



WHAT'S INSIDE
15 Years at Newman
Prayer
Hospitality
Service

APRIL 2024

Newman Catholic Community

SPRING NEWSLETTER

15 Years

culture of encounter



Doris Nordin, Campus Minister

and decided to serve others, or because their friends invited them to a small group, or because their parents encouraged them to join this community for their own good. They came and were “arisen” to a new spiritual journey that marked their lives forever.

I am so privileged that God has allowed me to continue this path of discipleship at Newman; to be a vessel providing opportunities for students to be touched by God through the sacraments, fellowship, and formation—helping them find Jesus’s path for their lives. It is a gift to accompany and encourage them to respond to their own call as disciples. I have seen God’s deep love and grace for each student as they finally say *yes* to His invitation of loving one another. The Holy Spirit keeps me alive and joyful to do this ministry. I can speak with the crowd in Luke Chapter 7, “God has visited his people.” God is dwelling in this Newman community. It is a joy to be at His service.

Luke Chapter 7 is the story of the widowed mother whose son died. Jesus, moved with compassion, touched the coffin and said, “Young man, I tell you, arise!”

At the SEEK 24 diocesan gathering, I was taking a picture of our Bishop when I was called up to receive recognition for my 15 years of service as a campus minister. Since I first joined the Newman Community, I have witnessed “arisen” young people who came to Newman looking for a refuge when their friends turned on them, or because they were at a low point of their life, or because they wanted to explore and deepen their faith, or because they were moved with compassion



In January, 26 students traveled to St. Louis for SEEK '24. We saw some familiar faces there – Sr. Kara Davis, DC (EIU '12, '14) and Fr. Zach Samples (EIU '14, '16) among them!

Fr. Braden distributes ashes at one of our Ash Wednesday services.



Our annual Lenten Early Bird series continues with Mass, a bite to eat, and weekly presentations.



Join our *Newman Mission Circle* when you sign up for monthly donations. By giving \$10, \$50, or any other amount you choose monthly, you help us plan and budget more efficiently.

In becoming a Newman mission partner, you will receive special prayer opportunities and student updates. Consider this way of giving and sign up through the website, or call the office 217-348-0188.

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website



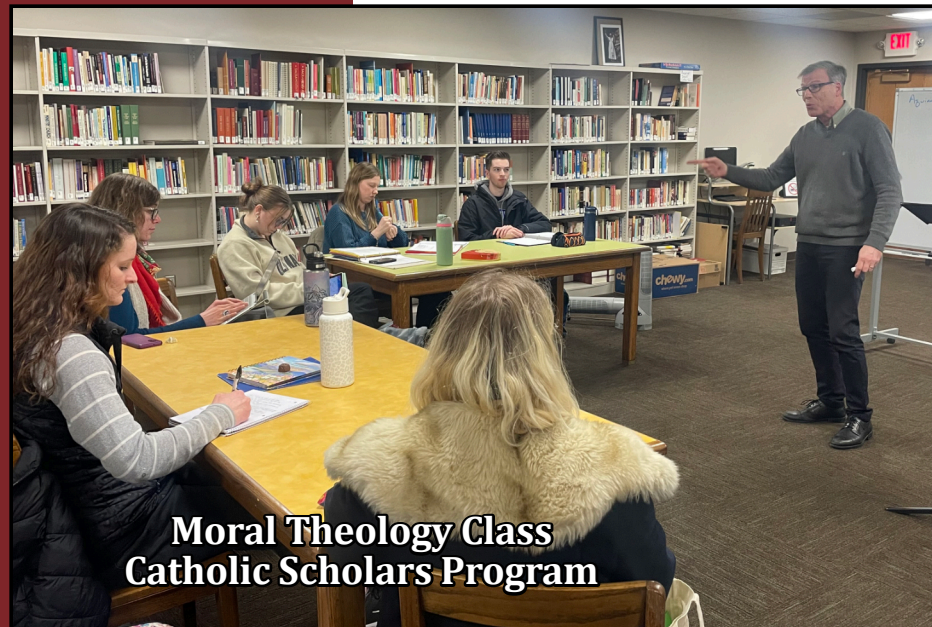
Students gathered for our Super Bowl party in February, and shared food and fellowship after Adoration.

not just to see, BUT TO LOOK

In a 1966 article Abraham Maslow wrote, “I suppose it is tempting, if the only tool you have is a hammer, to treat everything as if it is a nail.” One might add this line, “It might be time to expand your toolbox.”

Expanding one’s toolbox is why young men and women venture off to university. They look to explore what might be possible for them as they get the tools to embark on careers and embrace vocations. An important element of all this is to integrate faith and reason, to make sure the Cardinal and Theological virtues are in the ever expanding toolbox. It is one of the reasons Newman Centers were established at state universities: to give students the place and space to come to understand how to sanctify the ordinary. How to live as we ought to live. It is why we offer classes in Theology, presentations on faith, retreats, and formation in being a missionary disciple.

Our friend St. Thomas Aquinas believed, “The good presupposes the true.” What we see and know about the world is indeed good. However, it is based on understanding what we also know to be true. Giving students opportunities to explore what is true brings a richness to both their studies and to their faith. It opens them up to have a freedom for God. Engaging our students in formation allows them to see “a human act is a moral act.” These words, also uttered by our friend St. Thomas Aquinas, remind us how critical our role on campus is. We do not separate ourselves from the world, rather we look to our actions as opportunities that shape us for better or worse. Looking at life through the lens of faith enables us to recognize the hand of God writ large without having to check our faith at the door of academia but rather to integrate it. It gives us another tool in our toolbox to answer the question of how I ought to live. ■



Moral Theology Class
Catholic Scholars Program



Spring Reach More
(T) second from left)



Josh Dart from EC
Presenting to our
Reach More students



Lenten Mission
with Thomas Schniers

TJ Garland, Sophomore '26

Newman has brought me much closer to God through its culture and community and led me *to truly listen to God's word, not just hear it*. Before Newman, I was very much a church-on-Sunday-only Catholic and had very little prayer in my life. Now as a student here I have been presented with many callings and opportunities to grow deeper in my faith.

When I first came to Newman, I was immediately presented with volunteering to be a server at Mass—something I had not done since junior high. Experiencing Mass as a server is an eye opening and blessed experience. From playing a role in helping the priest set the altar to ringing the bells for the blessing, I truly find more awe and meaning in Mass than when I was simply sitting in a pew. This opportunity deepened my connection to my faith.

This year I was encouraged to participate in our Reach More program, and this has been significant to my time here. Through Reach More, I am learning how to become an evangelical disciple, how to listen and act on Christ’s words to us, and how to grow deeper in prayer. My favorite part is the prayer companion we receive, which helps guide me through prayer with new techniques and intentions.

Additionally, Reach More helps create a discussion with God through readings, and these readings encourage me to further seek His wisdom. These have become part of my nightly prayer routine. I have often found that the messages presented were exactly what I needed to hear, especially after hard days in school or athletics. A recent discussion about true fasting and intercessory prayer taught me that I can take little actions in my everyday life and offer it up as prayer for someone or something.

In John 15:16-17 it is written, “*It was not you who chose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you. This I command you: love one another.*” I think this perfectly describes God’s call for me; to act and heed His word and follow Him. During my time at Newman, I’ve grown to not just hear God’s voice but to actively listen; and then go do His will. ■

not just to hear, BUT TO LISTEN

Sylvia Kendera, Senior '24

My friends laugh at me sometimes for how long it takes me to get to our table in the dining hall. One Sunday brunch in particular, they counted how many friends I stopped to talk with along the way. It was three, not including the two I greeted earlier. By the time I got to the table, my food was cold, and people were chatting away, nearly done with their meals. I can't help myself from stopping to say hi to people, check in on them, and embrace their humanity. Every human being has the basic dignity to be recognized, heard, and reminded of their worth. How can we pass by the *Imago Dei*, the Image of God, without at least a smile and a wave? We are called **to stop and walk with** one another.

Our faith should not merely encompass actions that we take, checking off the commandments one by one. Think of the rich young man asking Jesus what to do to enter the kingdom of Heaven. He had done all the good deeds, but what was missing was his heart. Jesus tells him to sell all that he has and to come follow him. We are not called to love out of obligation, but out of joy. We are called to give our whole selves to others, for in doing so we give our whole selves to Jesus.

We invite Jesus when we sacrifice sleep to converse with a friend needing to be heard. We clothe Jesus when we get to know a person beyond their name and major. We look after Jesus when we ask a friend how we can pray for them. We visit Jesus when we meet a person for the first time and say in our heart of hearts "Lord, help me to radiate your love to them."

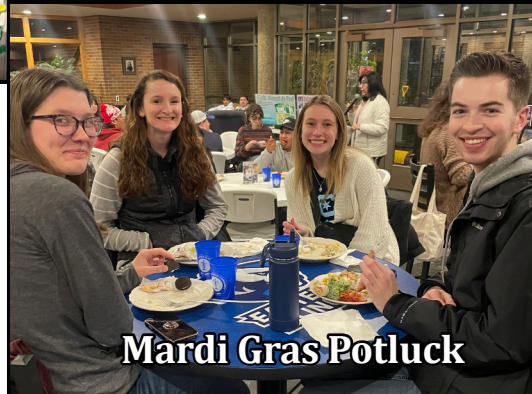
I will always remember a night of Adoration at Newman when, overwhelmed by life's troubles, I decided to write Jesus a

letter. While I wrote about my need for help, I began to think about those whom I had helped, invited, and encountered. I began to think about their stories, gifts, and potential to bring good to the world. Benediction began, and there was a voice in the pews that I did not recognize. It turned out it was an alumnus passing through Charleston who currently serves as a missionary with the homeless. God was reminding me that we cannot risk mediocrity—human souls are waiting to be seen, heard, and welcomed.

Who knows what plans the Lord has for them? It is not just the person that misses out, but rather the Church as a whole when someone is not there. We are called to cast into the deep, to be fishers of men, and to foster a living culture of meeting people where they are. It is in this way that we leave everything behind us and answer Jesus' call to follow him, person by person, encounter by encounter. ■



Works of HeArt (Sylvia on left)



Mardi Gras Potluck



Amigos & Friends



Nursing Home Visits



Nickie Smith (left) is a catechumen this year and will receive the Sacraments of Initiation at the Holy Saturday Easter Vigil Mass. Please keep her in your prayers! Her sponsor is Deb Cuddy.

not just to feel pity,
BUT TO ACT WITH COMPASSION

Nickie Smith, Junior '25

James 2:17 says, "So also faith of itself, if it does not have works, is dead." I've heard both my pastor at home and Father Braden quote this. Father Braden's homily about this verse spoke to me. He said, "Rarely do we hear people making New Year's resolutions that prioritize serving those in need." Time spent in service is an important part of living faith. We are called **to act with compassion**. It was at Newman that I discovered that good works and service help complete my identity as a child of God.

One service I choose to do at Newman is to work with Amigos and Friends as a tutor teaching English. This ministry is one of my favorites. Seeing how some people treat immigrants, acting as if they don't belong, disgusts me. I cannot imagine living in a country without knowing the common language. So, I not only get to use my Spanish, but I am moved by and choose to act with compassion.

Moments to act in faith present themselves when we are open to them. During Advent, I took an ornament from a giving tree. I wanted to invite others to serve too, so I started fundraising to purchase the gifts. In one week, with the support of family, friends, teachers, neighbors, and random strangers, we raised \$523.44 and were able to purchase clothes, household items, and art supplies as requested. From this experience, I felt true joy seeing how strangers are willing to support those in need. It gave me a sense of hope and love in the world, reminding me that not everything is bad out there. While this service was new to me, it is something I intend to continue seeking. ■

not just to pass by,
BUT TO WALK WITH



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Newman Night

Celebrating 85 Years on Campus

November 9, 2024
EIU Grand Ballroom

SAVE
THE
DATE!



This next academic year kicks off the celebration of **85 years on campus!** We're excited to gather together to "remember our past, celebrate our present, and ensure our future" on **Saturday, November 9th** in the Grand Ballroom. Please save the date for our annual Newman Night. We hope you plan to attend and maybe even fill a table with past classmates, friends, family, or co-workers. We look forward to celebrating with you!