

THE CATHOLIC PHOENIX

ELON CATHOLIC CAMPUS MINISTRY NEWSLETTER

| SPRING 2025

CCM IN CHARLOTTE!

Catholic Campus Ministry gathered alumni, parents, and prospective students at an event in Charlotte, NC.

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Record crowds and six students receiving their Sacraments were the highlights of our Easter Mass.

4 THE GIFT OF SERVING

Corey McCall '25 and Lexi Stamps '28 share how the CCM service trip to Jamaica made a lasting impact on their own lives.

6 IN THEIR OWN WORDS

The class of 2025 share their favorite moments during their years with Catholic Campus Ministry.

CATHOLIC CAMPUS MINISTRY

2025 CCM SERVANT LEADERS:

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Liam Dupas
Sophie Feldhues
Liam McGarry
Paul Nunno
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Tyler Strenk
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Luke Coan
Tyler Craig
Katie Geraghty
Grace Minton
Maria Romero Achon
Grace Stetler

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Russ and Kathy Smith, P'15
Cindy Touloupas, P'13
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CCM celebrates Palm Sunday Mass in the Academic Village amphitheater, followed by Sunday Supper at the CCM House.



Fr. Peter and Br. Nick Romeo converse with students around the fire pit during "Friar-side Chat" on Wednesday of Holy Week.



Kiara Cronin '25 (fourth from left) was the featured speaker at Elon's Numen Lumen event on Thursday of Holy Week.



Fr. Peter washes the feet of students at Holy Thursday Mass in Holt Chapel.



Nick Brillo '28 carries the cross during Good Friday's Stations of the Cross around the university campus.



Students adore the wood of the cross during the Liturgy of the Lord's Passion on Good Friday.

HOLY WEEK ACTIVITIES

Easter Joy



By Kasey Miller, Catholic Life Staff

Catholic Campus Ministry celebrated Easter Mass in Alumni Gym on April 20, 2025. Over 480 students, faculty, staff, families, friends, and alumni were in attendance, overflowing the seats into the bleachers. There was an incredible number of students with many bringing their friend groups, fraternity brothers, and families, taking up entire rows. Everyone was smiling and chatting, waiting for Mass to begin.

This was a record crowd for Easter Mass on Elon's campus. Father Peter Tremblay shared what he believed motivated the increase, "Hope and joy motivate us all. Elon students are eager to find these feelings in faith and in Jesus." Navigating college life while practicing religion can be tough, but CCM is seeing rising engagement. Father Peter continued, "The demand for spirituality, hope, and joy is clearly growing. We're committed to creating spaces where students can embrace their faith."

After praying, fasting, and almsgiving for the forty days of Lent and following Christ's footsteps through Holy Week, CCM celebrated six students – (from left to right in picture) Julien Dupas '26, Andrew Cochran '28, Parker Stevens '27, Liam Dupas '26, Ava LeGendre '25, and James Follette '25 – as they received their Sacraments of Initiation in front of family and friends in Elon University's Alumni Gym. Andrew was baptized, Parker made a profession of faith, and all six received Confirmation. These six students met regularly for the OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation of Adults) process throughout this past year. Julien highlighted the impact those classes had on his spiritual journey.

"Attending OCIA classes weekly with FP was a gift," Julien said. Each session helped me better understand the Church's history,



teachings, and traditions. What made it even more special was asking any question and receiving thoughtful, wise guidance from Father Peter. Those weekly conversations became a cornerstone of my faith journey. So, if I had to sum it up, my biggest takeaway was the consistent, intentional formation I received, as it made all the difference."

After making his profession of faith, Parker entered into full communion with the Catholic Church. "I remember not knowing what to do or what was happening, and now I'm sitting in front of a packed Alumni Gym with all my friends and fellow confirmands, singing together with joy for the resurrection," Parker remarked. "Although it wasn't in an ornate church, it felt like home. I no longer feel distant from God; His grace has brought me closer to Him."

Julien echoed the moment's significance: "For the first time, I experienced Easter not just as a holiday but as a sacred celebration. It felt like everything I had offered, every sacrifice and prayer, had led to that moment. Easter Mass wasn't just a tradition anymore. It was a deep, intimate encounter with Christ."

The Gift o



Above, from left:

- The CCM group together after Mass at Blessed Sacrament Cathedral located in Montego Bay.

- Corey McCall '25 helps one of the Blessed Assurance residents with a craft.

By Corey McCall, class of 2025

I had the privilege to not only partake in, but also lead the CCM service trip to Jamaica during this year's spring break. This was not my first service trip with Elon CCM, but my third! Having been on multiple service trips now, I can confidently say that the one to Jamaica has truly been the most impactful and life-changing for me!

I actually was supposed to go on this same CCM trip to serve Mustard Seed Communities during my sophomore year, but ended up getting sick with viral myocarditis (a heart condition) and was unfortunately unable to attend. Despite my original plan, God's greater plan of having me go during my senior year instead was not for nothing – I don't think I would have gotten as much out of the trip had I not gone this year! Words cannot even begin to describe my experience but I will try to make an attempt at it.

Unlike the other service trips I have gone on, this one involved direct, hands-on care for the people we were serving. This aspect of the trip was something I was looking forward to due to my career interest of becoming a dentist. Through our interactions with the residents, including feeding, prayer services, Bingo, arts and crafts, and a field day, our group was able to provide so much individual love and attention. These moments allowed me to grow much deeper in my faith. I was also able to see Jesus in every single one of

the caregivers, as their patience, love, and care for the residents was so evident. I'll admit after interacting with the residents for the majority of the days, I was somewhat exhausted, but to think that these caregivers do this each day is amazing and nothing short of Christ-like. It truly was life-changing.

Additionally, I have become much, much, much more grateful for the everyday things I take for granted, such as having a loving family, being able to feed and clothe myself, and even being able to communicate verbally. And being able to co-lead the trip with fellow senior Kinga Srednicka – planning activities for the residents, facilitating small group discussions, and helping the other CCM students grow in their faith – is something I will be forever grateful for!

This experience was transformative for me. After experiencing this trip, one of my goals when I become a dentist is to go back to Mustard Seed Communities and set up free dental clinics to provide restorative care to the residents. Something I noticed on this trip was that although the residents brush their teeth, lots of them have decay that needs restorative care. I will keep this goal close to my heart during my time in dental school and my career to ensure it becomes a reality and to ultimately give back to a community that has given me SO much!

f Serving



Above, from left:

- Lexi Stamps '28
laughs with one of the
residents.

- Natalia Znosko '27,
Sahara Preudhomme
'28, and Kinga
Srednicka '25 enjoy
music time.

- Father Peter gets a
hug from a resident.

By Lexi Stamps, class of 2028

I went on the Jamaica trip because I wanted to grow closer to the CCM community, step out of my comfort zone, and reconnect with my faith in a deeper way. I had never been on a mission trip before, and I was drawn in by the opportunity to serve, especially since I already have a strong passion for working with individuals with disabilities. I knew it would be a spiritually renewing journey, and I was right.

What impacted me the most was the people I met. Miss Vanessa, one of the head nurses, is the kindest and most selfless woman I've ever met. She's been at Mustard Seed for almost 19 years, and the way she lives out her faith every day is so inspiring. Through our conversations about uncertainty and faith, she helped me realize that God really does have a plan for my life. She shared how He's worked through her own story and reminded me that He's working in mine, too. I just need to trust. Her words reminded me of Isaiah 30:21: "Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, 'This is the way; walk in it.'" I truly believe that voice was guiding me all along.

Then, there was Kahailia, a two-year-old resident who became such a dear friend to me. She couldn't see, but she recognized our presence through our voices and touch. Sitting with her in silence was when I felt closest to Jesus. It reminded me that love doesn't

always need words; it's simply about being present.

Honestly, I was really nervous before the trip, but seeing the way my CCM friends loved the residents with their whole hearts moved me beyond words. Watching God work through them showed me the beauty of community, compassion, and service. Even the physical discomforts helped me slow down and appreciate the simple things. Our meals were unhurried, and we had time to talk, reflect, and just be. We weren't constantly rushing, and that was such a refreshing change from the fast-paced world we're used to. I noticed how people there truly appreciate the moment they're in, instead of always longing for more. That surprised me and will stay with me.

Going forward, I hope to carry this spirit of intentionality and grace with me. I'm learning to pray more often and thank God for the small moments in my day. I want to approach everything in life with passion and purpose, giving it my all, and remembering the love and strength I witnessed at Mustard Seed. I've built friendships that I know will last, and I've come home with a renewed sense of purpose. I trust now, more than ever, that God's timing is perfect, even when I don't understand it, and that He places people and experiences in our path exactly when we need them.

Class of 2025

In their own



Kiara Cronin

I found my best friends through CCM, and I am beyond thankful for the ways this ministry brings people together in community and in the Eucharist. I have especially treasured my time doing service during spring break and serving the elementary school in San Fidel, New Mexico. Through that experience, I have been able to create strong relationships with my peers from Elon and NM. It showed me the magnitude of the mystical body of Christ and left me with beloved memories.



Jillian Thomas

I am so grateful for the amazing CCM community, which helped me find my place on this campus. CCM has given me the courage to live more boldly in my faith because I know that there are other Catholic students, staff, and faculty here who support me unwaveringly. It has been an honor to serve the CCM community in the same way, and a great joy to see others continue to grow more confident in their faith journeys.



Diego Coello de Portugal Magallón

My favourite memories from CCM are those I made during the different retreats and with the people I got to meet. I still remember the day I came here as a foreigner, unsure of what to do, and then I met countless others such as Gavin Michaud, T, Father Peter, Tyler Strenk, Liam McGarry, and the Dupas brothers. They were always welcoming and open to discuss the faith with plenty of respect. The friends, the events, and the sense of community are things that will forever remain a part of me and my life.



Alexa Ferraiuolo

My favorite memory was hosting the Welcome Back Barbecue at our new CCM House this past September! It was a full-circle moment, inviting new and seasoned students to an intentionally designed, cozy place we can call home. Our ministry has put so much love into this space over the past year, and I can't wait to see how it becomes a resource for fellowship, relaxation, and programming for everyone.



words

Corey McCall



My favorite part of CCM has been the service trip opportunities. I was fortunate enough to attend one to Puerto Rico during my freshman year spring break, one to New Mexico during my junior year fake break, and then lead one to Jamaica this past spring break! These trips have truly changed my life and have been such an integral part of my "Elon experience."

Maria Romero Achon



Elon CCM has been my family away from home since the day I arrived from Spain. My favorite part about it is all the true, deep friendships I have formed that I am sure will last forever. The Music Ministry, especially, has been a gift through which I have grown in my faith and met amazing people.

Kinga Srednicka



My favorite memory is definitely my senior year spring break - I was a leader on the CCM Mission trip to assist the residents at Mustard Seed Communities in Adelphi, Jamaica. Not only was it an incredible experience, but I also grew so much in my faith and spent meaningful time with my friends in the CCM community. It's a trip I will remember fondly, and I am so blessed to have had such a joyful opportunity at CCM.

Zoe Eusemann



I am most grateful for the community and memories I have made over the past 4 years. CCM has truly been one of the most remarkable parts of my life, and I am so blessed to know that just because I am leaving Elon does not mean I am leaving behind my CCM community and memories.

CCM in CHARLOTTE!

By T Huynh-Duc, Catholic Life Staff

As one of the new initiatives in the 2025-2030 Abundant Life strategic plan for Catholic Life, we took our ministry on the road to Charlotte, NC! Elon University had recently established a Charlotte campus as part of their National Campus Programs, so CCM held the **CCM in Charlotte** event there in early April, right before the start of Holy Week. Charlotte was the perfect location to hold this initial outing to bring together the wider CCM community that extends beyond the Elon campus.

The event brought together alumni, current students, parents, prospective students and families who recently committed to Elon, and representatives from the Diocese of Charlotte. One of the primary goals of the event was to reconnect alumni with what is currently happening in CCM and also to begin establishing CCM alumni networks in various cities. We recognize the role we have to assist our alumni develop these Catholic communities in their own cities, so that they can encourage each other and grow in faith together. It was also a joy to meet and update parents on the ministry as well as introducing CCM to students who will enroll at Elon in the fall!

Many thanks goes to Kiara Cronin '25, who served as an intern with Catholic Life this past semester and coordinated the event, and Karen Neff, Associate Director of Elon Charlotte, for making **CCM in Charlotte** possible. And, of course, we are appreciative of Bishop of Charlotte Michael Martin, OFM Conv., who made a special guest appearance! His outpouring of support for the young people of our Church is a great example to our ministry.

Would you like CCM to hold an event in your city? Reach out to us! You are welcome to contact me at tduc@elon.edu at any time.



Staff members Father Peter, Nina Devaney '24 (middle), and T with several CCM alumni at Elon Charlotte.



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