

IGNITE

fall 2019



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LETTER

from Deacon Richard

What a joy and what a beautiful experience it has been to serve as Director of Catholic Campus Ministry in Conway! I am so blessed and privileged to have witnessed the growth of this ministry, and the impact it has had on MANY students' lives.

With the transition to a new location and our continued growth, how do we continue to provide opportunities for a personal encounter with Jesus? How can we encourage and empower students to take the next step; to take that relationship out into their world?

Merely providing a litany of "programs" is not always the answer. Encounter requires meaningful relationships and community to thrive. This is why we make **Small Groups** (student led bible studies) one of the foundations of our ministry. Through Small Groups, students (both as leaders and members) have a chance to meet Jesus in new and different ways while in a space that is encouraging and welcoming. For many students, this is where their love of Christ is set aflame or reignited. It isn't about numbers, it is about an encounter.

We've also recognized the need to deepen faith and grow in **discipleship**. Through peer to peer mentoring, staff one on ones, retreats, and discipleship groups, students have many avenues available to take that next step. To become disciples who not only draw closer to Christ but who also seek to accompany others in their journey.

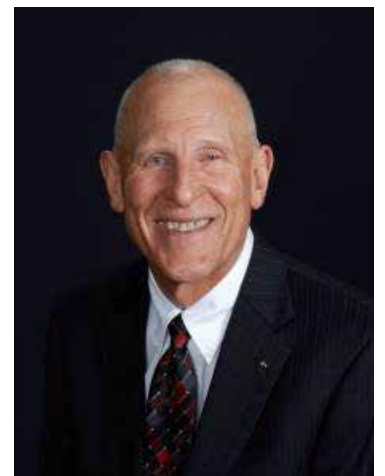
And finally, students need empowerment to take **ownership** not only in their faith but in their ministry. Students lead weekly Small Groups across campus, meet one on one with other students to encourage them in prayer and life, organize our weekly Alpha Omega event in the student center, serve at the CCM Mass, and so much more. Having a responsibility to fellow students helps the students embrace their faith as something for now, not just in the past or to be put off for the future.

So, take a look through this newsletter to see all the ways we strive to *'ignite souls, form disciples, and embrace service.'* Hear directly from current students, alumni, and staff about the impact your support has made. And as we enter into a new phase, please continue to pray for our students and the ministry staff who have been called and entrusted to accompany others in faith and life.

We remember you, our benefactors, in our personal prayers, as well as in the Prayer of the Faithful during our CCM Sunday Masses. God bless you all.

In Christ's love,

Deacon Richard Papini



UNEXPECTED

Spirituality

Community leads student leader, Savanna Gauthier, to Christ and service.



My faith life before coming to college was nothing close to what it is today. I didn't see the importance of faith or the impact of God on my life. When I came to the University of Central Arkansas, I decided that the best way to make friends similar to me was to find a campus ministry and get involved. The Catholic Campus Ministry here at UCA greeted me with open arms and proceeded to fully change my life. I was just looking for community and, while I found that in spades, I also found something unexpected: spirituality.

I was enriched constantly with messages of who Jesus is, how much He loves me, and how to live as a Catholic in an environment that is more suited to partying than praying. Had I not met Deacon Richard on the first week of school, I don't know who I would be.

I learned how to pray, how to read scripture, and eventually, I learned how to lead others in doing the same. Through all of the awkward first moments, from not knowing where to find the gospels in the bible, to painful silences in Small Group when a question about who Jesus was to us seemed too daunting to answer, none of the CCM community judged my lack of knowledge or made me feel lesser. They just offered me a helping hand, teaching me what I was missing.

Looking back, I know that I was desperately seeking not just people I would like to hang out with in college, but God himself. Through CCM, I now have the rest of my life to share with God and an eternity beyond that.





"I have always been involved in my faith, and as soon as I began attending events and Mass at the CCM House, I knew that I wanted to be a part of the ministry. The environment was so positive and I wanted to be a part of the mission to share Christ. Also, I could tell that the leaders and other students involved in the ministry were very close to Christ, and I wanted to share in this amazing relationship with the Lord."

Anne Moellers





"CCM for me has been the spiritual oasis in the middle of my crazy busy college life. It is a place for me to empty my heart out into Christ, so that Christ can pour out Himself into me."

Aubrey Volpert





"So much of my faith journey is linked to my experience with CCM. It's where I learned how to really praise, how to pray with scripture, the genius of St. Francis de Sales. It's also where I met many of my closest friends, but maybe the thing I appreciate the most is the way I learned to care for and walk with people. I know that wherever this crazy life leads me, I will be able to better care for people and accompany them in their journeys because of what I learned during my time in that tiny house on Bruce."

Katie Karp





SEEDS *of Hope*

CCM Conway is not possible without you.

Thanks to your support CCM Conway can be an active presence on multiple campuses in central Arkansas. We are wholly supported by you, our alumni, our parents, our university staff, and the broader Catholic community across the state. The sacrifices of time and finances that you make to support this ministry and the prayers you lift up are seeds of hope that are planted in the hearts of everyone who enters the doors of CCM Conway. The fruit, while amazingly present during their college years, often fully ripen many years later as they serve throughout the community as teachers, business leaders, parents, parishioners, volunteers, and voters.

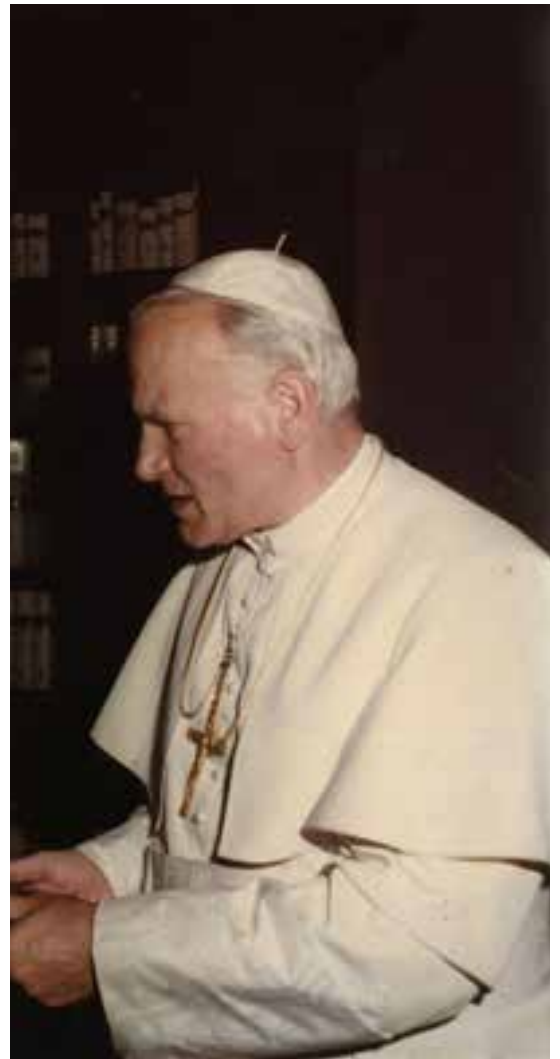
There is no other time that you can make such a direct impact on both the Church now and in the future. And we are so thankful that you have made that commitment to plant those seeds. With your support we have done so much, but there is still so much more to do, and we can't wait to begin that next step with you beside us.

SOCIETY *of John Paul ii*

The Society of John Paul ii is a community for our monthly supporters, specifically those who donate online. Monthly online support is critical to the continued growth of CCM Conway. Thanks to these supporters CCM Conway can continue to develop major events and programs that become things potential students look forward to when they choose colleges in central Arkansas.

The benefits of membership is as unique and diverse as our students. From personal thank yous from students to special events to more direct updates, members are invited to connect deeper with the lively community at CCM Conway.

Check out conwaycatholic.com for more information about online giving. It is the safest and easiest way to support organizations you care about. Or if you prefer, contact Kasey Miller to discuss how to set up recurring monthly support.



PHONATHON *Nov 11-14*

Will you answer the call?

On the evenings of November 11-14th our students will be calling you to share all the exciting things happening at CCM Conway and to share how you can be a part of this community. If you receive a call from a number you don't recognize between 6 pm and 9 pm it could be us!

Not going to be home or just don't like talking on the phone? Then swing by conwaycatholic.com to make your phonathon donation and avoid the call!



ENDURING *Connections*

Hendrix & UCA graduate, Bernard Smith of Bebe, discusses the lasting impact of campus ministry

Connect - a tradition for CCM. First-year students are welcomed into the campus ministry with a retreat that introduces them to the ups and downs of maintaining a spiritual journey amid college life. It is also an excellent time for students to connect with new and veterans members of CCM. Get it? Connect, because they connect? No? Cool, moving on.

Funnily enough, the same word comes to mind when I think about the lasting impressions in my life. At the time of writing this, I have just come back from a friend's visitation. I was floored by the number of people who showed up. There was a line that snaked out the back door of the main church for an entire hour. A large number stayed to pay their respects during the rosary and vigil service. Even more than that, I was shocked by the conversations I had that night. I reconnected with quite a few people from my high school years, and I was pleasantly surprised at how easily the conversations came, even after all this time. In particular, I saw a close friend, Megan, for the first time in years; and yet, if you had heard us talking, you would not have known we had ever been apart.

Wherever I find myself in life, I continuously go back to the connections I have made during my time at Hendrix and UCA. I think

about where my friends and I are now. I am in my third year of teaching high school math. My college roommates are a medical resident and a third-year medical student, respectively. My closest friends are married; one just recently had his first son! We've gone through so much since college - and yet, we still come back to each other. Those connections are still there. We have supported each other, both emotionally and spiritually, almost every step of the way since we first met, and through the unique struggles I experience as an adult, they are still there.

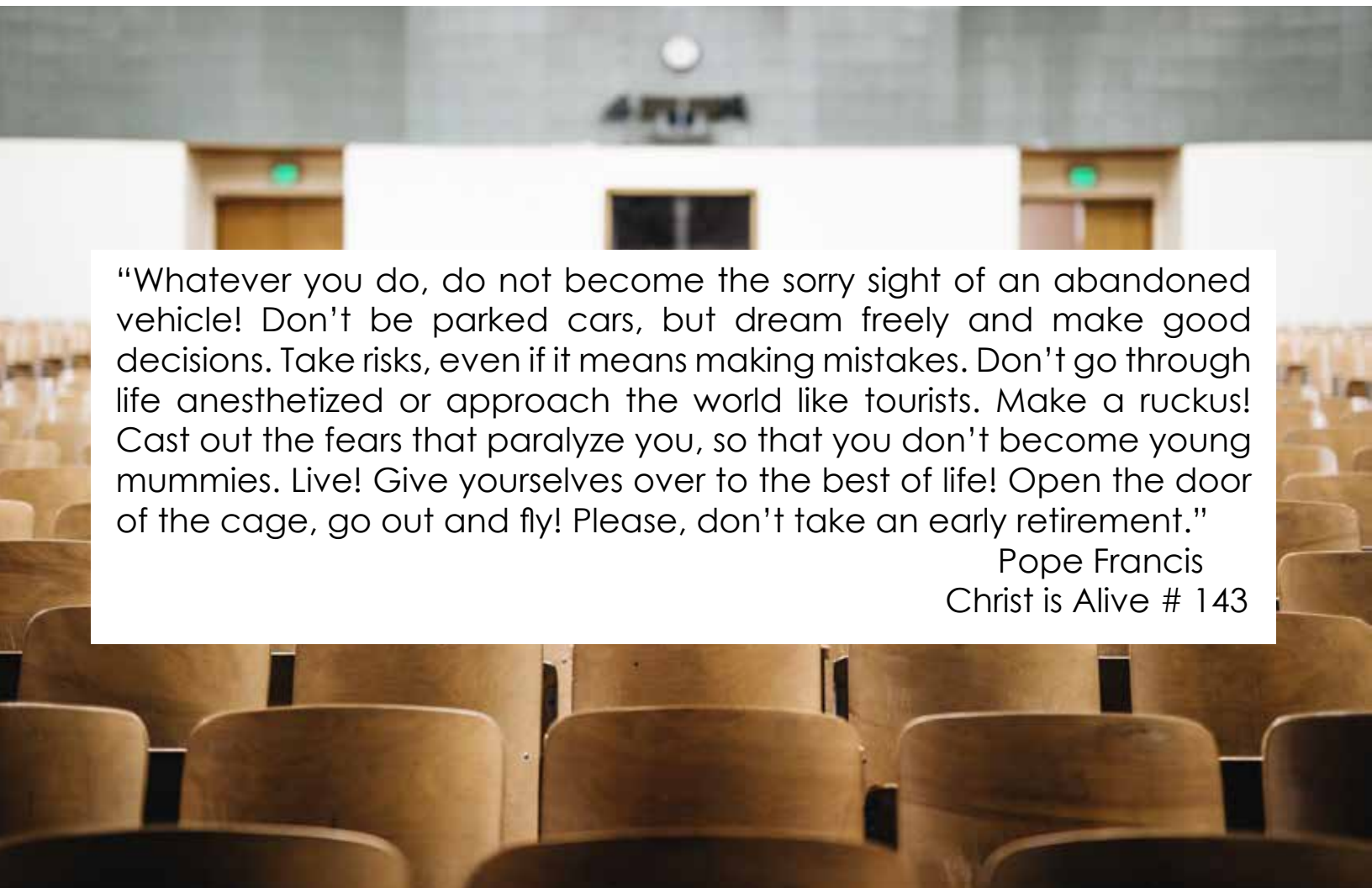
I now volunteer as a youth minister and music minister at my church. I regularly attend Mass, and I'm currently in a men's program with a few current UCA students and recent alumni. In mentioning this, without a doubt, I would not be where I am if it weren't for the connections I developed through CCM. I strive now to deepen any relationship I have, both with others and with God. Jesus had his twelve disciples; within that, as is shown specifically in the gospel of Matthew, He had those core three: Peter, James, and John. I encourage you to do the same. Find those people who can challenge you to be better and to whom you can do the same. Trust more. Love deeper. Create those connections, and most importantly, keep them. You'll be blessed beyond belief when you do.



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"Whatever you do, do not become the sorry sight of an abandoned vehicle! Don't be parked cars, but dream freely and make good decisions. Take risks, even if it means making mistakes. Don't go through life anesthetized or approach the world like tourists. Make a ruckus! Cast out the fears that paralyze you, so that you don't become young mummies. Live! Give yourselves over to the best of life! Open the door of the cage, go out and fly! Please, don't take an early retirement."

Pope Francis
Christ is Alive # 143