



UNIVERSITY CATHOLIC

Proposing Jesus Christ and Forming His Disciples

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

SUMMER 2023

WE'RE PILGRIMS ON A JOURNEY

A message from UCat Nashville Chaplain

One of my favorite parts of living in Rome was the ample opportunity to be a pilgrim. There are so many places in Europe made holy by saints and Our Lady that make visiting them a spiritual experience. Whenever I would show people around St. Peter's Basilica, the goal was always "come a tourist, leave a pilgrim." The idea of pilgrimage is that I am destined for somewhere and have not arrived. The reality is we are all pilgrims. We are heirs to a Kingdom where the Father has prepared a place for us.

This is so beautifully lived out sacramentally in a Eucharistic procession. A group of the faithful

journeys along in hope with the presence of the Lord in their midst as they honor the Blessed Sacrament and witness to others their faith in Christ. This past semester, we were blessed to do a Eucharistic procession both on Vanderbilt and Belmont's campus. I loved seeing the students' excitement at witnessing to their faith in such a bold and overt way. The gold vestments, chanting in Latin, a handful of Dominican sisters, and dozens of young people certainly would have been a sight for the average college student walking by. Some bystanders were curious, some were clearly uncomfortable and sought to avoid us. Such is the reality of proposing Jesus Christ in the fullness of the faith on a college

campus these days. However, the procession only increased the students' faith and love of being part of the University Catholic community. The world constantly pressures them to think about success, grades, and post-grad plans, but as we processed with Our Lord, students were reminded their real future lies in heaven. We have not yet arrived, but we are called to live in hope of the divine glory which awaits us.

Fr. Rhodes Bolster

Rev. Rhodes Bolster

University Catholic Nashville
Chaplain

EUCCHARISTIC PROCESSION AT BELMONT

University Catholic is growing stronger throughout the Diocese with the newly-formed Diocesan Office of Campus Ministry overseeing the implementation at colleges across the mid-state.

UCat Nashville, the model for our efforts, had a great year under the helm of Fr. Rhodes Bolster, chaplain, Nick Aguirre and Mariana Pimiento and FOCUS teams at Vanderbilt and Belmont. For the first time ever, Middle Tennessee State University welcomed a team of FOCUS missionaries who made great headway in serving the students there and laying a foundation for a stronger Catholic community. Students at Tennessee Tech have enjoyed their new Aquinas House, which provides a home away from home. Sewanee students have benefitted from weekly Sunday Masses on campus, thanks to the generosity of Diocesan priests who have taken turns



traveling there. This Easter was extra special because of the college students who came into the Church.

But there is much work to be done. We must continue to cast our net into the deep — to the margins — to invite others back to the sacramental life. College campuses

are full of non-practicing Catholics and future Catholics who don't realize what they are missing, and yet they know there has to be more.

We are busy planning for the new school year. Leadership retreats will nourish and inspire our student leaders to grow in their personal relationship with Jesus Christ and to live differently because of Him. Strengthened with the Eucharist and a deep prayer life, they will bravely "Propose Jesus Christ" to their peers. Pray for us. Pray for our student leaders. Transformations happen daily. But many more await us.

We can't do it without you. Please join our mission as a monthly donor.

In Christ,

Fr. Gervan Menezes, M.Div.
Diocesan Director of Campus Ministry

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL GALA

Over \$36,000 was raised for University Catholic at the UCat Gala on April 15.

The evening featured a bountiful family-style dinner, served by UCat college students, touching student testimonials and a live band composed of UCat students. Thank you to all who helped make the evening such a big success!

At right are some of the UCat students who served at the Gala and provided the musical entertainment.

The inset photo shows our past and present UCat Chaplains, from left: Fr. Gervan Menezes, Fr. Michael Fye, Fr. John Sims Baker and Fr. Rhodes Bolster.





FR. LEGANSKI'S ORDINATION, 2ND FROM THE RIGHT, 1ST ROW

FR. JEREMY LEGANSKI ORDAINED

Fr. Jeremy Leganski, VU'17, was ordained to the priesthood on May 20 at the Cathedral of St. Raymond Nonnatus in Joliet, Illinois.

A former UCat President, J-Leg, as he was often called at UCat, was involved in numerous activities — from intramurals to altar serving — and was a friend to many, says Fr. John Sims Baker, UCat Chaplain from 2006 - 2016. “His openness to God’s Will for him was both supported by the UCat community and was a witness to it. I continue to be edified by him and am thankful for knowing him, not only while he was in college and later

when he was in seminary, but now as my brother priest!” said Fr. Baker.

Fr. Leganski celebrated his first Mass on May 21 at his home parish of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church in Darien, Illinois. He has been assigned to Immaculate Conception parish in Elmhurst, IL.

University Catholic is so proud, and we know Fr. Leganski will be a fabulous priest! He is the fifth UCat alum to be ordained to the priesthood, joining Fr. Josh Altonji, VU'11; Fr. Stephen Schumacher, VU'12; Fr. Pachomius Walker, OP, VU'11; and Fr. Alex Wyvill, VU'16.



JONATHAN CAWTHON AND WILL STACY

COLLEGE STUDENTS JOIN THE CHURCH AT EASTER

Welcome to the family

Jonathan Cawthon, Sewanee University of the South, is pictured here with Will Stacy, UCat at Sewanee President.

Theodora Phillips entered the Church, was confirmed and received her first Holy Communion at the Easter Vigil Mass at St. Rose in Murfreesboro.

Four students from Vanderbilt University were baptized, confirmed

and made their first holy communion at the Easter Vigil at the Cathedral of the Incarnation; two other Belmont students were confirmed. Two students from Vanderbilt University entered the Church at the Easter Vigil, receiving confirmation and first holy communion. Leah Fullerton received her first communion and confirmation at St. Thomas Aquinas. She is part of UCat at TNTech.

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FINDING A HOME AT UCAT

by Madison Perry

I transferred to Belmont last year from Rice University, where I was studying vocal performance. During my first year of college at Rice, I struggled with intense perfectionism and had a stunted vision of what, and who, my life was ultimately serving. I felt like the only way I could earn love was through my accomplishments and maintaining a certain level of performance. In addition, the presence of any kind of ministries on Rice's campus was lacking. Throughout my freshman year, I was losing sight of who I was, who God created me to be and what He desired for my future.

After much time of contemplation, I decided to leave Rice and began the search for another university to call home. In the spring of 2022, I traveled to Nashville and spent a day at Belmont. I will never forget when I first stepped into the Frassati House and the Cathedral of the Incarnation. During my visit, I had the opportunity to pray the Stations of the Cross with some UCat students. I was immediately welcomed into the community and was embraced as if I'd been friends with them all along. It was incredible to witness such profound faith and such profound reverence in such young people — what was the secret?

It was the love of Jesus Christ that pierced their hearts. An unconditional, unquenchable love, not one with expectations or a scoreboard. I came to find out that it wasn't much of a "secret," as the mission, *to propose Jesus Christ and form his disciples*, is boldly proclaimed here at

University Catholic.

We have weekly Thursday adoration in the Frassati chapel, events for intellectual growth, praise and worship nights, frequent opportunities for community service, a weekly Sunday experience that consists of dinner, holy hour, confession and Mass, and Eucharistic processions on our campuses.

Through this community,

I have found a home among fervent, empathetic, zealous young Catholics that will be my friends for life. Most importantly, I've found a home in the tender arms of Jesus. The love of Christ overflows at University Catholic, and I pray that it overflows upon all of you.

Madison is a junior at Belmont University and is a publishing major. Her hometown is St. Augustine, Florida.



MADISON PERRY, BACK ROW THIRD FROM LEFT





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