



Newman News

University of Missouri - St Louis

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DIRECTOR'S PEN

"Father Bill, I went back to the Newman Center to get the medicine I left there, and it was raining inside the house." Those are not exactly the kind of words one wants to hear on their cell phone at 11:30 p.m. on a Friday night. Or any time, for that matter. The source of the water was the upstairs bathroom and a toilet that once flushed, chose not to stop. By the time I arrived, the makeshift crew of Newmanites had shut the water off and begun the process of cleaning up. Brooms were pushed into service as squeegees. Towels doubled as mops. Recycle bins became trash cans. Adding to the chaos was the need to dodge the chunks of wet plaster as they achieved critical weight and left their happy home on the ceiling, hitting the floor and steps with a resounding crunch.

It was the great flood of '04, and I am one of the survivors. The ceiling in the hallway, however, was not so lucky. Nor was the carpet in the basement. Nor was the paint and a lot of the plaster in the kitchen. The hallway and kitchen walls will have to undergo some plaster surgery, and they and the basement walls need a fresh coat of paint, but should recover nicely. The hardwood floors have never been washed so clean. The crown molding in the living and dining rooms are intact and unharmed. Unfortunately, the kitchen cabinets were likewise undamaged... And I am exceedingly grateful that Kim Cowan inadvertently left her medicine in the house; otherwise we would not have discovered the flood till the next morning...

On Saturday morning Mike Rogan and his dad came and helped with the cleanup and 'dry-up' of the house. Armed with a half dozen fans and extension cords, they had air moving around the house in no time. The rest of the loose plaster ceiling was aided to its untimely end with a pry bar and a few gentle pushes. And an initial plan was suggested as to how to make the repairs. Since then, they have returned, along with Brandon Dempsey, D. Mike Bauer, and I, to replace the plaster ceiling with drywall. I am awaiting the second bid on costs to do the plaster work and carpeting in the basement. Once all the insurance forms have been submitted, the work will begin in earnest. Then another generation of Newman Center denizens will have the ability to tell their children in the quavering voice of the elderly: "I remember when this entire ceiling came crashing down...and I helped to plaster and paint this hallway. I used my bare hands. It was uphill, in the rain, both ways..."

~Fr. Bill Kempf

SPOTLIGHT: DAVID GRAHAM, *ALUMNUS & BOARD MEMBER*



The Newman spotlight falls again, and taking center stage this time is Newman Center alumnus and board member David Graham. Alumnus of both the University of Missouri - St. Louis and the Catholic Newman Center community, David is now serving on the Newman Center's Advisory Board. As a parishioner of St. Ann and a long-time resident of this neighborhood, David brings a number of valuable perspectives to the Board.

David grew up local to the U.M.-St. Louis campus, in Normandy and Florissant. His propensity for travel seems to have started early as he attended St. Ann's elementary school in Normandy for 1st and 2nd grades and then switched to St. Thomas the Apostle for his 3rd grade through 8th grade years. During his high school career, David again made a switch, attending Rosary High School for his freshman and sophomore years and then McCluer North High School for his junior and senior years.

After graduating from high school in 1978, David started at UMSL, deciding upon Anthropology as his major because he was interested in different cultures. About his years spent at the Catholic Newman Center, David says, "My years at the Newman House when I was in college were wonderful years. I

truly enjoyed the intramural soccer, the parties, the wonderful liturgies, and the great people who were the Newman community."

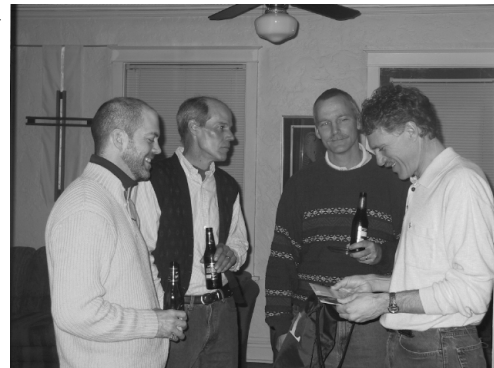
David graduated from UMSL in May of 1983 and, in 1984, went to work for the Department of Defense. After having lived in Richmond, Virginia; Chicago, Illinois; Denver, Colorado; Derry, New Hampshire; South Boston, Massachusetts; and Platte City, Missouri, David is now "back where I want to be" in Normandy, Missouri. He is a parishioner of St. Ann Parish, where he sings in the choir and helps with the annual Silent Auction, Dinner & Dance fundraiser for the elementary school.

When not working and traveling with the Department of Defense, David can most likely be found engaging in one of his many hobbies. A fan of horticulture, David would pursue a horticulture degree at Meramec Community College if he didn't spend so much time 'on the road' with his job. David also likes to bicycle, having biked the Katy Trail from Sedalia to St. Charles, about a 190-mile venture. He also likes to go flyfishing for rainbow trout at various Missouri state parks, including Bennett Spring, Montauk, and Roaring River. In addition to hiking, David also likes to backpack, making an annual trip to the Appalachian Trail. Last year marked the 20th anniversary of these annual excursions, and David and three friends celebrated with an eight-day 90-mile trip through northern Virginia ending at Harpers Ferry, West Virginia.

When asked about his insights on life, David responded with poignant words of advice for current students: "Life goes way too fast. It is very, very im-

portant that you don't merely wander through college switching from one major to another major. You or your parents are going to spend a bundle on your college, so spend a bundle upfront on discerning what God's will for your life is and then pursue that with a passion regardless of whether or not 'you can make a living at it' or 'it has prestige.'"

David's life reflects his own advice, as he remains very intentional about what he wants his life to be about and then "pursues that with a passion." David has made incredible contributions to his various communities, including, to name a few, the University of Missouri - St. Louis, St. Ann Parish, and the Catholic Newman Center. As a member of the Advisory Board here at the CNC, David has been instrumental in helping to organize several alumni reunions, including our most recent event on February 27th (please see *Happy Hour at the Catholic Newman Center* for more info). Regarding the alumni events offered by the Newman Center, David says, "I realize people's lives are so very busy nowadays, but I truly hope that all Newman folks can come to the Newman alumni events to reacquaint themselves with the Newman House, the staff, and old friends." David continues



to be a blessing to this community and others. We wish him many blessings on his life's endeavors, and we look forward to his continued contribu-

tions of time and talent to those of us here at the Catholic Newman Center.

~Kevin Born

PREVIEW OF HOMELESSNESS AWARENESS WEEK

April is here already. Not only does April bring with it Easter and spring, but it also brings the second annual Homelessness Awareness Week at UM-St. Louis. Homelessness Awareness Week 2004 is scheduled for the week of April 19th through April 23rd. This week is filled with events and activities to raise the level of awareness about the issues and concerns that surround homelessness in our city and throughout the United States. The Catholic Newman Center is proud to co-sponsor this week with several other organizations on campus in order to help educate the UM-St. Louis community. Here are the events that are scheduled for the week:

~ Informational table in the Millennium Student Center, Monday

through Thursday

~ "Panhandlers" will walk through campus throughout the week wearing sandwich boards with homelessness statistics on them handing out informational fliers

~ A representative from Habitat for Humanity is scheduled to come to campus to speak on problems of substandard housing and how organizations like Habitat for Humanity help remedy this problem

~ A Cardboard Shantytown Simulation Experience, where students, faculty, and staff are invited to sleep outside on pieces of cardboard near the Millennium Student Center to help raise awareness of the issues of homelessness

~ A Box Social will be held one af-

ternoon in the Nosh where about 15 boxed lunches will be auctioned off and the proceeds will be donated to help support the work of *What's Up Magazine*

~ On Friday students, faculty, and staff are invited to join the Newman Center in working for Habitat for Humanity to help in the construction of houses for low-income families

~ Throughout the week Donation Jars will be placed at several locations across campus giving people the opportunity to donate money to help financially support the work of *What's Up Magazine*

If you would like more information on these events, call us at 385-3455.

~Mo Dunn

ACTS RESIDENTIAL HALL

The Catholic Newman Center will be taking on a new venture beginning this fall. Starting with the 2004-2005 academic year, there will be a "new" residence hall on the University of Missouri - St. Louis campus. The ACTS dorm will be housed in Bellerive Residence Hall on South Campus and will provide students with an opportunity to take ACTION, live in COMMUNITY, share THEOLOGICAL reflection, and participate in community SERVICE.

The students who live in the ACTS Residential Hall, sponsored by the Catholic Newman Center, have as

their first priority, academic success. They also share a common desire to measure success by the kind of person they are and how they impact their world. Students who choose the ACTS Residential Hall, in addition to Community Living activities, will also participate in a year-long service project, an annual retreat, prayer, faith sharing, and other Newman Center events.

Our Residential Living staff, as well as the staff of the Catholic Newman Center, will assist the students in this community living experience on campus, offer support in service projects, and be available to advise

students in their personal and educational goals. Residents will also be encouraged to participate in other UMSL Campus Activities that interest them.

Living on campus is more than sleeping and studying. The ACTS Residential Hall is for students who desire to learn more about themselves; develop a sense of community with the students in their dorm; participate in service projects with friends; explore their relationship with God and others; and believe they can make a difference in this world.

~Teresa Roberson-Mullins

THE PASSION DISCUSSION

One of the many roles that the Newman Center plays on campus, one that is often overlooked, is that of one of the members of Interfaith Campus Ministries. Interfaith is a bit of an umbrella group for all the various religious ministries going on at UMSL, and provides a space, a campus affiliation, and an opportunity to network for any groups actively participating in ministry on the campus. In the past, the members of Interfaith have mostly met once a month to update everyone on what each group has been up to, and once in a while, to share their time and talent with another group's event. This year, however, Interfaith banded together for something a bit more ambitious: a panel discussion of Mel Gibson's film, *The Passion of the Christ*.

When *The Passion* was released this year, our society, for the first time in recent memory, suddenly found a large amount of attention given to something with a religious message. As Marc Murchison, a member of

Interfaith and the person most responsible for the panel discussion, said, *The Passion* really was a "cultural phenomenon" for a couple of months. With Marc's impetus, Interfaith was able, in a small way at UMSL, to take advantage of the brief attention society was giving to religion. A panel of experts, representing Jewish, Protestant and Catholic perspectives, was assembled to discuss the film and to take questions from the audience.

Members of the panel, Rabbi Gershon Litt of Aish HaTorah, Dr. Jay Sklar of Covenant Theological Seminary, and Dr. Mike McClymond of Saint Louis University, led an intriguing discussion about their reactions to the film, discussing the way it has encouraged many (both Jews and Christians) to take a deeper look at their faith and live it more fully. Dr. Sklar, in particular, led a defense of the film, challenging the audience to examine Gibson's intent and the degree to which he fulfilled it, rather than criticizing him for not doing something he never

meant to do. Although many questions from the audience had to do with whether or not the film was anti-semitic, panel moderator Catherine Marquis-Homeyer, film reviewer for *The Current*, ensured that the discussion remained an academic discussion of the film, and not a theological debate.

In all, around 45 people were in attendance, including a mix of faculty and students, which (by commuter-school standards) was a fantastic turnout. Groups were seen afterward sticking around to continue the discussion on their own—including the panelists themselves. The event garnered a brief write-up in *The Current*, as well, and the Interfaith staff left satisfied that the discussion had achieved its goal: to make people think.

~D. Mike Bauer

HAPPY HOUR AT THE CATHOLIC NEWMAN CENTER

On February 27th, the Catholic Newman Center hosted a "happy hour" gathering of alumni. Funded by a generous donation from Alumni and Constituent Relations in honor of Homecoming, this reunion of Newman Center alumni saw approximately 40 guests socializing and revisiting memories of their days here at the Newman House and at UMSL. The event was scheduled to run from 6:30pm until 8:30pm. However, with plenty of appetizers, beer, wine, and soda, as well as good people to

talk with, folks were still hanging out at the house at 11:00pm. The event was a wonderful opportunity to gather people together to remember a very formational time in their lives.

Our next reunion of Newman House alumni will be on Friday, May 7th, at 7:00pm at the Whistle Stop Custard Shop, located at #1 Carson Road, near the train trestle in downtown Ferguson at Florissant Road.

~Kevin Born

Staff and Officers:

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Kevin Born

D. Mike Bauer

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AWAKENING

Religious retreats can mean different things to different people. For me, retreats used to mean a weekend of confusing talks that left me unsure about many things I thought I knew about my faith and myself. However, those were just my past experiences. I took on a whole new view of retreats after going on the Catholic Newman Center's Awakening retreat.

The weekend provided me the time and support to strengthen my faith,

and for once to come back from a retreat having more answers than questions. The Awakening experience was truly unbelievable. In the approximately 48 hours I spent there, I was able to realize the importance of forgiveness in my life, and I chose to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time in over six years.

However, Awakening was more than just a time for Reconciliation. It was also an immersion in the ever-

present love God has for all of us. That love came in many different ways throughout the weekend, and each retreat participant had the chance to feel it.

The Awakening experience has definitely changed my entire view on retreats, and I could not be happier about it. I look forward to next year's retreat when another group of lucky students will have the awesome experience that I had.

~Mike Rogan



Mark Your Calendars: All-Years Newman Reunion

@ the Whistle Stop Café

Located in downtown Ferguson at Florissant Road and Carson

May 7th @ 7pm

Newman Center Wish List

- ~Weed eater (gas powered)
- ~Sturdy trash cans with wheels
- ~Lawn furniture
- ~New dining room chairs
- ~New kitchen (cabinets, flooring, oven, stove)
- ~Gas fireplace

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