



# Newman Catholic Community

Serving Eastern Illinois University

## Newman Notes

December 2020

### A VIEW FROM MY WINDOW...



Roy Lanham, Director

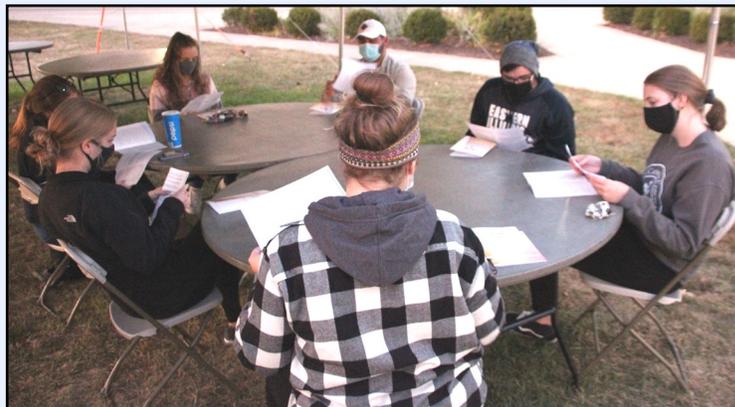
Mitch Barrett from Kentucky sings a song entitled, *Drop in the Bucket*. The first line is "It's a crazy world we live in, bad news all around, brothers and sisters if we are going to make a difference, we are going to have to stand our ground, and be a drop in the bucket, and the bucket in the pond . . . what becomes a mighty ocean, started as a drop."

At our recent virtual Zoom-a-Newman Night, I shared a story about a young man coming to our center late on a Sunday night. I want to retell it here: I encountered him in the parking lot. He asked me, "Is the center open?" I said without hesitation, "you know it is!" He was coming to make a visit and pray in our chapel. After we chatted a bit, I turned to leave, and my heart was filled with gratitude. I was able to say, "you know it is!" because **you believe** in our ministry. Each of you can, and many of you do, make a difference by adding your drop in the bucket.

Your support, your partnership with us makes it easier for us to say, "you know it is!" We all recognize the work of the Church on campus is important. It is transformative. And that is why I hope *you will be generous* in your support of the work we do with our EIU, Lakeview, and Lakeland college students. Amidst all the challenges, our faith community on campus has been a place where our students experience God's grace, a space where our students experience healing, a community where lives are impacted for God and by God. It is a place where folks make their **YES**.

As the semester winds down and we look forward to celebrating Christmas, I am reminded that the gift of the Word becoming flesh draws all of us to be radiant with the light of Christ. I hope you will keep our ministry in your prayers and you will continue to add your drop in the bucket, because it will indeed become a mighty ocean in helping us to transform the lives of our young people to become who God has created them to be.

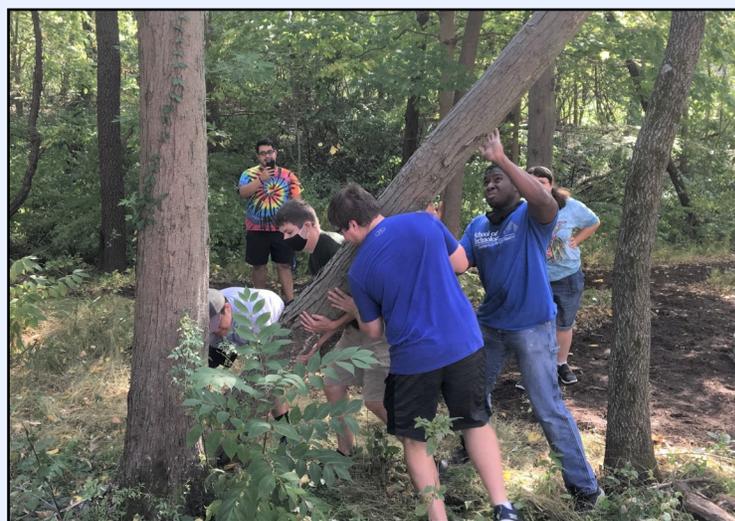
### A WALK THROUGH 2020



A group gathers to pray outside under a tent at Newman for weekly small group



Students rake leaves for Charleston community members to raise money for our sister communities in Haiti



EIU Knights cleaning up the grotto and firepit areas



# Newman Notes

## College & Faith: Reflecting on Time Spent at Newman

BY BILL WOLF '10

It's hard to believe it's been 10 years since I left EIU, and with it, my beloved Newman Center. When I arrived at Thomas Hall in August 2006, I knew my Catholic faith was a firm part of my identity, but Newman provided a context within which my studies, hobbies, and friendships could be blended with my faith to form a more cogent picture of who I am and what matters to me.

**"My Catholic faith was a firm part of my identity!"**

At Newman, I learned to practice my faith in a variety of actions through worship, study, and service. My experience playing piano and singing with the choir, as well as evenings at Prayer Around the Cross, helped me develop new ways to connect with God through prayer and song. My studies in the Dr. Ann Jackson Catholic Scholars Program made me appreciate the nuances and gray areas in how the practice of my faith works in the real world. My membership in the Knights of Columbus provided me numerous opportunities to give back to the community while building lifelong friendships.

As I prepared for graduate school, I realized that my faith had overflowed into the reasoning for my studies in physics and astrophysics. Over time, I progressed from thinking these topics were merely interesting (they still are!) to being a way to survey the beauty of God's creation, bridging my professional and faith lives.



Bill during ASB 2007—Nature Conservancy, Florida

Ten years later, I'm married to a woman I met in a small group I joined in graduate school, and I'm working as a professor of Physics and Astronomy at the University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire. As I write this in the middle of a pandemic, the lasting context Newman helped imbue within me is invaluable for living out my faith in a time where normal outlets are unavailable or unsafe.



On July 20, 2019 at the wedding of Bill and Marcela in Ecuador, EIU graduates gather for a photo! Kevin '10 and Abby '11 (Petrosky) Martin, Bill Wolf '10, Susie '07 (Wolf) Brooks, along with Sher and Roy Lanham.

**Our Vision Statement:** To invite the EIU Community into transforming relationships with Christ and one another, empowering all to create a lasting impact in the world.



# How Can We Possibly Hold a Retreat During a Pandemic?

BY EMILY ROGERS, CAMPUS MINISTER



When the pandemic began, there were many question marks when it came to campus ministry. One of which was, "How can we possibly hold a retreat?" The answer: an all outdoor retreat at Camp Ondessonk. With some great energy from our students, the last weekend in September, 14 students and 2 campus ministers set off to Camp O. We spent the weekend staying up late around the bonfire, hiking for hours, and, most importantly, immersed in prayer and reflection.

One of the most beautiful parts about the weekend was that there was not a single complaint about social distancing or mask wearing. Everyone was committed to the safety measures we put in place so that it could be a weekend filled with encounters with our Lord.

The theme for the weekend was based off of the Scripture passage Revelation 21:1-7. We offered several presentations and student testimonies that reflected on different parts of this passage. Our goal was to invite the students to delve more deeply into divine intimacy with Jesus. This retreat was truly a gift to all who attended!

***Some words taken directly from the retreat outline:*** For as Pope Francis says: "Jesus wants to draw near to us personally, to accompany our journey to its end, so that His life and our life can truly meet." We live with such uncertainty right now, but we do know one thing that is certain: God is at work in this world. No matter the circumstance, a life lived in friendship with God serves as the rock to which we can anchor our lives.





# Newman Notes

## Virtual Newman Night: Zoom-a-Newman



**SAVE THE DATE**  
**2021 NEWMAN NIGHT**  
**EIU GRAND BALLROOM**  
**NOVEMBER 13, 2021!**



Our phone operators, or as Matt dubbed them..."Zoom-a-Newman gals"

Joe Astrouski '10 and  
Matt Piescinski '79



Above are award Winners from left to right: Chris Sheeran '21, Student Volunteer of the Year Award; Edgar Romero '21 & Tori Wilson '20, '22 both received the Dr. Julian Hamerski Student Leadership Award

Above—A few of the faces involved with our virtual event  
Right—Fr. Mark Tracy, Roy Lanham, and Fr. Braden Maher

**THANKS TO YOU—WE RAISED  
OVER \$35,500!**



We are *truly grateful for everyone's involvement in this event*—from Joe (the man behind the camera), Matt (the "talent"/our host), Frank Lanham (the man with the mic), Emily Rogers '16, Campus Minister and Evan Holscher '23, (both our Zoom hosts), Fr. Braden Maher (Chaplain), Fr. Mark Tracy, Jay '07 '12 and Jill '08, '11 (David) Grabiec, our operators, our students and staff! **However, we are most thankful to YOU, OUR DONORS!** We couldn't do what we do without *your support!*

@eiunewmancenter  @NewmanEIU 

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[www.eiunewman.org](http://www.eiunewman.org)

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