITY, FORMATION,
AND EVANGELIZATION

“To know Christ
Jesus and fulfill
His Great
Commission.”

The Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS) is a Catholic apostolate that seeks to invite college students into an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ and equip them with the formation and resources to lead others to Him. Through Bible studies, outreach events, mission trips, and everyday accompaniment, FOCUS missionaries inspire and build up others in faith, sending them out to spread the Good News and live out the Great Commission: “Go and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19).

OUR 2025–2026 MISSIONARIES

Sean Clennan, Kellie Clennan,
Angelle Doucet, Ivey McAleer,
Isabella Doscocil,
Henry Doscocil



STATS FROM THE 2024–2025 SCHOOL YEAR

249

STUDENTS IN
A BIBLE STUDY

50

STUDENTS IN
DISCIPLESHIP

45

STUDENTS WHO
ATTENDED SEEK25

20

STUDENTS LEADING
A BIBLE STUDY

11

STUDENTS LEADING A
DISCIPLESHIP GROUP

27

STUDENTS ON THE
PERU MISSION TRIP



PERU MISSION TRIP

“If I could describe my mission trip experience with three words, it would be ‘the simple Gospel.’ Through working, laughing, and sharing such beautiful moments alongside the neighbors of Pamplona, I recognized how present Jesus is in the simplicity of things. I learned that mission isn’t about serving others; it is about serving with others. And the only way to do that is by finding humility, recognizing the dignity of every person we encounter, and seeing the face of Christ in each of them.”

KIMBERLY MERAZ-FUENTES

CLASS OF 2027



SEEK25

“I went to SEEK before I entered the Church, and it was my first big Catholic event. The entire week of SEEK, somehow it seemed all of the talks emphasized identity. Looking back, I can see how much the Father desired to show me my identity as his beloved daughter. It seemed like everyone else at SEEK was able to explore their vocation, especially being surrounded by so many priests, friars, and sisters, and that made me feel left out. I wasn’t even Catholic yet! But ultimately, my whole time there, God was showing me my first and foremost vocation is to be His daughter.”

REAGAN MASON

CLASS OF 2026



BIBLE STUDY SPOTLIGHT

“FOCUS has provided for me a brotherhood in which we can cultivate the virtues of Christ together. It has prepared me to be a true leader in the faith. Through that preparation, leading a Bible study has been one of the most fulfilling experiences of college so far.”

BEN HOOVER

CLASS OF 2028



ADOREMUS

*come, let us
adore Hím*

KATIE WELSH, CLASS OF 2028

“Spending time before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament has truly changed my life. I first encountered this gift of the Eucharist in high school, and since then, Eucharistic adoration has been my favorite form of prayer. There is no joy like that of being face-to-face with Jesus. There is no presence like His. I was fortunate enough to live five minutes away from a perpetual adoration chapel, and I had the opportunity to visit Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament every day. I didn’t realize it at the time, but the Lord worked so much in my heart during those moments in His presence. He softened my heart in ways that I didn’t know were possible and opened the doors to greater love. It’s been such a gift to continue to draw near to Jesus in this sacrament while at The Catholic Center. Every moment with Jesus is new, and each second in His presence reveals more of His love for me.”

CHRIS CLEMENS, CLASS OF 2027

“One of the biggest things that has helped develop my personal relationship with Christ is Eucharistic adoration. In a world of turmoil, noise, and confusion, I always look forward to my weekly holy hour or getting to the chapel at 9am to spend some quiet time in the presence of Jesus. Whether it be reading Scripture, studying apologetics, praying a rosary, or just sitting there talking to God (my favorite thing to do in adoration), my time in silent Eucharistic adoration is essential for my daily life. It provides me with a reset to turn my brain off and rest knowing I am surrounded by God’s love. A man I look up to spiritually is the late Thomas Merton who famously studied how a monastic lifestyle facilitates deeper spiritual development. He said, ‘Not all of us are called to be hermits, but all of us need enough silence and solitude in our lives to enable the deeper voice of our own self to be heard at least occasionally.’ This quote reminds me that I need silent time with the Lord so that He can pour into me. If I am to spend my days pouring into others, it is a requirement that I make time to allow God’s mercy to fill my heart. Silent adoration provides me with a recharge so that I can fill my heart with God’s grace and then share the grace of the Eucharist with every person I interact with. In college, I am constantly barraged with questions, activities, noise, and thinking about what my life needs to look like after college, but silent adoration teaches me I don’t need to spend all my time worrying about tomorrow when I can find comfort knowing God just wants me to silently exist in His presence. If I am to spend time with my Lord and Savior, I know that all my questions and concerns will disappear because I am allowing him to become the center of my life.”



A Reflection on Sunday Night Dinner

RACHEL LICHTENWALNER
CLASS OF 2026

The aroma of meat, barbecue sauce, and carbs wafted down the line and intensified as each person finished heaping their plate and hunted for a spot to sit, inching me closer and closer to sustenance.

I served myself pork, green beans, and mashed potatoes, then turned around to a sea of faces I didn't recognize. *Gulp.* Was I about to relive the middle school cafeteria?

While I eventually found a seat at a table and engaged in some awkward introductions and small talk, I knew in my heart that that day—the first student dinner of my freshman year at The Catholic Center—was the beginning of a tradition that was going to be a staple of my college experience.

Sometimes when we make a habit of doing something, we lose our gratitude for our ability to do it, like brushing our teeth, showering, driving a car, or breathing out of both nostrils—something you remember to appreciate once they're stuffed up from a cold.

As a sappy senior reflecting on over 100 Sunday Night

Dinners I've attended, I haven't taken a single one for granted, because I know how precious these opportunities are. They've made me realize the interesting role food plays in our faith.

We don't just come to Sunday Night Dinners because of the free food. We don't open the Center doors for casseroles and cupcakes alone. Yes, we all appreciate a cooked meal that we don't have to prepare ourselves and can count on routinely, but there's some other inclination in our hearts drawing us here.

While the food attracts and brings us into proximity, it's the fellowship that makes us stay.

When I first started coming to Sunday Night Dinners, once I cleared my plate, I bid farewell to my tablemates. But departing as soon as I finished eating turned into staying in my seat and continuing conversations. It turned into making friends. It turned into my pals and I being the last people to leave after everyone else, laughing and goofing around.

I keep thinking about Matthew's call to follow Christ. After he accepted our Savior's invitation, Jesus asked to dine with him. The story goes: "While he was at table in his house, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat with Jesus and his disciples. The Pharisees saw this and said to his disciples, 'Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?' He heard this and said, 'Those who are well do not need a physician, but the sick do'" (Matthew 9:10–12).

Luke 7 recounts when Jesus "entered [a] Pharisee's house and reclined at table" and a woman poured an "alabaster flask of ointment" over His feet in reverence. Correcting the Pharisee who called her out for being a sinner, Christ commends her for her display of immense love.

In these stories, Jesus uses the context of a meal to point to something greater. He uses them to communicate His infinite, boundless love for us. To teach us about our identity and dignity.

In the same way, we could argue that Sunday Night Dinner points to something greater. It's about togetherness. It's about life-giving camaraderie, connection, and encounter.

"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them," Christ says (Matthew 18:20). The fellowship on this side of Heaven—yes, even at Sunday Night Dinner—is just a glimpse of the perfect and whole communion will we share with our God and one another in Paradise. Our feasts in the Center hall are merely a mirror of the eternal wedding feast in Heaven. How blissful, beautiful, and intimate will it be!

As Fr. Michael Bremer insists, "everything is an excuse for God to love you." And without fail, every single Sunday Night Dinner has nourished my soul with joy, playfulness, and the love of Christ.

Meet Our Chef: Darby Crawford



Darby Crawford began working as the Kitchen Manager at The Catholic Center in October 2024. Here, he is able to combine his love for his faith with his passion for cooking.

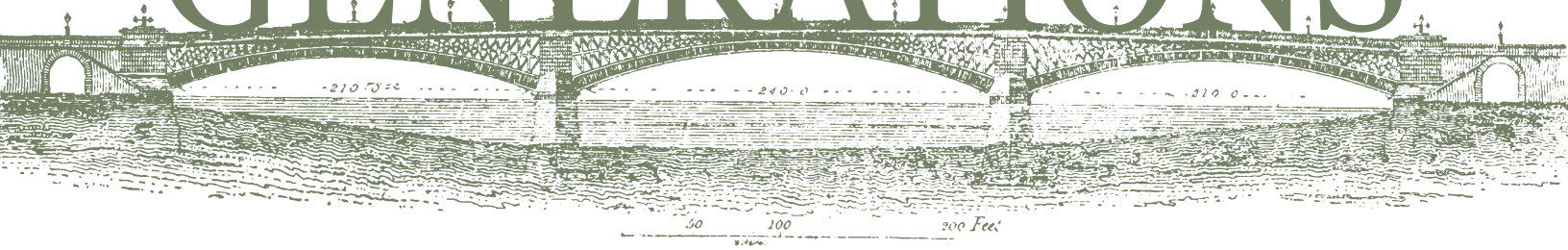
Darby started his career in residential construction for a variety of builders. Later on, economic factors compelled him to consider new work, landing him in the food business.

In 2022, he started "Darby's Cheesesteaks" in a small food truck. Many years ago, a restaurant in Five Points used to sell delicious cheesesteaks, but after the owner passed away, it was hard to find a good one in Athens, Darby said, so he took on the challenge.

He balances his entrepreneurial endeavor with serving hundreds of Catholic Center students per week through Sunday Night Dinner, Ignite, Ablaze, and special events. He also prepares food for major receptions, like for the Easter Vigil, Confirmation, and Family Weekend.

We are thankful for Darby's dedicated work and warm presence in our community!

BRIDGING GENERATIONS



One of the many things that makes The Catholic Center at UGA unique is our multigenerational community. While our primary mission is to serve UGA students, we have a large resident membership that also worships at the CC. It is a blessing to be able to involve all groups of people together for ministries and events!



5K HUMAN RACE

Our annual 5K Human Race invites the entire Catholic Center and Athens community in fellowship and competition! Funds toward the race support CSA ministries and events.



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Many of our students help teach religious education for children in grades first through sixth. We are so grateful for their service and their heart for sharing the Gospel with young souls! Below are some pictures from the 2025 RE fall carnival.





DOOLEY CLASSIC GOLF TOURNAMENT

Another Catholic Center tradition and fundraiser for CSA programs, the Dooley Classic Golf Tournament brings golfers of all age and skill together.



CHOIR

Our choir, led by Dan Marcacci, the Director of Music & Liturgy, guides the congregation in worship during Mass and celebrates funerals and weddings. While many choir members are resident members, students have also joined. It is a joy to hear from various beautiful voices lifting our hearts in song!

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

The Knights of Columbus at The Catholic Center is comprised of both male students and permanent members. They work together on service opportunities, Lenten fish fries, and much more.



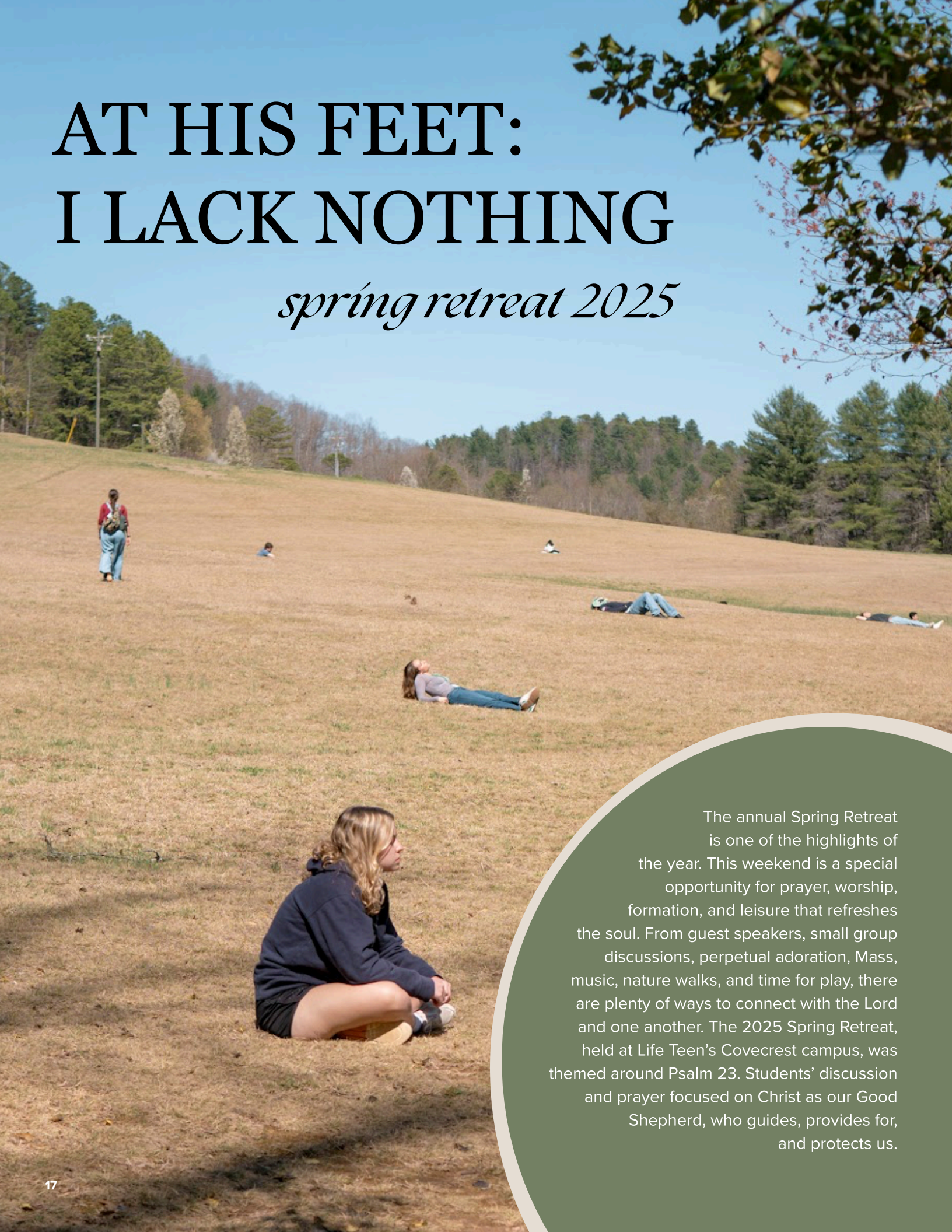
MR. CATHOLIC CENTER

Spearheaded by the Special Events team, Mr. Catholic Center is the men's pageant, talent show, and fundraiser. Contestants participate in formalwear, a group dance, an individual skit or performance, and a Q&A session. The night is always a hit with lots of laughter. The winner who is crowned Mr. Catholic Center comes back the next year to emcee the event!

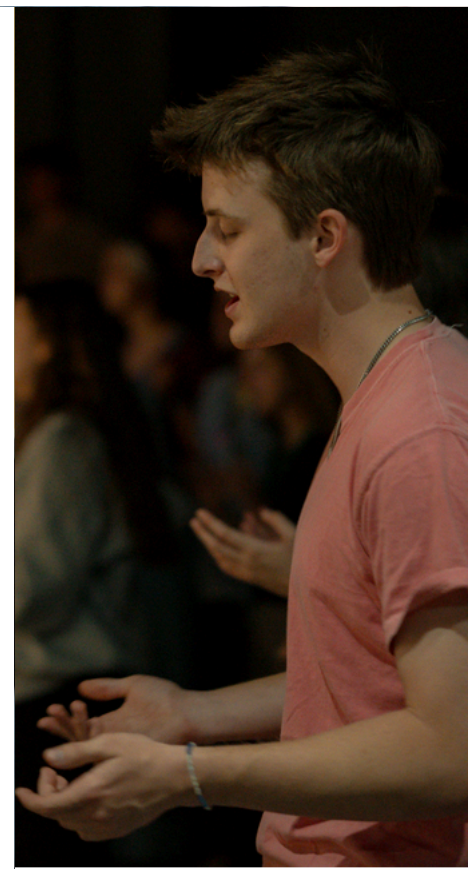


AT HIS FEET: I LACK NOTHING

spring retreat 2025



The annual Spring Retreat is one of the highlights of the year. This weekend is a special opportunity for prayer, worship, formation, and leisure that refreshes the soul. From guest speakers, small group discussions, perpetual adoration, Mass, music, nature walks, and time for play, there are plenty of ways to connect with the Lord and one another. The 2025 Spring Retreat, held at Life Teen's Covecrest campus, was themed around Psalm 23. Students' discussion and prayer focused on Christ as our Good Shepherd, who guides, provides for, and protects us.



VOCATIONS IN MOTION:

ALUMNI ANSWER GOD'S CALL



AUSTIN THOMAS CLASS OF 2020

When Austin Thomas transferred to the University of Georgia during his sophomore year, he came with a strong Catholic upbringing and faith foundation, but detached from that environment, he knew he had to take a new form of ownership over his relationship with Christ.

"There's no one to keep you accountable. It's just you and the Lord," he said.

The challenges of being a transfer student, in addition to this fresh sense of independence, tested his faith to adapt.

"Coming in as a transfer, people already have their friend groups. You're trying to find your way, and for me, it all started in the chapel," he said.

Sitting in his favorite pew one night with a heavy heart, the Lord said to him, "Austin, you can get married, and you can have kids, and they're going to love you a lot. But they will never love you as much as I do."

What kind of love is this? Austin marveled. Here, he encountered God's invitation to the priesthood.

Fast forward to the present where Austin is in his fifth year of seminary—undergoing his pastoral year at St. Peter Chanel Catholic Church in Roswell, GA—and expects to be ordained in summer 2028.

The fraternity and accessibility of the sacraments have been formative during his time as a seminarian, but so too has the reality of being faced with one's own woundedness. But the wounds that the enemy wants to weaponize and use to cast doubt, Austin said, the Lord wants to heal and redeem.

Austin said that currently in his journey toward the priesthood, he no longer questions his calling, but rather now, he prays, "Lord, what kind of priest are you asking me to be?"

He continues to see God give him the desire for priesthood and finds himself longing for it. While he is excited for the future, he reminds himself that the Lord uses each day to bear fruit in him and prepare him for when he fully embraces his vocation.



MICHAEL SOULE (CLASS OF 2027) AND EVA SELL (CLASS OF 2024)

Eva Sell, a UGA alumna and Master's student, and Michael Soule, an undergrad pursuing a degree in finance, met in the fall of 2024 teaching religious education at The Catholic Center. After the children left, the college-aged volunteers would mingle. The two of them soon began to have long conversations of their own, especially about theology.

"I wasn't looking for a relationship at all," Eva said, but "as [she] saw what a great heart he had," she kept opening herself up to the possibility of dating Michael. And it did not take long to become exclusive. On their first date, they were aligned on goals, dreams, and intentions and knew they wanted to pursue one another.

"We were so idealistic, but we both had that same vision, which I think helped draw us together at first," said Eva.

To keep Christ at the center of their dating relationship, they prayed together, whether it be the rosary or attending Mass. Sometimes, personal devotions turned into shared ones. Most importantly, developing charity and practicing mortification of self—putting faith into action—was and is critical for learning how to love and honor the other, Michael said.

Since their engagement in May 2025, Eva and Michael have been preparing for marriage, anticipating their wedding day in June 2026 at The Catholic Center. The marriage preparation period bears its challenges, as with any couple. It exposes a person's wounds and habitual sins and highlights areas of the relationship that need healing, but this is all directed toward enabling partners to best live out their vocation.

"Lord knows I'm not a perfect man, but in meeting Eva and working toward the marriage process, I've grown up a lot and become a better person for it," Michael said.

In a world of naysayers about people getting married young, Eva and Michael do not bat an eye.

"It is always going to be a hassle to build a life with someone else, so you might as well start young," said Michael. "As long as your disposition is that you're willing to change for your future bride/husband, and you guys are both willing to work through things together, then you're going to be fine."

With plans for building a family and moving near their own families once they both finish school, they have aspirations, a caring community, and God's providence that they know will support them.

Quoting 1 John 4:18, Eva's perspective is, "There is no fear in love."



Paul Lagerbloom

FROM SEARCHING TO SACRAMENT: *Stories of Conversion*

PAUL LAGERBLOOM

Born to a Lutheran father and a Catholic mother, Paul Lagerbloom grew up finding himself at an intersection of shared yet differing Christian beliefs. What resulted was a self-identification as Episcopalian, but neither his family nor individual life was devout, he said.

“I knew coming into college I wanted to get more into my faith,” said Paul, so when he came to UGA his freshman year, he started attending the Episcopal campus ministry. The community was friendly, he said, although it lacked the formation he was seeking.

Paul went to a Catholic high school and felt overwhelmed by the Catholic faith during his time there. Everyone else seemed to know what they were doing except him, and “my lack of knowledge kind of scared me,” he said. Nevertheless, he thought, “The Catholic Center is right down the street... I might as well try it.”

He came to a Tuesday Mass, and following an invitation from Fr. Michael Bremer, he went to Ignite, the weekly Wednesday ministry for freshmen. He

kept coming back to The Catholic Center again and again, meeting new faces and building relationships.

When sophomore year began, Paul desired to undergo OCIA. He enjoyed the lectures and small group discussions, learning alongside people like him. The camaraderie turned into strong friendships he still has today. Finally, after months of preparation, Easter Vigil arrived.

“I remember sitting there for all the readings and Psalms and [thinking], ‘If we could do this all night, I’d be happy.’ It was almost like artwork, where I could just look at this and hear this for a while,” Paul said.

He received the sacraments of the Eucharist and Confirmation. After receiving Christ—body, blood, soul, and divinity—he sat back down in his pew and thought, “Okay, wow. This is real. This all starts today,” he said. “I felt it in my chest.”

Paul remains active at The Catholic Center through attending events and ministries, serving as a prayer team leader at Ignite, and being involved with FOCUS through discipleship and Bible study, which “has become such a cornerstone in my life,” he said.

EMILY GRACE SEBRING

Emily Grace Sebring and her now-husband Jesse were active members in their Methodist community, but after a faith-based conference they attended in spring 2024, they left feeling shaken and unsettled.

“We really need to look into a church that’s actually foundational in the Bible and isn’t just going to change with the times,” she recalled thinking.

Her cousin, Clay, and his wife, Sophie, were both converts and invited her and Jesse to explore Catholicism. After some time, they enrolled in OCIA.

“It wasn’t until halfway through OCIA I really realized that the Catholic faith was right for me, and for everyone,” Emily Grace said.

Even though she had come to realize that the fullness of Christianity lay in the Catholic Church, she said she was still scared of committing herself to becoming Catholic, anxious if she would really be able to understand the faith and live it out well.

But Jesse asked her once, “Could you go back to being Protestant?”

“No,” she said.

“After you understand the Church and its history and the Eucharist, there’s no going back,” said Emily Grace.

So, she persisted in trying her best to participate in the faith. She persisted in learning. She persisted in making peace with the mysteries of the faith being mysteries without trying to pick them apart. She persisted in leaning into the OCIA community, especially her support system of Jesse, Clay, and Sophie. Learning about the lives of the saints brought her deep encouragement, too.

“To have the models of who the saints were and realize that there’s no one, finite way to be Catholic was incredible,” Emily Grace said.

Come Easter Vigil, the Mass was an emotional experience full of joy, awe, but also trepidation. *Am I good enough? Have I prepared enough?* Emily Grace wondered. That all changed when she received our Lord in the Eucharist. “The moment it hit my tongue,” she said, “a wave of calm washed over me.”

Today, Emily Grace continues to fall in love with Christ alongside Jesse. OCIA was so impactful for them that “we want to do OCIA every single year. We want to be sponsors,” she said.



Emily Grace Sebring

The Lord's beauty is revealed to me
in the joyful smiles of my friends
& the splendor of creation ♥

- Anna Frankford

i feel the joy of the
Lord when i crunch
through the fall leaves

-Alexis Krupp

“

God's love
is made
visible
through
his creation.

- Peter Bx

**MY
SPIRIT
REJOICES**

LUKE 1:47

”

my identity
is revealed
through
the Lord.

- April
murillo-
mundo

Our Lord's beauty
shines in eyes
so bold to offer
rest for aching souls

- Troy

God's beauty is often
revealed to me through his
mother. -Jake Manes

God's love is made visible
in the kindness of strangers.

- Allison Wills

I experience the peace of
Christ through Adoration. During
holy hour, I can let go of my worries
and anxieties and rest in His love.
- Michael Karpathy

I feel the peace of
Christ in the
sanctuary - Lea Smith

I see the Lord's beauty in my walks
across campus
- Annika Anderson

“

LUKE 1:47

*IN GOD
MY
SAVIOR*

I feel
the peace
of Christ
when I
visit the
chapel.
- Caleb
Hughes

God's
love
gives me
peace.
- Jordan
Kula

”

I see God's beauty through people
with same faith as me, they keep me
accountable and make me wanna pursue
him more and more.

- Emil Joice

God's love is made visible
to me in the sacrifice of
the Eucharist.

- Marissa Muenchen

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