



 **Newman**
Catholic Community at RIT

2023–2024 ANNUAL REPORT



Cool Thoughts

Dear Tiger Catholics,

Reflecting on another remarkable year, I am filled with deep gratitude for all that we have achieved together. As you know success takes many people to implement a vision and in this report, you will see the impact Catholic life at RIT has on our students, university, and indeed wider community.

For over a decade as Director of the Newman Community, and with your prayers and support, Newman has achieved tremendous success in bringing Christ and the Church to campus. We accomplish this with the steady aim of directly addressing our challenges, and there are many, but with determination in creating a sustainable ministry for both today and future generations.

Today, over 300 students draw great strength and inspiration from our Sunday Mass. More than 150 students participate in social programs, spiritual growth opportunities across the 50+ programs. Newman students contribute over 100 hours of service to the Rochester community, demonstrating their commitment to loving God and neighbor. Our signature retreat program, Kairos, has transformed nearly 40 students, and this year, we welcomed four students into the Catholic faith through our RCIA program!

Faith thrives on campus, and here at Newman, all students find a home and a warm welcome. They experience a sense of belonging, forge new friendships, serve others, and deepen their relationship with Christ for a lifetime.

We are not yet finished! Student leaders have already started planning and preparing to welcome the Class of 2028. Simultaneously, the Newman Advisory Board is developing a vision for a dynamic ministry to serve future generations with our strategic plan. While still being finalized, this plan once fully realized, addresses our lack of resources and will allow Newman to engage every Catholic student at RIT!

As we look to the future, we know today is equally important. We are incredibly grateful for the steadfast support of our alumni and parents, which is essential to our ministry and the transformative experiences of our students. Remarkably, 85% of our budget is funded by you and others like you who know the importance of Catholic life for the next generation. As you will read in this report, students themselves express the impact of our ministry and on their daily lives at RIT.

“Faith thrives on campus, and here at Newman, all students find a home and a warm welcome.”

On a personal note, please permit me to extend our heartfelt gratitude to Sr. Leandra Kosmoski, SSJ, our Pastoral Leader for the past two years. As a Sister of St. Joseph of Buffalo, Sr. Leandra has guided our students towards Christ, the Church, and created future Church leaders. Two years ago, I gave her weekly bulletin column a title. For me it expresses her heart so well, “All of Me”. Sr. Leandra gives all of herself. Our students know it and have been richly blessed. We wish her well in her future endeavors.

Once again, I extend my deepest gratitude to each of you. Your steadfast support and prayers have allowed us to accomplish so much. Newman is a fertile ground for faith, instrumental in fostering an environment where students thrive emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually in their Catholic faith. With plans in place for the upcoming year and our developing strategic plan for our future growth, and with your continued partnership, our future remains ever so promising. God bless.

Fr. Brian C. Cal
Director

NEWMAN 2024

BY THE NUMBERS



96

Masses
on Campus



3523

Students Attending



523

Service Hours



323

Given Ashes on
Ash Wednesday



36

Graduating Seniors

4



Students Becoming
Catholic



1

Liturgical Trainings
Provided



32

Students Trained As
Lectors/Eucharistic
Ministers



473

Coffee Hours
Attendees



189

Student Participants



145

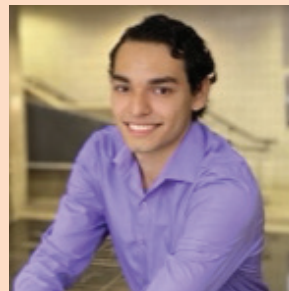
RCIA Instructional
Hours

Newman Is *My Home Away From Home*



“Essential to Newman is the Sunday Mass. As sacristan inviting others to share their gifts as readers or help set up and take down build’s community responsibility.”

Chimamanda Eze '28,
Lagos, Nigeria
Mechatronics Engineering



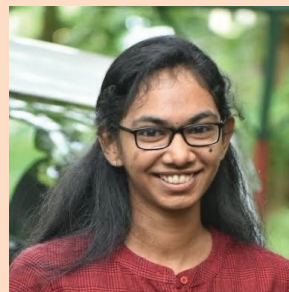
“Helping others understand the intellectual tradition and teachings of the Church is something that motivates me to live out my faith on campus with others.”

Alex Velez '25,
East Elmhurst, NY
Chemistry



“Coming from Nigeria, far from home, Newman friends and staff have become my family in every way, especially to live my Catholic identity at RIT.”

Tobi Fadipe '25,
Lagos, Nigeria
Psychology



“The social environment of Newman has helped me overcome the unique challenges of being a graduate student to feel deeply welcome and connected to others.”

Priya Chiriyankandath, PhD (cand)
Kerala, India
Biomedical and Chemical
Engineering, PhD



“It is the rosary each Friday with other students that reveals the heart and love of our Mother Mary upon our Newman family.”

Christis Shepard '26,
Bayonne, NJ
Museum Studies

URBAN CHALLENGE: *Transformative Experience*

Before the trip to Camden, NJ, the eight participants on the RIT Newman Alternative Spring Break Trip were unfamiliar with the concept of Catholic Social Teachings (CST) and the practice of service learning. Service learning is an educational approach that combines community service with classroom learning and personal faith reflections to enrich the experience, teach Christian and civic responsibility, and strengthen communities rooted in our Catholic Faith.

Through the Urban Challenge experience, students gained a deeper understanding of CST, particularly the tenets of “Life and Dignity of the Human Person” and “Preferential Option for the Poor and Vulnerable.” Volunteering highlighted the intrinsic value and dignity of every individual, often determined by the circumstances of their birth. The food insecurity simulation, where they lived on \$4 per person per day for 24 hours, was a challenging exercise, mirroring the reality of about 13.5 million American households. Such statistics are alarming, especially in a nation as great and respected as the United States. Witnessing the hardships faced by the underprivileged reinforced the importance of advocating for the marginalized and vulnerable in society, ensuring their voices are heard and respected, and taking appropriate actions to address their needs and to be attentive to the needs of others.

The experience in Camden was transformative, establishing a profound connection between their actions and our Roman Catholic faith, and was a tangible manifestation of Christ’s teachings, emphasizing love, compassion, and service to others, especially the marginalized.



Alternative Spring Break participants enjoy a day at the Jersey Shore following a week of service in Camden NJ.

RIT Day of Discernment '24



Over 25 Catholic student leaders gathered on April 19th for an evening of discernment. This annual three-hour event is a pivotal moment in creating student leaders at RIT Newman, providing them with the opportunity to plan, evaluate, and grow both personally and as leaders in Catholic life. The experience gained from this event is an invaluable opportunity.

Participants engage in prayer, discernment of gifts, a shared meal, and deep listening to others. This process allows them to thoughtfully evaluate the current state of Catholic ministry, consider activities for the upcoming year, and elect student officers. By taking part in this event, student leaders acquire essential skills and experiences that will benefit them in their academic, professional, personal, and spiritual lives.



Congratulations Newman Class of 2024!



Princess Regina Afu
Zicora Arachie
Daniel Benedetti
Riley Brotz
Thomas Bullock
Kyle Burbank

Sydney Burgard
Nathaniel Cardiel
Connor Chernesky
Carl Dotterweich
Emily Durand
Caleb Erno
James Gallagher
John Grinthal
Carlos Gutierret
Rachel Hamilton
Skyler Herman
John Melinin
John Paul Raj
John Kiernan
Emi Knappe
Viktoria Koscinski
Izzy Kunde
Ian Laforest
Jared Lawrence

Alyssa Lund
Karl Makuvaro
Margaret Manders
Andrew Martin
Luke Menet
Jonathan Meyers
Justin Namba
Michael Nguyen
Taode Ogden
Collin Oravetz
Juan Patino
Thomas Pawlak
Jacob Plato
Emerald Rafferty
Jacob Ramirez
Rachel Ramsdell
Matthew Repecki
Tyler Rodgers
Rakshitha Rozario

Reese Sanders
Wylee Sanders
Joseph Serafin
Joesph Serahn
Anthony Smith
Katie Smith
Ryan Stevens
Luke Sullivan
Maddy Swainston
Ryan Sweet
Albert Szarek
Anthony Talarico
Matt Uzelac
Amala Varghese
Alex Vlez
Josephine Worley
Chris Wright

SERVANT LEADERS MAKING A BETTER WORLD



Sr. Jean Rodman SSJ, Newman Interpreter Retires After 40 Years

As some of you know, I've recently resigned after having been an RIT staff interpreter for 20 years. My introduction to the Newman Community began long before that, however. I became a member in 1984, just after I left parish work to join the interpreter training program at NTID.

Over my 83 years, while I've had a lot of jobs that I really enjoyed, I very rarely even guessed what might be coming next! It's been a series of surprise. In hindsight, they were God's providence at work.

I joined the Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester in 1959, just before a time of exciting change for the Church and for our community and the opening of the Second Vatican Council in 1962.

The Council's idea that the sacrament of Baptism gives all of us –the "laity" and the clergy alike – the same Christian vocation, is a value that inspired me. So, I took the job that started me traveling around the Diocese and gradually, learned how to work with the sign language interpreters when the audience included our deaf clergy, Fr. Ray Fleming and Deacon Patrick Graybill. One day Fr. Ray came to my office and – through the interpreter – invited me to talk to the newly formed Deaf Church in Rochester. I didn't realize then that something new was beginning. Knowing some ASL gave me a way to connect with the vibrant and varied members of the Catholic Deaf Community in Rochester. The following year, I went back to school to study interpreting.

As I retire from the RIT staff position, I'm also celebrating being a 40-year parishioner of Newman! In the Fall of 1984, I was the non-traditional age student in the two-year Interpreter program at NTID and joined the RIT Catholic Newman parish and as such began serving as interpreter for mass.

What I especially loved about Newman was knowing, or at least recognizing, pretty much everybody in the church! I have learned from the students how inspiring and encouraging their faith and commitment is to the generations ahead of them!

So many memories! The people over these years – priests, deacons, sisters, and lay-women as Campus Ministers... choir members; interpreters... the local residents' people in Ingle auditorium and then the Schmitt Interfaith Chapel. Recently, I found copy of the 1989 Catholic Courier with a picture of Fr. Jim Sauers, me interpreting, and our beautiful cross hanging just where we see it today in chapel.

Paul says in 1 Corinthians 12:4 "God's various gifts are handed out everywhere; but they all originate in God's Spirit... God's various expressions of power are in action everywhere; but God is behind it all. Each person is given something to do that shows who God is: Everyone gets in on it, everyone benefits... The variety is wonderful..." I'm so grateful to have been called to be a Sister of St. Joseph, an interpreter, and part of the RIT Catholic Newman Community. Here's to whatever comes next!!



Sr. Jean Rodman SSJ



A Special Gift

This past Holy Thursday, Newman gratefully received this beautiful monstrance from Richard and Muriel DeMartino and son, Issac for use at Newman. This beautiful monstrance was refurbished for our weekly Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and other times of the year. Students and staff thank the DeMarino's for this gift and allowing us to be with Christ in the Sacrament.

Annual Donors

We are deeply grateful for the support of the following alumni, parents, student and friends who support Catholic life at RIT. You are critical to our ministry! We aim to acknowledge and regret any inadvertent omissions. Please contact us with any changes.

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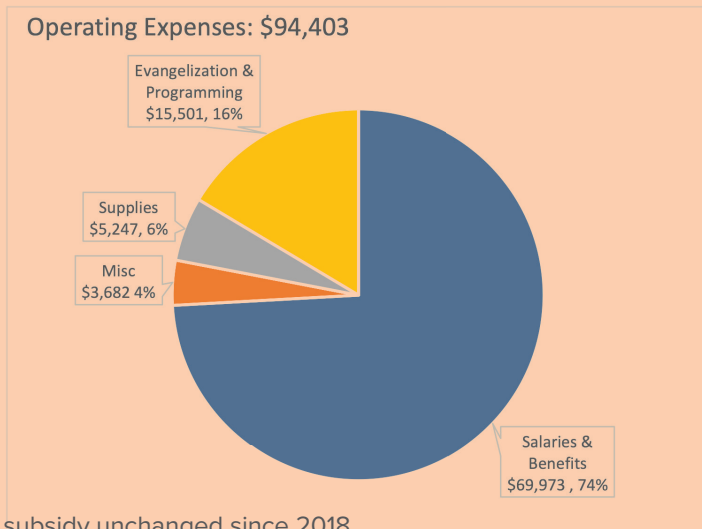
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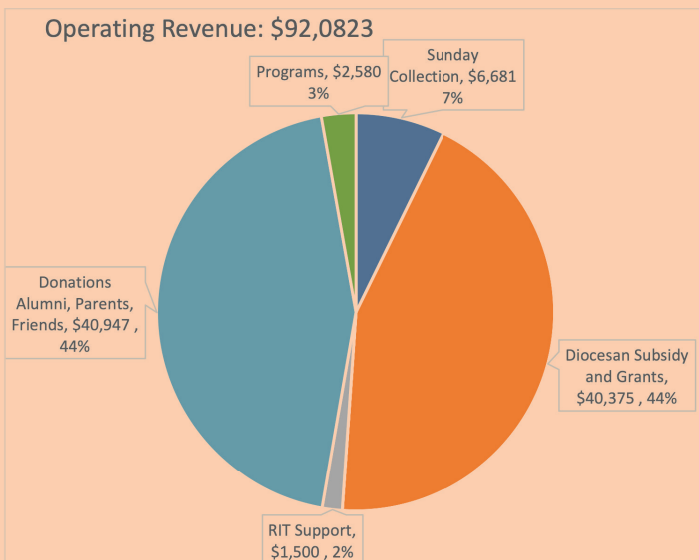
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Financial Report

Year-End Fiscal Result
July 1, 2023–June 30, 2024



Diocesan subsidy unchanged since 2018
Increased student programming expenses every year since 2021



Donations from Alumni, Parents and Friends comprise almost 45% of Income

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