From left to right: Lincoln Mayor Chris Beutler, Leadership Council Member John Miller, Phi Kappa Theta Treasurer Travis Barrett, Bishop James D. Conley, Father Robert Matya, Phi Kappa Theta President Matt Keller, Bishop Emeritus Fabian Bruskewitz officially cut the ribbon to open the newly constructed Phi Kappa Theta Fraternity house. Photo by Jessica Norton

BUILDING FOR, AND BECAUSE OF, A TRANSFORMATION

By Jude Werner

This spring, a small group of staff and alumni gathered to watch the former Newman Center - St. Thomas Aquinas Church come down, making way for our new, larger facility. Razing the Newman Center brought with it a flood of fond memories. We laughed and reminisced together. Generations of Catholic college students have had their lives changed at the Newman Center; for many students it was a defining time and place in their lives. Personally, I recall some transformative moments that took place within the blue-washed pews and I'm a better person because of them.

Yet, clearing the site brings tremendous excitement for the future of Catholic campus ministry at the University of Nebraska. This excitement, and hope in the good fruit to come, propels us forward. God continues to affirm that we are cooperating with His will and has blessed our efforts in some dramatic ways. I have no doubt that unimaginable blessings await the future generations of college students who will be impacted in the new facilities.

NEWMAN CENTER – ST. THOMAS AQUINAS CHURCH

Prior to the demolition crew and the reminiscing, the Newman Center’s leadership was granted permission to proceed with razing the old

continued on page 4
At the recent groundbreaking ceremony for our new church and Newman Center, Bishop Conley quoted the great Russian writer Fyodor Dostoevsky who wrote the line, “Beauty will save the world.”

As a priest living amidst college students, there have been many times too numerous to count, where I have witnessed awe in the face of a student when he/she has encountered something that was beautiful. This is why we have taken Dostoevsky’s line seriously in thinking about the design of our new church. This entire project came about from a practical need of more space. But building a church is not just about a practical need. In trying to make the church beautiful, we are not interested in winning some award or recognition. It really is about drawing the students’ attention to the building so that they might be more curious and walk through the door where they will hopefully have an encounter with Christ.

While there is often an aspect of rescue to our work, we’re not simply a rescue operation. It is our hope that the students who come to the Newman Center will grow into a deeper and more mature faith in God and His love for them during their college years. I am often reminded of the importance of this mission but was reminded of it in a profound way this summer through the lived experience of a young couple, Mitch and Erica Ostgren.

Mitch and Erica both came to college already possessing the gift of faith, but they certainly grew in their faith during college. They both have generous hearts and served the work of the Church in various ways while at the Newman Center. God drew them to each other, they fell in love, and they were married at the Newman Center after they graduated. They now live in Seward, Nebraska and God has given them two beautiful children. Julia, their oldest, is a toddler and is absolutely precious. Last fall, Mitch and Erica discovered that their little boy had anencephaly, which meant that he would only live for a few hours after he was born. You don’t often hear about children with anencephaly being born because we live in a culture that would advise most couples to terminate this pregnancy. But that thought would never have crossed Mitch and Erica’s mind.

Mitch and Erica would take a different approach. They would celebrate his life while he was with them. They went on outings to the park and the zoo. They named him Francesco. The name Aloysius was chosen in part because it is a family name and also because of a quotation from St. Aloysius Gonzaga, “It is better to be a child of God than king of the whole world.” There were many things that happened throughout the pregnancy that would remind Mitch and Erica of God’s love for them. One beautiful story they learned about was the story of a young Italian couple named Enrico and Chiara Corbella. Enrico and Chiara’s first two children had anencephaly and after both of them lived for a few hours, they gave them back to God. Chiara would become pregnant a third time and the baby was fine, but they discovered that Chiara had cancer during the pregnancy. Chiara died surrendering her life to God. Mitch and Erica were inspired by their beautiful faith. And even though they did not try to contact Enrico, through God’s providence a beautiful note and a card from him came to them from Italy right before they went to the hospital to deliver baby James. As Erica wrote to me in a note yesterday, “Christ’s presence and work was so apparent to us through stories like this that we experienced!”

And when baby James was born in June, there was of course sadness, but it was also a splendid affair. Mitch and Erica made the most of the nine hours he would be with them. They dressed him beautifully and held him and kissed him. Their good friend, Father Brian Kane, was present to celebrate the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. A photographer was present and took beautiful family pictures. They had a great birthday cake and placed a rosary in his hands, entrusting him to Our Lady. And when he died, Mitch and Erica were blessed to hear two peals of thunder from the sky, another great gift from God as they knew that Saints James and John were the Sons of Thunder. And now whenever James’ sister Julia hears his name, she is quick to say “Baby James is in heaven.”

Mitch and Erica would never say their faith is heroic. But I will. I witnessed it on the day of baby James’ funeral. I was with them recently at the wedding of Mitch’s brother Matt to Katie Madsen and saw it again. Their faith is beautiful and is a true inspiration. A deep and mature faith. And it reminds me of why we are making our best effort to build a beautiful church. Beauty will save the world.
members of the Newman center’s leadership council and donors break ground for the Newman center and St. Thomas Aquinas Church.

photo by Kim Breitfelder

4 St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church | Newman Center

catholic

Father Ben Holdren, Father Robert Matya, Caleb Swanson, Matt Litt, Ed Jaros. NEED COPY

Current and Past Presidents of Phi Kappa Theta fraternity break ground.

Through an abundance of prayer, an amazing $500,000 matching challenge gift and the generosity of many others, the Newman Center’s leadership was given permission to begin construction of the new St. Thomas Aquinas Church and Newman Center this summer.

Praise God for His goodness and thank you to everyone who helped reach our matching gift goal!!

This summer’s construction includes drilling seventy-seven geothermal wells, each at a depth of 625 feet, which will serve the heating and cooling needs of the new church, Newman Center and our neighboring Phi Kappa Theta Fraternity house. Following the installation of footing and foundations, steel frame construction for the Newman Center and church should be visible later this fall, adding to the excitement of a new semester.

Our current construction schedule has the Newman Center being completed in Fall of 2014, which would allow student ministries to finish the semester in their new facility. Construction of the church should be completed for a dedication Mass in the Spring of 2015.

When completed, the new facilities will not only welcome the growing number of college students seeking a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and His Church, but will be a physical expression of the Catholic Church on campus. The beauty, richness and stability that is found in the Catholic Church will be clearly seen within its Gothic architecture. It will be a prominent addition to the University’s growing campus. Our architectural teams, led by Kevin Clark and James McCrey have been fabulous! Thanks!!!

PHI KAPPA THETA FRATERNITY

Life has been busy on the other end of the block as well! Last September, the men of Phi Kappa Theta Fraternity, their families and others gathered to celebrate the groundbreaking for their chapter house. Since that time, contractors have been diligently working to construct what is, arguably, the nicest Greek house on campus. It’s masculine, built to last and function well, but is not extravagant. The house reflects the Catholic values to which the Phi Kapp men aspire. Rooms are comfortable and welcoming, designed to foster a strong brotherhood and community. Full ADA accessibility extends Christian hospitality to everyone who visits. In good stewardship, the house was designed with high efficiencies and low operating costs in mind. Foremost, the chapter house is built close to the church, a tangible reminder of how its members’ lives should be lived.

Construction of the Catholic fraternity house was just completed and furnished in time for occupancy this fall semester. Two delightful and experienced women have just been hired to serve as house parent—Cheryl Draeger, and cook—Lori Cookston. Fraternity recruitment was also in full swing this summer. Tours to interested freshmen were given almost daily and the Phi Kapps remain happy to visit with UNL students interested in membership.

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PHI KAPPA THETA | Groundbreaking

PROJECT TIMELINE

07/10—Cornerstone Church purchased
06/12—Miracle Mile Motor agreed to move
02/11—Credit Union purchased
06/11—Tax Increment Financing approved for Credit Union
08/11—FOCUS moved to Cornerstone Church
07/11—Credit Union construction began
07/12—New Credit Union completed
09/12—Old Credit Union demolished
09/12—Catholic Fraternity groundbreaking
10/13—Newman Center moved to Cornerstone
12/06—St. Thomas Aquinas – Newman Center completed
07/10—Newman Center groundbreaking
09/13—Fraternity House blessing
10/14—Newman Center completion
09/15—St. Thomas Aquinas completion
04/15—St. Thomas Aquinas – Newman Center blessing
08/15—Cornerstone Church demolition
08/15—Catholic Sorority groundbreaking
07/06—Sorority House completion
09/16—Sorority dedication

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NEW MINISTRY CREATED AT NEWMAN CENTER

Father Ben Holdren has created and formed a group called the Sons and Daughters of Mary to help students grow in virtue and faithfulness to the Church while in college. One goal of the group is to assist students in living a chaste and pure life now and in their vocations. Father Holdren gives us an explanation of each group and why he created this life-changing ministry.

DEVOTION TO OUR BLESSED MOTHER

Devotion to Mary, our Blessed Mother, is something that I providentially uncovered my first semester at St. Gregory the Great Seminary. After reading True Devotion to Mary by St. Louis DeMontfort, my spirituality transformed. St. DeMontfort pointed out the words of Jesus Christ from His cross, “Behold your Mother,” and echoed the teaching of the Catholic Church, saying that these words are meant for every one of us. He also pointed out, “Mary, made by the hands of the Most High, is, we all acknowledge, merely a creature. God does not depend on her. But He did will to begin and end His greatest works through her. It was through her God gave His only begotten Son to the world. What great glory we give God when, to please Him and to imitate Jesus, our supreme Model, we too submit to Mary! She has produced the greatest thing that ever was and ever will be, a God-Man. And consequently, she will produce the greatest things of future times—the great saints who will come toward the end of the world.”

I started asking for her help, and found out that there was a Total Consecration to Mary, written by St. DeMontfort and highly encouraged by Blessed Pope John Paul II, who was serving at the time. I made the Total Consecration, and began experiencing the effects in very deep and, to me, profound ways. I began to see the love of Jesus Christ in a way I never had before. Things that were pulling me away from Him were illuminated in new ways, and old wounds began to be healed and transformed. This, I soon found out, was not a unique experience to me. It is a devotion that is as old as the Catholic Church. Devotion to Mary is what helped the Apostles begin to the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in the Upper Room. I am very excited to be bringing this devotion to the students on our UNL campus through groups we call the Sons and Daughters of Mary, and to watch as our Blessed Mother forms, we hope, the great saints of our times.

In the words of Pope Benedict XVI, “Dear friends, devotion to Our Lady is an important part of spiritual life. In our prayer we should not fail to turn to her, confident that Mary will intercede for us with her Son. Looking upon her, let us imitate her faith, her complete openness to the loving plan of God, her generous welcoming of Jesus. We learn to live from Mary.”

SONS OF MARY

Because masculine and feminine spirituality are, according to the Church and common sense, equal but different, the Sons of Mary have an equal but different focus than the Daughters of Mary. At the root of masculine spirituality there is a need to be strong and to use that strength to protect others. United in a greater way to Jesus Christ through the help of our Blessed Mother, we desire a greater strength of mind through a superior knowledge of God’s Truth and a hatred of all that would separate us. Part of the year-long formation of our group is to learn about the light of Catholic doctrine, and also about the darkness of a culture of death, that attempts to pull us away.

We also desire a greater strength of body, and to excel in living a life of holy chastity before marriage, in marriage, and after marriage, or in our religious vocation. There are many, many attacks on our young men’s purity on a college campus. By a greater openness to grace, a man begins to see how insufficient and shallow using strength to protect selfish desires is, and begins to see the beauty of a life lived to protect others, and especially God’s daughters on this campus and on the Internet.

By a greater openness to grace, a man begins to see how insufficient and shallow using strength to protect selfish desires is, and begins to see the beauty of a life lived to protect others, and especially God’s daughters on this campus and on the Internet.

And finally, we desire a greater strength of soul. By consistent, obtainable spiritual goals, we desire a supremely loyal spiritual life. We work to praying the Rosary every Friday at 3pm, praying for 15 minutes daily, preferably before the Blessed Sacrament, receiving the Eucharist every Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation, and preferably daily, going to the Sacrament of Confession at least once every two weeks, and reading St. Louis DeMontfort’s True Devotion to Mary, and accomplish his Total Consecration to Mary.

With a greater strength of mind, body, and soul, we desire to protect the Truth of Jesus Christ and His Church publicly and privately, and with the strength given by God, to protect all of His children at all times.

DAUGHTERS OF MARY

In their closing message of the Second Vatican Council, the Council Fathers expressed an urgent plea for women to accept God’s call, “The hour is coming, in fact has come, when the vocation of woman is being acknowledged in its fullness, the hour in which women acquire in the world an influence, an effect and a power never hitherto achieved. That is why, at this moment when the human race is undergoing so deep a transformation, women impregnated with a spirit of the Gospel can do so much to aid humanity in not falling.” We recognize that there is darkness in our culture, but we also recognize that there is a tremendous amount of hope found in our young women. I wish all of you could see what I get to see every day at the Newman Center. In the lives of these women who are becoming more and more open to our Father’s love with the help of our Blessed Mother. It is a beautiful thing to see a young woman who is filled with the Father’s love, and is pouring out that love to others. It is beautiful to see them holding young men to a higher standard, and helping them to purify through a dignified modesty.

Blessed Pope John Paul II commented, “I can thus say that women, by looking to Mary, find in her the secret of living their femininity with dignity and of achieving their own true advancement. In the light of Mary, the Church sees in the face of women the reflection of a beauty which mirrors the loftiest sentiments of which the human heart is capable: the self-offering totality of love; the strength that is capable of bearing the greatest sorrows; limitless fidelity and tireless devotion to work; the ability to combine penetrating intuition with words of support and encouragement.” Through a greater devotion to Jesus Christ through Mary, the Daughters of Mary work for a supreme faithfulness to God the Father, and so be filled with a great capacity for Nurturing Power, or the power to care for, to nurture, others.

In the light of Mary’s Annunciation, we see that her love ascended to the Father, seeking a profound friendship with Him. We seek to do the same through the same obtainable spiritual goals as the Sons of Mary. We ask Mary’s help in being open to receiving the Father’s infinite love, receiving a deep sense of belonging to the Father, and in loving the Father in return and being open to His will for our lives, mirroring Mary’s words, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be done to me according to your word.”

I wish all of you could see what I get to see every day at the Newman Center in the lives of these women who are becoming more and more open to our Father’s love with the help of our blessed Mother.

In the light of her Visitation, we see that after our Blessed Mother was filled with the Father’s love, she immediately turned to others to nurture and care for them to the glory of God the Father. The Daughters of Mary desire to do the same by guarding against the darkness of self-seeking love, and instead, turning their focus to give life to others.

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St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church | Newman Center
www.huskercatholic.org
Capital Campaign Donors

Over the past years, I can’t count the number of times that I have visited with parents, alumni and friends of the Newman Center about our “Great Problems,” and they truly are. However, it is even more important to thank so many of you that are playing an important part in our “Great Solutions.” We have an amazing group of people volunteering, praying and financially supporting our capital campaign. Without you, our dream of building a new St. Thomas Aquinas Church – Newman Center would never be possible.

Thank you very much!

Together we are building a better future for generations of Catholic students at the University of Nebraska Lincoln. May God richly bless your generosity!

Sincerely,
Father Robert Mazya
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UNLESS THE LORD BUILDS THE HOUSE, THOSE WHO BUILD IT LABOR IN VAIN. — PSALM 127:1

a) Newman Center Easter Vigil. Twenty people joined the Catholic Church and six were Confirmed at the Easter Vigil. What a celebration!

b) Final Mass at the Newman Center. The 11:30am Easter Mass was the final Mass at the Newman Center—St. Thomas Aquinas Church. We rejoice in the Resurrection and pray for the grace to continue to reach more students with the life-changing message of the Gospel.

c) Bishop blessing. We officially broke ground for the Newman Center and St. Thomas Aquinas Church. Bishop Conley blessed the construction site at the ceremony.

d) St. Thomas Feast Day Reception. Bishop Conley visited the Newman Center and celebrated our Feast Day Mass of St. Thomas Aquinas on January 28. Following the 10pm Mass, a party was held in JPII Hall.

e) Living Stones. 2013-14 Student Board and Leaders gather together to begin the school year at the construction site. It’s going to be a great year!

f) Artwork. Emily German, 2013 Graduate and new FOCUS Missionary, presented Father Matya and Father Holdren with a sketch of the former Newman Center building.

g) Temporary Location. Our temporary home at 640 N. 16th Street.
Fifty-five are currently living in the house, which has a maximum capacity of 68 men.

A chapter house for Pi Alpha Chi Sorority remains the final piece of our current expansion plans. Construction will commence for the Catholic sorority when the temporary Newman Center, former Cornerstone Church, is vacated and the site is available for demolition. Construction will likely be completed for the fall of 2016.

‘A GREAT PROBLEM TO HAVE’ CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Hard work and determination alone could not achieve the success that the Newman Center’s expansion efforts have experienced so far. God’s immeasurable blessings and your generosity are essential. Thank you to everyone who has blessed us with their support. To date, our ‘A Great Problem to Have’ campaign has raised $15.5 million and continues to count new donators daily. Campaign support has come from every corner of Nebraska and 38 states across the country, a true reflection of the breadth of impact that the Newman Center’s ministries have had over its 100+ years at UNL.

Despite this remarkable success, we cannot be complacent. Campaign efforts will continue throughout construction in an effort to secure the remaining $9.5 million needed to fully fund this historic expansion effort. Thousands of additional alumni, parents and friends of the Newman Center will be approached in the coming months. Many early campaign donors, inspired by the project’s success and excited about the construction, have stepped forward and offered additional support. Both of these are needed to reach our $25 million goal.

Please prayerfully consider how God may be calling you to invest in the future of Catholic ministries at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Our list of capital campaign donations that are still needed may help as you consider your personal level of support. Thank you!!!

BUILDING FOR A TRANSFORMATION

Catholic campus ministry at the University of Nebraska is undergoing a dramatic transformation. The transformation exists not simply because of the new facilities that are being constructed, nor because of the continued growth of our FOCUS Bible study program. In fact, the transformation is even bigger than the 20 new Catholics who entered the Church at our Easter Vigil Mass this past spring.

Those are the fruits of something deeper that is taking place. I believe that the Holy Spirit is stirring and ushering in the New Evangelization that Blessed Pope John Paul II so often spoke about. And the change is palpable. The depth of holiness being instilled in the hearts and souls of college students today is inspiring and contagious. Their holiness is manifest in the rich harvest of vocations each year, the overflowing Masses and the change of culture that is taking shape on UNL’s campus. There truly is an amazing transformation taking place!

Building a new, larger and more traditional-styled Newman Center and St. Thomas Aquinas Church is not the cause for this growth in holiness. This transformation is already well underway! Yet, I have no doubt that when the new facility is completed it will be at the service of the Holy Spirit, and through it, thousands more students will be impacted each year and brought into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and His Church.

Please join us in praying for the soul of Pat Flynn who served on the Newman Center’s Leadership Council. Pat was called to his Heavenly Reward on Sunday, May 5th. Pat was a founding member of the Newman Center’s Leadership Council and served on its programming committee. Pat had a passion for working with young people which he brought with him to the Newman Center’s board. Please keep Pat and the entire Flynn family in your prayers.

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<th>Capital Campaign Gift Level</th>
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Remaining gifts needed to reach $25 million ‘A Great Problem to Have’ campaign goal
640 N. 16th Street
Lincoln, NE 68508
(402) 474-7914
www.huskercatholic.org
newmancenter@unl.edu

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

HELP SPREAD THE WORD!

While construction is happening, Sunday Mass and Confession is in the Nebraska Union. Weekday Masses and Confession are in our temporary location at 640 N. 16th Street. For more project updates please visit, www.huskercatholic.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>OCTOBER 30</td>
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<td>NOVEMBER 1</td>
<td>HuskerCatholic Live!</td>
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<td>NOVEMBER 16</td>
<td>HuskerCatholic Tailgate</td>
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<td>Koinonia Student Retreat</td>
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<td>DECEMBER 6</td>
<td>Newman Student Formal</td>
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Find us on Facebook!
www.facebook.com/HuskerCatholic

Capital Campaign Website
www.huskercatholic.org

Student Website
newmancenter.unl.edu