



# CALVERT NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE CATHOLIC CENTER AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Summer 2024

On June 23<sup>rd</sup> we celebrated the 12<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time and the Gospel for the day was the story of the Apostles and Jesus getting caught in a violent squall on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus calms the storm, and tranquility is restored on the waters. Jesus asks the Apostles why they were terrified and where was their faith. I found myself preaching on the question of whether it is a bad thing to experience anxiety. Does our anxiety mean we have little or no faith in Jesus? This theme was also the topic of my talk at our Spring Retreat where the overall theme of the retreat was about finding God in transition.

The undergraduate and even graduate years are times of transition. What comes next after graduation? What should I major in while in higher education? What will I do with that education? There is a lot on the plate of any young adult as he or she moves from childhood to independence as an adult. Turning to God with the questions that arise from this time of life is necessary.

So, is it wrong to experience anxiety and, at the same time, say we believe in Jesus? Jesus does say that being anxious does not add anything to our span of life (Mt 6:27). However, we do get anxious, and so, Jesus urges us to “seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness” (Mt 6:33). When we experience anxiety, we must ask for help, but also prioritize what is most important: doing what Jesus tells us from the Gospel. Of course, it is not always easy to live the Gospel nor is it easy to resist temptation, but Jesus, who strengthens both our faith and will is the one to whom we must stay close especially when we are anxious.

Calvert House is a unique place to encounter Jesus. Whether that encounter comes from celebrating the sacraments, participating in spiritual reading from small group articles, service to the poor, or engaging in the community life, Calvert House endeavors to be a place where one can find the Lord. The experiences of our students portrayed in our biannual newsletters would not be possible without the support of our benefactors. Our benefactors both large and small are essential for continuing to serve the spiritual needs of our community as well as maintaining the foundation of Calvert House. The students and faculty who come to Calvert House find a place of peace and support because Jesus is found within these walls. There is no greater mission than to bring the risen Christ to souls in need of his love, mercy, and innumerable blessings.

There are several changes and transitions taking place this summer. Calvert House will undergo some much-needed capital improvements. A new roof



**Fr. Andrew Wawrzyn**  
Chaplain / Director

**Fr. Andrew Wawrzyn** *(continued from page 1)*

will be installed in the coming weeks and new windows for a portion of the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, as well as the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors later this summer.

It is with both sadness and excitement that we bid farewell to Matt Moran. It has been a pleasure working with him these past 3 years that I have served as chaplain, and his 8 years of service to Calvert House certainly indicate his dedication and admiration for the mission, but even more for the students who have come through the University of Chicago in his time. We pray for God's blessings upon Matt in this exciting time of transition.

I am pleased to announce that we welcome Sam Landon as the new Associate Director. Sam brings experience both from the University of Chicago and campus ministry. He is a graduate (undergrad and grad) from the university and worked as a campus minister at Northwestern prior to his coming to Calvert House. He will be a great addition to our team of those who serve the students and faculty of the University of Chicago.

Thank you for all you do for Calvert House and know of my blessings and prayers for you.

In Christ,



Fr. Andrew



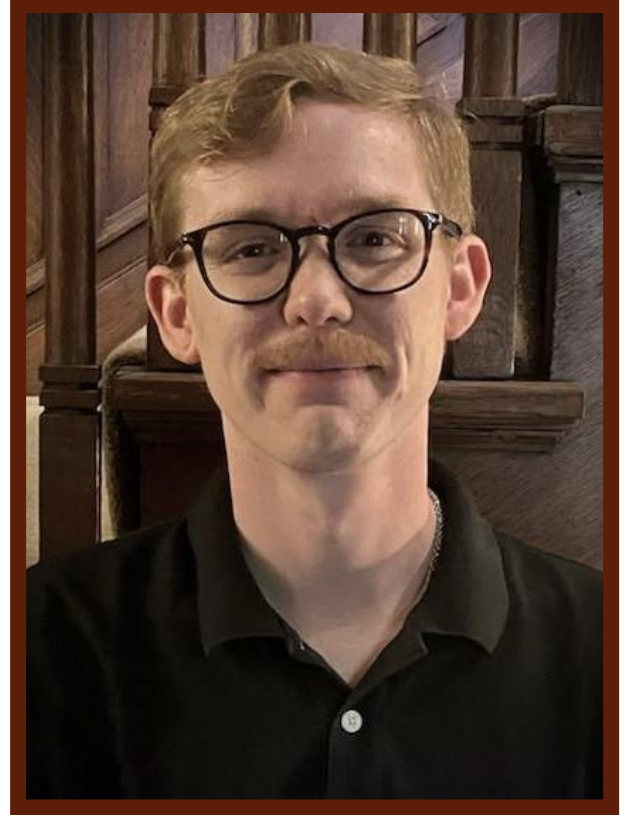
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You can also make a gift on our website: [www.uofccatholic.com/giving](http://www.uofccatholic.com/giving)



## Sam Landon - Eager for what lies ahead

Hello! My name is Sam Landon and I'm very excited to join the Calvert House team as the new Associate Director. I grew up in Tennessee and first came to the University of Chicago in 2017 as an undergraduate. It was during that time that I was first exposed to the Catholic faith and was received into the Church in 2018 through the ministry of Calvert House. After being received, I was blessed to continue to grow closer to Christ through the prayer and learning opportunities provided at Calvert. I also was able to give back to this community that had given so much to me through serving on the board of the Catholic Students Association. Following graduation, I was privileged to work in campus ministry at Northwestern University before returning to the University of Chicago for graduate studies. During that time, I was thrilled to reconnect with Calvert House and continue serving through the Catholic Students Association for Graduate and Professional Students. In this next chapter, I'm excited to help build on the great things that I have seen done at Calvert. None of these would have been possible without the hard work of the Calvert House team (past and present), including Fr. Andrew Liaugminas, Fr. Andrew Wawrzyn, Barb Pisto, and especially the outgoing Associate Director, Matt Moran. They have each been a witness to the importance of Faith for all students on campus and have made an impact on countless lives like mine. I look forward to all the great things that God will do in the lives of the students on our campus this upcoming year. Please pray for me and for our work. Glory to God for all things!



## Bishop Perry - A presentation on the life of Fr. Augustus Tolton



Bishop Joseph Perry, retired auxiliary bishop of Chicago, currently serves the Vatican as the promotor of the cause for canonization of Fr. Augustus Tolton. Fr. Tolton was an ex-slave who became a priest and served the Archdiocese of Chicago. Bishop Perry visited Calvert House on January 10, 2024, and presented an inspiring talk on the life of Fr. Tolton to the community.

## Fr. Peter V. Armenio - We are in a Springtime of Christianity

As a young priest in my early 30's, I initially got involved with Calvert House through contact with a few young men who recently entered into the Catholic Church and wanted personal spiritual guidance. The chaplain at that time, Fr. John Sanaghan, allowed me to use a room to meet with people about once a month. His successor, Fr. Bill Jabusch, former professor of homiletics at Mundelein Seminary, was appointed by Cardinal Bernadine to be the chaplain of Calvert House around 1990. Upon introducing myself to him, he asked me if I could assist him in his campus ministry once to twice a week. During those years I was leading discussions on recent documents of John Paul II, giving spiritual direction and celebrating weekday and Sunday Masses. In addition to pastoral work, from time to time, I would serve as chef for parties organized by Fr. Bill for fellow clergy. The dinners would invariably consist of a pasta, followed by a serving of meat and cannolis for dessert. During those years, I was kept moderately busy with students coming for spiritual guidance with few time constraints on the amount of time I was able to spend with each person.

The years between 1990 and 2010 were quite rewarding as Fr. Bill and I saw different young people convert to the Catholic faith, commit themselves to serious discipleship including a brilliant physics graduate student who became a Chicago priest and now the rector of Mundelein Seminary, Fr. John Kartje. Another former undergrad, who found a second home at Calvert during those years is the present head of Lumen Christi, Danny Wasserman.

I am exceedingly grateful to Fr. Bill for inviting me to be part of the Calvert House campus ministry. I certainly cherished my friendship with him as well as the friendships with the students who were coming to Calvert for Mass and spiritual sustenance or just plain old Christian fellowship. A few months ago, I ran into one of those former students after not seeing him for about 30 years and he said he remembered one of my homilies when I apparently stated that it is good to break Lenten resolutions like giving up ice cream if having ice cream meant a chance for bonding with someone else. I was disappointed that he did not remember something more profound. But maybe the example of Christian charity was more important for that young man at the time than I expected.

When Msgr. Pat Lagges became Chaplain around 2005, I took the initiative to come up with a design for a real reconciliation room with a good screen for anonymous confession coupled with a little space for conversation. We both felt that we needed a much better and more attractive space for the sacrament of Reconciliation. Once that room was ready for sacramental use, confessions dramatically increased. Friends started bringing friends. The newfound attraction to the reconciliation room even prompted a jubilant article written by a student in the Calvert newsletter.

When Msgr. Lagges retired, I considered stepping down since there was already a significant age difference between the students and me. I figured the big age difference would hinder my effectiveness in relating to the students-though up to that point I had been kept pretty busy. Fr. Andrew Liaugminas, whom I knew since he was a teenager, emailed me from Rome that he was the new chaplain of Calvert and in that same email urged me to stay on and work with him. To my surprise I got busier than ever before and started to limit my conversations to 15 minutes a person so that I could get to everyone. These sessions presently begin mid morning and end in the late afternoon or early evening on Thursdays. Given the wonderful qualities of all the young women and men who come to Calvert, I would love to spend much more time than I do with each person.

## We are in a Springtime of Christianity *(continued)*

I am clearly aware that I do not have any special gifts or charisms. I attribute the ground swell of religious fervor at Calvert to the prophetic messages transmitted to the youth during the entire pontificate of St. John Paul II. He repeated quite often that from the new generation of young women and men will come apostles of the new millennium. He would refer to the young as the hope of the Church and the main protagonists of the new evangelization, a phrase he coined. Growing up in the late 60s and 70s, which were marked by rebellion and rejection of anything that hinted of authority, I never cease to marvel at the fervor and the commitment of the young people to Christian discipleship once converted to the Lord. When I contemplate the piety and eagerness of the students to follow Christ, I automatically imagine St. John Paul II whispering in my ear: "I told you so."

When I was a young teenager the rock concert in Woodstock, New York became the icon of the mindset of my baby boomer generation. Occasioned by World Youth Day in 1993, many young people declared that Denver World Youth Day had become the new Woodstock given the staggering number of young people present at this singular event despite the harsh negative predictions of the media. In summary it was a smashing success beyond expectation. This explosion of spiritual yearning certainly did not stop with John Paul but has continued energetically under the pontificate of Pope Francis. This encouraging phenomena was poignantly demonstrated in the sweltering heat of Portugal where Pope Francis drew a million and a half high school and college age people. They all came to find Christ represented by the Holy Father and were certainly not disappointed.

As I contemplate the young people coming to Calvert under the shadow of a post Christian culture afflicted by a pandemic of moral relativism, I believe that we are in a springtime of Christianity. To extrapolate from the Gospels, this springtime will be found in the hearts and minds of a core of students who are bound and determined to follow and witness Jesus Christ. In short, I feel honored to be both a coach and a fan for the young evangelizers of the new millennium. Perhaps I can also say with the former New York Yankee baseball great, "I am the luckiest man in the world."



## Sophia Cook - Retreat Speaker - Encountering God in Change

Before leaving for college, as an 18-year-old I had a reversion to my faith through my parish's confirmation retreat program. I started to learn about the love of the Father and made the commitment to start going to Sunday mass. When I left for college at the University of Illinois, I had many different things pulling my attention in different directions. As a freshman I joined the rowing team, waterski team, a sorority, and I had assumed my faith would just fall in suit like it previously had. I was wrong. I stopped going to mass and if I was lucky enough for one of my dormmates to drag me to mass, it would not be without me being painfully hungover.

To my benefit and my peril, I was a "Yes" person. Always saying yes to every opportunity that came my way, (including random scuba classes). However, by the grace of God, during one of the masses I was dragged to, they were announcing a freshman retreat. Given my complex, I said yes. I went on this retreat, and afterwards it felt as though nothing had changed. However, in reality, everything had. The beginning of an even greater reversion to the faith was starting. I had no idea what God had in store for me.

Years later, I cannot imagine living my life for anyone but God. He has truly changed my life in innumerable ways. Throughout this experience, and recently going through another transition period, from graduation to grad school and working as a dietetic intern, there are certain things that have stuck with me and help me every day to grow closer to God.

A big thing when transitioning from college to post graduation life or even from high school to college is knowing your priorities.

At U of I, through the freshman retreat and consecutive retreats to follow, I met many spiritual leaders. They would ask and invite me to do different things, and my responses were usually: "I am too busy to go to mass," "I am too busy to join a Bible study," and "I am much too busy to spend time in prayer every day." What I came to realize as my heart slowly shifted, is that if I am too busy to spend time getting to know God, I am just too busy. What needed to happen, was a shift of priorities. An exercise that helped me do this was picturing my life as a circle. Now, I want you to draw out a circle with a throne in the middle. Then I want you to list all the priorities you have in your life whether that be: school, sports, friends, family... when done with that, place God somewhere. Either outside the circle, inside the circle amongst the rest of your priorities, or on the throne of your life. Take a moment to think about this and to reflect on the way you are currently living your life, and if you want to make any changes.

Things will come up in your life that will try and take your focus away from Christ and your relationship with him. In addition to the priorities you have in your life, the devil will sneak into any spaces you leave open for him. For example, comfortability with mediocracy, falling into solely reason and not a relationship, becoming a slave to a routine and not doing everything through love of your creator Jesus Christ.



You will meet many Catholics out there that are comfortable with their faith. Being comfortable does not allow for growth, please avoid this feeling and mentality at all costs.

Specifically, during change, our way of living shifts, many of our local hobbies might shift and change. It is very easy to let your faith become one of those things. Above all, it is important to remember not who you are, but whose you are. And let

everything stem from this overarching truth. Our Catholic faith is so beautiful, and the more we learn about the faith, the more beauty we discover. Our lives are simply that. A time of discovery in which we learn how to let this beauty in. To let the pure, unceasing love of God penetrate the cracks of our aching hearts.

You all have said yes to coming here this weekend. I want you to think about how you came to making this decision of giving God your yes. And then think about any changes that might be coming up in your life and lean into the ways God is stretching your heart through this change. How are you going to open your heart to the gift of this change, as challenging as it might be? How is God asking you to rest your heart in his?

As far as practical tips that have helped along the way during my transition from college to post graduate life, in which I continue to strive to practice every day, are as follows:

- We are creatures of habit, create a routine of prayer and mass, etc. Whatever God is asking of you. Allow yourself to be stretched.
- Pray for good Catholic community and put yourself out there.
- Take part in penitential acts. Make sacrifices for others. Doing good for others doesn't just make us feel good, but it connects us to members of the body of Christ. In the Our Father we ask God to "give us this day, our daily bread." Our days, *our life*, is given to us by God and through the Gospel and the fruits of our relationships with others, we can live in communion with Jesus's body every day.
- Be a mirror. If receiving God's love through daily prayer, it is natural to reflect that love onto others. This image has been great for reminding me that my soul reflects what I put into it.
- Finally, put out into the deep. Jesus will meet you where you are at, if you let him. Let Him into your boat to teach. Whether that boat be your family, your studies, your workplace, your relationships, or your entire life. He will not leave you toiling without a catch. Trust in Him and let down your nets.

When looking back at my life pre-conversion to now, the biggest thing I noticed is my ability to appreciate and to accept God's love. Through this growing of my heart, I have been able to love others, and create a life worth living built on a foundation of a font of endless Love of a Father who is so incredibly good. As changes come and go in your life, I encourage you to continue to seek out this love and place yourself in positions where you can hear the whisper of Christ's heart. Nothing in this world will give you the joy that God provides. When life's changes create different cracks, shifts, and movements in your heart, fill those spaces with God's love. Let him transform you.

*If men only knew what eternity is,  
they would do everything in their  
power to change their lives.*

*Our Lady of Fatima*



*I used to believe that prayer  
changes things, but now  
I know that prayer changes us,  
and we change things.*

*~Mother Teresa*

*While the world changes  
the cross stands firm.*

*~St. Bruno*

## Kenzie Bustamante: Students for Life Conference

Students for Life recently hosted the 3rd Annual Conference on Life. Our goal was to facilitate productive dialogue about an increasingly taboo topic. Namely, we convened experts on the medical, legal, and philosophical foundations of the pro-life movement so that students could better understand current politics and policies regarding abortion.

Our first speaker, Ben Conroy, a UChicago Ph.D. candidate and Calvert House regular, is a founding member of the Minimise Project. He is committed to fostering constructive dialogues about abortion and promoting pro-life policies. His dedication to reducing abortion rates through respectful discourse exemplifies his commitment to bridging philosophical inquiry with social impact. He eloquently reasons that no characteristic can strip anyone of their inherent human worth, not even the smallest and youngest human beings.

Our next speaker was Dr. Kathi Aultman, a retired board-certified OB/GYN and associate scholar with the Charlotte Lozier Institute. She co-founded and co-directed the first rape treatment center in Jacksonville, Florida, also serving as the medical director for Planned Parenthood of Northeast Florida, Inc. Throughout her career, Aultman performed many abortions—but she is now pro-life.



She spoke to the audience about her experience performing abortions and relayed her mindset before and after realizing the gravity of her actions. By God's grace and an unconditionally loving friend, she converted to Christianity and became a passionate pro-life advocate. Her talk was deeply moving and extremely eye-opening.

We then heard from Catherine Glenn Foster, J.D., an internationally recognized constitutional attorney, a post-abortive mom, and the president & CEO of First Rights Global, an international nonprofit organization standing in defense of the vulnerable, marginalized, and defenseless across the full spectrum of human rights. Foster informed the audience of the varying laws in the U.S. and her experience working with one family whose teenage daughter was being coerced by her boyfriend to get an abortion in another state. The parents had no legal means to stop their child from receiving an abortion, yet through Christ-like love, they ultimately encouraged her to choose life and are happily raising their grandson alongside her.



*See that you do not despise one of these little ones - for I say to you that their angels in heaven always look upon the face of my heavenly Father.  
Mt 18:10*

*Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you, a prophet to the nations I appointed you.  
Jeremiah 1:5*

*Before birth the Lord called me, from my mother's womb he gave me my name.  
Isaiah 49:1*

*You formed my inmost being; you knit me in my mother's womb.  
I praise you, because I am wonderfully made;  
wonderful are your works!  
My very self you know.  
My bones are not hidden from you, When I was being made in secret, fashioned in the depths of the earth.  
Psalm 139:13-15*

Finally, Dr. Monique Chireau Wubbenhorst, MPH, who most recently served as a deputy assistant administrator in the Bureau for Global Health at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), has over 20 years of experience as a practicing OB/GYN and is an expert on international health, policy, and women's health.

Her talk analyzed the data on abortion in America. Of particular interest to Dr. Wubbenhorst are the rapidly increased use of chemical abortion and the disproportionate impact abortion has had on black communities in America. In addition to these phenomenal speakers, we had local pro-life organizations introduce conference attendees to initiatives in Chicago and beyond. The Archdiocese of Chicago's Project Rachel, for instance, hosts post-abortion healing retreats. Southside Women's Services also offers pregnancy and postpartum services.

Donors included professors and UChicago affiliates, fellow student-run pro-life groups, and numerous Catholic organizations, including the Knights of Columbus and Seven Sisters Catholic Holy Hour Groups.

Students for Life plans to make this conference an annual event. In the coming years, we hope to involve more community members and student clubs. This annual conference aims to bring people in the Chicago area together. We want to encourage and support one another so that we can work towards a world where all men, women, and babies can be supported in their roles as loved fathers, mothers, and children.

Now more than ever, we must combat the culture of death that surrounds us. The best way to do so is to love struggling women and their most vulnerable children. This love needs to manifest itself through action. If you're interested in learning more about the local pro-life effort or want to be involved in future conversations about inherent human worth and dignity, please reach out to me at [kenzibustamante@uchicago.edu](mailto:kenzibustamante@uchicago.edu). I'd like to thank the abundance of support for this conference that came from the Calvert House community. Without this institution of Catholic excellence, our conference would not be possible.



*Congratulations Matt . . . We will miss you!!!*



## Matt Moran - Farewell Message

Dear Friends of Calvert House,

After eight spectacular and deeply fulfilling years spent here at Calvert House, it is with both joy and sadness that I announce my resignation from my role as Associate Director. I recently accepted a teaching position in the Religion department at Benet Academy, a Catholic college-prep school in Lisle. I am excited for the opportunity to share my love and understanding of the Church's rich tradition with the students at Benet and to train them to live out the Gospel with passion and joy. This is a transition I have been discerning and working towards for a few years now, and I am excited that it is finally happening.

My tenure here has stretched over three pastors, and I am incredibly grateful to each of them for all the encouragement, support, and mentorship they have offered me during my time here. The knowledge and skills I have gained and developed here will surely aid me in my future endeavors.

Among my proudest accomplishments during my tenure in at Calvert House is the design of our current RCIA program. I had the great privilege to work with the pastors, as well as with several students, to create a robust RCIA program. Each year, we led an average of ten Candidates & Catechumens through presentations that we believed would form them in the strong, doctrinal tradition of the Catholic Church in a way that enables them to bring these teachings to bear in their everyday lives. We spent hours preparing each presentation, only to have students ask tough and insightful questions which would demand that we revise the presentation for next year's group. After several iterations of these edits and revisions, I believe I can say that the presentations we share with our students are of the highest quality. It was in our RCIA discussions that I first discerned the call to full-time teaching.

A second achievement during my time here is the creation of our popular Small Group Program to promote faith and fellowship among our students. Each year, I create a diverse reading curriculum that draws on homilies from the Church Fathers, writings from the medieval mystics, and essays from recent and contemporary Catholic thinkers. It is both a joy and a privilege to present these treasures of the Church to students. It is my conviction that exposing students to the profundity of this tradition will inspire them to pursue lifelong nourishment in all our Catholic heritage has to offer. I have every intention of bringing these readings into the classroom next Fall.

I would also like to thank all the students who have allowed me the tremendous pleasure and privilege of working with them. The students who come through the door of Calvert House are truly amazing, and I will miss them dearly. In fact, one of my favorite tasks is something I never would have expected to enjoy: writing letters of recommendation. The opportunity to brag about how wonderful these students are in order to help them take their next steps in life has been an immense joy. It's really the case that those letters wrote themselves.

Finally, for those of you who do not know, I am engaged to be married this summer to an amazing woman named Caitlyn! We are very excited to begin our life together. Please keep us in your prayers as we prepare to take on these significant life-changes.

My favorite thing about myself is that I get to be Catholic, and I hope I've been able to share something of that with all of you. I've experienced tremendous healing and growth here, and I will treasure Calvert House for the rest of my life. Thank you all for your prayers and support. Please be assured of my prayers for this community.

THE CATHOLIC CENTER  
CALVERT HOUSE

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*"We all have a vocation. We believe that God has placed us in this life to fill a special need that no one else can accomplish."*

*~ Saint Frances de Sales*



***Congratulations Class of 2024!***