HABEMUS PAPAM

CCM watches history unfold as the Church welcomes Pope Francis

By Grace Ahlering, Class of 2016

Habemus papam! We have a pope! This highly anticipated news swept the Vatican on March 13, 2013, when Jorge Bergoglio, former Cardinal of Buenos Aires, Argentina, was named Pope Francis. Members of CCM quickly heard about the selection of Pope Francis, receiving updates through television, live online streams, social media, and each other.

The evening of the election, the CCM community dedicated the weekly Wednesday Night Catholic Mass to Pope Francis, to celebrate his new leadership and pray for his time in the Vatican.

Amid all of the excitement, CCM students have noticed that Pope Francis brings a lot of “firsts” with him to the Vatican. “He’s Jesuit,” said first-year student Conor McKoy, “and coming from a Jesuit school I know that means he has a lot of experience serving people who need it.”

Being Latin American, Pope Francis is the first Pope from outside of Europe in more than 1,000 years. Senior Jessica Simmermeyer said, “I am excited about the change, mainly because I think it is amazing that we are able to watch the Catholic Church make history.”

For some students, Pope Francis’ introductory speech caused them to realize his humble nature. “His humility is something that makes him stand out from different popes. Whether it is his robes, asking us to pray for him, or paying for his hotel room, it is refreshing to see a pope that acts no different or superior than any other Catholic,” said sophomore Matt Zimpelman.

All of these “firsts” are appealing to the young people of the church, offering a breath of fresh air. “The youth are the future of the church, and being able to retain that membership will keep the Catholic Church strong,” added first-year Matt Krause.

Elon Catholic Campus Ministry offers a warm welcome to Pope Francis. We pray that his ministry to the Church acts as a sign of God’s love to people everywhere.
Wholly Service for Holy Week

By Anne Marie Wilson

When thinking of Holy Week, you wouldn’t necessarily think of Spring Break, but that was the reality for Elon University this year! Ten amazing students, Fr. Gerry, and I had the privilege of going to Johns Island, South Carolina, to work with the Sea Island Habitat for Humanity, alongside Habitat supervisors and a group from Eastern Connecticut State University. Today, Habitat has helped build or repair more than 600,000 houses and served more than 3 million people around the world.

While working with Habitat, some students were installing sheet rock and vinyl siding, others were making a beautiful wooden deck, digging holes, moving gravel... with everyone coming together to make a difference in the lives of the future homeowners. This was an amazing opportunity for CCM to give back to others in need and truly see what Habitat is all about. We have some students who are excited to go back next year and others are trying to get more involved with Habitat locally! During an evening reflection, first-year student Kevin Coyne expressed the following: “Going out and doing service (like CCM’s Alternative Spring Break Trip) is always great and needed, but true service starts within our daily lives on a daily basis.” The love and service the students showed to everyone on the trip was so evident and truly reflected the remarkable character of our students here in CCM.

We were also able to celebrate Holy Thursday with an intimate Mass and a Washing of the Feet, and on Good Friday we were blessed to meditate with the Stations of the Cross around the Angel Tree, possibly Johns Islands’ most famous attraction. The experience was a once-in-a-lifetime trip where “service” and “spirituality” came together harmoniously. What a great way to spend the final days of Lent and the beginning of the Sacred Triduum.

WASHINGTON D.C. MARCH FOR LIFE

By Conor McKoy, Class of 2016

While most students were heading home for Fake Break, a CCM group of 12 students and I were picked up on a bus on January 25th to Washington, D.C., to participate in the National March for Life. Getting no sleep the night before, we departed on the five hour bus ride, pairing up with Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church in Greensboro, NC, to arrive in our nation’s capital around 7:00 a.m. Upon arrival, I was amazed by the sheer size of the number of people in attendance for this event.

It was my first time ever participating in a walk for life, but it was truly an experience everyone should have at least once. I had come to see what it meant to be part of such a morally driven event, and it did not disappoint. It was a lot of fun marching through the freezing cold streets of D.C., watching everyone proclaim their beliefs of the right to life. Actually, one could see people on both sides of the debate making their ideals known.

It is truly rewarding to get a chance to understand such a political and ethical debate from a group perspective. It was amazing to see so many people from all around the country to come together to express a common value. I could not have asked for a better religious experience to start off my break.
In January 2014, Elon University will host the traveling exhibit “Graces Received: Painted and Metal Ex-Votos from Italy.” The exhibit, curated by folklorist Dr. Leonard Primiano from Cabrini College and brought to Elon by Dr. Tom Mould in Anthropology, Dr. Lynn Huber in Religious Studies, and Dr. Evan Gatti in Art History, consists of 53 votive objects from the Italian Catholic tradition created between 1832 and 1959. “Ex-votos,” short for *ex voto suscepto* meaning “according to the promise that was made,” were offered as thanks for heavenly intercession with various misfortunes, including accidents or illness. The collection includes both painted tablets (*tavolette*) depicting the dramatic moment of crisis for which intercession was requested and metal objects (*milagros*) in the shapes of people, afflicted body parts, or hearts representing the Sacred Heart of Jesus. In some sense, these objects reflect not only the thankfulness of those who have received divine intercession, but serve as a visual record of individuals’ faith in God’s grace and compassion.

The Elon Center for the Study of Religion, Culture, and Society, along with Catholic Campus Ministry, and other departments on campus, anticipate offering a number of events in connection with the exhibit, including a lecture by Dr. Primiano, a panel discussion by Elon faculty on the use of ex-votos and personal altars in various religious traditions and historical time-periods, and a conversation with Father Gerry Waterman about Catholic spirituality in relation to these types of votive objects. All of these events will be open and free of charge to the Elon community and to the public. As planning continues for the exhibit, which will be located in the Isabella Canon Room in Elon’s Performing Arts Center, we will be updating the public about times and event locations. Needless to say we are very excited about being able to bring to campus this collection, which highlights the rich connections between faith and art, and we hope that many of you will join us in experiencing this unique collection.
CCM was honored to welcome Bishop Michael F. Burbidge from the Diocese of Raleigh on Sunday, April 14, 2013. Bishop Burbidge celebrated the 6pm and 9pm Masses on campus, visited with students and joined us for a wonderful, sumptuous dinner hosted by members of the Elon Community Church.