



St. Joseph Catholic *Newman Center*



Serving Black Hills State University

Says 'Merry Christmas'

December 2010

NEWMAN CENTERS REPRESENT AN INVESTMENT IN THE FUTURE

By Paul Higbee

"There's nothing more important that I could be doing – that we could be doing – than supporting young Catholic leaders in their faith and life," says Rev. Joseph Vetter, director of the Newman Center at Duke University. "The return on our investment is, as the MasterCard people say, priceless."

Of course, there's a Newman Center for Black Hills State University students, too. Dropping by to meet some of the students who make it a home away from home affirms what Rev. Vetter says about the importance of this type of student support. Studies say that nationally about 19 percent of university students who are Catholic attend Mass regularly during their college years. What those studies don't reveal, though, is the power that even a few students committed to the church can have in moving others toward deeper faith. While the Newman Center in Spearfish offers attractive amenities – food, movie nights, quiet spots for study – they aren't what draw most students. Rather, says campus minister Lisa Fahey, credit goes to students already involved who invite others to Bible studies, rosary walks, and adoration.

"There's a small core of our students that has stepped out of their comfort zone to invite others, and it's working," reports Lisa. "This reaching out hasn't just popped up. It's been building over time. There seems to be a hunger in our young adults."

Young people are finding ways and devoting time to feeding that hunger for Christ, at the Newman Center and nearby St. Joseph Catholic Church, on campus, and elsewhere. Twelve BHSU Newman Center students are signed up for a FOCUS (Fellowship of Catholic University Students) conference in Denver this January.

Lisa is pleased that this core group in no way resembles a clique. The students always welcome newcomers and are eager to communicate their beliefs even with others who find little or no value in the church. While Newman Centers are fixtures on Catholic university campuses, there's evidence they make the most impact on campus culture at secular schools.

Regular Newman Center activities through the week include home-cooked dinners after Sunday evening Mass at St. Joseph (provided at no charge by St. Joseph and St. Paul's parishioners), a Monday night rosary walk on the BHSU campus, studies, experiencing adoration alone or with friends, movies, and opportunities for community service. Students pay no fees for any type of participation. Instead costs are covered by donations from people looking to shape the next generation of Catholic leadership.

Nor can there be any doubt that young Catholics who find a solid connection to the church during their college years will be more active as parishioners in the years after graduation, wherever their careers may take them.

With the end of the tax year approaching, December is a good time for those wishing to help to make a tax-deductible contribution of any amount. Donations may be sent to St. Joseph Catholic Newman Center, 844 Fifth Street, Spearfish, SD 57783.

Lisa Fahey notes that contributions are up this year, certainly a testimony to the good work that's happening and to the current students who are helping promote fundraising. But the St. Joseph Catholic Newman Center's needs are great, and that's especially evident in winter. Unlike most other Newman Centers, this one is several blocks off campus, making access difficult for some dormitory residents. So in addition to funding current services, the program is working towards a new building a block from campus, projected to open within the next five years. A payment of \$207,000 was made in 2010 to secure the site...money which came from the Diocesan We Walk By Faith Special Appeal.

Why do we need to reach college students?

According to the Fellowship of Catholic University Students, college years are some of the most pivotal of a young person's life. Without the support of family and friends, the majority of freshman students fall into the party culture, swallowed by promises of happiness from destructive influences.

National statistics show:

- 85% of Catholic college students do not attend Sunday Mass.
- Binge drinking, sexual promiscuity, moral relativism and academic hostility towards the Catholic faith are prevalent.
- Students suffer general lack of knowledge or understanding of their faith.
- There exists scarcity of faithful young people to lead the Church into the future.

On the other hand, students who participate in their faith in college tend to remain practicing Catholics their whole lives. The St. Joseph Newman Center is here to provide support for BHSU Catholic college students as well as offer opportunities for their spiritual and social needs.



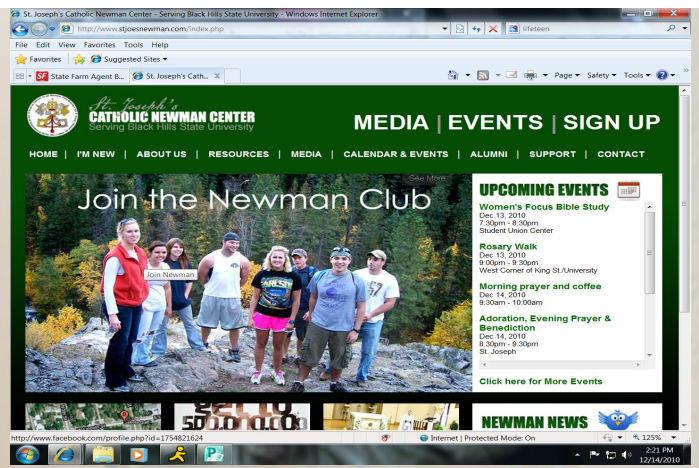
What the St. Joseph Newman Center members have given to our Parish and community this fall!

- Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion
- Master of Ceremonies
- Edge core team members
- Members of the Knights of Columbus
- Ministering to the elderly at the Dorsett



You can help to make a difference!

Check out our website:
www.stjoesnewman.com



*Donations make
the difference!*

- \$ 8 A Bible Study Book for a student
- \$10 Provides for Christian Prayer book for morning prayer @ Newman Center
- \$50 For transportation of one student to attend FOCUS Conference
- \$55 Pays for wireless internet for a month
- \$75 Will buy snack items for the Newman Center
- \$200 Provides one month of electricity
- \$250 Provides scholarship monies for student to attend FOCUS Conference
- \$450 Allows one student to attend the College Student Leadership Training Summit
- \$800 Funds for one student to attend a FOCUS mission trip

Please consider donating

Contributions can be sent to:

St. Joseph Newman Center
844 Fifth Street
Spearfish, SD 57783

MEET A NEWMAN CLUB MEMBER: MELISSA ROGERS

Melissa Rogers, treasurer of the St. Joseph Catholic Newman Club, is a valuable member in many ways. Some of her strengths stem from the fact that she isn't a traditional student.

Melissa is married with three children, ages 3, 7 and 9. Not surprisingly, she sometimes just needs a quiet place to study, and she finds it at the Newman Center. But what she takes away and shares is much more substantial.

Younger club members know they can count on Melissa to remind them to eat balanced, healthy meals when food is prepared at the center – and that she will take the lead in gaining donations of food and other necessities. She's an English-Speech-Theater major on her way to a high school teaching career, but her skills in negotiating for donations has led to light-hearted comments from others about how going into business for herself wouldn't be a bad choice. "Through the Newman Center I've learned to embrace the gifts God has given me," Melissa reflects.

Fellow club members who get to know Melissa well learn that her life as a Catholic hasn't been without ups and downs. "I grew up in the Church in Timber Lake, fell away from it, and came back," she notes. "When you're younger you maybe don't realize that life experiences could make it so you're not always on track in your church life. It's not always easy, but you can get back on track."

One of the things Melissa especially enjoys about the Newman Center is bringing non-Catholic friends over. "It opens up good question and answer opportunities, a chance to address misconceptions others may have," she says. "You don't normally talk about those things in other places."

St. Joseph Newman Club Officers



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