

Newman News

St. Thomas Aquinas Newman Center - Fall Semester Newsletter - November 2021



First Timer's Retreat Pictures (Clockwise): Student attendees, FOCUS Missionaries, and Fr. Luke; Mealtime fellowship inside the cabin; Outdoor Mass with Fr. Luke on Saturday.

In this issue:

- A First Timer's Retreat Reflection- 1
- 2021 UND Student Board Serves Community- 2
- Newman House Welcomes Sixteen Residents- 3
- Meet the Missionaries - 4



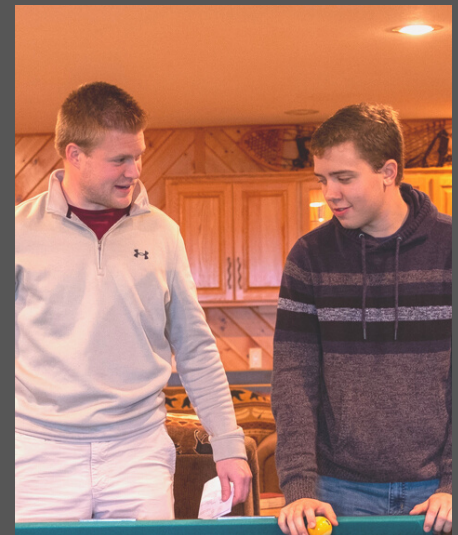
Encountering Christ

A First Timer's Retreat Reflection

It's a beautiful, cool September evening. Crickets can be heard in the background and the campfire is crackling. As if straight from a movie, about 25 college students huddle around the warmth of the fire swapping stories – but not the stories you'd hear in movies. No, more like, "I can't believe how God has worked in my life," or "Man, that confession was the most moving confession I've ever had."

That's just a small glimpse into what Dylan Kangas, freshman at UND, experienced at his First Timer's Retreat. He openly admits he's not much of a social person, but the warmth, openness, and welcoming atmosphere of the Newman Center drew him in immediately. It was no surprise then when someone asked him if he'd like to attend the First Timer's Retreat, he quickly changed his usual plans of going home for the weekend and accepted the opportunity.

First Timer's Retreats are just like they sound – they are retreats held each year for college students who have never before attended a retreat. About 20-30 UND students arrive at a cozy lakeside cabin on a Friday evening for fellowship around the campfire. They enjoy a... (Continued on Page 2)



Dylan Kangas (right) and FOCUS Missionary, Joe Forde, (left) enjoy free time to chat at the First Timer's Retreat.



Encountering Christ

(Continued from page 1)

Saturday full of outdoor Mass and confession, talks from Fr. Luke Meyer and the FOCUS missionaries, and plenty of free time to hike, explore the outdoors, get to know each other more, and enjoy God working in their lives. And Sunday culminates with Mass and the return to "the real world" – but now with a lightness of heart and fortitude knowing God is at work in their lives.

"This is the closet I've ever felt to God," shared Dylan. "I got to know a lot of new people and got closer to friends I'd met at the Newman Center." What made the biggest impression on Dylan was learning about the Eucharistic Miracle of Lanciano where the host visibly became human flesh and blood in the 8th century A.D. When studied under microscope as late as 1981, the cells of the host still consist of human muscular tissue of the heart.

"I grew so much in my faith through this experience. On Saturday night, I felt called to put it all out there for God during confession and had the best, and probably hardest, confession I've ever had. It was all such a great experience to get closer to God – and some of us were pretty far from God before – so it was amazing."

In the busyness of student life and never-ending search for the answer to "What will you do with your life?," the First Timer's Retreat helps students to have a true encounter with Christ and understand what's most important in life – building a lasting relationship with the Lord.



Retreat attendees take advantage of time to experience God's love through nature at Glendalough State Park

"I grew so much in my faith through this experience."

- Dylan Kangas



2021 Newman Center Student Board

A recent development to expand the past efforts of Peer Ministers, the Newman Center Student Board serves the Catholic student community of UND by assisting in the coordination of music, sacristans, and servers for the celebration of Mass. They assist in finding ways for students to grow in the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy through service opportunities and times for Adoration. And the Student Board welcomes new and returning students into a community of fellowship through intramural sports, activities, social events, and more. When a student is looking to grow in their leadership skills, joining the Newman Center Student Board is a great place to start.

Meet the FOCUS Missionaries

The University of North Dakota St. Thomas Aquinas Newman Center is blessed to have on campus for another year a full team of FOCUS missionaries.

FOCUS missionaries coordinate 20 Bible Studies with 107 students, lead 31 students in one-on-one mentoring, called Discipleship, and assist in the planning of student service and social activities, like spring break mission trips and SEEK 22 from February 4-6, 2022, among other things.

Please join us in welcoming Connor Maly, Joe Ford, Katie Schuth, Michaela "Mick" Moriarty, and Sydney Fuller to the 2021-2022 FOCUS Missionary team!

Pictured left to right: Connor Maly, Mick Moriarty, Katie Schuth, Fr. Luke, Sydney Fuller, and Joe Forde.



Newman House Welcomes Sixteen Residents

The Newman House continues to provide a uniquely Catholic living opportunity at UND. This is the fourteenth year it has been a home to female students growing in friendship and community! Already this year the House has hosted several Women's Nights and broader community events like the upcoming Friendsgiving event this November.

This year undCatholic was excited to welcome 5 new and 11 returning students to the Newman House.

Learn more – and apply! – at newmanhouse.org.

"It's really nice to have a place that feels like an actual home here at school!"

– Elizabeth Waldorf

A Message from Fr. Luke Meyer



Welcoming students back to campus this fall feels much more alive than a year ago, and gosh does it feel good! Campus sidewalks

are bustling again as so many classes are back in person. We have had a strong start to this semester with fervent welcome week activities, a First Timer's retreat, an eagerness to come to Bible studies, Mass, and confession, and an all around solid community environment.

Thank you for helping to make the Newman Center at UND such a vibrant place to ignite the fire of faith!

God Bless,

Luke D. Meyer

In this Issue...

Encountering Christ : A First Timer's Retreat
Reflection with Dylan Kangas (Page 1)

