

BROWN-RISD CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

SPRING 2023 NEWSLETTER



Looking Back & Ahead

We look back on this spring semester with immense gratitude for all of the graces God has poured into our community, as well as for the individual students who have frequented the Sacraments, Bible studies, Mundergrounds, socials, and service opportunities at the BRCC. In this newsletter, you will find updates from some of the major events this semester - from a spring formal dance organized by our student leaders to a spring break mission trip to Lima, Peru. The last page of our newsletter features testimonies from three of our thirty-one graduating students. While it is bittersweet to see these students leave the BRCC and move on to new opportunities, the number of students who are departing is a testament to how much our community has grown over the past several years. We are hopeful that this growth will continue to happen as our current students are eager to introduce their friends and classmates to our community. We extend our deep gratitude to all of you, as your support allows this growth to happen!

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FALL UPDATES

Fall Retreat

Our spring retreat took place over President's Day Weekend. 39 students and 7 staff returned to Enders Island in Mystic, CT for a weekend of prayer, the Sacraments, and fellowship. The retreat's theme was "Fiat," named after the response the Blessed Mother gave when asked to be the Mother of God. Talks and discussions focused on God's will for our lives, how to be faithful to God's will, and how to approach times of hardship and suffering. Students experienced God's presence through the content of the retreat and the island's beautiful surroundings.



Holy Week

Holy Week this year was incredibly blessed. For the first time, the BRCC had all-night adoration - from 8pm on Wednesday to 6pm on Holy Thursday. All of the hours were filled by students! The silence and sorrow of Good Friday led us into the joy and glory of the Easter Vigil, where 10 students were confirmed, and 3 received first Holy Communion.

Spring Formal

Our student leadership committee, the Pastoral Council, planned and executed our annual Spring Formal, which took place on Friday, April 28th. About 50 students came by to dance, socialize, and play games. It was a great way for students to celebrate the end of classes and take a breather before reading period and final exams!





March 24 - April 2

Lima, Peru

Over spring break, nine students from Brown, one of our FOCUS missionaries, and Fr. Edmund spent a week on a mission trip in Lima, Peru. They joined students and FOCUS missionaries from several other universities, and worked alongside a Catholic nonprofit that ministers to some of the most impoverished communities in Lima. The students helped build a retaining wall along a steep slope and spent quality time with the local children at Mass, during meals, and on the soccer field. For many students, this was their first experience like this. We are grateful to the Fellowship of Catholic University Students for organizing these opportunities where our students can live their faith and love for God in such tangible ways.



Student Testimony

"This FOCUS Mission Trip helped me to encounter Jesus Christ and to broaden my appreciation for the Catholic faith. Backed by daily devotional and liturgical prayer and frequent reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist, our Lord cultivated in me a renewed knowledge, love, and ability to serve him through both divine worship and charitable action. Listening to Christ speak to me in the Blessed Sacrament and our neighbors in Pamplona Alta spurred me into desiring to empty myself in all things with love so that our Lord can become present in every moment with the hope that others may encounter him." - Brian Nguyen, '25



WORDS FROM OUR GRADUATES

"The BRCC has been my spiritual home since I arrived at Brown in September 2019. Even then, without a dedicated gathering space, friendships with Catholics provided much-needed community all around campus. Since the opening of the Catholic Center and the chapel, Christ's presence in the tabernacle has nourished me and granted innumerable graces. Our chaplains, campus ministers, and missionaries shepherded me through the challenges of college and continue to help me grow in prayer and virtue. The love and joy of my fellow students in the BRCC radiates out to every corner of campus, and challenges me to keep seeking Him ever more deeply. Four years later, people I met at the BRCC's freshman ice cream social have become my dearest friends. I believe this foundation of faith and authentic friendship which the BRCC has cultivated for me in college will continue to bear fruit as I discern the Lord's call for the rest of my life!"



**Joanna Jarvis, A.B. Urban Studies
'23**



**Francisco Cordero,
Sc.M. Medical
Sciences
'23**

"I do not have enough words to describe the impact of the BRCC on my life. At the BRCC, I discovered what a strong, loving, Catholic community should be. I experienced radical compassion, kindness, joy, and the grace of God so palpably present in every conversation, interaction, and Munderground. I am not exaggerating when I say the BRCC transformed me; here I learned what it means to give myself entirely to God's will and to trust in His grace and love above everything else. I do not know what is next for me, but I know that wherever I go, I know what the kind of community I need to seek looks like, thanks to my time at BRCC."

"For all its beauty, my favorite characteristic of the Catholic Center is that the tabernacle and the kitchen practically share the same wall, connecting the ways students are spiritually, socially, intellectually, and physically nourished at the Center, from Holy Mass and adoration to reading groups, guest speakers, and holiday dinners. Thank you, BRCC, for showing me that we are not just meant to go to God, but we are meant to go to God together!"



**Rebecca
Marisseau,
Ph.D. History
'23**

Thank you for your continued prayers and support of the Catholic ministry at Brown and RISD! We hope you have a beautiful summer!