

GTCC

2016 Spiritual & Fiscal Report

Dear Alumni, Parents, and Friends,

An extraordinary year has passed at the Georgia Tech Catholic Center, and another is just beginning. It has been a year of grace. We have so many good things to report—you'll only hear about a fraction of them in this Annual Report. I am very much looking forward to the year ahead.

This past year, we celebrated the 30th Anniversary of the Catholic Center being in its present location on 4th Street. As many of you know, our Gala celebration at the Georgia Tech Hotel in honor of this momentous event was a magnificent party—and appropriately so considering the impact the Catholic Center has had over the years.

In this past year, we went on a pilgrimage to Philadelphia to see Pope Francis, got trapped in the blizzard of the century at the March for Life, had an exceptional mission trip to Peru working with and evangelizing the people living in the Shantytowns of Lima, saw 4 men off to seminary, 2 women to religious life, and 2 women to FOCUS. My schedule is so filled with marriages that I'm not sure how to get all the preparation done! Our young alumni are having children and doing wonderful things, and baptism requests are picking up—which I certainly love! We welcomed a large group into full communion with the Church this year at Easter. We completed some very noticeable and needed renovations on our main floor, and we just finished a touch up on the basement. If you haven't visited in a while, you wouldn't recognize the place!

For most of this year, we have been celebrating the Jubilee Year of Mercy. I want to share just one of the many things we are doing to live this Year of Mercy. Before all Masses, I have been leading the Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. It's fairly long, but I haven't heard a single complaint. I suspected when we began that students would eventually love it, but what I didn't expect is how much devotion to the Sacred Heart of our Lord would grow in the hearts of the students. Now, I see references to the Sacred Heart in emails, in literature we prepare for various occasions, in prayers, and in general conversation. It's amazing how something so small can make such a big difference. This Catholic Center is a place filled with hope for the future of the Church.

We had a good year financially. As you may recall, we have operated at a deficit for many years, and this year is no different—but our deficit came from unexpected expenses. We actually raised enough funds to cover our budget last year! This puts us four years ahead of my 6-year financial plan for the Catholic Center. That said, a large part of our deficit was covered by the gala proceeds, which we will not have this year. So many people came together to support our Catholic ministry here at Tech during our Anniversary Year—even folks who have

no ties to Georgia Tech. We hope that you will continue your support. No one uses your charitable contributions better than we do. As you know, I get particularly excited about vocations, which you'll read about later. Currently we have 12 men in seminary formation, 3 women in religious formation, and 2 FOCUS missionaries from Georgia Tech. There are not many places which have been so blessed, and we could not do it without your consistent and generous support.

I want to thank in particular our young alumni, who have been shockingly generous with the Catholic Center. We are rolling out a "class gift" program at the conclusion of this school year, in the hopes that we can build the Catholic Center on a firm financial foundation for many years to come.

I hope to see many of you this Fall during football season. Please stop by for our tailgate—or just to say hello.

Please let us know of any way we can assist you. Our students pray for you every single day at our communal rosary, and you are remembered in every Sunday Mass. If I can do anything for any of you at any time, please don't hesitate to ask!

To Hell With georgia,

Fr. Josh Allen, Chaplain





To some the Catholic Center is just another building on campus. Some walk right by without giving it a second glance or a moment's consideration. Some think they have no reason to ever step foot inside. But I've said it before and I'll say it again, the Catholic Center is the most important building on Georgia Tech's Campus. The Catholic Center houses neither the labs responsible for the discovery of flowing water on Mars nor those which observed gravitational waves. The news will not cover them, but much more important matters are studied at the Catholic Center. Apologetics, Theology of the Body, morality, philosophy, and metaphysics are studied by students, not in place of, but in addition to their regular school work. Students make the time to study such things but don't be fooled, they're burdened and heavily laden with schoolwork. Tech is not an easily conquered machine. Tech forges alumni strong enough to become Presidents, Nobel Prize winners, 4 star generals and admirals, CEO's, astronauts, engineers, scientists, mathematicians, and athletes. Students at the Catholic Center pursue such careers not as ends, but rather as means by which they may glorify God. Georgia Tech produces incredible alumni, and the Catholic Center ensures that Tech produces incredible saints. The Catholic Center aims to make saints because the world needs saints most of all. The world needs saints for the same reason Tech needs the Catholic Center. That is because every day some people walk right by the Catholic Center and Catholic Churches all throughout the world without a second thought. They don't realize that inside they can find what they really want and what they really need. Waiting for them inside the tabernacle, hidden under the humble signs of bread, is the One they truly seek. They pass right by because they do not know that the second person of the Trinity, the Lamb of God, the one who was and is and is to come, waits and longs for them. But those who stop inside come to know him. Those who seek his mercy in confession know him. Those who receive him in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass know him. Those who adore him and keep vigil into the night know him. Those who abide in him know him. So even if some never step inside to know him, he is brought out to them. For when those who know him dip their fingers into that holy water, drop to one knee, bless themselves, and go out through those doors into the world, he abides in them, and he goes out with them. They take him out to the world and they make him known. They obey the command he gave two thousand years ago; they make the good news, and the good word, known.

Steven Shlapak - ME '16

State of the CC

In an effort to quickly get to the point regarding the current state of the Catholic Center and Catholic Student Organization (CSO), I'd like to sum up the past year in just three words: above and beyond. Every year, Fr. Josh challenges the CSO board to think bigger, be greater, and do more (in many more words), and this year was no exception. Several brand new events and programs have been added so far this year with still more set to begin this fall, including an increased focus on offering freshmen-focused events and the planning of a "parish" mission. This meant that the CSO needed to fill 71 student leadership and committee positions for the fall of 2016 – and we managed to fill every single one, allowing more students than ever to take ownership of their faith through service and leadership within this Catholic community. Additionally, we have placed a large focus on expanding spiritual development and community service, leading to the offering of a 24 Hours of Mercy retreat, revamping our faith formation programs, and engaging in outreach events on a weekly basis. On top of that, our RCIA program grew tremendously this year with 14 people receiving sacraments at Easter. Students also traveled to Philadelphia, PA to see Pope Francis during his visit to the United States and to a poor, rural community in Peru for a mission trip during Holy Week. We continue to encourage and provide opportunities for students to very actively and intentionally discern their vocation to the priesthood, religious, married, or single life through retreats and talks, met with staggering success (as Fr. Josh will discuss in more detail). FOCUS and the Knights of Columbus also continue to draw in many students through bible studies, fellowship, and service. We constantly seek ways to reach the rest of the Georgia Tech campus through big events like the annual Thanksgiving dinner, "Ask a Catholic Priest" on Skiles walkway, a presentation on the Shroud of Turin, and a talk on the medical dangers of contraception. And in listing all of the aforementioned items, I'm only just scratching the surface of all of the past and future events going on at the Catholic Center! We continue to pray for the ways in which God is calling us to think bigger, be greater, and do more with the knowledge that He guides us through all of the wonderful, beautiful, grace-filled craziness that is the Georgia Tech Catholic Center. St. Faustina, pray for us!

Elizabeth Waters, CSO President - ME '16



A Vocations Update

We are so proud to announce that we have 4 new men entering into seminary formation this year, two women entering religious life, and two women joining FOCUS to be missionaries for at least two years. This brings our total number of men and women in formation to 17—12 seminarians, 3 women religious, and 2 missionaries. Steven Shlapak has joined the Archdiocese of Atlanta and is beginning his philosophy studies at Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans, LA. Kyle Simonis, our former Pastoral Lackey, is doing the same. Nicholas Le, also studying for Atlanta, is beginning philosophy studies at Mundelein Seminary outside of Chicago, and Jason Lewitzke (now Brother Peter) has joined the Central Province of the Dominicans! We look forward to sharing more about these men with you in

our e-newsletter in the coming months! Janna San Juan has discerned a call to join the Salesian Sisters of St. John Bosco in New Jersey, and Alina Nieser has joined the Parish Visitors of Mary Immaculate. Mary Cason DeWitt and Aislinn Domantay have both committed to be FOCUS missionaries. Mary Cason is assigned at Georgia Tech this semester and will receive a new assignment in the Spring semester. Aislinn is winning souls for Christ at Vanderbilt! And we, as I write this in September, already have 6 men applying to the seminary for next year. It has been an incredible year for vocations, and we are looking forward to more. Please pray for all of our men and women in formation—that they continue to do the will of God in their lives and find joy in that service.



Sr. Gemma Grace
Sisters of Life



Alina Nieser
Parish Visitors of Mary Immaculate



Janna San Juan
Salesian Sisters



Chris Berger
Archdiocese of Atlanta



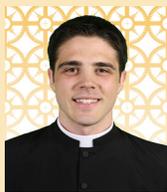
Dan Fitzgerald
Archdiocese of Atlanta



Edward Danemiller
Archdiocese of Atlanta



Joey Martineck
Archdiocese of Atlanta



T.J. Capaldi
Archdiocese of Atlanta



Nicholas Le
Archdiocese of Atlanta



Steven Shlapak
Archdiocese of Atlanta



Kyle Simonis
Archdiocese of Atlanta



Mary Cason Dewitt
FOCUS



Aislinn Domantay
FOCUS

Knights of Columbus Triple Star

Six years ago a group of men from the Catholic Center decided that they wanted to expand the opportunities they had for spiritual and fraternal growth on campus. They came together to form Georgia Tech Knights of Columbus Council #14496. What began as a small social event has grown into a brotherhood of almost 70 members which serves the Georgia Tech Catholic community in a variety of ways. The Knights of Columbus was founded in 1882 by Father Michael J. McGiverny on the principles of Charity, Unity, and Fraternity. At Georgia Tech, we strive to impart these essential virtues into every man that elects to become a part of our order. We believe that during this unique period of their lives where they are trying to discover who they are, the Knights gives them a solid base

in which their identity can reside. In our work, we have been recognized by winning the Triple Star Council Award for the 2016 year. This is our third consecutive year winning a Star Award, which recognizes our council's rapid growth and our high quality programming that uphold the principles of the Knights of Columbus. During World Youth Day, Pope Francis said, "Our response to a world at war has a name: its name is Fraternity." We want to take this as a challenge to go beyond awards; to continually improve the formation that men receive through the fraternity of the Knights, and send them out to change the world through Charity, Unity, and Fraternity.

David Depres - EE '17

GTCC meets Wo



Serving in Peru

Deciding to go to Peru was very much outside of my comfort zone; I'm an introvert and had never been on a mission trip. Long story short, I took the risk to go on this trip and allowed God to provide for what would happen.

We stayed near Lima in a retreat house, which had a chapel downstairs, beautiful grounds, and green grass. The basic schedule of our trip was 3 days of work on stairs and the 3 days of the Triduum, in which we did catechesis in the morning and some sort of Mass or service in the second half of the day. Each morning, as we would drive up (literally up—they call it *Alta* for a reason) to Pamplona Alta, a layer of dust would settle over you. It makes it hard to breathe; it gets in your eyes. The dust was like a reflection of the extreme poverty—it's

overwhelming to encounter. The people there basically climbed rocks daily, just to get from shack to shack. I was overwhelmed and thinking of the little I could do to help these people on the first few days of the trip. I focused on relying on Christ in my weaknesses—He's the one who will help these people. So, I put myself out there and struggled through some Spanish. I focused on the mission we came to do—bringing Christ to these people and seeing Christ in these people. This is when I realized that we all rely on God in our weaknesses. This is how we are united in the Body of Christ.

Of all the small stories I could tell about Peru, one little girl, named Jhoselin, stands out in my mind. She approached me, looking for a friend, and started telling me (in Spanish) the basic premise of Jesus' death. This 9-year-old girl has such childlike, simple faith, which is exactly what Jesus tells us we should have! Matthew 18:3-4 says that "unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." After visiting numerous houses and seeing walls filled with devotion cards, it's clear to see the people of Pamplona have deep devotion, but no access to the sacraments—they have 1 priest for 300,000 people! They truly know Jesus, but they aren't able to sacramentally receive Him. Seeing these people encounter the True Presence in the Mass was truly a joyful experience.

Paige Orangio - MSE '17



Marching for Life

I have been to the March for Life three times, but the March for Life 2016 will definitely go down in my personal history book as the best one ever. We found ourselves trapped in the blizzard of a lifetime – and we made the best of it! About a week before, we knew that the forecast was dismal, so we waited to see how the weather progressed. The day of, Father Josh, CSO President Emeritus, Teresa Prieto, and I decided that Operation: GTCC Blizzard in D.C. was a go. Every year, the March for Life amazes me. So many people turn out (even with the threat of a blizzard!) to take a stand for the fact that abortion is a scourge within our society. I believe that as young Catholics we have an absolute duty to live the Gospel of Life that John Paul II so beautifully proclaimed. Our faith has so much power, and the March for Life is proof of that. Right as the March began, the snow gently began

to fall. And it didn't stop. For 36 hours. We were snowed in. So what do approximately 50 college students do in that situation? Have an epic scavenger hunt, of course! We broke into multiple teams to compete for the coveted prize of free breakfast in the hotel restaurant the next morning. We all raced to get to the White House and build human pyramids and form a choir of delicate snow angels, taking pictures along the way. Father Josh also texted us bonus point opportunities, one of which included reenacting a scene from the movie *Frozen*. It was definitely a weekend to remember. After some bus issues delayed our exit, a call was made to the Georgia Tech administration to explain our absence. Eventually we got on the road and back to the grind of school in Atlanta. Was the trip worth it? Absolutely. Playing hookie to save babies is the best!

Casie Connolly - CE '17

World!



Visiting the Pope in Philly

I signed up for the trip to Philly out of pure interest in seeing the Pope. Up until then, I had only stepped foot in a Catholic Church a few times in the last ten years. I didn't know how to say a Rosary, how the Eucharist worked, or why we needed to pray for the lost souls. I had no idea that six months after that short trip to Philly, several of those college kids I met would soon be my mentors, spiritual counselors, and dearest friends, guiding me into my confirmation in the Catholic Church.

The trip was filled with rosaries on the bus rides, prayers before and after meals, Mass in a tiny little downtown church, confession with Father Josh, fun journeys around the heart of Philly, incredible street worship music, great cheese steaks, and uncomfortable nights sleeping on the floor of a basketball gym. We saw the Pope twice and received his blessing together with millions of beautiful people infatuated with Christ and His sweet Church. It was powerful and awesome and I was moved to tears many times.

My favorite memory was a conversation with two GTCC students I had never met. We were in a little restaurant in Philly, when one learned of my interest in RCIA and asked me why I wanted to be confirmed. I didn't know what to say! I was doing it to make my mom, also a fallen-away Catholic, proud. I was doing it because I was tired of saying I was Catholic, but "not confirmed yet." I was doing it because I wanted a Catholic wedding and a fifty-year marriage like my grandparents had. I had so many doubts and questions about my faith. I asked about how to live my life as a Catholic, about Jesus and Mary, about what God needed me to do after this trip. I didn't know these students, but their responses were filled with love and opened my eyes. It wasn't until then that I realized I was living a life filled with sin.

Looking back, I was lost and broken. The trip to see Pope Francis ignited the fire of the Holy Spirit in me. It revealed the true Christ and placed a real and holy love that began to grow inside me and now radiates several months later. My visit to Philly provided countless blessings and special memories that I will cherish forever.

Taylor Spuhler - BA '19



World Youth Day

I was lucky enough to attend this summer's World Youth Day in Poland with thirty other collegiate Knights of Columbus. Over a period of two weeks, we pilgrimage'd around Krakow, volunteered at the Tauron Arena (a giant catechesis site for English-speaking pilgrims), and attended several events hosted by Pope Francis. Our tour began with a visit to Wadowice and the childhood home of John Paul II (JPII). Later, we met up with our co-pilgrims for the trip, the Sisters of Life, which included one of our Georgia Tech Catholic Center alumna, Nancy Harris (Sister Gemma Grace). Together, we toured Auschwitz, a very sobering experience for all. The next morning, we went up to Zakopane, a mountain range city where JPII taught his students when he was a priest under communist rule. There, we hiked an hour to a hilltop, where the Sisters of Life proceeded to sing to us in beautiful polyphony (after a few fun renditions of "The Hills Are Alive"). These sisters were a joy to have with us on our trip! The next day we hiked part of JPII's papal trail and saw the most beautiful mountain ranges. The last day of our tourism trip had us visiting the JPII Cultural Center and the Divine Mercy Shrine in Lagiewniki, where we were lucky enough to celebrate Mass in the convent where St. Faustina lived and died, the altar mere feet away from St. Faustina's actual body. We then were treated to a tour of Krakow with JPII's personal biographer and theologian George Weigel. The next week was even better, we helped out with the English catechesis at Tauron Arena and attended memorable events hosted by Pope Francis. The entire trip seemed to encompass one theme: the necessity of having and traveling towards an authentic relationship with Christ. In the saints we learned about in our tours, we saw historical examples of men and women rising up from the horrors of Nazis and Communism and being a beacon of light to those around them, simply because they wanted an authentic relationship with Christ, and worked towards that desire. In Pope Francis' actions and words to us, we see his humble simplicity, and simple humility, because of his journey towards an authentic relationship with Christ. World Youth Day invigorated me and gave me a renewed desire for God and a relationship of authenticity with Him. It was an unforgettable experience and a true blessing in my life that I will cherish.

Kyle Simonis - AE '15

A word from our Parents...

The Georgia Tech Catholic Center is strong and vibrant, due to a large group of remarkable young men and women whose dedication and faith keep our programs moving forward. Chris Martineck, GTCC Office Manager, says, *"the students who come here are some of the best people I have ever met. They are very knowledgeable about their faith and selfless when it comes to serving others."*

Over the years, we have found that the majority of these students have something important in common: they grew up in a faith-filled home, with parents who nurtured them spiritually. Our parents value our mission, and together with our alums, they are our greatest supporters.

One of the great things about working at the CC is getting to know many of these wonderful parents and hearing how much the GTCC means to them. Rosanne Larkins, is the mother of two Georgia Tech alums (Theresa and Denise), and currently has a senior (Natalie) and a freshman (Christopher). *"The GTCC has been a consistent refuge for my children in the rigors of Georgia Tech."* It has provided a means for extracurricular activities, an opportunity to deepen their faith, and a place for spiritual guidance. As graduates, our alum daughters continue to be active in the church and devoted in their faith."

For the Muñoz family, the Catholic Center helps prepare their junior Alex for the future. "GTCC is a sign of hope for the world. In the midst of one of the most intellectually rigorous universities in the nation, the Church is blessed with a large group of students who acknowledge their need for God and seek him out regularly. I want to be a part of this and contribute to the mission." Maria Muñoz says the Catholic Center complements her son's education. *"The GTCC provides a home away from home for our son,"* especially during his freshman year. He called it his Living Room - a place he could go hang out with supportive people in a healthy environment. *He also benefitted from being able to spend time before the Blessed Sacrament and have a place to make his first new friends at college.* In addition to providing the sacraments, our son has had opportunities for apostolate and for leadership. His Georgia Tech education would not be complete without the GTCC."

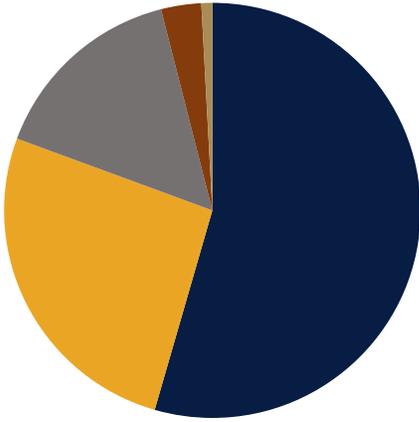
The Catholic Center is blessed to have had in its Chaplaincy priests who are deeply committed to the mission and the success of this ministry. For the Barrenechea family, it's a cause worth supporting. "We are very grateful for the dedication and care that our son and daughter obtained from Fr. Tim Hepburn, Fr. Kevin Peek and now Fr. Josh. *We would like to give others the opportunity to be surrounded by so much goodness and motivation to grow spiritually and in other ways"* says Ilse Barrenechea, mother of two Georgia Tech alums, Andres and Paula.

The Georgia Tech Catholic Center is deeply grateful to all our parents for their commitment to this ministry, for their prayerful and financial support, and for their guidance and care in nurturing the Catholic faith within their families. It is a privilege and honor to serve the students of Georgia Tech.

Patty Schmitt, Development Director, IM '88



Income

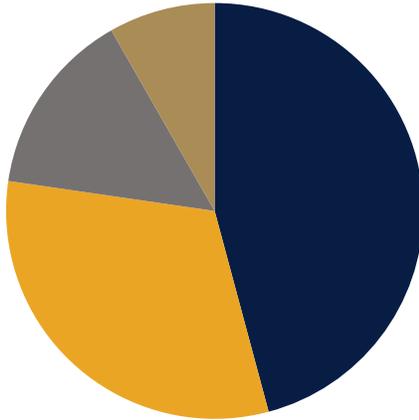


- Annual Appeal
- Offertory
- Restricted Donations
- Other
- Grants

**Note Endowments are rolled into other category

Expenses

- Ministries & Programs
- Facility & Rectory
- Administration
- Development



Wish List

Microwave for kitchen	\$250
Dehumidifier	\$225
Push Mower	\$150
Power Washer	\$250
Rolling cart	\$250
Gas grill	\$500
Thanksgiving dinner	\$1000
Office furniture	\$3000
Ciborium	\$1800
Credo Choral Books	\$500
Donations to Burning Furnace of Charity Fund (HVAC System)	
Donations for Basement Renovation	

Income	
Offertory	\$123,420.15
Annual Appeal	\$256,976.89
Restricted Donations	\$72,692.43
Other	\$19,883.18
Grants	\$4,000.00
Endowments	-\$5,155.03
Total	\$471,817.62
Expenses	
Ministries & Programs	\$253,837.95
Facility & Rectory	\$79,986.95
Administration	\$174,294.68
Development	\$45,711.72
Total	\$553,831.30



The Georgia Tech Catholic Center is 100% self-funded. Annual Appeal donations and offertory collections provide unrestricted support for all our ministry's programming and operational expenses. This year we exceeded our goal of \$360,516 and raised more funds than ever before! We want to thank all our benefactors: parents, alumni, students, friends, charitable foundations, and YOU! You are the reason we are able to keep this ministry alive on the Georgia Tech campus. God bless you all!

FINANCIALS

Renovations

This past December, our projects continued. We opened up the main floor completely and added a new Coffee Bar by the fireplace. We replaced the flooring with beautiful Core-Tec planks. We painted all of the walls, replaced ceiling tiles, and we completely redid the electrical scheme for the floor. We installed an 80-inch TV, which has become a favorite for giving Apologetics presentations, and we purchased a commercial grade espresso machine that is just awesome. Now, when a student walks by the front of our building, instead of looking to our front door and seeing a wall, they now see a large, inviting room usually filled with students! We have many more projects to complete. If you are interested in being a part of funding one of our major renovations, please contact Patty Schmitt, our Development Director, at pschmitt@gtcatholic.org. We are particularly interested in renovating the seating and the flooring of our main chapel! Thanks to all the donors who made this long-overdue renovation possible!



Open now to find out how the Lord is changing lives at Georgia Tech!



Look for us online!

GTcatholic.org

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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Atlanta, GA 30313

