



# Illuminations

Spring Semester 2021



Alexander, Claire, and Adam preparing homemade pizzas



Attending the March on the Arch pro-life rally in Saint Louis



Building a snow man after a snow storm



The Eucharistic Procession at our Spring Retreat

## Honoring Our Seniors

Among the students who graduated in the fall and spring semesters this school year, thirteen of them held leadership positions at the Newman Center at some point in their college careers. Their class formed what the community at the Newman Center looks like today. They were great leaders and role models for the younger students in our ministry, and their impact will be felt for years to come.

They graduated during what is in many ways the most unique school year that the Newman Center has ever experienced. They experienced a steep learning curve during the fall semester as they learned to navigate new rules resulting from the COVID pandemic. They were not able to experience large events and socials the same way as previous years. However, because of their leadership, the 2020-2021 school year was extremely fruitful. Take a look at the various pictures on this page to see some of the events we were able to host. Please pray for our graduating seniors as they move on to new careers and vocations – that they continue to grow in their relationships with God and in their love of neighbor. Also, please pray that our ministry at the Newman Center will continue to impact the lives of college students in Rolla.

Raymond Boos, a graduating senior, was our service coordinator for the past three years. He wrote the following about his time at the Newman Center:

“Walking into the Newman Center during my Opening Week could be the best decision I made when I showed up to Rolla my freshman year. I wouldn’t be the person I am now if I hadn’t gotten involved there and learned to take my faith seriously. Even after spending kindergarten through high school in Catholic education, I still didn’t know what it was like to have a real relationship with Jesus Christ. The people I met and the friends I made at the Newman Center showed me how, and it changed my life forever.”



Families from Saint Patrick Church attending our Easter Egg Hunt





Above: Newman Student Garren Gray brushing out Pepper's winter coat while Rocky peeks over the top.

## Woodcuts, Service, and Horses at Camp David



Raymond preparing to cut a felled tree



Students carrying smaller branches to the burn pile



Campers riding the horse trail at Camp David

Four years ago, we held our annual Spring Break Service Trip at Camp David of the Ozarks. Located about 20 minutes south of the Missouri S&T campus, Camp David's main ministry is hosting Christ-centered summer camps for the children of prisoners. During our service trip four years ago, Newman students and parishioners at Saint Patrick Church helped maintain the campgrounds and construct a new shower house. Since that spring, our relationship with Camp David has been constantly growing. We now host both of our retreats on their grounds. A nondenominational camp, they have been incredibly welcoming to our Catholic ministry.

This spring, we were presented with a new opportunity to serve Camp David. The camp has a herd of eight horses which their campers ride over the summer. Sadly, the horses were not ridden very often during the offseason. Because of this, they were out of practice and temperamental when the time came for kids to ride them at their summer camps. Fortunately, a few of our students at the Newman Center have been riding since childhood and have been looking for opportunities to ride horses while they are in Rolla. Camp David invited us down for an orientation with their horses and facilities, and we have been riding nearly every week since. Our days of riding have been a joy to our students and a great service to the camp.

But our greatest service to Camp David this year was during this year's Spring Break Service Trip. The camp needed to expand their horse enclosure since all eight horses now live on their grounds year-round. The area around their horse barn was heavily wooded and needed to be cleared. Again, our students were uniquely equipped for the job. Several Newman students already have experience felling and cutting trees from Woodcuts. Woodcuts is a long-standing Newman service project which provides firewood for local families in need. Throughout the week of spring break, our students set to work clearing approximately two acres of land for the horses. The wood will be used to heat the houses on the camp property where the directors and interns live. The horses are much happier with the additional space they have, and the camp residents are stocked with firewood for the coming winter.

A special thanks goes to Joshua and Julia Collum, directors of Camp David of the Ozarks for allowing us to serve at their camp and for the work they do bringing Christ to kids who are most in need.

# A Home for Vocations

The Newman Center has been the starting place for several priestly vocations. Please read the stories of two of our alumni who recently entered seminary:



**Mark Echele, Class of 2019** – Above all else, if there was one thing that the Newman Center did for me, it placed in my heart a need for faith and community. My involvement with the Newman Center began second semester of my sophomore year and grew with each semester. By my last semester of college, I think I spent more time at the Newman Center than at the place I was living. I couldn't get away from the people there or the events, prayers, and sacraments that took place there.

Soon after graduation I was traveling for work and living out of hotels, often switching several times in a single week. My prayer life took a large dip and I was for the most part all alone. I could feel the absence in my heart of the prayer and community I had only months ago at the Newman Center. Very soon by God's grace I began attending daily Mass even while traveling. I prayed multiple rosaries each day. I wrote letters to friends to stay in touch. I stopped traveling just before Christmas that same year and was finally able to settle into a new city and a new parish. With the encouragement of a fellow Newman alum who is now a FOCUS missionary, I sought out the Catholic young adults of the area. By a very happy accident, I attended a Catholic men's group made up mostly of retired men. At the first meeting, I was invited to a men's retreat just a month away. It was on this retreat that I received my calling to the seminary.

I owe a great deal of gratitude to the Rolla Catholic Newman Center. Without the prayer life and friendships I formed there I would have never made it on the retreat which led me to the seminary. The atmosphere of the Newman Center was also a primer for life at the seminary. Both places are full of people seeking to love God more, live more virtuous lives, and form faith-filled friendships. I highly encourage involvement with the Rolla Catholic Newman Center. It is a true joy and blessing.



**Max Medina, Class of 2020** – I will always be thankful for the presence of a Newman Center on S&T's campus! Before getting more involved at the Newman Center on campus, my life merely revolved around academic success, extracurriculars, and leisure. I felt a lack of peace, I wasn't quite sure where God wanted me, and my faith was very lukewarm. However, that all changed completely when I decided to get more involved at Newman. Through the many opportunities that the Newman Center offers for prayer, including retreats, men's groups, Bible studies, Eucharistic Adoration, and a chapel open most hours of the day, God helped me to carve out space in my life for Him. I started to develop a relationship with Him.

Additionally, as I formed friendships at Newman with other people who were striving for holiness, it became much easier to grow in my own faith. All of this played a big role in discerning my vocation. Frequent prayer at the Newman Center created the space for me to discern God's will, and the community provided a very encouraging, supportive environment for discussing vocations. Hearing presentations on the meaning of vocation, listening to speakers with different vocations, and simply learning how to be a better Catholic all proved very useful. I eventually discerned a

call to enter the seminary where I am further discerning a call to the priesthood. I have had true joy and peace ever since I decided to follow that calling.

My advice to current college students is to make time for prayer (even 10 minutes makes a big difference!) every day, to frequent the sacraments, to embrace the Newman community, and to trust that God knows what is best for us and what truly makes us happy!

In addition to Max and Mark, Nick Zummo (Class of 2017) is attending Mundelein Seminary in Illinois, Paul Sappington (Class of 2015) is attending the North American College in Rome, and Peter Puleo (Class of 2016) is in formation with the Holy Cross Fathers in Indiana. We also have new applicants for seminary this year. Recent graduate Adam Gordon applied and has been accepted to seminary for the Diocese of Saint Louis, and Garren Gray has applied for the Diocese of Jefferson City. Their decision to enter the seminary does not mean that their discernment of the priesthood is over. Over the coming years, they will continue to discern if God is calling them to become priests. Please pray for all of our alumni in seminary as they continue the process of discernment.

We are also happy to report many new Newman marriages. Our campus minister Tom Kasza married Monica Schulz in January of this year. Alumni Patrick Brennan (Class of 2018) married Margaret Mahoney on the same day. Recent graduates Noah Fakeri and Katherine Frisbee got married on May 7 after graduating in December. Finally, current graduate student Mark Herman married Mary Koch on May 21. Please pray that their marriages remain strong and rooted in Christ.



Tom and Monica Kasza with then-engaged couple Mark and Mary and alumni Jack Reiher



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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.

**Alumni** – Do you have any updates on your life? Please let us know by sending us a message at [rollacatholiccm@gmail.com](mailto:rollacatholiccm@gmail.com). We plan to reserve a section in future newsletters about the incredible things our alumni are doing after their graduation. We want to hear your stories!

**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.

**Want to support the Rolla Catholic Newman Center?**

Go to [www.rollacatholic.org/support-us](http://www.rollacatholic.org/support-us).  
You can give online or by mail.

Your donations to the Newman Center are tax deductible. We are included under the Diocese of Jefferson City as a 501(c)(3) organization, Federal Tax Exempt ID 43-0653548.



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