



THE TORCH

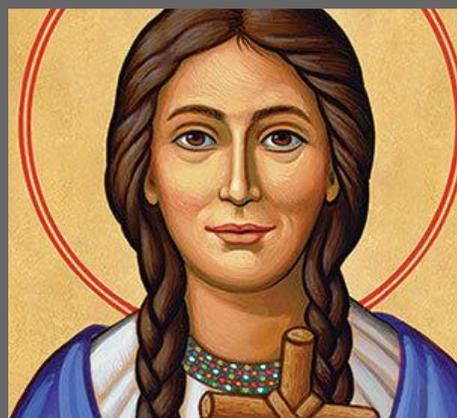
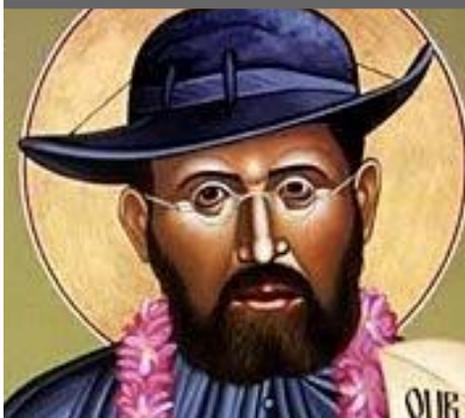


Newman Centre Catholic Mission Newsletter

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR



Dear brothers and sisters::

Each time we pray the Nicene Creed, we say “*I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic church.*” Our church is one because she finds her sole origin in the Trinity (CCC:813), one because of her founder, Jesus Christ who came

to unite all into one people and one body (Gaudium Spes 78:3) and “one because of her soul... the Holy Spirit brings about that wonderful communion of the faithful and joins them together” (CCC:813). Contrary to what some people believe, there does not exist a Canadian, Mongolian or Indian church. There is one Catholic Church that exists in Canada, India, Germany and in many countries throughout the whole world. Our baptism does not make us individual islands but members of the *one* living body of Christ on earth.

The Catechism defines the word “catholic” to mean “universal,” in the sense of “according to the whole” (CCC:830). It goes on to explain that the Church is catholic because she contains “the fullness of the means of salvation” and “because she has been sent out by Christ on a mission to the whole human race” (#831). While the methods with which this has been accomplished in the past have not always been perfect, the call to evangelize the whole world comes from God himself. Jesus said to his disciples that “repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to *all the nations...*” (Lk 24:47). Reflecting on these theological truths may help us in the midst of our current crisis of disunity both inside and outside of the church.

Each person is a unique gift from God. We know that the Church is “marked by a great diversity which comes from both the variety of God’s gifts and the diversity of those who receive them” (#814). The Holy Spirit recreates the image and likeness of the Son in each baptized person, purifying and sanctifying the unique aspects inherent in each of their respective cultural origins. The saints featured on the cover of this issue were all born and raised in different countries and in vastly different historical periods. All of them

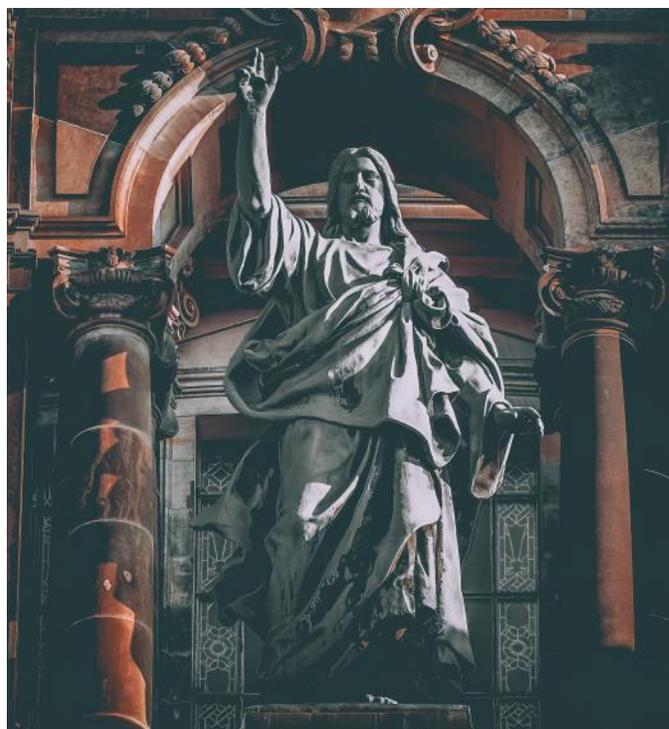
were united spiritually into one big family which is the Catholic church.

COVID-19 continues to impact the whole world. This is a cause of understandable distress, especially for those working on the front lines. Moreover, our brothers and sisters in faith in other parts of the globe are undergoing similar, and often more difficult challenges that have only been exacerbated by the pandemic. Inadequate access to the sacraments, extreme poverty, political strife and religious persecution are the daily bread for many of them.

Yet, through this all, their faith keeps them steadfast amidst the storms they face. I hope that the international testimonies shared in this current issue from friends and families of our community will both inspire you in your own vocational discernment and motivate you to pray for them.

God bless,

Fr Peter.



SUPPORT LINE FOR STUDENTS



MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT LINE FOR STUDENTS

For students (18 - 35 years old) experiencing stress, isolation, or struggling with school-life or work-life balance. All callers accessing the line during non-operational hours will be directed to our main CFS Toronto line which is monitored during our regular office hours 9-5 pm (Mon, Wed, and Fri) and 9-9 pm (Tues and Thurs).

Phone number(s): Local: (647) 249-9059 | Toll free: (877) 794-8373

Hours of operation: Every Wednesday 3:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Fee for service: Free

Callers' anonymity is respected and there is no paper work required of them.



NEWMAN CENTRE
CATHOLIC MISSION

at the University of Toronto's St. George Campus



Catholic
Family Services
of Toronto

Newman Centre is very grateful for the stewardship of all our volunteers during this challenging time. God bless you for all that you do for your community.



Cover Photo

The Saints of God

Top row (L to R):

St. Josephine Bahkita of Sudan (1869-1947);
St. Pedro Calungsod of Philippines (1654-1672);
St. Catherine Drexel of America (1858 - 1955);

Middle row (L to R):

St. Andrew Dung Lac of Vietnam (1795 - 1839);
St. Therese of Lisieux of France (1873 - 1897);
St. Charles Lwanga of Uganda (1860 - 1886);

Bottom row (L to R):

St. Damien of Molokai of Belgium/Hawaii (1840 - 1889); St. Kateri Tekakwitha of Canada/US (1656 - 1680); St. Charles Borromeo of Italy (1538 - 1584)



WHAT IS A VOCATION?

Transcription of talk by Fr John O'Brien, SJ from the Virtual Vocations Fair held in February 2021 at Newman Centre.

What in the Catholic sense is a vocation? This is a tricky question because every Christian who has experienced their vocation has heard it in a very personal way. No two vocation stories are exactly alike and moreover if you look at the Bible, you will not find the word vocation there. You will not find Jesus saying 'And now I will institute something called vocation'. But what we do see is God calling people by name with some specific task or purpose. Something that He has done right from the Old Testament. So vocation first and foremost means calling. It comes from a Latin word *vocare*, which means to call. So there has to be a caller and there has to be a person called.

And so when you think of Moses before the burning bush, God gives him a vocation – *Go and set my people free!* And later there are prophets like Jeremiah who are called by God to call people to conversion. Now Jeremiah has to warn Israel that if people don't repent of their idolatry – always chasing after false gods and false images that distract them from their primary relationship with God, then a great calamity will happen to them. And so Jeremiah is plucked out of obscurity. He is called by God and his calling is one of the most beautiful instances of vocation in scripture – *Now the word of the Lord came to me saying, Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you. Before you were born, I consecrated you. I appointed you a prophet to the nations.* Jeremiah responds to this call by saying, "Ah Lord God, I do not know how to speak for I am only a boy. But the Lord said, "Do not say that I am only a boy, for you shall go to all to whom I shall send you and you shall speak whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you."

The first point of a vocation that it is really God's initiative. God always takes the first step in our lives. He makes the call. And we might hear God's words loudly like Saul on his way to Damascus to persecute Christians and we really get woken up and we turn our lives around. Or it is the still small voice spoken deep



in our hearts as something like 'Follow Me' or 'Come and See' or 'Feed my lambs', 'Feed my sheep' – Whatever the word is, it is the Lord who speaks it within us.

And then the second point that we can see in the call of Jeremiah is that God reassured him right away with 'Do not be afraid'. Don't you think it is a bit normal to be rattled if you hear a call from God to be a sister or nun, or a priest or deacon, or a brother or even a consecrated lay person. There are a lot of different ways to be called to consecrated life in the Church and all of them involve leaving something for something new. God understands it takes courage on our part. So He says to us 'Don't be afraid', because if God wants us, God will very well be with us every step of the way.

Today is the World Day of Consecrated Life which is why the Vocations Fair was organized. And so it begs the question – What kind of vocation is the consecrated life? To consecrate simply means to be set apart for some specific purpose. And just as we see God calling people as prophets in the Old Testament, so also did Jesus invite some people to be His followers in a particularly intimate way in the Gospels. Every vocation story is essentially a love story between God and you. Consecrated people say vows that set them apart in this intimate pilgrimage with the Lord which like marriage vows are the way we say our commitment will be faithful forever and fruitful, not to a human spouse, but to God Himself. And generally, those vows that consecrated men and women make, are those of chastity, poverty and obedience. Because it is by these three vows that we sacrifice our life to God so that it may be forever faithful and fruitful.

WHAT IS A VOCATION?

Why poverty? By this vow, we forever give up the pursuit and accumulation of personal wealth as our life's purpose. Instead, our congregations will support us in all that we do to free us up to be fruitful workers for God.

Believe me, it is a much more interesting way to live. It relieves you of a huge burden. Remember the rich young man? He was a good kid who wanted to know how do you enter the kingdom of heaven. And Jesus simply told him to keep the commandments. But he said he has done that and wants to know what more he ought to do. I think that more is very important. Somewhere deep inside of us we want to give more of ourselves. We're not just satisfied being good people, we want to make an even greater sacrifice of ourselves. So Jesus understands the young man and tells him 'If you wish to be perfect then, sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come and follow me.' What do we see there? It is a radical invitation to a new kind of freedom, a new kind of following. And this invitation is the basis of the vocation to consecrated life.

So the second vow we make is to chastity which is the natural process of begetting and raising children to a more literal imitation of Jesus who did not marry and raise a family, but who called his closest apostles followers to a similar way of life, even those who might have been married earlier in their lives. About chastity, Jesus says, 'For those who have ears, listen.', as if to say that this is not for everybody, but some will hear this call deep within them. Chastity is not just a sacrifice, but an invitation to a different kind of fatherhood or motherhood to beget a multitude of spiritual children to whom you dedicate your life to nourish and support and to whom you prepare for eternal membership in the family of God. Whenever you think you might be giving up for God, He gives it back to you in unexpected ways – thirty-fold, sixty-fold, hundred-fold. We can't outdo God in generosity, although we can try.

The third vow is obedience. It is an imitation of Christ

who is perfectly obedient to the Father. Lay people have to be obedient to a whole bunch of people too. To their bosses at work, to their spouses and to each other. Consecrated people are primarily obedient to God and we are freed up by that holy obedience answering usually to a designated superior in our communities which in our life means someone who shares our vocation and who has our best interests at heart.

So poverty, chastity and obedience, they define this vocation. They give character to our lives and they are life-giving. In conclusion, those who have responded to a call often look at their vocation, in the words of John Paul II, both as a gift and a mystery. I myself thank God everyday for my vocation which is such a source of grace and consolation and it has fulfilled me on a level that the world never could, although it tried. At the same time, my vocation remains a little bit beyond my grasp. It is a mystery, there is something mysterious to it – it never gets old, it never gets stale, it continuously challenges me to grow and reach new heights and for that reason I love my vocation.

So in the end, Jesus did establish vocation. He called a number of people, men and women, to a more direct and radical way of imitating Him. He said the harvest is great, but the labourers are few and that might explain why there never seems to be enough people in consecrated life. But the great summons in the great harvest goes out in all times and all places. I truly hope these words may find a way into your hearts. If at first you hear God's voice, do not be afraid. Do not say you are too young. Do not say you are not holy enough, smart enough, good enough. God laughs at our objections and says it is enough that I have called you.

Fr John O'Brien SJ is the Vocations Director for the Jesuits in Canada.

<http://jesuitvocations.org/>



THE IMPORTANCE OF LISTENING

Transcription of talk by Sr. Gill Goulding from the Virtual Vocations Fair held in February 2021 at Newman Centre.

Listening seems to be such a simple process. We do it every day though there is so much to listen to - friends, family, classmates, teachers, you are listening to me now. We are so accustomed to listening that we use earbuds as we listen to music or one another. Immersed as we so often are in so many works, by the internet, the social broadcasts, the social media, now countless zoom meetings, we run the risk of becoming deaf to God's word in our hearts. Pope Francis in one of his morning Mass homilies in 2017 suggested that it could be useful to dedicate a day for listening. We recently celebrated on the 24th of January the Sunday of the Word of God. Following from this the day of listening might be a good idea. And today, Pope Francis instituted a new memorial in the liturgical calendar – the month of Mary and Lazarus, because he said they listened attentively to the words of Jesus. Mary and Joseph are also examples of people who listened deeply to the Word of God.

Why would we listen to God? We need God's Word so that we can hear amidst the thousands of other words in our daily lives that one word that speaks to us not about things, but about life. Listening is about relationship. We know this from our own experience of listening to friends. Listening to God is a more profound experience. It is turning our attention to the God who loved us into being and who desires to draw us into fullness of life. This listening is at the heart of prayer. When we turn our attention to God in prayer, we find that we begin to notice our own loving desire for communion of life with this God who so passionately loves us beyond anything we can imagine and who loved us before we came into being. It is God's initiative at the heart of our creation and this love of God for us is transformative.

As Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI stated, 'God's love transforms all of life. It is a love that is limitless and that precedes us, that sustains us and calls us along the



path of life. A love rooted in an absolutely free gift of God. In the light of such a love, I really want to listen to what God has to say. *But how do we listen?*

Well, we should surely need to stop and listen. Stop in order to listen. But stop what? Well, we cannot listen if we are trying to do other things at the same time. I know it may seem cool to multitask all the time, but listening to God is one task above and beyond all others and needs full attention. So yes, you do need to turn your phone off. It is important to find a quiet space and silence is an enormous help in this listening enterprise. Why do we do these difficult things? Because the benefit of such listening is that it enables us to be receptive in our relationship with God. We come to prayer in order to listen and in our listening God enables a deeper relationship with us.

Prayer with scripture, meditation, Lectio Divina, liturgical prayer, Mass (even virtually, at the moment) and the sacraments of Reconciliation, spiritual reading and other forms of prayer – they all need this desire for a relationship with God. It is important to realize that this desire for God is part of our original creation already present within our hearts. Cardinal Newman used to speak of this: 'Though at times the cry of this desire may be buried under the weight of busyness, it is always aligned deep within us. When it remains unfulfilled, our hearts know that something important is missing.'

.....Continued on page 17

LOVING THE BROKENHEARTED

It's dark outside with only the soft glow of the casino lights peeking through my blinds. My alarm summons me awake. The once foreign sounds of Atlantic City – people shouting, cars backfiring, sirens blaring, and the seagulls squawking – are now a melodious hum in the background as I begin my day as a St. Michael Missionary. With my imperfect and wounded heart, the Lord has invited me to love Him in His beloved poor. Still half awake, I gaze upon my crucifix hanging over my bed as I promise to give Jesus my lousy best and ask Him to use me as His hands and feet this day. The risk of love is always worth it.

As our Lord asked St. Francis to “rebuild my Church,” it has stuck me that it is not the grandiose edifices of our churches that need repair, but the crumbling walls of our hearts that are in dire need of attention. It's sobering to live amongst the poor and witness daily the tragic sufferings of poverty and addiction.

To my surprise, in the hands-on work we do with the poor, material poverty is often not the most pressing concern, rather it is a poverty of loneliness. The people we serve are hovering above rock bottom, filling the hole in their hearts to belong and to be loved with the fleeting solutions of the world: sex, drugs, money, alcohol... you name it. The destructive cycle of addiction spirals out of control, leaving them feeling unworthy of being loved or getting the help they need.

However, the poor are not problems to be fixed, but people to be loved. It is through meeting each person where they are and building a healthy and dignified



relationship that the defensive walls of self-destruction slowly come down and they can receive the authentic love they crave and the help they need. I've witnessed that “nothing is impossible with God” (Luke 1:37). Whether it is George, who struggles with alcoholism, taking the steps to go to detox and rehab after years of addiction, or Tes' immigration paperwork miraculously being completed, or David being able to receive a room at a boarding house against all odds, I am always reminded to trust in the slow and mysterious work of God.

During my time in Atlantic City as a missionary, I've learned *it is not what I can do for the person, but who I can be in the journey with them*. Our perfection is not a prerequisite to love. In my own poverty I can offer perfect Love, Jesus Himself. We don't need to travel to distant lands to experience this. Poverty is everywhere – in our own city streets, families, and hearts. The next time you encounter someone experiencing poverty, I invite you to open your heart to allow it to be an encounter with the face of Christ. “This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him” (Psalm 34:6); will you do the same?



Sasha Hellwig was a Student Campus Minister at Newman Centre for three years and graduated from U of T with a B.A. in June 2020. She currently serves as a St. Michael Missionary with the CFR Sisters in Atlantic City, NJ.



FAITH AND REASON LECTURES

The Newman Centre presents an outstanding line-up of speakers for our 2021-2022 Faith and Reason Lecture season. All our lectures are open to the public and free to attend. Retreats are \$30 per person.

Primal Screams: Identity Politics

- Dr Mary Eberstadt

Thursday, September 23, 2021 | 7 PM | Newman Centre

Register here - <https://primalscreams2021.eventbrite.ca>



The Development of Doctrine

- Fr. Phillip Cleevly

Thursday, October 14, 2021 | 7 PM | Newman Centre

Register here - <https://developmentofdoctrine.eventbrite.ca>



A Mind at Peace: Reclaiming an Ordered Soul in an Age of Distraction

- Dr. Joshua P. Hochschild

Thursday, November 11, 2021 | 7 PM | Newman Centre

Register here - <https://amindatpeace.eventbrite.ca>



Artificial Intelligence

- Dr. Michael Ryall

Thursday, January 27, 2022 | 7 PM | Newman Centre

Register here - <https://artificialintelligence2022.eventbrite.ca>



The Irony of Modern Catholic History

- George Weigel

Thursday, February 24, 2022 | 7 PM | Newman Centre

Register here - <https://ironymoderncatholichistory.eventbrite.ca>



RETREATS AT NEWMAN

Advent Retreat

Saturday, December 4, 2021

Sr Agnes

Vocations Director, Franciscans of the Renewal

<https://adventretreat2021.eventbrite.ca>

Lenten Retreat

Saturday, March 19, 2022

Cardinal Thomas Collins

Archbishop of Toronto

<https://lentenretreat2022.eventbrite.ca>

THE FILHOS DA MISERICÓRDIA COMMUNITY

Our community, the Filhos da Misericórdia (Children of Mercy) Community, founded by Father George Batista, is a Catholic institution located in João Pessoa, Brazil. In addition to evangelization, we organize and help arrange various social projects, such as adoption services, care for children with neurological diseases and microcephaly, as well as helping organize donations to the families of these children, who often lack basic food, medicine, and hygiene products for which they are in dire need.

Due to the pandemic, like many of our fellow charitable organizations, we've seen a significant reduction in donations, which fund everything from milk to physical therapy. Additionally, the process for all of our social projects has had to change so that we can avoid the high risk of Covid transmission. But these problems that our projects aim to address don't stop because of the pandemic. In many ways, the problems intensify. Even adoption becomes harder, since it's hard to know if the family is right when you can't even share a warm hug.

So, we couldn't just pause our help until it got better. The needs of so many depend on us. We've sought ways to reverse the situation, we've tried to innovate in how we provide services, and reaching out to the faithful with online Masses, retreats, and other events. We've invested our time and effort into growing our social networks, in hopes of finding those who may themselves be searching for a way to help others.

Our social networks continue to grow, and our faithful are slowly rebuilding our community online. We all feel an emptiness due to the inability to celebrate some sacraments, such as confession, which has had to be foregone due to the risk of infection, but we know that this period of longing will allow us to achieve a deeper understanding of the sacrament, and appreciate it all the more when life returns to normal.

While reduced in number and frequency, some ministerial activities have been able to return in limited form. We have been able to celebrate a few marriages in our community, with the newlyweds and their close



The street mission, which brings food, clothing, showers, and words of comfort to those without a home.

THE FILHOS DA MISERICÓRDIA COMMUNITY



Kids with neurological diseases/microencephaly, and their parents, helped by the treatment centre.

relatives. While our dire financial position still prevents us from providing our previous levels of care, our community has shown incredible resilience. We've been able to keep providing for sixty-four children, and we continue to expand our online presence, seeking donations to reduce our current waitlist of thirty.

Even while in many ways more isolated, we do feel more united with our brothers and sisters from the Catholic community around the world. And, through our faith, we've been able to strive ever forward,

seeking to fulfill God's purpose; seeking to be a sign of the Lord's mercy to the world. Through the Power of God, we know that this pandemic will be overcome, and that we can truly become Children of Mercy.

Website: <http://filhosdamisericordia.org/>

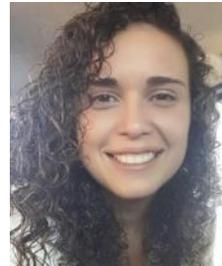
Instagram: [@comfilhosdamisericordia](https://www.instagram.com/comfilhosdamisericordia)



Father George Batista
Joining the priesthood in 2006, he earlier founded the Filhos da Misericórdia Community in 2001, to care for the poorest. He has since grown the Community to three missions across Brazil.



Alessandra Diniz Santos
Married to Bruno Santos, mother of 2-year-old Maria Júlia, lawyer, postgraduate in labor law and psychoanalysis, missionary for 8 years at the Filhos da Misericórdia Community.



Amanda de Holanda Costa
A teacher, post graduate in social pedagogy and project management, missionary in the Filhos da Misericórdia Community since 2010, active in the mission of Cerro Largo.

FAITH OVERCOMES FEAR IN PANDEMIC

The village here is among the Tahltan First Nation and with many in the community having a strong belief in God there is a receptivity to faith and a thankfulness for the presence of a church. Among those who do not attend we have heard many times, “It is good that you are here.” Those who do attend church, mainly an elderly populace, have said that, “Being a Catholic gives me strength and hope,” and “Living as a Catholic connects us across cultures and gives more depth to how we view situations.” Some of their most enjoyable times of being Catholic are in the gatherings and celebrations; whether it be for coffee after a Liturgy of The Word, potluck meals when a priest travels in to celebrate Mass once a month, celebrating the Sacraments, praying together, or funerals. This has also been true for us, along with the intimacy of being able



to journey alongside people.

Being a remote community, we have not seen any infiltration of COVID, however there is still a great fear among many within our community so we are faced with heightened restrictions in an attempt to preserve the health of the elders. With forced quarantine, for all those travelling outside the territory of Northwest British Columbia or in contact with anyone having travelled such, there is a heightened anxiety and a feeling of isolation for many people.

The church has been open, strictly for private prayer, since November with specific sanitizing and distancing procedures and many people have been taking advantage of this opportunity for a quiet place to pray. We have seen no priest since November, with restricted travel from the Yukon border as well as restriction of gathering for public worship in BC.



WATCH PAST LECTURES AND TALKS ON NEWMAN'S YOUTUBE CHANNEL

<http://bit.ly/NewmanYouTube>

FORMED

- The Catholic Faith. On Demand.

Share with everyone!

<https://newmantoronto.formed.org>

FAITH OVERCOMES FEAR IN PANDEMIC

As a community we have missed the Sacraments very much, but have been taking consolation in the true presence of Jesus Christ with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on Sundays.

We have had to be more intentional in reaching out to those within our faith community no longer in attendance, connecting with them over the phone. This is usually our only interaction with them to find out how they are doing, we pray the scriptures with them, ask for prayer intentions, and encourage them.

Recently, one of the elders who is a Catholic passed away from a heart attack. These are normally the times when the entire community pulls together in support of the family however there were many who did not want to gather because of contact with those coming from outside the territory. One of the elders said, "I don't want to lose any more. This can only happen for so long. It feels like everyone is going to pass away before we can gather again." While another elder offered encouraging words: "Faith overcomes our fear in order to be with the family. I know that we are going to be safe."

It truly is our faith that will carry us. As this elder continued to say, "Even if it has to be praying together one on one."



Joshua & Denise Grimard are Pastoral Administrators at St. Theresa's Catholic Mission in Telegraph Creek, British Columbia, in the Diocese of Whitehorse, in which they have lived and served since 2014. They now have seven children.

Faith & Reason Lecture

Dr. Mary Eberstadt
Influential American author in anthropology, intellectual history, philosophy, popular culture, sociology and theology.

Thursday, September 23, 2021 | 7 PM

Registration:
<https://primalscreams2021.eventbrite.ca>

All are welcome

PERSEVERANCE AND PEACE IN MONGOLIA

Here is the story of a Christian woman from Mother of Mercy Catholic Church in Arvaikheer, Mongolia. Her name is Norgim and she has been living with her husband who suffers from the stroke he had eighteen years ago. Norgim is a brave woman and works in the animal skins business to support her family. However, she has been searching for peace and spiritual support to cope with her family's various struggles. Behind her motivations lies her thirst for the divine.

One day in the market place of Arvaikheer, she noticed a group of two Missionary foreigners going around and looking for house supplies. "I approached them, introduced myself and asked them: where do you stay", she told us. This approach, reminiscent of John 1: 36-39, was answered with the words "come and see" by these foreigners of the Consolata Missionaries who had just arrived a few years ago in this place. "I followed them as they drove back home. I saw where they lived and I remained close to them. I always visited the place since then.", she added. After she fervently pursued her catechism lessons, she was baptized in 2012. Norgim remained one of those who never gave up her Christian faith.

What is it like to be a Catholic in Mongolia?

"To this question, she answered: "In the Church I found what I could not find elsewhere. Togetherness in prayer is something I needed. In the Church I feel myself belonging to a big family with people I did not know before with whom I would feel comfortable sharing about my life. The Church opened my mind about God's love for every person. This God's love for us has to be extended to other people who need help."



"To help other people has become part of me, just as the saying goes: the little received once shared gets bigger. This attitude is what I hold vis-à-vis my husband who has been sick for many years. I struggled to understand the meaning of his sickness, but now I found a satisfactory response through prayer. God uses different ways to bring us towards Him. Perseverance and peace in my family are things I needed the most."

"From the time I joined the Church, there have been countless changes in my life. Prayer life gives me a lot of comfort and assurance that God will always guide me and protect me, my family and friends. Prayer helps me to forget my pain and to build up my trust in God's heart, even when I do not understand everything."

"My days start always with prayer and, through this I offer to Him the day and all my activities. I can feel the presence of the Holy Spirit in me. I had a lot of superstitions about ghosts as many do in most cases in my country. But now, I have changed and am no longer the same. Everything today has become clear to me that God is all I need. In Him is the source of my life and on Him depends my life. So, now, I have no fear when I face difficult situations because I know to whom I should go to find what I desire."

PERSEVERANCE AND PEACE IN MONGOLIA

About the joys and challenges, she said:

“In the market where I do work, people ask me why I am always calm, positive and happy about life even when things do not go the way I want. I always tell them about my faith and the Church where I go to pray. When we trust in God, He gives us not always what we want but, rather, what we need the most. I tell them also that in the Church I pray not only for me and my family but also for other people. To pray for other people is not something I am used to, because mostly in our traditional religion people visit the monk to pray for their personal intentions. But here, I am free to stand before God, pray for myself as well as for other people. This prayer makes me feel fulfilled and go through various situations with much joy. This joy comes from God who never lets me down.”

“The challenges I face are mostly in family - because I always try to bring everybody to the Church, and this does not work the way I wish. However, after moments of resistance, my husband accepted to be baptized. Now he is a Christian and I always bring him to the Church in his wheelchair when possible, or I call the Consolata fathers and sisters to visit us, pray with us and give him the Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist at home. This, I believe, is God’s miracle. Nevertheless, I have not succeeded in bringing my children to the Church. Despite this, I never give up praying that one day God touches their hearts and brings them to the Church. But also, not everybody understands my Christian life. Neither do they understand the life of Missionaries who leave their families and countries just to come and live among us.”

How the pandemic has affected your faith and local church:



“Since the Covid-19 pandemic started we cannot go on with life the way we used to. We are not allowed to go to the Church during the lockdown. Of course this situation affects my life of faith and the local Church at large. I used to come for daily morning Adoration, Rosary and Mass, but now there are no such opportunities. Morning prayers and gatherings in the Church bring me peace, joy and happiness. It is true that I do pray at home and my house has become a small Church. However, we cannot always have the Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist and meet together with other people. It is true that in moments such as these, people need faith nourishment to cope with life. I really miss those moments and I do hope things may get back to normal soon.”

Translated by:
Sr Magdalene Mathuvi of the Consolata Missionary Sisters from Kenya who has been working in Mongolia for over a decade.



NEWMAN CATHOLIC STUDENTS' CLUB

This year, the mission statement of the Newman Catholic Students' Club (NCSC) was to create community by connecting with students despite the challenges posed by the pandemic and continuing to serve wherever they were called. They held as their motto a quote from St. John Paul II: "Do not be afraid. Do not be satisfied with mediocrity. Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch."

The NCSC had to be especially creative this year to work with the online format. They undertook many new or modified projects in order to address the Newman students' needs for fellowship and spiritual nourishment.

In the fall semester, the NCSC hosted a Street Patrol package pickup program, where they put together care packages for the homeless to be distributed by the students. In October, they participated in the 40 Days for Life Prayer Vigil at St. Charles Borromeo parish to pray for an end to abortion. They held two Chain Rosary events for the feasts of Our Lady of the Rosary and the Immaculate Conception, where they invited the community to pray ongoing Rosaries with them over four hours on Zoom. The semester culminated with their major online social called "Taskmaster," where five teams of six students competed in several fun instant challenges and created laughs and memories along the way.

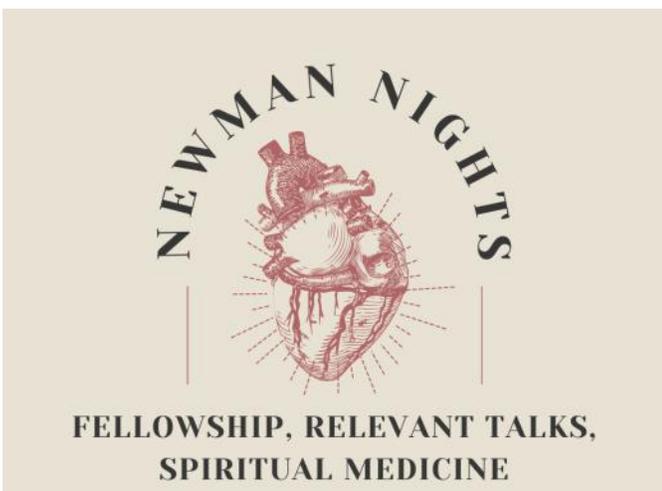
In the winter semester, the NCSC worked hard to bring recurring events to the students. They held



virtual "Pray & Play" events every Tuesday evening, where they watched live-streamed Adoration, prayed the Rosary and Compline, and played online games together. The NCSC, along with the Student Campus Ministers, also created a new spiritual formation and fellowship event for the students called "Newman Nights." They held four Newman Nights that featured talks on having a consistent prayer life, sharing their faith with non-Catholic friends, giving their "yes" to Christ, and testimonies from three Newman students. They also brought out great interaction among students through fruitful small group discussions. These nights were a hit, with turnouts of forty students on average.

The NCSC is grateful for all the volunteers and attendees who helped promote Christ's love in the community this year!

Marie Gamboa, Christianity and Culture B.A. student, provided the year-end report as 2020-2021 Newman Catholic Students' Club president.



THE IMPORTANCE OF LISTENING (cont'd)

.....Continued from page 7

As the psalmist writes, 'O God, you are my God, for you I long, for you my soul is thirsting.' So this desire to listen to God and to enter a relationship with Him, is the most natural thing in the world. It is attending to the One who loves us with a passion beyond comprehension, who sustains us with an inexhaustible supply of grace, who has promised that we shall never be left alone neither in the darkest or lightest of times, who gives us a vocation and who draws us always to a fullness of life.

The more I am open to listening prayerfully each day, the more I become aware of God's continual giving to me in so many ways throughout the day. Through events and my interactions with people, I become aware of the presence of God throughout the day. So I become adept at recognizing His voice. *But how do I know it is God's voice and not my imagination or something else?* Practice over time helps. There is a certain quality and resonance to the voice of God in the depths of our hearts that we come to recognize. It is also a very good idea and one that many saints have suggested, that as we come to prayer we ask the Holy Spirit to open our hearts and minds to whatever the Lord might be wanting to say to us. It is God who draws us to the desire to listen and to pray and God is always faithful. But it is also important to have someone to walk this path of verbal listening with you. We tend to use the term spiritual director, I think the French have a better way of putting it – the one who accompanies. Pope Francis has made it very clear that he thinks it is very important that young people be accompanied by someone with wisdom and discernment who walks with them helping them to listen more deeply to the voice of the Lord at work within their lives.

This is at the heart of discernment of vocation. Every specific vocation is born of the initiative of God. It is the gift of the love of God. He is the one who takes the first step because of the presence of His own love wrapped into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. So to summarize the practicalities: Listening of this kind is about entering into a relationship with God. It is about



prayer. To facilitate such listening, I need to give quality time – time when I am fully awake. I need to leave aside other tasks and especially my own. It is good to have a quiet place where I can be silent. I may prepare for my listening by reading some scripture – the Gospel of that day's Mass could be helpful. As I come to such a prayerful listening time, it is important to ask the Holy Spirit to help me to be attentive and open to what the Lord might want to say to me. And then we wait upon God's timing. Just like Simeon in the Gospel who had been waiting a long time to see Jesus. We come with reverence to the Lord and at the end of our time, we leave with reverence. Perhaps by saying the Glory Be or another prayer. We begin and conclude remembering this is a relationship – the most important relationship in which we shall be engaged. Finding a wise person who is able to accompany us in our prayerful listening and discerning of our vocation is most helpful.

Let me give the last word to St Augustine: *'To seek God is the greatest adventure and to find God, the greatest human achievement.'*

Sr Gill Goulding, CJ, is a Sister of the Congregatio Jesu an order founded in 1609. She is a Professor of Systematic Theology at Regis College at the University of Toronto and a parishioner at St John Henry Newman Catholic Church.



A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY DURING COVID-19

It has been more than a year under the shadows of Covid-19, where precautionary measures like masks and social distancing were adopted. Only if the number of affected cases dropped tremendously would things change, otherwise there are no public masses in Hong Kong either. The faithful are urged to stay at home as much as possible and to avoid taking part in social gatherings or visiting crowded venues, so as to minimize the risk of transmissions. For the sake of the common good, we have to stay apart from others, and be extra alert on personal hygiene.

Here in Hong Kong, we may choose one of the following alternatives to attending Sunday Mass:

- a. Taking part in a Sunday Mass online and receiving Holy Communion spiritually; or
- b. Reflecting on the Sunday liturgical text, reading the Bible or saying the Rosary, etc.

We can also avail ourselves of various online services, such as daily Masses, formation programs, Lenten works of penance and piety, as well as other spiritual exercises. This ranges greatly from daily morning prayer, Rosary and Angelus to visiting websites. Parochial churches and affiliated chapels remain open for personal prayers, Way of the Cross performed individually, visits to the Blessed Sacraments and the regular exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

Normally, the Church encourages the faithful to go to confession during Lent in order to renew themselves. Nevertheless, under the current circumstances, some of the faithful might find it risky to go to confession. They can rest assured, however, that a genuine desire for receiving the sacrament of reconciliation, together with prayers and works of penance and charity, fulfils the Lenten obligation of repentance.

Lack of physical contact and a total block of in-person communication might have led to restlessness, anxiety or even depression that remains untold and unrealized especially when we are “separated”. When



a personal friend visited Newman Centre for Sunday Mass before the lockdown, she saw the green crosses taped on the pews as a sign to “stop talking to ourselves”. In fact, now is a great chance to start talking to our Lord directly. Belief is not supposed to be built on “being told by somebody”! When we pray with *Lectio Divina*, we read His Word and meditate on it. Without any distraction and disturbances, we talked face to face! Our inner self experiences refreshing moments filled with new views that make renewal possible. When we read the book of Job (Job 38:4-41), we need to put aside the questions of just and unjust and realize that we are so small and helpless. Discomforts and complaints are no longer valid!

We smile behind the mask, but nobody can see it. How can we deliver peace and happiness to people around us? Pray. When we cry hard and nobody comes to soothe us - Pray. Pray and read His words, as He has written the answers in the books. To find Him, we have to be patient and observant! Let go and present ourselves humbly to our Lord, for He will kindly show us the way of surrender during this age.

Brenda Ng converted to the Catholic Church and was baptised more than 30 years ago. She is married with one child and has a B.A. in Religious Studies from Holy Spirit Seminary College of Theology and Philosophy in Hong Kong.

A CATHOLIC IN INDIA DURING THE PANDEMIC

The coronavirus had reached Indian shores. We had watched on TV, the way this invisible predator took lives and livelihoods in other countries.

Then our country, which had very few numbers of cases then, stepped up. First it was a day-long curfew, then a complete nationwide lockdown from March 25th. A confusion and internal sadness took over, as we mourned our lost normal life.

It was unthinkable that we could not go to church now. Our church, our place of peace, and renewing of spirit, our access to our beloved Lord in the Eucharist was simply snatched away, just like that. The dioceses rose to the occasion, providing strength at this time, offering daily online Holy Masses. Other online catechetical programs also began. In a few weeks, many parishes were also telecasting Holy Mass. Thanks to YouTube, we all had access to the Eucharist this way.

Intercession was initiated by various groups and retreat centres at the onset of the lockdown. Praying for an eradication of this virus, for a vaccine and for those suffering. Online retreats and prayers became a staple for the very religious minded, and a source of strength to the weary, overworked, emotionally zapped Catholic. We could feel the Lord being with us during the online Holy Masses. It was a fulfilling time of prayer. Sometimes however, the longing to physically receive the Lord in Holy Communion was like a great ache; and to be able to spend time again in the chapel with the Blessed Sacrament, was so real a need.



Some church groups zealously continued with daily intercessory prayers, praying the rosary, the Divine Mercy Chaplet, praying with scripture or other prayers. Some young and old were praying and studying the faith more during this pandemic. Soon, church ministries by various church groups resumed in limited ways. Life returning to some normality brought hope. The churches were reopened towards the latter part of 2020. Christmas day and Holy Week services saw people wait for hours in their socially distanced seats before services began.

However, not all came back to church after it reopened. According to a young IT professional in a South Indian city, the church congregation has halved since the pandemic began. Many youth have drifted away, and do not watch online Sunday Mass even if they are not busy.

A strange sort of syncretism seems to have set in among some people. They practice some daily devotions and watch online services sometimes, but do not consider it important to come to church. A lady stood outside church on Easter Sunday evening, but did not enter the fairly empty church, nor receive communion. She says she prays to the Sacred Heart at home, visits the chapel to meditate sometimes, but did not choose to receive Communion.

May we reach out in love to our fellow parishioners. May the shepherds call out to their sheep, that none may be lost.

Article written by **Tara Noronha** from Mumbai, India



NEWMAN CENTRE 2020 FINANCIAL REPORT

	2020 Actuals	2020 Budget	Budget Variance	2019 Actuals
Income				
Church Receipts (incl. Sunday Offertory)	137,081	140,000	-2,919	135,528
Other Donations ¹	5,260	20,000	-14,740	43,121
Rental and Interest Revenue ²	112,157	130,500	-18,343	108,010
Parish/Chaplaincy Programs Receipts	6,779	19,000	-12,221	17,043
Sundry Income ³	142,011	59,250	82,761	49,454
Newman Foundation Grant	160,000	206,000	-46,000	162,000
Archdiocese Subsidy	276,000	276,000	00	276,000
Investment Redeemed	00	0	00	32,660
Total Income	839,288	850,750	-11,462	823,816
Expense				
Salaries & Benefits	455,975	442,150	13,825	421,379
Office Services / Supplies	36,406	28,000	8,406	28,229
Church and House Expenses	134,716	256,100	-121,384	172,318
Parish/Chaplaincy Program Payments ⁴	15,432	42,000	-26,568	38,172
Sundry Payments ⁵	55,665	72,000	-16,335	149,352
Furnishings & Equipment ⁶	98,552	10,500	88,052	14,109
Total Expense	796,746	850,750	-54,004	823,559
Net Income Before Extraordinary Item	42,542	0	42,542	257
Wage Subsidy	107,003	0	107,003	0
Net Income After Extraordinary Item	149,545	0	149,545	257

Notes:

1. Funds received from donors to the Centre
2. Includes fees from events & rentals
3. Includes unbudgeted flow-through items (\$86,000 loan for waterproofing) & HST
4. Weekday chaplaincy programs and retreats
5. Includes flow-through items, HST, training and social events
6. Includes payment of \$83,000 for waterproofing
7. **\$2,972** raised in Special Collections (including ShareLife, Shepherd's Trust, etc.) passed on to the Archdiocese and not included in income and expenses above.

Special Funds

Newman Leadership Formation Bursary Fund	
Jan. 1, 2020 Balance	1,592
Newman Foundation Grant	0
Awarded to Students	(500)
Dec. 31, 2020 Balance	1,092

The expenses associated with running the Newman Centre are significant and we work very hard to contain expenses. In this year of global pandemic we have made an extra effort in this regard and our expenses fell well under budget. In addition, this year we benefited from the CEWS subsidy. As our churches are still closed and the CEWS subsidy will be considerably lower, we are keeping excess funds on hand as a cushion. **While the Archdiocese has continued their support, your contributions are vital to our ongoing operations.** The Sunday Offertory contributions are an important support to our church expenses, so please consider increasing your weekly offering, and consider using our pre-authorized giving methods. We really do depend upon and appreciate your support.

I also encourage you to support Newman's mission in a direct way by giving to our Campus Ministry Program and Bursary Fund through the Newman Foundation. See how the Newman Foundation has been a vital help to the Centre in the past year on page 21.

My thanks for the diligence and input of the Finance Council, consisting of: Catherine Pawluch, John Finley, Marianne Boyd, Nick Pawliwec, and Jessel Subero. If you have any questions or comments please email them to Marianne Boyd at marianne.boyd@newmantoronto.com.

- Fr. Peter Turrone

NEWMAN FOUNDATION OF TORONTO

Dear Friends of Newman,

2020 has been a challenging year in so many ways for the Newman community, but thanks to our loyal donors, dedicated Board of Directors and industrious staff, our fundraising initiatives have been very successful!

The Foundation supports the work of the Newman Centre Catholic Mission which offers programs to help Catholic students grow in their understanding of their faith, to draw back those Catholics who have left the Church, and to reach out to those who do not yet know Jesus Christ, both on campus and beyond.

The 2020/2021 academic year included events and programs such as the Faith & Reason Lecture Series, Book Studies, Vocations Fair, Poverty in Action Series, Mentorship Events, Pray and Play, Retreats, and Newman Nights. In addition to these, the newly designated St. John Henry Newman Chapel has remained open for those who have yearned for proximity to Our Lord through liturgy, Adoration and prayer. And, hundreds of hours have been spent accompanying members of the community in spiritual direction.

The Foundation is pleased to report that in 2020 we raised \$184,140. Here are some highlights of your support:

- An anonymous donor contributed \$50,000 to the St. John Fisher Fund
- We received close to \$60,000 in generous grants and significant donations from friends for specific projects. These donors included Aimia Inc., F. K. Morrow

Foundation, Heritage Restorations Inc., the Jackman Foundation, the Lamb Foundation, L.I.U.N.A. Ontario District Council, LiUNA LOCAL 183 and the Serra Foundation.

- We recruited new monthly donors and received new donations from friends and parishioners, many of them attending our lectures and events
- A number of donors gave more than once

We are happy to report that the Newman Foundation has contributed a grant of \$160,000 in support of the Newman Centre Campus Ministry Programs.

Now as we turn our focus to 2021, we calculate that the Newman Campus Ministry Programs require \$196,000 to maintain operations. The Foundation has been asked to raise \$185,000 in support of this budget. With friends and organizations like you who believe in our mission, we trust that we will succeed.

On behalf of the Newman Centre, we thank you for your generosity, without which we could not be effective in delivering our programs and supporting the students to whom we are committed.

Your Sincerely in Christ,



Fr Peter Turrone
Executive Director

Catherine Pawluch

Catherine Pawluch
Board of Directors Chair

Dorothy Day:

A Saint for our Times

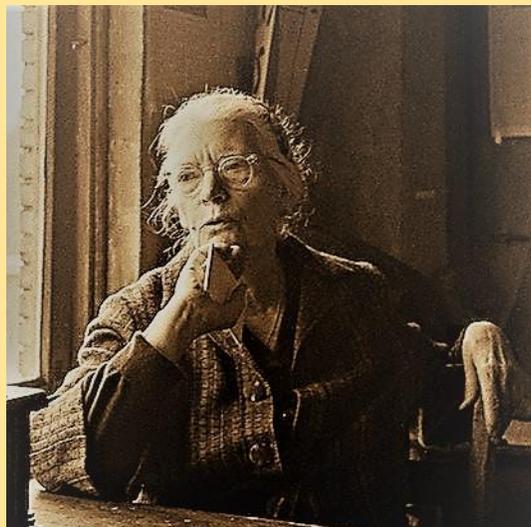
Thursday, September 30, 2021
7:00 - 8:30 pm Zoom webinar

Dr Terrence Wright

Author of *Dorothy Day: An Introduction to Her Life and Thought*

Andreas Widmer

Author of *Pope and CEO*



DONORS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

We recognize the donors of the Newman Foundation of Toronto for their wonderful generosity. We are truly grateful for your support. We also wish to thank those donors who have chosen to remain anonymous.

Benefactor

\$10,000 +

Anonymous (1)
Aimia Inc.
Catherine A. Pawluch
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\$5,000 to \$9,999

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Susan Almonte
Teresa Coelho
Thomas Murray
Thomas Reid Alderson
Tom Aratyn
Veronique Viellerobe
Vicenta Blake
Warren E. and Mary Ann Baker

Put your faith into action and lead our youth to the Church.

Contact: Samantha Koon, Development Consultant, Newman Foundation of Toronto samantha.koon@newmantoronto.com

NEWMAN EVENTS AT A GLANCE

Tear off this quick reference guide to events at Newman and put it on your fridge.
For more details, visit our website: www.newmantoronto.com or social media links.

EVENT	DATE
Summer Retreat with Fr Jacques Philippe	Saturday, June 26, 2021, 10:30 am
Primal Screams: Identity Politics Faith & Reason Lecture by Dr. Mary Ebersadt	Thursday, September 23, 7:00 pm
Dorothy Day: A Saint for our Times Speakers: Dr Terrence Wright & Andreas Widmer	Thursday, September 30, 7:00 pm
The Development of Doctrine Faith & Reason Lecture by Fr Phillip Cleevly	Thursday, October 14, 7:00 pm
A Mind at Peace: Reclaiming an Ordered Soul in an Age of Distraction. Faith & Reason Lecture by Dr. Joshua Hochschild	Tuesday, November 11, 7:00 pm
Advent Retreat with Sr. Agnes of Franciscans of the Renewal	Saturday, December 4, 9:00 am
Advent Dinner with the Newman Community	Thursday, December 9, TBA
Artificial Intelligence Cardinal Newman Lecture by Dr. Michael Ryall	Thursday, January 27, 2022, 7:00 pm
The Irony of Modern Catholic History Faith & Reason Lecture by George Weigel	Thursday, February 24, 7:00 pm
Lenten Retreat with Archbishop Thomas Cardinal Collins	Saturday, March 19, 9:00 am

CONNECTING WITH NEWMAN CENTRE

Newman Chapel Open for Private Prayer Only

Monday-Friday 12 pm - 3 pm

Saturdays 8:30 am - 10 am

Sundays

(11 am *Livestreamed Sunday Mass*)

Communion Service 12 - 2 pm

(Daily **Confessions**)

Capacity as per Public Health Regulations

(*Visiting hours are subject to change following Public Health and Archdiocese of Toronto protocols)

The Centre is closed until further notice.

Please visit our website and social media channels
for regular updates.

Newman Centre Catholic Mission

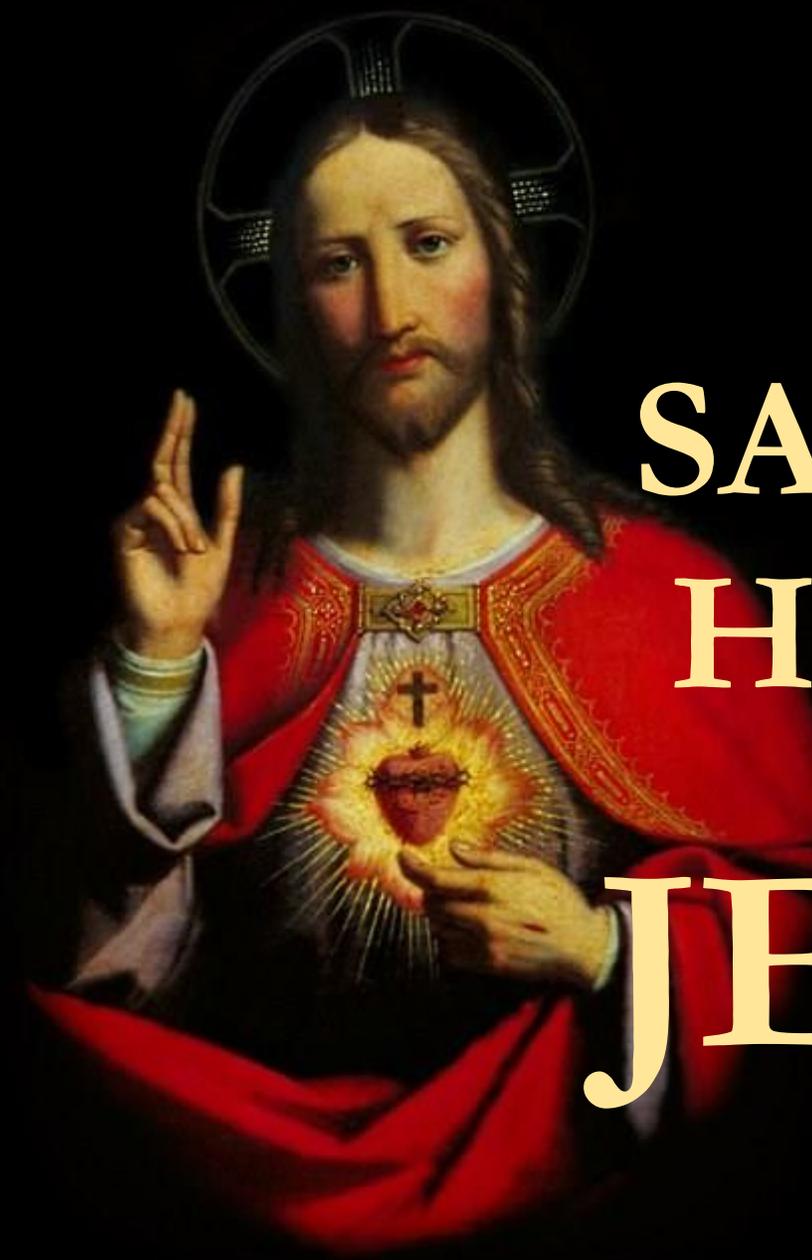
(Charitable Registration Number: 10791 0259 RR0021)
89 St. George Street, Toronto, ON M5S 2E8 | 416-979-2468

Facebook.com/NewmanUofT

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Interested in receiving Newman Centre's bi-weekly event updates? Email: maria.dasilva@newmantoronto.com

SUMMER RETREAT



THE
SACRED
HEART
OF
JESUS

Saturday, June 26, 2021 | 10:30 am - 12:00 pm

LIVE WEBINAR

Fr Jacques Philippe

Registration: <https://summer2021retreat.eventbrite.ca>

All are welcome. (Free will offering)

