



Commissioning Mass: Back to Normal?

by: Elli Einset '23

The annual Commissioning Mass was held on Monday, September 13. This mass is one of the main traditions at Villa, and this year, we were almost back to normal.

Instead of having to split everyone into different rooms because of Covid, we were allowed to have everyone attend mass in the Performing Arts Center together. Two of our sisters also came in person, which they were unable to do last year. Finally, Father Matt Brody, the parochial vicar at Mount Carmel and the Priest Chaplain at Villa, commissioned the mass and will be conducting every mass this year!

For each person, Commissioning Mass symbolizes something different. For Mrs. McCarthy, Director of Mission and Ministry, it is the rejuvenation of her personal commitment to Villa's mission and to her Catholic identity. Father Matt Brody said, "Commissioning Mass symbolizes our need to take seriously Christ's call to be active, growing disciples each and every day. We can't be complacent in where we are currently in our spiritual lives, but we need to take each day as a new opportunity to walk with Jesus and to be inspired to live out that relationship

in what we do and say."

The Commissioning Mass is the start of what unites the faculty and students to Mother Maria's message. Father Matt Brody said, "The Mass gave us an opportunity to offer a visible sign of living our discipleship and a formalizing of what

that looks like for our faculty, staff, and student body." It gives us all a chance to refresh our commitment to our Villa.

This Commissioning Mass, somewhat normal this year, will continue to reiterate our mission to Villa, Mother Maria, and God.



Three, Two, One, PULL

by: Jacquelyn McGinty '25

Cheering, teamwork, and fun are just a few words to describe Fall Spirit Day at Villa. On Friday, September 24th, two teams participated in chanting matches, dance battles, and tug-of-war contests to determine a winner. Sophomores and seniors filled the gold team, while the freshmen and juniors made up the blue team.

Pizza outside was the kickoff of the event. Next, the students went inside the gym, took famous songs, converted the lyrics to relate to Villa, and performed them. Each team found a unique way to ignore the other, such as crossing their

arms, turning their backs, or even pretending to sleep. Each advisory performed their cheers, and then everyone went outside for tug-of-war games. The gold team was on one side of the rope, the blue team was on the other, and both groups were cheering their teammates on.

Walking inside Villa the morning of Spirit Day did not disappoint at all. From blue skirts and face paint to yellow banana costumes, the students surely went all out. Based on the outfits, cheers, and tug-of-war rounds, the staff made their choice of a winner.... GOLD!



Ring Day and All of Its Glory

by: Elli Einset '23

Ring Day, which occurred on Friday, October 8th, is the event every junior looks forward to, and this day causes much excitement for everyone involved. Mrs. Nelson, Vocal Music Director and Junior Class Moderator, said, "[The juniors] join the seniors in being leaders of the school, and it's exciting to be able to celebrate that day. Seeing the juniors receive their rings to connect them to Villa alumnae is very special." Each ring is personalized, except they all have the same blue stone in the middle, symbolizing the unity of the Villa sisterhood. Cianna Rzepski, an 11th grader who got her ring this year, said, "It gave me more unity to

my fellow sisters. It is a celebration of all the things that happened so far."

Mrs. Nelson explained, "Last year, we started having parents put the ring on their daughter's finger, and I love that we started that!" One tradition that will always stay throughout the planning is having the juniors walk through the giant ring. Mrs. Walinskas, Alumnae Relations Manager and Class of 1996, loves this tradition. "I love the quirky, uniquely-Villa tradition of walking through the gigantic ring on ring day. What other school does something so fun and slightly odd? Only at Villa—that's why this place is so special!" Ring Day will forever be a spe-



cial day in every Villa girl's mind as these girls continue to grow in, and eventually out, of these walls.

This Year's Mother-Daughter Tea

by: Juliana Tulio '22

This year's Mother-Daughter Tea took place on Sunday, October 24th, at the Sheraton Hotel in Philadelphia. Mothers and daughters were eager to once again be able to attend this year's Tea after the event was cancelled last year due to the pandemic. According to Parents' Guild President, Mrs. Braun, preparation, as well as seeking out a venue for this year's Tea, began in early August. Despite having tight timeframes for scheduling the event, the Tea Committee was hopeful to once again uphold traditional and beloved aspects of the event.

Aside from many traditional elements, this year's Tea also included new components. As in previous years, students modeled prom dresses from Giana Rose Couture, however, this year, both the

sophomores and juniors modeled cocktail dresses in addition to prom dresses. The traditional senior tributes to their mothers were also able to be held at the event, in addition to the performance of the senior song, "You'll Always Find Your Way Back Home," by Hannah Montana. Although the number of guest speakers at this year's Tea had to be limited to minimize the possible spread of bacteria with microphone usage, President Dr. Kenkel was still able to offer the opening prayer at her first Villa Tea, an opportunity that she felt honored to receive.

The turnout for this year's Tea was comparable to previous years, and those in attendance seemed to enjoy the ambiance and food, as well as the raffle baskets and 50/50 drawing. One special



touch added by this year's committee of parent volunteers on the Parents' Guild and Mother-Daughter Tea Committee was bringing back the traditional favor of the teacup that had since been replaced. The entire school community expresses sincere gratitude for all of the dedicated parents who planned the event and enabled mothers and daughters to make long-lasting memories.

Highlights From Our Events



1. Some Jems with our Jem Bear on Spirit Day
2. Two Jems receiving their rings
3. Modeling at the Mother-Daughter Tea
4. The Thanksgiving Feast: a meal of gratitude with Villa sisters
5. The cast of "The Addams Family" performing

Pray, Eat, and Eat Again

by: Jacquelyn McGinty '25

On Tuesday, November 23rd, Villa had its annual Thanksgiving Feast for the Thanksgiving holiday. The day consisted of shortened classes, a prayer service, the Thanksgiving Feast itself, a scavenger hunt, scooter races, and even a gobble contest.

The students had their prayer service in the Performing Arts Center and shared what they are thankful for. Later, students lined the halls ready to eat. Turkey, stuffing, green beans, mashed potatoes, corn, bread, and other Thanksgiving foods filled the tables. Each grade was assigned a room to eat and ate with their friends. Every Advisory brought their own desserts and shared cookies, cupcakes, and other delicious treats with their tables. During the Feast, a gobble contest occurred. Next, a scavenger between the Advisories determined which two people from each grade would be participating in the scooter races! It was such an exciting experience as students raced down the hallway and cheered for their friends. First, the seniors beat the juniors, and then the freshmen beat the sophomores. Lastly, it was between the seniors and freshmen, and the freshmen won! It would be an understatement to say that this was a truly amazing day for all students, faculty, and staff.



Lights, Music, Rigor Mortis The Addams Family: Full Disclosure

by: Juliana Tulio '22

Opening night for this year's comical and spooky fall production of "The Addams Family" was on Thursday, November 11th. This year's musical had performances from Thursday night through Sunday afternoon, giving audiences plenty of opportunities to view both casts and see these iconic characters come to life onstage. The plot of the musical centers around a peculiar family, The Addams, and this family's attempt to act normal for one night to host their daughter's fiancé, Lucas, and the rest of his family for dinner. Although the visual elements of the show were intended to portray the ideas of darkness and death, according to director Mrs. Holdren, "The importance of family, light, and love" was still able to be conveyed through catchy and belt-y vocal numbers, thus making the show enjoyable for people of all ages.

Preparations for this show began at the beginning of September under the guidance of director Mrs. Holdren, music director Mrs. Nelson, and choreographer Ms. Amanda Page-Horvath. The sets, props, and costumes for this show were much more intricate than previous years and required additional preparation and thought. Specifically, the large ensemble of "Ancestors" for this production was crucial for the overall performance, needing increased effort to bring each unique ghoul to life! The quality of the show was also due to the cast's chemistry, which was on display during every performance, and in the words of Drama Club member Grace Iannacone '22, being a part of Villa drama has "...allowed us [the cast] to express our talents and true selves." Ultimately, this production demonstrated that laughter and love can truly be found amidst the darkest of times!



Meet Villa's New Faculty & Staff

Villa has been blessed with eleven new faculty and staff members this year! With excitement and gratitude, Villa welcomes these new community members to support our Jems every day.

Contributors: Paige Lewandowski '24 (Michael Ashton), Carina Yancer '22 (Anne Crotty and Connie D'Angelo), Cianna Rzepski '23 (Lorianne Davis), Ava Candela '25 (Isabella DeVito), Kristin Taylor '25 (Lori Gallagher and Kathy Young), Isabelle DaSilva '25 (Cecelia Grant), Juliana Tulio '22 (Karen Kenkel), and Elli Einset '23 (Grace Scarpello and Linda Smith).



Michael Ashton

Department: Science

College: West Chester University

What You Teach: Physics

Favorite Villa Memory: Halloween Parade

Favorite Hobby: Reading



Anne Crotty

Department: History

College: Chestnut Hill College and Arcadia University

What You Teach: American Civilization II and AP Human Geography

Favorite Villa memory: Fall Spirit Day

Favorite Hobby: Reading and watching the news



Lori Gallagher

Department: English

College: Saint Joseph's University

What You Teach: Academic English II

Favorite Villa Memory: Halloween Parade

Favorite Hobby: Writing, reading, and eating lots of ice cream

Villa Alumna: Class of 2016



Cecelia Grant

Department: Fine Arts

College: Kutztown University

What You Teach: Freshmen Art and Basic Art

Favorite Memory: Always Villa Fund Family Feud

Favorite Hobby: Painting

Villa Alumna: Class of 2016



Karen Kenkel

Department: Administration

College: Stanford University and Cornell University

Position at Villa: President

Favorite Villa Memory: Traveling to the Sisters of Saint Casimir Motherhouse in Chicago and Fall Spirit Day

Favorite Hobby: Gardening, reading, and candle-making



Connie D'Angelo

Department: Administration
 College: Saint Joseph's University, Arcadia University, and Cabrini University
 Position at Villa: Dean of Academic Affairs
 Favorite Villa memory: Seeing the Jem Bear and Basil Panther racing scooters
 Favorite hobby: Cooking and baking



Lorianne Davis

Department: Mathematics
 College: Seton Hall University
 What You Teach: Math
 Favorite Villa memory: Fall Spirit Day
 Favorite hobby: Shopping



Isabella DeVito

Department: Mathematics
 College: Pennsylvania State University
 What You Teach: Algebra II and Statistics and Probability
 Favorite Villa memory: Fall Spirit Day
 Favorite Hobby: Running, walking, and cycling



Grace Scarpello

Department: Theology
 College: The University of Scranton
 What You Teach: Theology III and Theology IV
 Favorite Villa Memory: Thanksgiving Feast
 Favorite Hobby: Knitting
 Villa Alumna: Class of 2012



Linda Smith

Department: Guidance
 College: Gwynedd Mercy University
 Position at Villa: Guidance Counselor
 Favorite Villa Memory: Thanksgiving Feast
 Favorite Hobby: Watching HGTV and trying to replicate projects in my house



Kathy Young

Department: History
 College: West Chester University, Pennsylvania State University, and Pace University
 What You Teach: AP Psychology, Intro to Psychology, and Reel History
 Favorite Villa Memory: The handmade ornaments my students made
 Favorite Hobby: Reading

V-I-C-T-O-R-Y! - Villa Soccer 2021

by: Elli Einset '23

Villa soccer's season was full of ups and downs for the team, but they still managed to have a pretty successful season, ending with 13-5-2 record for Varsity and 9-5-3 for JV.

This season was a memorable one for the seniors. Captain and center back, Shea Riley '22, said that her favorite memory was "winning the District Semifinal in PKs to guarantee us a spot in states."

Erin Butler '24 said that her favorite memory this season was the Pink Out Game, which was the game against Merion Mercy Academy that celebrated Breast Cancer Awareness month by donating the money that was raised to can-

cer research organizations.

Although the team was not able to

return to Hershey this year, the team had a triumphant season.



Villa Volleyball

by: Sarah Barats '24

As many Villa athletes know, the 2021-2022 athletic season was going to look different from years past because of new students, the lingering effects of COVID-19, and the all-around uncertainty of it all. The volleyball team in particular had 17 new players combined from every grade level. The growth of the program also called for new lineups, new traditions, and much collaboration. Through the many hours of practice over the summer and after school, the team was able to bond and grow closer in friendship and in their collective goals. Many barriers were broken this season, defeating teams that the old program could never dream of de-

feating. The team was able to finish the season with 18 wins and 4 losses to make Villa volleyball history and secure the top spot in the league for the first time. The team made it to District finals where they faced Pope John Paul II. Unfortunately, that would be the end of the road for the 2021 season. Despite this, three of the athletes were selected on the AACA first and second teams. Seniors Maren Hunter and Tess Majkut were selected on the 2nd team league all-stars, and Junior Rachel Mace was selected not only for the 1st team, but also for league MVP. These achievements could not have happened without many hours of dedication, hard

work, and the ability to adapt when unexpected challenges arose.



Villa Field Hockey

by: Carina Yancer '22

The 2021 Field Hockey season came to a close with many tremendous wins, but with that came its losses. Without the senior class that graduated in 2021, the girls had to adapt to playing with a lot of new girls, but they made sure to adjust swiftly. Julia Noone '22 encapsulates this feeling perfectly by saying, "This season had its ups and down...The learning season we had this year will help Villa Field Hockey for its future." As Julia said previously, building seasons are very important for the future success of sports teams. Sadly, Villa did not make it to the playoffs, but they were very close to qualifying. The senior night game ended by putting goalie, Grace Quick '22,

in the game as a field player in order to make it a memorable and fun night for the seniors. Overall, the season was suc-

cessful in the team's eyes, and the players had a fun time navigating through the season.



Villa Tennis

by: Sarah Taylor '23

The VJM tennis team, also called Vennis, led by senior Molly McAtee and junior Sarah Taylor, powered through the 2021 fall season. The team was able to achieve many accomplishments this year, making the Villa community very proud. From late August to early October, Coach Jessica Sims held afterschool practices on the tennis courts at Core Creek Park in order to prepare the team for 15 AACA matches. This year, three team members were named 2021 AACA All-Stars. Erica Johnson '24 and Izzy DaSilva '25 were named 2021 AACA All-Stars for Tennis Doubles, while Cassie Gibbs '25 was named the 2021 AACA All-Star for Ten-

nis Singles. First singles player, Cassie Gibbs, moved on to the second round in the District's Singles. In the District's Doubles, Cassie Gibbs and Erica Johnson also moved onto the second round. The team's four seniors, Molly McAtee, Nichole Piermatteo, Anisa Pocari, and Erin McFadden, were celebrated on senior night. Captain Molly McAtee, who has been on the Vennis team since freshmen year, reflected on what she most liked about the team, saying that her "favorite aspect of being on the tennis team has always been the teamwork both on and off the court." Molly explains that she feels "lucky enough to play with the most en-



couraging, hardworking, and determined teammates all four years of high school" and that she "would not change her time with the team for the world."

Putting Our Best Foot Forward

by: Ava Candela '25

The Villa Cross Country team competed in multiple meets and invitationals this season across the state of Pennsylvania. Two of the members, Meredith Glunz '23 and Cate Quinn '22, ran at PIAA states in Hershey, Pennsylvania. Meredith and Cate were also both Athletic Association of the Catholic Academies All-Stars and Brianne Smith '22 was an honorable mention. Throughout the season, Coach Gentile made sure to instill a positive mindset for the team and motivated the girls at each race. In addition, the cross-country seniors Annabelle Galasso, Brianne Smith, Samantha Sonnie, and Cate Quinn were celebrated for their dedication and

their last season as part of the Villa team. When talking to their girls about their favorite memory from this season, Cate Quinn said, "My favorite memory from this season is really hard to pick because I loved this entire season from start to fin-

ish. But if I had to pick, it would probably be just sitting down to stretch every day at practice and getting to see and hear from everyone because it really bonded us as a team." Overall, the cross-country team had a successful season.



Fun with Fores!

by: Olivia Rueger '23

"Fun," this was captain Amanda Cornwall's '22 response when asked about how her senior golf season went. Amanda and all of her fellow teammates took on this season with the intent of making it the most memorable. From their successful matches to their trip to the local farmer's market after champs, these athletes truly seemed to enjoy their season. This group became very close, but they are always looking for new participants. "The golf team is such a great time, and you don't need to have any experience to play on the team. It's really just about having fun!" stated Amanda when asked about what she would like to tell those thinking about joining the golf team.

The entire team is very grateful for the mentorship of their two coaches, Coach "Pop Pop" and Coach MK, for all of the work that they put into this season. This was Coach MK's first season. She also happens to be Coach "Pop Pop"'s granddaughter and a Villa Alum. The dedication that was

shown by those on the team, their wonderful coaches, and the Villa Community really made this season special. With this season, there was a lot of success, and it is no surprise that the seniors will miss this team next year. However, the one thing that they know for certain is that they will always have a place with the Villa Golf Team.



Art-Ceramics Club

by: Bernadette Stanton '22

Ceramics club is something students look forward to on Tuesday or Thursday mornings before school. It takes place in the art room, and anyone who is interested is welcome. Ms. Grant and Mrs. Brooks are both there to help and guide the girls with whatever project they are currently working on. The students have been able to create fun projects like Halloween and Christmas decorations. Ceramics club is fun because members are able to see their progress from week to week after their creations are glazed and put in the kiln. Not only is ceramics club a great

way to socialize, but it is also a way for students to take up a new hobby, as some of them have never worked in ceramics before. Senior member, Ava McCrea, said, "I decided to join ceramics with no past experience, but it turned out to be a great decision. It is a fun and relaxing way to start my day." Ms. Grant added that "The ceramics projects have been a great addition to the Art Club. Members are able to explore 3D work, get messy, and channel creativity before the rigors of a VJM school day." Ceramics club is yet another amazing club that Villa has to offer!

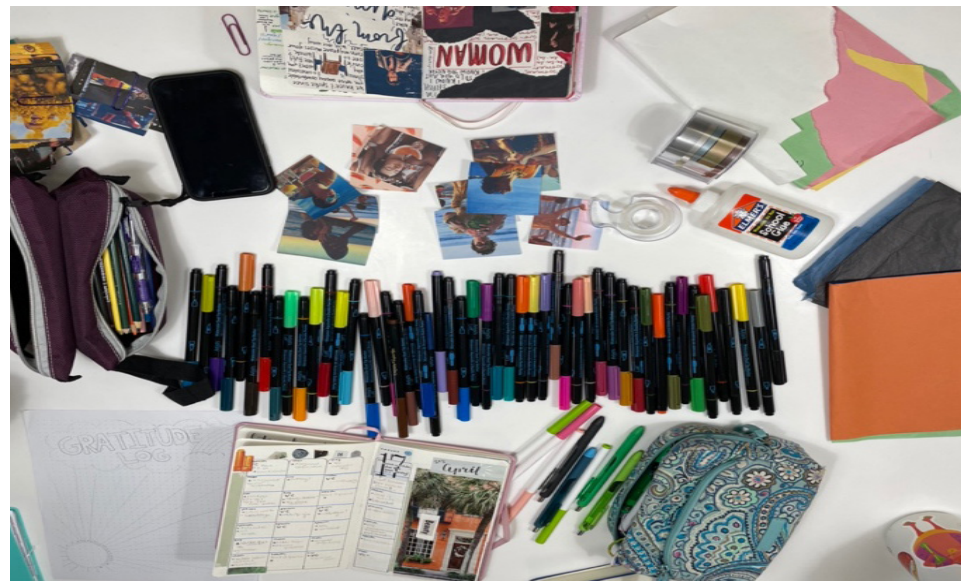


Bullet Journal Club

by: Isabelle DaSilva '25

Bullet Journal Club at Villa Joseph Marie, run by Ms. Chirico, centers around a method of bullet journaling that helps girls with organization in a fun way.

Bullet journaling is a system of personal organization which includes scheduling, calendars, reminders, to-do lists, and mood trackers. When asked about the Bullet Journal Club, Ms. Chirico said, "We meet once a month and our goals for the club are organization, community, and stress relief... We are working to create shareable content for the school community, including monthly calendar spreads designed by club members." This bullet journal would allow students to easily track things in a visual and organized way.



Catholic Relief Services (CRS) Club

by: Ava Cornwall '23

Catholic Relief Services, often referred to as CRS, is an organization that provides aid to those in need and raises awareness about global issues through the guidelines of Catholic moral and social teachings. CRS assists those in need, whether that be financially or spiritually. This year, for the first time, Villa Joseph Marie is extending CRS to be a school-wide club led by select ambassadors and invites anyone who is interested to join. Thus far this year, CRS has undergone training from members of the CRS Global Team, emailed members of Congress on pressing issues, and so much more. In addition, CRS is preparing to share migration statistics across the school to

educate and urge the importance of this issue and is working alongside the Stu-

dent Council to run a food drive. All are welcome and encouraged to join!



Gaming Club

by: Kayla Moak '22

The Gaming Club is back in play this year at Villa! This club is full of passionate gamers who come together after school on Fridays in room 112 to share their mutual love of video games. Students have been strongly supporting the club. Abby Arbogast '23 commented, "I usually don't enjoy competitive games, but with the club, I feel much more comfortable playing with others and engaging in playful banter." The club prides itself on having a comfortable environment where students can relax. Mr. Erik Mayer, one of the club supervisors, said, "...it's easy for people to get to know each other better and feel welcomed and included. We usually have two Switches hooked up to projectors, so there are lots of opportunities to get in on the game!"



Good Vibrations Club

by: Paige Lewandowski '24

The good vibrations club here at Villa meets once a month and provides a relaxing environment for students to listen to music and get to know each other. During these meetings, students present creations that they have made based off of the song that they listened to in the previous meeting. The club encourages students to be inspired by music and use their imaginations to bring the songs to life. The creator of the club, Nanea Pera-

les '24, said, "My favorite part of the club is how open-ended it is for the members." There are many reasons why students may want to become a part of this club. Nanea stated, "I wanted to create this club because I know a lot of people use music as an outlet, and music is something everyone can bond over!" This club is a great way to express your creativity and love for music, as well as bond with other Villa students.



Interviews, Photography, Statistics, and Sports!

by: Olivia Rueger '23

The Sports Media Club begins this new school year with a variety of ways to highlight the success of our Villa Athletes. From soccer to softball, volleyball, and swim, there is not a team that this club is not supporting! When asked about what this club means to her, Madeline Williams '22 said, "For me personally, this club has been a fantastic way to bring attention to all Villa athletes, and I truly get the greatest joy capturing photographs for the athletes to have as memories of them playing the sport they love!" Madeline and Molly Lyons '22 partnered to first start this club in 2019. Through their amazing efforts and the support of the club and Villa Community, this club has established itself as our athletes' biggest cheerleaders.



EDITORIAL NOTE

The *VJM Journal* is a student publication. It is created by the *VJM Journal* staff. The opinions present in the paper do not reflect those of the student body, staff, faculty or administration of Villa Joseph Marie High School. Letters and comments should be sent to Ms. Gallagher.
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Jem Style!

by: Sarah Taylor '23

JEM Style is one of Villa's new clubs. While it's a new club at Villa, JEM Style, formerly known as Panther Tales, was at Saint Basil Academy since 2014. It was brought to Villa by Basil's seniors, most notably Bryn Colon '22, Amia Johnson '22, and Alexandra Mahoney '22. They wanted to share a tradition that is very close to their hearts. As Amia Johnson

stated, "Bringing Panther Tales, now known as JEM Style, to Villa was our way to bring us all closer together." The goal of the club is to share school information in a fun, entertaining, and exciting way. The club, moderated by Mrs. Gorman, usually meets during Advisory in Room 128 or in other locations depending on the content that they need to film.



Advantages of Advisory

by: Juliana Tulio '22

This school year, a new time has been implemented into students' schedules between first and second periods called Advisory. Similar to Study Hall or Homeroom, Advisory allows students the option to do a multitude of things, such as studying, meeting with a teacher, completing homework, or even just chatting with

friends! This time is also utilized for club meetings and various school-wide activities and announcements. In addition, students in each Advisory participate in Villa traditions together, much like Homerooms in the past. Overall, this additional 37 minutes a day seems to be greatly appreciated and beneficial for many students!

