



# Newman News

St. Thomas Aquinas Newman Center - Fall Newsletter - 2023

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Newman Center Alumni and Friends enjoy a wine and cheese celebration at Ralph Engelstad Arena.



Bottom Row Photos:  
Potato Bowl Parade & Alumni Weekend Festivities



## Pastor's Corner

### A Message from Fr. Chris Markman

Dear Friends of the Newman Center,

The 2023-2024 school year is off to a great start! We had great turnouts for our Welcome Week activities...saw a lot of new faces. It is always a blessing each year reconnecting with returning students and meeting new students ready to encounter Christ! This coming year is a big year for undCatholic as 2024 will mark 100 years of ministry by the Newman Center at the University of North Dakota.

The Newman Center was founded in 1924 as the Newman Foundation. In 1941 it became the Newman Club. And in 1962 it became a parish with the saintly patrons of Thomas Aquinas and John Henry Newman. There have been 100 years-worth of students, faculty, and staff whose lives have been impacted by the Newman Center. That's a big deal!

This year also marks 20 years of FOCUS Ministry at UND. Having FOCUS on campus makes a big impact in the lives of our students. FOCUS bible studies and discipleship groups help students to grow in relationship with Christ through the Word of God and faith sharing with each other. Your support of FOCUS and the Newman...

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# Pastor's Corner

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...Center continues to change the lives of our students today, as you will hear from Max, a sophomore at UND. Just think of the impact our current students and those of the next 100 years will have on the Church!

It was great to see some of our past students - our cherished alumni - at a couple of our alumni events during Potato Bowl weekend. Thanks to our alumni and friends who stopped in to say hello! I ask that all of you would especially keep the Newman Center, our students, faculty, and staff in your prayers during this 100th year of our ministry. We have a special 100th Anniversary Prayer just for the occasion! We are grateful for your continued prayers and support for undCatholic as we celebrate our past 100 years and look forward to the next 100 years and beyond.

## Centennial Prayer - 1924-2024 St. Thomas Aquinas Newman Center at UND

Heavenly Father, Lord Jesus, Holy Spirit, we come before You humbled and grateful for the last 100 years of ministry at the Newman Center. You have touched and transformed the souls of so many students, faculty and staff through Your love and truth, through Your Church, through the proclamation of Your Gospel and the reception of Your Sacraments. We praise and thank You, Lord, for all You have done at the Newman Center these last 100 years. As we look forward to the next 100 years, and beyond, we pray, Most Holy Trinity, for You to continue to pour out Your blessing upon Your ministry at the Newman Center. Help us to dream big with You. Help us to be desirous, receptive, and generous in being good instruments and stewards of Your Newman Center. Help us to offer our weaknesses and fears, our wounds and sins to You, so that You can redeem them, and better work through us to reach more of the students, faculty, and staff at UND, inviting them into Your Good News, into Your truth, into Your love for them. Grant all of this through, with, and in Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

**Most Sacred Heart of Jesus...**have mercy on us.

**Immaculate Heart of Mary...**pray for us. **St. Joseph...**pray for us.

**St. Thomas Aquinas...**pray for us. **St. John Henry Newman...**pray for us.

### Igniting the Fire of Faith

## 100 Years of Student's Stories

### Max Langenbach, Sophomore, Aviation Major



Max, pictured in background in white at Bible study.

Last year, Max, like many new Freshmen at the Newman Center at UND, was just another Catholic student attending Mass with his parents during move-in weekend. He knew that he wanted to begin to take his faith life more seriously and began by attending Welcome Week events and eventually joined a FOCUS bible study. "It was cool to see another student leading a bible study. Coming to the Newman Center, I saw people my age practicing their faith. The Newman Center has put a few solid people into my life that I can always talk to or come to with questions. It is a place I can go to be around people who truly care for me." Max became more involved attending more events like Men's nights—grilling burgers, hanging out, and having adoration in the same night! Max also joined the student board as a social chair, finding "a little way to give back to Newman" by planning community nights.

This past summer, Max traveled to Calcutta, India with a group of students on a FOCUS mission trip to work with the Sisters of Charity, the community established by St. Teresa of Calcutta.

"The students that went on that trip were amazing. There were many gross and hard things that we had to do in service to others, and it would have been so easy to complain and maintain a negative attitude, but we didn't." Max has returned to the Newman Center ready to deepen his faith life because of the Sisters' simple way of life and the joy they had.

"I learned of the importance of prayer every day, in some way to spend time with God, whatever that means for you."

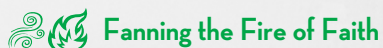
"I think a lot about the simplicity of that month and let that weigh in on decisions that I make. I have learned to thank God more than just asking Him for things."

If, like Max, you have a story to tell about your time at the Newman Center, we would love to hear it! There is a lot to celebrate as we look back on 100 years of students whose lives have been changed by the Newman Center, and that includes you!

Share Your

*memories*





# 20 Years of FOCUS at UND!!!

FOCUS, the Fellowship of Catholic University Students, a missionary program founded in 1998 to make disciples for Christ, has been working with our students at the Newman Center at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks for 20 years! FOCUS Missionaries invite students into a relationship with Christ, accompany students on their faith journey, and equip them to share the Faith with others. FOCUS missionaries come not only to serve the Catholic students that come to the Newman Center, but also to spread the gospel message to all students on campus through campus outreach, Bible studies, discipleship, mission trips, national conferences, and more.

Since 2016, when FOCUS began keeping records, UND has had...

Over 1000 students attend bible studies at least 4 times per year, 700 of those students reported attended at least once per month.

On average, 12 students form and lead their own bible study each year. Over 250 students have been commissioned in discipleship.

This year, the Newman Center's FOCUS team has already formed 12 Bible studies with a total of over 151 students attending.



UND 2023 FOCUS Missionary Team in order left to right: Zane, Hannah, Jenna, Ally, and Josh.

The Newman Center's current FOCUS Team Director, Jenna Zyweic, became a FOCUS missionary while attending the University of Kansas. She felt called to "teach [the students] to pray and live in the fullness of the Truth with God". This is her fourth year with FOCUS and her second year as a Team Director, having served last year as Team Director at Colorado State in Fort Collins, CO.

Jenna is especially excited for this year's team of FOCUS missionaries. UND will have the same team of five missionaries, two men and three women, that served on campus last year. Because they are all returning, Jenna states, "The team has an authentic grasp on what UND needs and the courageousness to be on campus to meet new people." The Newman Center is very grateful for the past twenty years of service to our students that has been provided by FOCUS and its missionaries. God has blessed us with being able to provide our students with the Truth of God's love and mercy and a means in which to grow in their personal relationship with Jesus Christ.



Brent and Amy Lahr, far right, pictured with friends at the 2023 Alumni celebration.



## The Impact of a Spark Ignited

### 2023 Alumni Weekend Spotlight: Brent & Amy Lahr

Many students take the first steps in college making their faith their own but we don't often know what comes of it after that spark is ignited. This alumni weekend, though, we met up with Brent and Amy Lahr and heard about their fondest Newman Center memories. This couple met at UND, got married in our church, and are still sharing the fire of faith that was first ignited here on our campus.

"Newman really helped me stay grounded in my faith during my college years. It was awesome to have a group of friends at Newman whose faith was really important to them. They were a great example for me. I also enjoyed all of the fun activities going on, like Bible studies, game nights, dances, and of course, the annual bike race!" -Brent Lahr

"My favorite memories at Newman were praying the Rosary each night & then going down to play foosball or pool. My friends at Newman helped me grow spiritually during college and they continue to be close friends today." -Amy Lahr



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# Save the Dates!



## April 27, 2024: Bike Race 2024

We are looking for 100 alumni to ride in the race. Contact Fr. Chris to participate! (701) 402-3806



## September 28-29, 2024: Homecoming

Join us for the 100th Anniversary Celebration!



**100th Anniversary Festivities:** Scan the QR code to find out how you can celebrate with us!

# Did You Know?

## Charitable Gifts in ND = 40% Tax Credit

### Your gift does triple duty:

1. Gifts over \$5,000 earn you a **40% ND tax credit**.
2. Contributions fund services to **help people today**.
3. Provides a **guaranteed source of income** the **Newman Center** can rely on to meet future needs.



Scan here to learn more!



### Individuals:

- **Make a gift** to a qualifying St Thomas Aquinas Newman Center endowment fund. Your gifts can be in the form of cash, securities, or real estate.
- **Make a planned gift** to the Newman Center such as a charitable gift annuity; certain forms of charitable trusts and life insurance may qualify.

### Businesses:

- **Make a gift** to a Newman Center endowment fund.

**To learn more or make a contribution, contact Deacon Curtis at (701) 402-3806.**