



ST. TERESA OF CALCUTTA NEWMAN CENTER



Pastor's Corner

Issue No. 2 — Fall 2023

Father Neal Hock

“Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” 1 Corinthians 1:33

Our fall semester has begun with some amazing growth! In our ministry efforts, we have had record numbers of registrants and Bible study participants. Our growth has also impacted our mission and vision as we seek to form the next generation of Catholic leaders. St. Teresa's has always strived to be a place of hospitality, but this fall, we are taking it to new heights as we embrace our recently adopted cultural virtue: Radical Hospitality.

Radical Hospitality is not merely a phrase; it is a guiding principle that we strive to live by every day. It is about encountering everyone as if we were encountering Christ Himself. It is about going deeper into the encounter to form authentic relationships that are rooted in Christ; going beyond the ordinary and making every individual feel not just welcome, but genuinely valued and loved. It is about showcasing to the world the intrinsic value of every human being.

Our mission is clear. **We are dedicated to building a culture where every person, regardless of their background, beliefs, or life circumstances, is received as Christ**

would receive them. We strive to put others' needs first, serving them with a joyful heart. In doing so, we invite them into deeper intimacy with Christ and walk alongside them on our pilgrimage to heaven.

This semester, we have witnessed the transformative power of Radical Hospitality in our community. Our events have provided opportunities for encounter, meeting students where they are and inviting them to strive for more. Our campus is transforming, soul by soul, into a haven of genuine connection and authentic relationships.

As we continue to embrace Radical Hospitality, we invite you to join us on this transformative journey. Your support and presence are invaluable as we work together to fill heaven with saints, one soul at a time. Thank you for being an essential part of the St. Teresa of Calcutta Newman Center family.

God bless,

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



A Sacred Space Renewed

Alfred Schwable, Development Director



UNK Newman Center's St. Teresa's Chapel, where the Eucharistic sacrifice takes place and countless hours of prayer have

been observed since the late 1960s, has undergone a remarkable renovation.

The sanctuary now boasts new flooring, a fresh coat of paint, improved lighting, and repurposed wood reliefs of Sts. Mary and Joseph. A dedicated spotlight for Eucharistic adoration creates an atmosphere where His True Presence radiates from the monstrance. New vinyl

window coverings, designed from images of real stained glass, bring the chapel to life and focus our attention heavenward.

Beauty, a transcendental that draws each person in and directs them to God, now permeates every corner of our chapel. **This renewal is more than cosmetic; it is an invitation to encounter the living and true God who dwells in our midst.** It is a beautiful reflection of our unwavering commitment to Radical Hospitality, inviting everyone into a sacred space where Christ's deep love and abundant grace are undeniable.

At the core of our mission lies a deep commitment to encounter Jesus in every aspect of our lives.

Through our recent chapel updates, students will come to greater conversion of heart and be changed for the better.



← Scan here to learn more about the renewal of St. Teresa's Chapel.



A Simple Invitation

Caleb Wiseman, Sophomore, Secondary Education-Math



Caleb Wiseman knows that it was not his will that carried him to St. Teresa's Newman Center when starting college at UNK.

"I practiced my faith, but I didn't have that desire," he admits. He was on

"I saw that everyone really cared about each other, they radiated love—that was easy to see. I wanted to explore why."

campus for the student organization fair when the Newman table stopped him. They invited Caleb to Welcome Week activities at the Newman Center. Caleb showed up on Sunday thinking, "I might as well get a free meal out of it," without so much as imagining what

else he might "get out of it". That very night, after being introduced to other students by a FOCUS missionary, Caleb noticed that there was something different about the Newman Center. "I saw that everyone really cared about each other, they radiated love—that was easy to see. I wanted to explore why."

Caleb was invited to daily Mass the next day and started going to Mass more frequently than ever before. He joined a Bible study and attended activities and retreats. In addition, Caleb eventually became a lector and altar server.

Now a Sophomore, Caleb leads his own bible study. "I was commissioned as a disciple with FOCUS, and when I was asked to lead my own bible study, I took it to prayer and felt peace and joy." Caleb desires to share what he had found at the Newman Center with others.

"Hospitality doesn't mean anything if the person invited in doesn't carry that to other people and help them grow their own faith."

Following the example of St. Teresa of Calcutta, the patron of the student parish, Caleb welcomes new students, as he says, **"by doing all of the small things—offering a smile, saying 'hi', remembering their name, and inviting them."**



Caleb Wiseman, right, pictured with Fr. Hock and fellow student during Welcome Week festivities.



MISSION

Education for Life

John and Crystal Vanderbeek, Newman Center Alumni

John Vanderbeek, while a student at UNK in the early 90s, suddenly found himself needing a different housing situation. He was invited to live at the Newman Center. Five years later, his now wife, Crystal, applied to live in the Blue House.

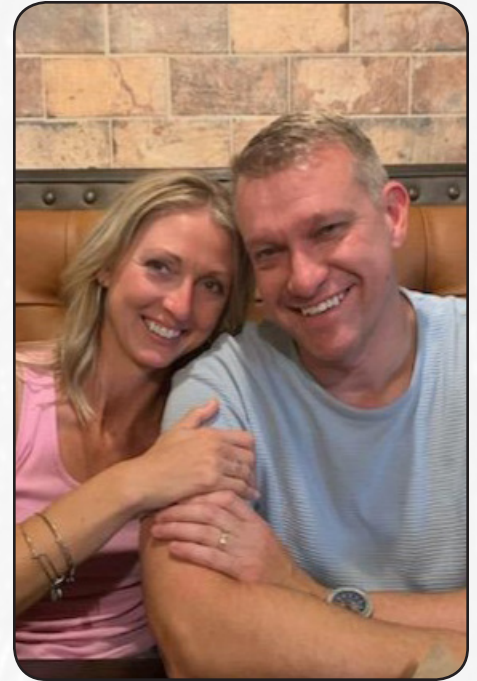
“The friendship and support of the girls in the house meant I could come back from being out in the world to people that really knew me.” John agrees and adds, “the Newman Center provided the fellowship that laid the foundation to grow in my faith.” Being welcomed into the community at Newman gave them both the desire to learn more and grow in their faith.

John and Crystal Vanderbeek have carried that desire for their Catholic faith into what is clearly their calling in life, Catholic Education. John is the Assistant Principal at Kearney Catholic High School. Crystal is the director of Little Fish Preschool, the

second preschool the couple helped start, having also opened the Catholic preschool in Hastings.

For Crystal, the goal is supporting families. “Walking with families is part of our daily life.” John sees a great need to give his students a strong Catholic identity as they leave high school. As part of their strategic planning, Kearney Catholic has invited students from the Newman Center into the school to speak to their students. “They get so enveloped in ‘high school stuff’. The Newman Center is the next step in bringing the trajectory forward in their faith.”

John sees the spiritual battleground on college campuses and wants his students to be prepared. “The Eucharist that we elevate and venerate is so different from what is held up in most college classes today.” Crystal adds, “People need to know that a strong Newman Center...is vital to have solid families and vocations.”



John and Crystal Vanderbeek

People need to know that a strong Newman Center ... is vital to having solid families and vocations.



Assistant Principal John Vanderbeek with students at Kearney Catholic High School.



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