



## Pastor's Corner

Father Neal Hock

Greetings and God's blessing to you all,

What a year it has been so far! From the announcement of our future home on campus, to the beginning of a new parish dedicated to St. Teresa of Calcutta, it is only fitting that we look forward to the future of our ministry at UNK with a new and renewed focus. The life of our patron, Mother Teresa, was one devoted to mission. Even in times of desolation she kept her love of Jesus and her promise to share that immense love in the service of others. With the beginning of the new parish, we have chosen to update our mission to capture the missionary spirit of St. Teresa of Calcutta.

The mission of the St. Teresa of Calcutta Newman Center is *transforming students into missionary disciples who know Christ Jesus deeply and love Him through a continual gift of self*. Because of the prayer and financial support of you, our generous patrons, this mission is coming to fruition in the ways in which we are able to provide growth opportunities in the lives of our students. The ministries of St. Teresa's Newman Center are guided by the four pillars of formation outlined by St. John Paul II, a contemporary and close friend of our patron, St. Teresa of Calcutta.

With your help, we strive to reach and support students through the Human, Spiritual, Intellectual, and Apostolic pillars. We feed their bodies at community meals. We offer the sacraments and numerous opportunities for prayer and retreat to build their relationship with Our Lord. FOCUS bible study groups and speakers on various topics grow the students in Knowledge of the Faith. Campus and community outreach and service projects, along with mission trips available through FOCUS, teach the students what it means to be an apostle and how to bring the Good News out into the world.

It has and continues to be a blessing to be an instrument of Our Heavenly Father to gather His children and to guide them ever closer to His Son. **Thank you for the part that you play in our great mission to bring the Light of Christ and the love of God to these students and into the world.** I cannot wait for all that is to come!

May the Lord continue to bless you,

Father Neal Hock, Pastor  
St. Teresa of Calcutta Newman Center  
Vocations Director, Diocese of Grand Island



## Fully Alive in Christ

Kenzie Dugan



Kenzie Dugan, a freshman Art Education major at UNK, will readily admit that she had a rough start in college. From Wichita, Kansas, she is

not really sure how she found her way to Nebraska, but God must have had a hand in it. Kenzie chose UNK because it was her best offer to play volleyball. The first week of school she saw a familiar face (from Kansas!) at the St. Teresa of Calcutta Newman Center table at the Chancellor's Picnic. She started attending St. T events and soon felt at home. But just a month into college classes and

volleyball, something just did not seem right. She felt sad all of the time. Kenzie turned to God and began to pray. She decided to remove herself from the volleyball team. The week after that, Kenzie's boyfriend broke up with her. Already in a bad place, this seemed like too much to handle, but enter God's plan!

The next week was the Emmaus retreat. Kenzie was paired with a Sister of Life for daily spiritual direction. Listening to Sister Lucia Christi's discernment story was very impactful. Kenzie chose to attend Fully Alive, Eucharistic Adoration on campus, in the student union that Monday evening.

**Jesus made Himself fully present.**

One moment Kenzie was sitting looking up at the monstrance, the next she had closed her eyes and was face to face with Christ. **"I saw the Lord's face in front of mine. We were staring at each other," she recalls.** Jesus told Kenzie that He was proud of her for being so strong. He had a plan for her. When she asked what His plan was, He said, "I just want you to come home to me." This has made Kenzie more determined than ever to live out her Catholic faith. "I want to make my faith my own, hold myself accountable," she states. She is dedicated to her involvement in life at St. Teresa's, as she says, "I have a place there. I am supposed to be here!"



## Living the Faith

Justin Vrooman

Learning about St. Teresa of Calcutta Newman Center from high school friends attending UNK, Justin Vrooman, made sure to take a tour of St. T's while on a campus visit at the university. It was very important to Justin, now a senior Agribusiness/ Applied Computer Science major, to live out his faith in college from the very beginning. Starting day one on campus, Justin began attending Mass and Adoration along with many other activities at St. Teresa's that fit into his busy schedule as a student athlete. **"Having St. Teresa's Newman Center is an invaluable opportunity to grow in the faith," says Justin.**

FOCUS bible studies have played a large role in Justin's time at St. T's. Being a part of a bible study group since freshman year, he now leads a group of young men whom he considers the best kind of friends, "who you can go to in times of need and



walk with in strength." Within the community at St. Teresa's, Justin sees that everyone is striving for Christ, helping each other to become better.

For Justin, the biggest benefit of being a parishioner of St. Teresa of Calcutta Newman Center is the availability of the sacraments. "Having confessions every day and daily Mass helps me to get all those graces that push me closer to Christ," Justin says. Justin also believes that spending time at Mass and Adoration together with

his fiancé, Sinclair, has helped them prepare for their upcoming marriage. Their time together at St. T's has grown the faith that they share and helped them to grow closer to each other. Experiencing the faith-filled community at St. Teresa's Newman Center has created a desire to find that same community in their future home. Looking to that future, Justin declares, "I want to be an example to others and walk the faith with others everywhere I go."





MISSION

## Teaching with Faith, an Alumni Story

Carolina Ramos

Carolina Ramos, UNK St. Teresa of Calcutta Newman Center Alumni, was new to the Catholic faith when she started attending UNK what seems like just a handful of years ago. Her conversion to Catholicism began when she attended a youth group meeting with a Catholic friend instead of going to her usual meeting at the Berean Church. She immediately became interested in the bible study they were undertaking and the new beautiful prayers that they were praying. By senior year of high school, she had found the answer to all her seeking and joined the Catholic Church.

At college, Carolina began attending Mass at Prince of Peace in Kearney. Not being Catholic for long, she had no idea of the existence of Newman Centers. Once she found St. Teresa's Newman Center on campus, she found Catholics her own age, living the same kind of life she was living. **"Having friends that value the Church helped me to grow in love with the Catholic Church," she**

**says.** Carolina lived in the Newman Center housing for two years. She loved living with the other girls and feels that the experience has given her skills that she can take into life. Living at St. T's also helped her to grow in her relationship with Christ through the close availability of Mass, Adoration, and community prayer.

The prayer life that was fostered in her time at St. Teresa's has helped Carolina find community at Hastings St. Cecilia Middle and Catholic High School, where she teaches art in grades 7-12. **"If I have free time, I can go to the chapel and pray," she says.** Meeting other teachers in prayer has helped her find a new faith community. Working in the Catholic Schools has been a tremendous blessing. It is not everywhere that an art project can turn into a theological discussion! Carolina says, **"Kids today are looking for truth, goodness, and beauty."** Being able to help her students find that goodness and beauty in each other and in the Church is what drives her commitment to her students.

Carolina Ramos has taken her budding Catholic faith, nourished and grown in her time at St. Teresa's Newman Center, out into the world where it continues to blossom in her life and the lives of her students. She cherishes where God is leading her in her life right now as a single woman which allows her to dedicate more of her time to helping her students grow in faith. Carolina has been able to bring students to Christ in the City, a service mission trip through FOCUS. She will also be accompanying students to SEEK 2023 and on a trip to Rome through the Diocese of Lincoln.

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**Sending her seniors off to college, she prays that they "find that place that fosters the relationship that they have with Christ," the place she found at Newman.**

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# ST. TERESA OF CALCUTTA

## NEWMAN CENTER

817 W. 27th Street Kearney, NE 68845-4358  
www.lopercatholic.org

## Save the Date

Friday, April 28, 2023

Since its inception in 2018, the St. Gianna Beretta Molla Banquet has been a family reunion of sorts. It allows current students, alumni and friends of the Newman Center to come together and celebrate our heritage here at St. Teresa's.

St. Gianna was chosen as our banquet namesake, as she is known for her "heroic virtue." St. Gianna serves as a beautiful example of finding God's will in our lives. Finding and serving God's will is a life skill fostered here at St. Teresa of Calcutta Newman Center. We see it in the lives of alumni and friends who have been connected here. St. Gianna's example is one that can connect all of us. Through her life of prayer, she inspired not only her children, but her coworkers, friends, and strangers to live the life Christ calls us to.

Please save the date and join us as we celebrate our 5th "Actual" St. Gianna Banquet on her feast Day, Friday, April 28, 2023. Formal invitation to follow.

**"Our concern must be to know God's will. We must enter that path: if God wants, when God wants, how God wants."**

- St. Gianna Molla

## *St. Gianna Banquet*



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