



CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

A Marist Brothers High School 1958



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Columbus High School's Gerardo Gonzalez is Stepping Down as Campus Ministry Director

MIAMI, FL— After 14 years of dedicated service, Gerardo Gonzalez will step down from his role as Director of Campus Ministry at Christopher Columbus High School at the end of this academic year. His departure from the position will allow him to spend more time with his growing family while continuing to make an impact in other capacities at the school.

A proud Columbus alumnus from the Class of 1989, Mr. Gonzalez has been deeply connected to campus ministry since his student years. His appointment as Director in January 2011 was, as he describes, “a way to give back to the Marist Brothers and lay faculty who did so much for my brother and I.” Reflecting on his journey, he shared, “Returning to lead the ministry that once guided me was a full-circle moment. To this day, I feel extremely blessed to be working in the same office where I once spent time as a student with my campus ministry director and mentor, Br. Michael Brady.” In the 1980s, Gonzalez was one of Br. Brady’s campus ministry leaders and for the last 14 years they had the opportunity to work closely together again, leading the department that means so much to both of them. “Jerry is a living example of a committed man of faith. He is a cherished friend...he is Marist!,” said Br. Michael Brady.

Mr. Gonzalez holds a bachelor’s degree in religious studies from St. Thomas University and a master’s degree in practical theology from Barry University. Before returning to Columbus, he worked as a campus advisor, activities director, and coach in Central Florida, then as a religion teacher at St. Timothy and Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Catholic schools in Miami. He has also served as a youth minister, and a Director of Religious Education for the Archdiocese of Miami, a role he continues to hold today.

Joining Columbus as a religion teacher in the fall of 2009, Mr. Gonzalez was quickly recognized for his passion and leadership. Within just a year and a half, he was offered the opportunity to lead the Campus Ministry program. As the fourth Campus Ministry Director in Columbus history, Mr. Gonzalez follows in the footsteps of Br. Michael Brady, who founded the program in 1981 with Fr. Arthur Dennison, Br. Ken Curtin, who took over in 1993 and worked closely with Fr. Liam Quinn, and Deacon James Dugard, who led from 2006 to 2011.

Today, Mr. Gonzalez and his team coordinate a multitude of Masses and prayer services throughout the year, sacramental preparation, and retreats for all grade levels and for faculty, staff and alumni. In addition, they



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provide spiritual guidance for the school family and mentorship for the liturgical and peer ministers. Students and faculty alike appreciate the tireless efforts of Mr. Gonzalez for providing opportunities for the Columbus family to gather as a community to share the vision of Christ. Gonzalez has been a steadfast presence for the school community in moments of celebration and in times of grief, always fostering a shared vision of faith.

“I see Mr. Gonzalez as a father figure,” said senior, Javier Aragon '25 who has been a campus ministry leader throughout his four years at Columbus and currently serves on the council as a coordinator. “Mr. Gonzalez genuinely cares about his students and he is such a good teacher...he is my role model.” Javier shared that when he first started at Columbus he was shy and uncomfortable with public speaking. He credits Mr. Gonzalez for helping him break out of his shell and now he loves public speaking and particularly enjoys leading retreats. “Mr. Gonzalez empowers his students to be leaders and to live the spiritual mission of the Marist Brothers,” added Javier.

Among his many contributions, Mr. Gonzalez introduced Pastoral Sessions by Grade, assigning campus ministers to meet with students one-on-one to discuss their faith journey. He also significantly expanded the retreat program, adding alumni-led retreats and launching the first-ever Freshman Mothers' Retreat, led by Columbus moms. He has grown the Campus Ministry team to six ministers and has taken on new events like the Senior Mass & Pinning Ceremony, in collaboration with the Advancement Office.

Reflecting on his time as Director, Mr. Gonzalez said, “This has never been a job—it's a vocation. I have ministered to countless students, faculty, staff, alumni, and parents, and I continue to learn from each person I serve and always remember that God is the true director.”

“The unwavering dedication of Mr. Gonzalez has been instrumental in fostering the spiritual growth and evangelization of our young men,” said Columbus principal David Pugh. “His impact on our school community is immeasurable, and we thank him for his years of service and devotion to our mission,” Pugh added.

“I have enjoyed my time leading Campus Ministry and look forward to my new role at Columbus, the place that I consider my second home. I am confident that now is the perfect time to bring a fresh perspective to our Campus Ministry Program. As I like to say, it's time to open the window and let the new and fresh air in.”

The school is currently conducting a search for Mr. Gonzalez's successor, who will assume the newly titled position of Director of Faith & Mission.

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