



Engaging Life, Proclaiming Faith

Illuminations

Fall Semester 2021



Preparing the food for our Thanksgiving Potluck



Showing off painted tattoos at the PRC Walk for Life



Teresa winning a spontaneous hat stacking contest

A Fruitful Fall Semester

Our success this year began even before the first week of classes. The freshman orientation program at Missouri S&T underwent major changes, and students were given much more time to meet the various clubs on campus during their campus visits. As a result, we met dozens of incoming freshmen. Sixteen of them registered with the Newman Center before the school year even began. That success continued during Opening Week. We hosted events every day and met many students who are now core members of our community.

Thursday night talks and discussions have been part of our weekly schedule for several years. This year, we added dinner to the beginning of the event, which effectively doubled the number of attendees. The dinners gave students an opportunity for fellowship as they learned about the Catholic Faith. The change also allowed us to invite volunteers to cook for us, including the ladies from the Women's Auxiliary at Saint Patrick Parish. The students welcomed the home cooked food, and the ladies were very happy to serve the students.

Additionally, we sought more ways to increase our involvement with Saint Patrick Parish. For many years, Newman students have staffed the elementary school's after-school care program. This year, some of our students helped put on a retreat for the high school youth group and continued to help throughout the semester. As in previous years, the students organized the Oktoberfest Bottle Booth and November's Pie Baking Contest. We look forward to many more opportunities to serve the parish during the spring semester.



Students opening white elephant gifts during our Advent Party

New Life at the Newman Center

Many freshman students became part of our community this semester. Read some of their stories below:



Teresa Bless – I was first welcomed to the Catholic Newman Center during opening week. Everyone was so kind and welcoming. College for anyone is a big culture shock. Being a homeschooler all my life, it was even more shocking. College was scary but Newman was my source of comfort. Here I found people just like me. This fantastic group of young Catholics instantly became my closest friends in this new stage in my life. As we got to talking about our faith, I learned so much. They gave me a new way of thinking about things, a new way to respond to the world, and a new way to pray and enter into a deeper relationship with my Lord. It was at this point that these friends became a family to me. They are always here when I need help. We laugh, play, study, and, most importantly, pray together. There are people in this world like me, and we lead each other closer and closer to Paradise every day.

Whalen Downs – My first experience of the Newman Center was attending the Wednesday Night Mass during opening week. The next day, I walked in and saw people playing Super Smash Brothers. I asked if I could play since I play that with my brother a lot. They told me to play Teresa since she's really good. We both started playing, and everyone got really hyped for it. It was lots of fun and made me want to continue coming to Newman. I keep coming back because I've made a lot of friends, and I don't really know what else I'd be doing besides hanging out in my dorm room alone.

Newman has a lot of fun activities and events to get involved in and plenty of opportunities to grow in knowledge about school and the Faith. I've really come to enjoy the community here. It's very accepting; it's really hard to not feel loved and appreciated when you walk in the door. Everyone is willing to help you and talk to you when they're available. Overall, I think the community is great and serves as an example of what friendship and community should be.

After coming to Newman, it felt like a fire of curiosity about the Faith was lit inside me. It made me want to learn everything about being a Catholic and what that means to me. I've developed my relationship with God. There are many people here that are great role models, and I've been inspired to continue to grow in my faith and become closer to God.



Devin Chiamonti – I first discovered the Rolla Catholic Newman Center after attending Mass the Sunday at the end of Opening Week. Immediately I was welcomed with open arms and toured the building. I noticed how kind and loving everyone was, and how welcoming they were to anyone regardless of how strong their faith was. As time went on, I continued to visit the Newman Center consistently and never once had the feeling that anyone was unwelcome there. I've made some amazing friends; some I consider to be almost family by this point.

The Rolla Catholic Newman Center has had nothing but a positive impact on my college career. I cannot think of another place on campus where I can hangout, play games, relax, and meet other people who share the same values. My academics, physical and mental health, social life, and college experience would be significantly worse if it were not for the Newman Center. On multiple occasions throughout the semester when things with school got rough, the people at the Newman Center would pick me up, get me back on track, and guide me through my first semester here. The fellowship opportunities here are amazing. In my first semester alone, I have already gone canoeing, hiking, on a retreat, had multiple meals together, went to Six Flags, and even attended a demolition derby because of the friends I have made.

Twenty-Three Years of Awakening



In fall of 1998, the Rolla Newman Center and the Newman Center at the University of Missouri - Saint Louis put on their first Awakening retreat together. At the time, Missouri S&T was still UMR, the current Newman Center building was not yet built, and Sister Renita Brummer was our campus minister. During the spring semester of the following school year, we held our very first independent Awakening retreat, and the tradition has continued every year since. This year, 45 students participated in Awakening, including 14 freshmen. We had an incredibly fruitful weekend, filled with prayer and fellowship.



The history of the Awakening retreat goes back even farther than its introduction to Rolla. McNeese State University in Louisiana held the first ever Awakening retreat in 1974. Eventually the campus ministry at Texas A&M began holding Awakening retreats, and it spread across the country from there. The retreat model is drawn heavily from the Cursillo retreat, so those familiar with the Cursillo movement would recognize many parts of the retreat weekend.



Awakening is completely student-led. Students plan the retreat, give the talks, lead the small groups, and even cook the meals. The students put an incredible amount of work into providing the best possible retreat experience for their peers. The weekend is packed with many activities and surprises. Many of these must be kept secret so that future retreatants can have the same experience as the students before them. What can be told are the effects. After the retreat weekend, the students share a special bond that comes from experiencing God's grace together. Students who have only been involved at the Newman Center for a few weeks now call the community their home away from home and their second family.

A special thanks goes to Camp David of the Ozarks for hosting our retreats. We also thank Fr. Christopher Aubuchon, Fr. Paul Clark, and our own Fr. Greg Meystrik for serving us throughout the retreat weekend.



The group picture from this year's Awakening Retreat



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Greetings from the Rolla Catholic Newman Center! The Newman Center is the home for Catholic campus ministry at the Missouri University of Science and Technology and other nearby colleges.

Thank you to everyone who has supported the Newman Center! Your support is bringing Christ to campus at Missouri S&T and other colleges in mid-Missouri.

Do you have any stories about how the Newman Center has impacted you, a family member, or a friend? Please let us know by sending them to rollacatholiccm@gmail.com.

Want to support the Rolla Catholic Newman Center?

Go to www.rollacatholic.org/support-us.
You can give online or by mail.

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