

Greetings and Advent 2024 Blessings!

It's hard to believe that we are ending the semester and entering the Christmas Season and New Year! This term has been filled with energy, enthusiasm, and remarkable participation.

The semester began with great momentum as our forty student leaders in ministry, along with our Newman Focus Missionaries, joined Fr. Emmanuel and me for our annual Formation Retreat. This retreat set the tone for the year through prayer, reflection, and our chosen theme: *"Love your enemies, do good, expecting nothing in return."* Together, we explored what it means to be called, formed, and sent by Christ, deepening our knowledge of and participation in our Catholic faith.

At the Newman Center, we live out this mission through five key pillars: liturgical life, community life, faith formation, outreach, and social justice. Guided by the Holy Spirit, we strive to uplift one another—our hands in prayer, our minds in study, our hearts in connection and community, and our souls in openness to God's voice.

This intentional approach has resulted in a vibrant and active semester filled with weekly and monthly events. We've seen incredible growth in student participation across daily Mass, confessions, small groups, Newman Nights, and more. The Newman library, student lounge, and my daily appointments have all been bustling, with an overall 28% increase in students spending time at the Newman Center. This growth is a tremendous blessing and beautifully aligns with our mission.

However, with this growth comes increased financial need. While students are generously contributing their time and talents, our budget has not kept pace with our rising expenses. Here's where we stand:

Four Months 10-31-24	Actual	Budget	Shortfall
Offertory	\$ 142,310	\$ 156,000	\$ (13,690)
Total Revenue	\$ 197,326	\$ 257,481	\$ (60,155)
Average per week (at 17 weeks)			
Offertory	\$ 8,371	\$ 9,176	\$ (805)
Total Revenue	\$ 11,607	\$ 15,146	\$ (3,539)

Through the first four months of our fiscal year (July–October), we are facing a significant revenue shortfall. To cover our operating expenses, we need an additional \$3,000 per week in our offertory collection. Ideally, we'd also raise an additional \$3,500 weekly to build a sustaining fund for unexpected costs, often stemming from deferred maintenance.

I am especially praying for a large Christmas collection to help offset our current \$60,000 revenue deficit. We need to not only close this gap but also find additional supporters, both locally and beyond, who feel called to partner with Newman's mission. If you know of others who may wish to contribute to this worthy cause, I ask for your help in reaching them.

Despite these challenges, our future remains bright! We are excited about plans for a future expansion of the Newman Center. Thank you to everyone who participated in interviews, focus groups, and the online survey. While I don't have major updates at this time, we expect to share more in late January.

Please know that I, along with our dedicated staff, remain fully committed to our Newman mission: *"To be transformed through an encounter with the Spirit of truth and the love of God."* Thank you for your continued support—spiritually, through volunteering, and in your financial stewardship. Your generosity sustains this ministry and ensures it can thrive for years to come.

As we approach the 100th anniversary of the Newman Center in 2026, my prayer is that this sacred place will continue to foster transformative encounters with God's love and truth for another hundred years and beyond.

With deepest respect and love,

Fr. John Paul Forté, OP

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Pastor