

# VANDERBILT CATHOLIC

Father John Sims Baker, Chaplain  
2004 Terrace Place  
Nashville, TN 37203

NON-PROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
NASHVILLE, TN  
PERMIT NO. 1369

Our Mission: To propose Jesus Christ and to form His disciples at Vanderbilt.



## FOCUS IS KEY IN BATTLE FOR SOULS

It's no big secret that college students are at great risk of falling prey to the *hook-up* culture and all its destructive influences. Among Vanderbilt Catholic's best weapons for rescuing college students from this empty, often Godless life are our FOCUS missionaries (Fellowship of Catholic University Students).

As recent college graduates, our FOCUS missionaries literally meet college students where they are, build

genuine friendships, and invite students into closer relationship with our Lord.

At Vanderbilt Catholic, our four missionaries facilitate small group Bible studies to help students understand and apply Scripture to their everyday lives. They also offer personal mentorship, modeling lives of faithfulness and joy in the midst of the demands, distractions and temptations of young adult life.

A significant percentage of Vandy Catholic's budget goes to support

FOCUS being on campus. It is an investment that yields eternal dividends in the souls of the college students we serve.

Pictured above is the Vandy Catholic FOCUS team: CeeCee Savrda, Frank Magnetico, Elizabeth Watkins, and Jerome Ibarra.

[www.vanderbilt.edu/catholic](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/catholic)

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## Hell, Purgatory, Heaven Explored Weekly on Campus

The horrors of hell, the journey through purgatory and the joys of Heaven are being explored each Wednesday night at Vanderbilt University, at the invitation of Vandy Catholic.

Professor Robert Benson — a Vanderbilt graduate, retired English professor from University of the South (Sewanee), and a convert to Catholicism — is leading the semester-long course on Dante's *Divine Comedy*, the renowned trilogy of *Inferno*, *Purgatorio*, and *Paradiso*.

According to Fr. John Sims Baker, Vanderbilt Catholic Chaplain, the *Divine Comedy* is St. Thomas Aquinas' *Summa*, set to poetry. "It's a great testimony to the power of human love that leads to divine, supernatural love," he said. Father Baker first took this course as an undergraduate student of Professor Benson at Sewanee.

The course at Vanderbilt has drawn an enthusiastic crowd of undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and community members.



## RELIGIOUS GROUPS SCRUTINIZED AT VANDERBILT

While I'd prefer to use this space for reflection on the great things God is doing among the Catholic students of Vanderbilt — and He is still doing those great things — I need to ask for your prayers for the future of Vanderbilt Catholic and of religious life in general at Vanderbilt.

You may have heard in the media of the recent controversial decision by Vanderbilt University to place some religious groups under provisional review.

Here's what I know: Vanderbilt University is reviewing how it applies its non-discrimination policy to student groups. At this writing, the University is maintaining that all student groups, including religious groups, must be open to all students for participation and for leadership. Some religious groups have been put on *provisional approval* because their constitutions were found to be in violation of this policy. And while Vandy Catholic is one of the groups approved by the university, we are united with all the other campus religious groups (approved or not), in agreement that leaders of religious groups must be practitioners of the faith professed by each group.

Fox News reported that Vandy Catholic changed our constitution in order to comply with the change in university policy. This is not accurate. Our constitution was found to be in compliance by the university, but we did not alter our constitution in order to gain approval. We interpret our constitution to recognize that only faithful, practicing Catholic students qualify



for leadership of Vanderbilt Catholic. It is all that we have ever had in leadership, and it is implicit in our mission.

Check out [vandycatholic.blogspot.com/2011/09/well-take-our-stand.html](http://vandycatholic.blogspot.com/2011/09/well-take-our-stand.html)

Please pray that Vanderbilt University will continue to be welcoming to robust expressions of religious faith as practiced by Vanderbilt Catholic and other religious groups on campus.

*Fr. John Sims Baker*

## PLEASE DESIGNATE YOUR GIFT

If a gift to Vanderbilt University is in your plan, please designate it to Vanderbilt Catholic. That way you can support the Commodores (and possibly receive matching funds from your employer) and support Catholic life at Vandy. We'll be eternally grateful!

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