



Students Who Stay Together ...

Suddenly, a Boomlet In Newman Center Housing

BY AMY SMITH

For Ann Marie Tschanz, a college dormitory is more than a place to sleep and study. The senior nursing student has lived at Newman Hall, part of St. John's Catholic Newman Center at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, throughout her college sojourn.

"Newman's been a home to me; that's why I've lived here for four years," says the Libertyville, Ill., native, who serves as her dorm's head resident adviser. "I wanted a small community where I could get to know people and grow in my faith. Newman's been that. In college, it's so important to have a community that shares your morals and that will help you grow in and deepen your faith."

St. John's Newman Hall is the only Catholic residence hall at a non-Catholic college or university in the United States. The dorm, which was built in 1927 in the heart of the Big Ten campus, houses approximately 300 students, most of whom are Catholic. The facility was a male dormitory until 1998, when it became co-ed by wing.

Now St. John's is in front of what seems to be a trend, as other Newman Centers around the country establish faith-friendly residences of their own. More on some of those below.

In Champaign, an approximately \$40 million two-phase expansion and renovation project is under way. St. John's determined an addition was needed to meet the increasing demand for housing — the current waiting list is nearly 200 — and to remedy the inadequate ministry space available for St. John's Catholic chapel. This serves the close to 12,000 Catholic students at the university and a nearby community college, Parkland College. When both phases of the project are complete, the St. John's residence hall complex will house 561 students.

"We're very excited," says Father Gregory Ketcham, chaplain and director of St. John's. "We can do so

much more for students living onsite. We'll also have more space for non-residents to hang out, study and participate in our ministries."

Ground was broken in December for the 127,000-square-foot, \$26 million addition. Slated to open in time for the 2008 fall semester, the new section will feature greatly improved living and common areas. A second phase will bring improvements to other facilities, including the chapel, by 2009.

This project will help St. John's fulfill its mission, says Father Ketcham.

"When students are living onsite, we can minister to them on a deeper level," he adds. "It's a ministry of presence amongst a community."

Fostering Fellowship

The Newman Center at Urbana-Champaign may be at the leading edge of this trend, but it's already got some good company.

This fall, a "Catholic interest" floor, co-ed by wing, will be available for students of Northern Illinois University at University Plaza, a private residential housing complex in DeKalb, Ill.

"It's a new adventure," says Msgr. Glenn Nelson, pastor of Christ the Teacher University Parish/Newman Catholic Student Center at Northern Illinois.

Msgr. Nelson knows that college living can prove challenging.

"It's hard to go from living in a strong, Catholic, family environment to living in an environment that can be the opposite of that — or even hostile to those values and lifestyle," he says. "It can even be discouraging, leaving one to wonder, 'Am I the only one who is living my Catholic faith?'"

Encouraged by the success of St. John's downstate, and with the support of students and parishioners, Msgr. Nelson decided to look into Newman-sponsored housing. He was thrilled that University Plaza was open to the proposal.

Now he's leaving the endeavor in God's hands. "The idea is solid, and it's worthy of the effort," Msgr. Nelson says. "We'll see where it goes through the guidance of the Holy Spirit."

Farther south still, this past fall St. Mary's Catholic Center at Texas



An artist's rendering shows what the completed expansion project will look like at St. John's Catholic Newman Center when it opens for the 2008 fall semester at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Ground was ceremoniously broken in December by Father Gregory Ketcham and crew.

Photos courtesy St. John's Newman Center

A&M University acquired an apartment complex. Father David Konderla, pastor and director of campus ministry at St. Mary's, which also serves nearby Blinn College, says St. Mary's and the Diocese of Austin will soon decide if the building will continue as a Catholic-themed apartment complex, or if a dormitory will be constructed in its place.

"It is exciting, this whole prospect of students being able to assert their faith while living in a community," Father Konderla says. "It's a

On the Web

- St. John's Catholic Newman Center at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign: sjcnc.org
- Christ the Teacher University Parish/Newman Catholic Student Center at Northern Illinois University: newman-niu.org
- St. Mary's Catholic Center at Texas A&M: aggiecatholic.org
- St. John Student Parish at Michigan State University: stjohnmsu.org
- St. Robert Bellarmine Catholic Center, Illinois State University: teamnewman.org

great opportunity for students and ministries where it's developed."

Church Next Door

Other Newman ministries are interested in housing. St. Robert Bellarmine Catholic Center on the campus of Illinois State University in Normal, Ill., is developing a plan for a new Catholic center, to include a new church as well as a residence hall. St. Robert Bellarmine also serves students at Illinois Wesleyan University, Eureka College and Heartland Community College.

"It's important to evangelize to students face-to-face, in person, and a residence hall is a great opportunity to do that," says Father Antonio Dittmer, chaplain and director of St. Robert Bellarmine. "There's more of an opportunity to evangelize to students when you can share meals with them and there's a church next door."

Also interested is St. John Student Parish at Michigan State University in East Lansing. "An intentionally Christian living community is a great opportunity for students," says Father Mark Ingot, pastor of St. John.

Father Ingot hopes Catholic housing continues to grow in popularity. "This really could raise the bar nationally in Catholic campus ministry."

None of the Newman housing planners doubt that their patron, Ven. John Henry Newman — author of the 19th-century classic *The Idea of a University* and a candidate for beatification and canonization — is praying for an outcome like that.

Amy Smith writes from Geneva, Illinois.

BOOK PICK

Back to the Bible

BY ANN APPLGARATH

As a child in Southern Baptist Sunday School, I memorized this pledge: "I pledge allegiance to the Bible, God's Holy Word. I will make it a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path, and I will hide its words in my heart that I might not sin against God."

This is, of course, a dangerous promise for Baptist children because, if they take it seriously — as I did — that illuminated pathway can lead straight into the bosom of the Catholic Church.

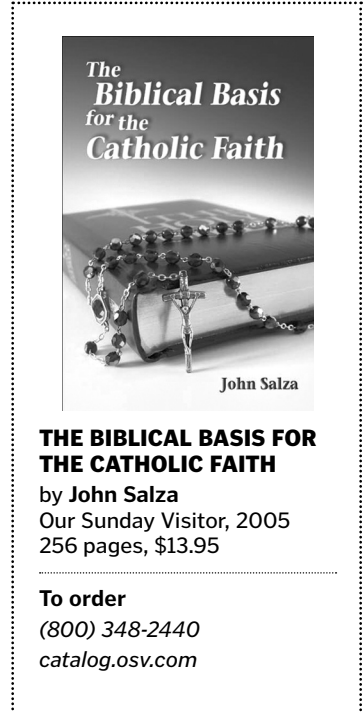
But, even though the idea behind the pledge is probably *sola scriptura*, I am glad I learned it. The pledge hasn't always kept me from sinning against God, alas, but those words tucked deep in my heart still enable me to recognize my sins as *sin*. When I fall, I know enough to be ashamed, contrite and grateful for forgiveness. What apologist-author John Salza does in *The Biblical Basis for the Catholic Faith* is to figure forth a neat doctrinal roadmap of this glowing pathway. Creator of ScriptureCatholic.com, a popular Catholic apologetics website, he is a clear thinker, a patient researcher and an engaging writer.

After establishing that it was the Catholic Church that decided which books belonged in the Bible, Salza goes on to show that "using the Bible alone to study and explain Christian truths is not a Catholic approach." He also recounts how God entrusted his Word to the Church by giving both sacred Scripture and sacred Tradition.

That's not to say his approach is not ecumenical. "The Bible," he writes, "is indispensable for explaining Catholic teaching, and the essential point of commonality between Catholics and Protestants."

Where the common Protestant interpretation of a Catholic doctrine is inaccurate or incomplete, Salza explains, step by step, the actual Church teaching.

Because some Catholic doctrines are derived from the Bible's deuterocanonical books, Salza points out that these books were important to the Jews of Jesus'



THE BIBLICAL BASIS FOR THE CATHOLIC FAITH

by John Salza
Our Sunday Visitor, 2005
256 pages, \$13.95

To order
(800) 348-2440
catalog.osv.com

day — and to Our Lord himself. An excellent appendix cites 73 deuterocanonical references in New Testament writings, along with references in the Old Testament books of Exodus, 1 Samuel and 2 Kings.

Last readers suspect that Salza's motive is to provide Catholics an arsenal of apologetics ammunition to go out and win debates, he notes that his true hope is that all Christians "grow in a deeper and holier relationship with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ ... for knowing and loving Jesus means knowing and loving what Jesus taught us, which comes from his written Word."

Still, implicit in the book's very existence is the firm conviction that, as the fathers of the Second Vatican Council put it, the "one true religion continues to exist in the Catholic and Apostolic Church, to which the Lord Jesus entrusted the task of spreading it among all people."

All of us — Catholic or Protestant — who love Jesus will find *The Biblical Basis for the Catholic Faith* a fine guide to knowing and loving the fullness of truth that can inform our faith and cast heavenly light on our earthly paths.

Ann Applegarth writes from Roswell, New Mexico.

CAMPUS WATCH

Upholding Women's Dignity

CARDINAL NEWMAN SOCIETY, Feb. 6 — Catholic colleges are promoting alternatives to the staging of the morally objectionable feminist play *The Vagina Monologues*. The University of Notre Dame hosted a two-day conference Feb. 23-24 on issues including sexual assault, women's rights, sexual modesty and abortion. Earlier in the month, the University of St. Thomas in Houston staged a play written by a faculty member about the trafficking of women. At Boston College, students have organized a "Dignity of Women Week." Students at several other schools are planning similar events. Cardinal

Newman Society spokesman Marc Perrington said that the society applauds "the students and faculty who are defending women's dignity in a mature, Catholic way."

Ethical Land Sale

THE AUSTRALIAN, Feb. 7 — St. John's College in Sydney, Australia, has attached a pro-life condition to its sale of college-owned land. Sydney University has agreed to ban embryonic stem-cell research at a medical institute to be built on land it is buying from St. John's. College Rector David Daintree told *The Australian* that "we felt that in ceding land to the university we ought to do what we could to ensure that it wasn't used for things that we would, as a group, have a conscience problem with — and the university was very obliging."

BACK WHERE IT ALL BEGAN



'OLD PRO' GIVES BACK. Loren Woods, former center for the NBA's Toronto Raptors, works with young athletes during a basketball clinic at his alma mater, Cardinal Ritter College Preparatory High School in St. Louis. Some Catholic and public high school officials in the St. Louis area said they are against a proposal to create separate state athletic championships for private and public schools. Woods is a 1996 graduate of the Catholic school.

CNS photo/Mark Kempf, St. Louis Review

Online Theological Studies

Saint Joseph's College of Maine Graduate & Professional Studies

Your connection to quality online education.

- Bachelor of Arts in Theological Studies
- Master of Arts in Pastoral Theology

Spiritual and pastoral programs rooted in Roman Catholic theology and ministry.

Attain your personal and professional goals while you live and work at home.



Call Today
800-752-4723

Visit www.sjcme.edu/ncr

Saint Joseph's College is accredited by New England Association of Schools & Colleges.