



NEWMAN GOES TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

by Allison Newkirk



Front row l to r: Rachel Schaefer, Abby Korschgen, Emma Johnson
Back row from l to r: Ethan Fahrendorf, Allison Newkirk, Kevin Hogan

From January 25th-28th, I attended the Catholic Social Ministry Gathering (CSMG) in Washington D.C. hosted by the USCCB with 5 other officers of the Mizzou Catholic Executive Team. We first discovered this opportunity when we found out that Mizzou would help fund a trip for leadership development for the executive officers of a student organization. We knew we wanted to take advantage of that opportunity, and when we discovered CSMG, it felt like the perfect trip for our group.

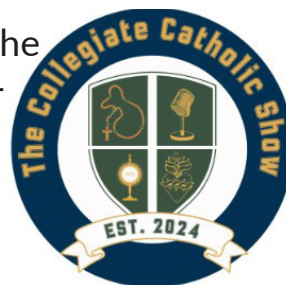
CSMG is a four-day conference hosted by the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops with keynote

BIBLE STUDIES AROUND

More than five hundred (500!) students are involved in Bible studies this semester. This is a first for Newman and we give all thanks and glory to God. The study groups are directed and led by 57 student leaders. Our FOCUS missionaries and student leaders have really set out to make Christ known on campus and the fruits of this labor are showing. We are gonna need a bigger boat!

RADIO NEWMAN

Okay, not quite radio - but it's today's equivalent of broadcasting over the airwaves. Assistant Director of Campus Ministry, Mason Arneson, has taken to the world wide web with The Collegiate Catholic Show, a ministry in podcast format. You can catch all of the episodes on your favorite podcast platform by searching "The Collegiate Catholic Show." Take a listen and let us know what you think about the podcast, by emailing Mason - mason@comonewman.org.



SPRING DAYS OF GIVING

For our Spring Days of Giving on April 3 & 4, we were able to raise \$13,751 for our campus ministry / development annual fund. We use this fund to plan and support programs for our students. Thank you to all who supported us in this effort.

ASKING, INVITING, SHARING

They keep coming. After the 8pm student Mass one Sunday, I was visiting with a group of students and heard one of them mention that he had brought his friend who isn't Catholic. I stepped over to talk with the friend. He had just been baptized as a Protestant over Christmas. He read the Gospel of Matthew and knew that either this was a made up story or he had to be all in. He got baptized and began a religious studies program at Mizzou. He had lots of interest, and questions about the Catholic faith. After talking for a bit, he said, "I wish I had grown up Catholic! I have so many Protestant contacts now, this is going to be harder." We set a time the next day to talk more and he was even more enthused after that. I don't know where his journey will end up, but it all started with a classmate inviting him to come to Mass.

That's what our students are doing more and more and more: asking, inviting, sharing. Then they come to Newman and we do the best we can to take them deeper, to form habits of prayer and a Christian way of thinking. I was deeply struck recently when one of our students said, "I realized that even though I'm following 'the rules', I still have a sexualized mindset. I need to learn the mind of Christ!"

And so they come to us.

And now I come to you. My Director of Campus Ministry just made three requests for significant budget increases this year because numbers are going up on our Awakenings retreats and our Cor ad Cor silent retreats and for our welcome week activities (all these include lots of food, of course!). And I really want to grow our Campus Ministry Endowment to meet our growing needs. As long as they keep coming to us, I will keep going to Jesus, and also coming to you to share in our ministry. Thank you for your past generosity and I hope you can help us in the present, too. Convert the campus...convert the world.

Peace and All Good,



Fr. Dan Merz, SLD

Fr. Dan Merz, SLD
Pastor



/CoMoNewman

ROME 2025

While many students' Spring Break plans included going home and catching up with family and friends or maybe hitting the beach and working on their tans - 14 college students from the St. Thomas More Newman Center at Mizzou, the Rolla Catholic Newman Center, and three FOCUS missionaries did something a little different. They travelled to the Eternal City for a Jubilee pilgrimage of hope. They were accompanied by Fr. Dan Merz and Angelle Hall, Director of Campus Ministry at Mizzou. Their travels took them to many churches where they viewed relics of Saints, amazing art pieces, and a few burial sites - one of note was Blessed Carlo Acutis's tomb in Assisi. (Consequently, by the time you may be reading this, he should be one of the Church's newest saints!)



You can read more about their journey in The Catholic Missourian online (catholicmissourianonline.com/). The stories that have come back with the students have been nothing short of joyous - and they are full of gratitude for the opportunity to have done this, especially during the Jubilee.



OPEN DOOR

by Julia Hejkal and Luke Mach, FOCUS missionaries

Open Door takes its inspiration from the Bible verse Matthew 7:7: "Ask and you shall receive, seek and you shall find, knock and the door will be opened to you." Open Door is a student led ministry by Greeks, for Greeks. Fraternity and sorority life often prepares great men and women yet has its own challenges in virtue and connectivity. Open Door aims to create a space to worship the Lord, build each other up in virtue, and create authentic friendships by hosting events at different fraternities once each month. Over the course of the last two school years, monthly attendance has increased from 30 regulars to around 80+ attendees. Open Door's most popular monthly events are Mass in a Frat, which has had as many as 112 Greek students in attendance. Mass, said by Fr. Andrew Auer, has borne fruit within the fraternity after the fact. Phi Delta Theta and Beta Theta Pi now have Bible Studies specific to their houses!



People are starting to take notice of the importance and increase of interest in Open Door. Fraternities that had not hosted previously are now expressing interest in hosting an event because their members are "getting more into their faith recently and would love to host an Open Door event."

The effects of Open Door and the hard work and prayers of the students are being shown and we owe it all to the Lord for the fruit of that labor.





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Thank you for your support! Your Knights of Columbus council donated \$3,800 from March's Food for Families collection to the Food Bank for Central and Northeast Missouri!

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If you are interested in becoming a Mizzou Knight visit: MizzouKnights.org or email MizzouKnights@gmail.com



(Cont'd) NEWMAN GOES TO WASHINGTON

and breakout talks regarding various elements of social justice and service that the Catholic Church is involved in, both in the US and abroad. The conference finishes on the last day with an Advocacy Day on Capitol Hill where we had the opportunity to speak to our Senators and Representatives about specific issues the USCCB wanted to advocate for in upcoming policy decisions. When we attended, the issues all related to protecting the vulnerable, especially families.

CSMG was a formative experience for all of us who attended, and it really opened our eyes to all the work the Catholic Church does in the United States and across the globe. We had no idea how active the Church was in communicating its policy beliefs to the government and how frequently it advocates for the poor and vulnerable in our country. We learned about so many organizations that we can get involved in and how they support different vulnerable members of our communities. Advocating on Capitol Hill was also an incredible experience because it actually wasn't that difficult to obtain a meeting with our Congressmen, and it proves that this is something we can do anytime we want. Learning to talk to those in positions of power and advocate as their constituents for people in our communities who are in need was incredibly powerful, and we are all very grateful for the experience. We had a lot of fun bonding with the other members on the executive team, and we hope that future teams get to have similar experiences.

Allison is a junior studying accountancy at Mizzou, from Overland Park, Kansas.

SEEK AND YOU SHALL FIND

by Julia Salzman



Julia Salzman finds a familiar face in Salt Lake City at SEEK 2025.

Attending SEEK 25 was truly one of the best experiences of my life. I met so many amazing women who inspired me in my faith journey and helped me see Christ in new ways. Throughout the conference, I had the opportunity to dive into tough questions about faith, science, and life, and I was amazed by the diverse answers and perspectives I encountered.

One of my favorite parts of SEEK was getting to speak with those in religious life and hearing their stories. Their testimonies of trust, surrender, and joy were incredibly moving and gave me a deeper appreciation for vocational discernment. Beyond that, I formed incredible friendships with people who share my passion for Christ, and I even got a permanent bracelet with Fr. Andrew—something that will always remind me of this transformative experience.

Another profound takeaway from SEEK was the inspiration to consecrate myself to Mary alongside my friends. Seeing the love and devotion others had for Our Blessed Mother moved me deeply, and I felt called to grow closer to her as I continue my journey of faith.

I left SEEK feeling renewed, challenged, and more on fire for my faith than ever before. I had so much fun, got to see my favorite artist Forrest Frank in concert, and stayed up way too late with my girls. It was a week filled with grace, deep conversations, and encounters with the Lord that I will carry with me for the rest of my life.

Julia is a sophomore in Elementary Education at Mizzou from Town and Country, MO.



HOME AWAY FROM HOME



by Christine Wendell

I am Christine, and I am a senior graduating this May with a degree in Agribusiness Management. I grew up in a small town in Illinois with a large Catholic family where we went to mass every Sunday and prayed together every night. Despite my blessed upbringing, I had no idea what it looked like to make my faith my own and to have a relationship with Jesus. When I came to Mizzou, I wanted to check out the Newman Center on campus. I went to their welcome week events- ice cream sundaes, the barbeque- and knew this was the community I wanted to be involved in!

Things began shifting in my relationship with Jesus when I went on the Awakenings retreat my first semester. I heard (and was able to receive) for the first time that I could and should have a personal relationship with Jesus. That He desired to know me and hear from me! As simple as that fact sounds to me now, it radically changed my life as a freshman. From that moment onward I've been actively growing closer and closer to Jesus purely by His grace and His blessing of the Newman community and ministries and the virtuous friends He's introduced me to.

The Newman Center at Mizzou has been my home for the past 3 and a half years. I go there almost every day to study, meet friends, go to bible study, attend mass, receive the sacrament of reconciliation, and/or pray in the chapel. Being able to hang out AND receive Jesus in the Eucharist in the same building has been the biggest blessing I didn't even know I needed before coming to college, but now I don't know how I would get through college without it!

Thank you from the bottom of my heart to anyone who donates time, money, or resources in any way to the St. Thomas More Newman Center. The growth of students at Newman from my freshmen year to senior year is beyond incredible to see, and it wouldn't be as possible without the support of donors! My heart has grown closer to Jesus' own Sacred Heart through my time at Mizzou, but I still have so much growing to do. To aid in my growing, I have accepted an offer from FOCUS to be a full-time missionary at a campus next fall! I'll start with training this summer, and I'm beyond excited to see how the Lord transforms me and uses what I learned at Mizzou to help reach souls for Christ!

Christine is a senior in agribusiness management from Jerseyville, IL.

SLU COMES TO MIZZOU

Last semester Newman partnered with Saint Louis University to offer Catholic students a one-credit hour course in Catholic Studies that will count as a Humanities credit and transcribed by SLU. Classes are held at Newman for our Mizzou students. The response from students has been overwhelming and positive with enrollments being at or near capacity. These courses help form the minds of our young Catholics and grow their appreciation for the richness of the Church.

"I have taken two courses through SLU led by Fr. Andrew- Theology & Sanity and Catholic Morality. Both have been incredibly formative as a young Catholic! I've learned so much about the faith through challenging discussions with fellow classmates, reading the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and having the freedom to ask Fr. Andrew questions about the reading. I'm very grateful to have had the opportunity to participate in both classes!"

"Fr. Andrew's Catholic studies classes have radically changed my spiritual life and my view of theology. They have informed me so much on our Catholic faith in a way that has aligned my sight with reality, engaged my intellectual muscles in the philosophy of



RETREATS

AWAKENINGS

Students experience God's love in a powerful way at Awakenings, a retreat held once each semester by students for students. It's an opportunity to meet new people and build relationships. Awakenings is held at Cross Pointe Retreat Center at the Lake of the Ozarks. Fellow students give talks and lead discussion groups.

BUSY PERSONS

During this retreat, students meet with a spiritual director for 45 minutes each day and commit to 30 minutes of personal prayer each day while still going to classes, work and all of their other life commitments.

COR ad COR SILENT RETREAT

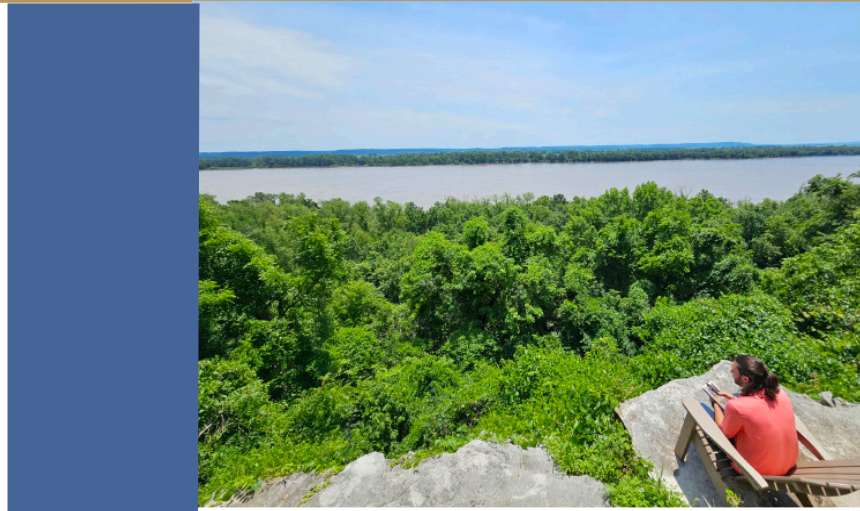
Cor ad Cor is a retreat focused on receiving and responding to God's call. Participants are encouraged to step back from decisions and focus on their relationship with God. This retreat is open to college-age students who are of junior, senior and graduates. Participants will hear talks from spiritual leaders, then spend time in quiet reflection and prayer.

FRESHMAN IGNITE

Ignite is a 2-day retreat for incoming freshman students each fall. Participants will meet other students who want to live out their faith in college, while learning more about the Newman Center and how they can get involved in their faith community on campus.

SEEK

Held each year in January, (at different locations around the country each year) Newman takes a large group of students to the SEEK Conference, hosted by FOCUS (Fellowship of Catholic University Students). Students get to participate in Mass, Adoration and hear from some of today's most dynamic Catholic speakers.



Austin Stewart ('26) is an accounting student at Mizzou from Columbia, MO I grew up Catholic and I went to catholic school, but I never knew there was so much more to my Catholic faith than when I discovered Newman! During high school and into my first semester of college, I gave in to my base passions and started living for the world. Long story short, I came back to my faith and started taking it more seriously, but not my catholic faith. I was on fire for God, but in my search for the Truth, there was always something missing. It wasn't until I came to Newman and experienced the sacraments through a new lens. I didn't realize it at the time, but the Truth I was searching for, the Truth I was longing for was Jesus hidden in the Eucharist! Newman is not only a place I call home, but also a place truly sanctified for the Lord. I have made true authentic friends and am a part of a vibrant, lively community that is bound in the love of Christ. I am beyond blessed to be a part of the Newman center and it wouldn't be possible if it wasn't for our donors! For all of those who give financially, whether small or great, we are so very thankful for your generosity. You are our unsung heroes!

(Cont'd) SLU COMES TO MIZZOU

knowing and loving God, and vivified my prayer life. For Theology and Sanity, the course material and Fr. Andrew's teaching of his insightful knowledge brought fulfilling and freeing answers in the light of the Catholic faith to the largest questions in life of who I am, who God is, what my purpose is in life. For Catholic Morality, the everyday queries and questions of how to put our faith into action at every level of daily life are addressed in a way that kindles compassion and motivation in the hearts of all the students. Even though the content in the courses is reason enough to take and enjoy these classes, the community that is formed among the students and our teacher enhances our time together and forms the hearts of the youth in catholic theology and philosophy and teaches us how to live our lives in the reality of the truth, goodness, and beauty of the Lord." - Ashley Pickett, a senior nursing student at Mizzou from Fenton, MO.

DONOR SPOTLIGHT



THE BOSCHERT FAMILY

COMO Newman became home for our family in the fall of 2012 when Christian was repeatedly welcomed in by many members of that community. It was here that he realized that these people were different because they had something special—a love for Jesus and one another. The Newman Center quickly became home and a place of peace on Mizzou's large campus. Christian was fortunate to have his sister, Kelsey, join him at Mizzou the following year. Subsequent years presented new opportunities to grow in the faith through bible studies, Ephesians 3, retreats, mission trips, SEEK conferences, daily adoration, and much more. Toby and Tracy have been incredibly involved in supporting Newman ministries with their time, treasure and experience that they have gained from serving in ministries at their home parish.

The Newman Center does not just make an impact in the brief 4 (or 5 or more!) years on campus. It spreads to wherever its students and alumni go. It formed our family because it taught each one of us that we are known and loved by God, and we should take that into the world. Our family grew even closer because our faith became the center of our daily lives, and our family also grew in size because of the Newman Center. Christian met his wife, Sara, at the Newman Center, and they were married in its chapel in the summer of 2019. Kelsey met her husband, Steve Harder, at Mizzou, and the two of them started their life journey by sharing their Christian faith. They married in 2018, and Steve went through RCIA to become Catholic. The Newman Center was the root of his conversion.

The foundation that the Newman Center laid continues to produce fruit. We are blessed to all be in Kansas City together with so many other wonderful Newman Center alumni. We hope and pray you find home here too!

Pictured above on a family trip to Napa Valley are Steve and Kelsey (Boschert) Harder, Christian and Sarah Boschert and Tracy and Toby Boschert.

THE CASE FOR CAMPUS MINISTRY AT NEWMAN

I try to write a weekly 'blurb' if you will, in the weekend bulletin for Mass. We have covered a variety of things regarding stewardship but I always try to include something connecting the parish or campus ministry to what our diocese is focusing on with regard to hospitality, prayer, formation, and service. We talk in development or advancement circles about various strategies to engage and retain donors and how we can show or report impact.



Scan to Give

The evidence for impact has never been clearer for me than seeing the success of students who leave their college experience with their faith intact, or renewed, or even faith anew, and with such great passion. Donor support is key to moving this mission forward and sustaining our programming and growing our reach. If you are a past or current donor - thank you for your faith in us and if you are not yet a donor, we welcome you to come and see how the Lord is moving here.



Also if you'd like information on becoming a monthly supporter or leaving an estate gift to Newman, please contact the Advancement Office at 573.449.5424, ext. 205 or email me (Thomas Rose) at thomas@comoneyman.org. Also if you or your alum from Newman has moved, let us know so that we can update our mailing list. You can update that information from our website, comoneyman.org/alumni/ or email thomas@comoneyman.org.