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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Upcoming Events Open to Friends of the UCC!

Christmas Eve Mass 12/24, 8pm

Easter Sunday Mass 4/5, 10:30am

Dance Marathon 4/9-10

Relay for Life 5/2-3

UCC STAFF



Please join us in helping to minister to the Catholic students at UCLA, for “the harvest is plenty but the laborers are few.” With your help, this coming academic year will bring even more formation, fellowship, and social justice activities to the Center. By financially supporting the University Catholic Center, your generous donation along with those of other alumni, parents, and friends of the UCC assists us in our efforts to empower the Catholic leaders of tomorrow. To donate electronically (using ParishPay), go to our website www.uccla.org and click on “Support the UCC.” Thank you for your support!



Student Leadership Team

Education & Faith Development

Gabe Relich
4th yr, Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology

Megan Beck
4th yr, English

Liturgy

Chelsy Sanchez
2nd yr, Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology

Maria Pedraza
5th yr, Biochemistry

Community Life

Leiza Castillo
4th yr, English

Social Justice

Allison Grenda
2nd yr, Anthropology

Lisandra Uribe
3rd yr, Psychobiology

Outreach

Jennifer Truong
4th yr, Environmental Science

Taylor Freitas
2nd yr, Political Science and Russian



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Catholic Bruin

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From the Director



“Dear Fr. Peter & Staff: Thank you for taking such good care of our son and being a guiding influence in his life while he is at UCLA. He absolutely loved the spring retreat. We’re so happy he has a place to worship while away from home, and feel very grateful for all of the wonderful work you do. Keep it up!”

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

As fall classes end and finals loom, such expressions of gratitude remind us that our efforts to make the University Catholic Center a lively and faith-filled campus ministry are bearing good fruit. Another sign of this? In addition to increasingly “full houses” at Mass, this year’s installment—our fifth—of ESTEEM, a groundbreaking national program aimed directly at fostering and holding onto the leadership abilities of our Catholic young adults, has its largest enrollment ever, twelve! I see this as a continuing mark of our students’ confidence in our ministry, especially in developing savvy, gifted leaders for tomorrow’s Church.

We’ve been astounded by great turnouts for our weekly Student Dinners (30-80 folks each week!), a Catholic “basics & more” discussion series on scripture and the sacraments, and for our on-campus community-wide Mass of the Holy Spirit and BBQ to kick off the new school year (nearly 400 attendees!), not to mention for a superb Christmas concert (on St. Nicholas’ feast day) by our rapidly growing Music Ministry. A visit to Homeboy Industries and Homegirl Café—ministries founded by Jesuit Father Greg Boyle as alternatives to gangs—plus evenings of adoration or reconciliation, a tour of LA’s Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, food ministry to the Skid Row homeless, reading to underserved children, Bible Study and faith-sharing groups, an evening on key election issues, Thanksgiving dinner, and an always-popular weekend retreat, entitled this year *Love in Translation: Stories of Faith* (42 attended!) filled out our fall schedule of events. These are 100% student-led, under UCC staff guidance. It’s been a packed quarter!

In October, acclaimed Catholic composer/music director Chris Walker, who trains Christian leaders to be more powerful servants in their ministry, spoke to us about the joys of liturgical ministry. On November 19, theologian Richard Gaillardetz of Boston College addressed “Pope Francis & the Future of Catholicism” to 100+ folks, over 70% of whom were students! Bishop Edward Clark, our regional bishop in LA, will hold an evening “Q & A” March 1. And Fr. John Cusick, founder of young adult ministry in the Archdiocese of Chicago, returns here in spring.

My Annual Christmas Wish List for the UCC

- \$500 donation – A year’s supply of candles for the chapel
- \$300 – Covers the cost of our Freshman/Transfer Student Retreat evening
- \$250 – RCIA or Confirmation resources
- \$100 – Defrays the cost of hosting one Thursday Student Dinner
- \$75 – Sends a student on a Weekend Retreat

This Christmas we ask once again that you prayerfully consider making a donation to the UCC. We count on your prayers and active participation as a parent, alum, or friend, and depend on your financial contributions. Donations of any amount are valuable; as ever, every little bit helps!

Thank you once again for being a crucial part of our extended UCC family. With the Holy Spirit’s guidance, let’s together make this coming year of stewardship for our UCLA campus ministry truly exceptional!

May our Gracious God continue to bless you this Advent and Christmas—

Fr. Peter Abdella, CSP



Fr. Peter and the rest of the staff pose with the Student Leaders.

Fall Retreat 2014 *Love in Translation: Stories of Faith*

What does God's love look like in your life?

This was the question that guided the retreat attendees for this year's UCC Fall Retreat entitled "*Love in Translation: Stories of Faith*." The nine fall retreat leaders, Kurt Anderson (UCC Community member), Gerard Convento (Class of '08), Eugene Del Valle (Ph.D candidate), Ana Hernandez (3rd yr), Margaret Ledak (4th yr), Gareth Monteiro (4th yr), Katelyn Olsen (2nd yr), Natalie Ross (4th yr), and Mary Starks (Class of '13), along with 33 more students, embarked on a three-day prayerful journey to explore God's unconditional love in our lives.

The retreatants got to hear various talks by the retreat leaders, with themes such as God's call to us during difficult times, changes in faith as we enter college, seeing God's presence in the big and small moments of our lives, and the universal struggle of suffering. The retreat attendees also got to experience communal reconciliation, Eucharistic adoration, reflection walks in nature, as well as small groups where they discussed their own faith stories. And let's not forget "Q&A with Fr. Peter," which is always a hit!

Retreat is a time for students to forget about midterms and all of the other stresses in our lives at UCLA and reflect on how God is always present in our lives, whether we realize it or not.

I think everyone who went on the retreat can say it was an awesome, grace-filled weekend, a high that can't be explained but only experienced. There were moments throughout the retreat that touched people's lives; for me it was the open homily during the closing Mass. At retreat the presider invited the attendees to express whatever they were feeling concerning the readings or the retreat weekend as a whole. I was touched as well as amazed at the number of people who felt that the UCC, and especially this retreat experience, helped them cope with the difficult times they face at UCLA. I mean, that's no surprise with a loving community like the UCC!

All in all, the Fall Retreat was a place where new friendships were formed, a closer UCC community was built, but most importantly, God's love was shared.

—Mary Starks (Class of '13), 2014 Fall Retreat Leader



Students gather together at the end of Fall Retreat.



Dr. Richard Gaillardetz speaks about Pope Francis to a packed house at the UCC.

UCC Events This Quarter

Student Leadership Team (SLT)

- Fall SLT Orientation & Planning Retreat
- Welcome Night: "Fall Into Faith"
- UCC Registration
- Finals Study Nights
- Mass on the Grass & BBQ

Liturgy Committee (+Music Ministry)

- Liturgical Ministers Training
- Fr. Chris Walker's talk on Liturgy
- Music Ministry Weekly Rehearsal
- Advent Planning
- Advent Reconciliation Service
- Eucharistic Adoration
- Writing Prayers of the Faithful
- Bread Baking for Sunday Mass
- Christmas Concert
- Our Lady of Guadalupe Mass

Education and Faith Development

- RCIA
- Richard Gaillardetz: "Pope Francis and the Future of Catholicism"
- Bible Study
- Bible Beach Day
- Rosary Prayer Group
- Kyrie Praise and Worship Group

Outreach

- UCC at Enormous Activities Fair
- UCC presence on Bruin Walk
- UCC T-Shirt sales
- Ads in UCLA's *Daily Bruin* Newspaper
- UCC Weekly Newsletter & "Wednesday's Word"

Social Justice

- Presentation on Election Issues
- Trip to Homegirl Café
- Planning for Tijuana Mission Trip
- SVDP's Skid Row Service and Toy Drive
- SVdP Midterm Care Packs
- SVdP Reading to Kids

Community Life

- Weekly Student Dinners
- Thanksgiving Potluck
- Weekly Cornerstone LGBT Meetings
- Lord of the Rings* Movie Night
- Trip to LA Cathedral

Retreats

- Freshman/Transfer Student Retreat
- Fall Weekend Retreat:

"*Love in Translation: Stories of Faith*"



UCC students wait for their food at Homegirl Café.



Students enjoy some fellowship at our start-of-the-year Welcome Night.



Fr. Peter, Fr. Paul, and Deacon Tom celebrate our annual Mass on the Grass.



Students enjoy a meal at Bible Beach Day.

Mass on the Grass: Bringing the Community Together

St. Paul wrote: "There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service but the same Lord; there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in every-one" (1 Cor 12:4-6). Mass on the Grass was a day where we as a community could celebrate the workings of the Holy Spirit in our lives and our ministries. It was a day where community members from all the different Mass times on a regular Sunday came together as a single congregation. Nearly 400 individuals gathered at Sunset Recreation Center on campus, where we celebrated Mass outside, under the warm sun, in the midst of God's wondrous creation. There, the environment of the liturgy was recreated and Holy Mass was celebrated.

This special Mass, celebrated early in the academic year, is also called the Mass of the Holy Spirit. The Lord produces in everyone unique and precious gifts, and the Holy Spirit calls us to put these gifts into action. But that's only the half of it. We are all unique and precious and different from one another, but in the Holy Spirit, we are united by love for each other and faith in our God. At Mass on the Grass, we honor not only the diversity of all the gifts that the Lord has produced in us, but also the deep and inherent unity of Christians in our community as well as in all the world, throughout time and space.

After the liturgy, the congregation was invited to grow closer as a community over food and fun. Student Leaders barbecued hotdogs and hamburgers for all the members to enjoy. With live music in the background by some of our talented community members, we bonded over good food and great company. Laughter filled the air as new community members met old ones, and friends were able to take time to relax and enjoy one another's presence. Friendships were made that day and so were memories.

God did not make us to be carbon copies of one another, but made each of us unique and special in our own way, gifted and precious and perfectly flawed. It is a miraculous thing that such different people can be united in celebration of the faith that we all share. Here at the UCC, we definitely do not lack in diversity! Yet, every year we can come together for Mass (and a great barbecue afterwards) as one community to honor the diverse gifts inherent in each person and to celebrate the unity that our faith provides. This, truly, is the Holy Spirit at work.

—Chelsy Sanchez, 2nd year