

FALL 2023

# NEWMAN NOW



## *Newman Catholic Student Center 61st Annual Benefit Dinner*

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2023

We would love for you to join us at our 61st Benefit Dinner!  
We will be partnering with Faranda's in DeKalb and we  
want to welcome you to kick off this Advent season  
at our semi-formal event!

Please contact the office at 815-787-7770 if you would like  
to purchase a ticket. If you are not able to  
attend and would still like to donate, please  
scan the QR code.

We are excited to gather together to  
raise money for the Newman Center!



SCAN TO DONATE



Students and missionaries getting ready to go on campus to tell people about Newman!



The 2023-2024 Student Ministry Team, FOCUS missionaries, and Fr. Gonnella



# NEWMAN CATHOLIC

## Student Center

512 NORMAL ROAD  
DEKALB, IL 60115-2299

815-787-7770

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NEWMAN CATHOLIC  
STUDENT CENTER  
AT NIU



## Father Gonnella's Corner

It is so good to have begun another school year here at the NIU Newman Center! As I write this, it is the feast day of our patron saint, St. John Henry Cardinal Newman. It was he who once prayed, "Dear Lord... shine through me, and be so in me that every soul I come in contact with may feel Your presence in my soul... Let me thus praise You in the way You love best, by shining on those around me." Along with St. John Newman, we strive for this very same mission. It is our goal here to be so in love with the Lord that His love shines through us and into the lives of everyone we meet. We are continually humbled by the ways that we see this happening here on the campus of NIU! We are already about 6 weeks into the semester, and we hit the ground running from day one. Between our Student Ministry Team retreat and events, Welcome Week events, NIU football tailgates, and other outreach efforts, we have been seeking in many ways to bring the love of Jesus Christ onto this campus. We have seen many new faces this semester, as well as many students who already know and love the Newman Center. It is such a blessing to be able to witness the growth here from year to year, and to continue to walk with students in their relationship with our Lord. We are also so excited to have our FOCUS missionaries back on campus this year. The growth that we have seen through their discipleship and Bible study groups has been incredible! It is an unbelievable gift to have full-time missionaries dedicated to bringing students to the Newman Center, and bringing Jesus to them. I am so inspired by the young people that we have here who are so passionate about bringing the Love of Jesus Christ into the world. They are truly striving to be "lights to the world" as Jesus has called us! I am so grateful for all of you as well. We could not do what we do without the prayers and generous support of our benefactors. I wish you could see and experience the good things that I see happening here. Seeing young people flourish in lives of holiness is extraordinary. For all of the bad news that we hear in the world, I am here to tell you that there are amazing transformations happening here at the Newman Center. We thank you so much for all of your continued prayers and support in this mission. May the Lord continue to bless all of you and your families abundantly. Let us continue to strive each day to receive the Lord's love and bring it into the world around us, so that we can be the lights that He calls us to be!

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# STAFF CHANGES AT THE NEWMAN CENTER



Christine Reynolds



Michaela McManon



Caleb Gray



Jenny Gray



Gaby Ysteboe



Louis Banet



Full-time Staff we will miss!

Please welcome our new staff members (pictured above) to the Newman Center! We are so thankful for so many helping hands and kind hearts.

Denise Sanders (on the left) served the Newman Center as the campus minister, and later as the administrative Assistant, for 16 years. She was a light to all at the Newman center and her dedication to helping students and parishioners was an incredible blessing!

Marcia Feltes (on the right) served the Newman Center as Office Manager for 4 years and left an amazing impression on parishioners and staff!

Both of these wonderful ladies will be missed very much by the Newman community!

# STUDENT MINISTRY TEAM

Every new year brings a new focus and theme to our mission. This year after thoughtful discernment, we believe that Christ has called our focus to be allowing Christ to become the center of our lives in all that we do and to bring others to Christ by allowing Him to take over. We firmly believe that we cannot do anything if we are not first "anchored" in Christ. This year's Student Ministry Team consists of ten other students who are all so blessed with unique gifts and talents. Please pray for us, that we may minister correctly, continue to reach out to new students, and help new and current members grow deeper in their faith life and their relationship with Jesus Christ. As always, we thank you for your continued support of campus ministry and for your witness of faith to us students. Please know we will be praying for you! Thank you and God Bless you always!



Hebrews 6:18b-19  
 "We who have taken refuge might be strongly encouraged to hold fast to the hope that lies before us. This we have as an anchor of the soul, sure and firm, which reaches into the interior behind the veil."

-Ben McCune and Michael Starasinich  
 SMT Co-Chairs 2023-2024

## Thank You for Your Generosity!

This report includes those who have given a donation between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023

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### Please Note:

The list of donors from the last fiscal year is accurate to the best of our abilities. If you believe there is an error, please contact the Newman office at [officemanager@newmanniu.org](mailto:officemanager@newmanniu.org)

Thank you for understanding and God Bless!



# The impact Newman has made...

A message from Michaela McMahon:

I have been a member of the Newman community my entire life. I grew up in the parish. I was very involved at Newman while in college at NIU and now I have the joy of joining the Newman Staff as Office Manager. While recently reading *Life of the Beloved* by Fr. Henri Nouwen, I came across this quote: "The fragmentation and commercialization of our milieu makes it nearly impossible to find a place where our whole being—body, mind and heart—can feel safe and protected." When I read this, the Newman Center quickly came to mind because it has been a place for me where I have not only been safe and protected but also formed, challenged, and fed. My college years were challenging enough and Newman was a place of steady security for me where I was drawn into a community of people focused on Christ. It has been a place where I could be myself and a place where I learned my faith and how to go out and share that with others. I am so grateful for the ministry that was provided to me, especially for the many meals and opportunities for Adoration. Thank you to all our generous supporters. Through your prayers and your gifts, the Lord has had a tremendous impact on my life. Do not underestimate the necessity of your role. We are here bringing the light of Christ to NIU's campus. It is a battle for souls. There is much work to be done and so much hope in it!



Hello! My name is Marcelli Vios, I am a current NIU student graduating in December of 2023 with a Bachelor of Science in Health Science and a minor in Family and Child Studies and I am a first-year FOCUS missionary.

The Newman Center really aided in my spiritual life. I was able to encounter the Lord in Eucharistic Adoration, His mercy in confession, and an amazing community with other college students who were on fire with their faith in such an amazing way. Throughout my time in college, I've found that the one thing that I was severely lacking in my life was good, virtuous friendships and community. The Lord has given me the grace to receive both virtuous friendships and good community at the Newman Center. Since being so involved at Newman and through great discernment, I was able to hear the call from the Lord to apply and accept to be a FOCUS missionary! I'm so incredibly blessed to spend my final semester at NIU as both a student and a missionary, knowing that the Lord has abundantly poured His graces upon me, my team, and the students on this campus. Praise God I get to receive it all!



# FOCUS

A message from Jordan Huff, one of our FOCUS missionaries:



As a FOCUS missionary, I am encouraged to live out and walk with others in the building up of three life-giving habits: Divine Intimacy, Authentic Friendship, and Clarity and Conviction about the Little Way of Evangelization. Divine Intimacy is our relationship with the Lord, cultivated mainly through prayer and the Sacraments. Authentic Friendship is loving others as Christ does and living life together while growing in virtue. Clarity and Conviction about the Little Way of Evangelization is a long name for something simple. It is the meeting place and natural result of Divine Intimacy and Authentic Friendship. It is how we share what the Lord is doing in our lives with our friends and help them to grow deeper in their relationship with the Lord in the context of the Church. They, in turn, share this with their friends, and so on and so forth.

I speak of all this to explain the impact the Newman Center has had on my life as a missionary here for three years. This place has become a home where I have been given countless opportunities to deepen my relationship with Christ and my friendships with the students and staff. The availability and encouragement of the Sacraments and Adoration, coupled with the community fostered at Newman, have led to abundant blessings in my own life and on mission. I am grateful for the way this parish has welcomed the FOCUS team year after year with open arms and how it is a place of true freedom and formation. I also appreciate Fr. Gonnella’s support on mission. His fatherhood is a blessing to all of us missionaries and to the students we serve. Overall, I am blessed to be here for a third year and I ask for your prayers for the Lord’s will to be done on this campus and in each of our hearts. Thank you!

# CATECHESIS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

This Fall, our parish happily announced the start of a new Montessori-style religious education program for children, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS). CGS is now providing preschool aged children a hands-on-approach to religious formation. A prepared room, called the “atrium,” houses materials for the children’s active engagement which help facilitate their understanding of scripture and liturgy and cultivate a relationship with the One who made them. Their work in the atrium encourages little ones to eagerly and actively pursue the language, knowledge and understanding of the Truths of our Faith which, in turn, helps them enter-in more fully to the life of the Church.

Coordinator and catechist Jenny Gray says, “we are inexpressibly thankful for the support and generosity of our parish community which have allowed for the building of this beautiful program and pray that it bears much fruit for years to come.” Please pray for us as we endeavor to enrich the life of our Newman Catholic Student Center through the formation of even our youngest members.





# NEWMAN SPRING 23 SCRAPBOOK

JUMP  
FOR  
JOY!



STUDENTS, MISSIONARIES, AND FR. GONNELLA AT THE SMT RETREAT



STUDENTS AT THE NIU INVOLVMENT FAIR



LEFT TO RIGHT:  
ZACH, JORDAN,  
ADRIANA, CATHRINE,  
AND LOUIS



STUDENTS AFTER  
MASS



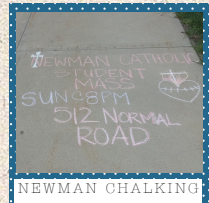
STUDNET MINISTRY  
TEAM BONFIRE



A FEW SMT  
MEMBERS AND  
MISSIONARIES  
GETTING READY TO  
CHALK ON CAMPUS



FR. GISMER SERVING  
DOUGHNUTS AFTER MASS



NEWMAN CHALKING



SMT CO-CHAIRS



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# NEWMAN NOW

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STUDENT  
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Students at the Welcome Back BBQ



Students at a Pro-Life booth  
during the Sandwich Fair



Students dressed up for Halloween!