

Sarah Frampton

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### Discovering New Possibilities for the Newman Campus

Since I started my freshman year at Cardinal Newman, two new buildings have opened up and another is almost open. It's been exciting to watch the classrooms, the SLC, and the chapel be built and I enjoyed the anticipation to see what they looked like inside. The classrooms are well organized and provide a great environment for learning. The SLC has been very useful over the last year, especially with being able to eat lunch inside during rainy days, and the cafeteria is also a nice place to hang out and do homework during advisory. While the chapel may not be open yet, it looks beautiful from the outside and I'm sure in the future the classes will enjoy mass inside of it very much. While these buildings are all serving the purpose they were specifically designed for, there are many more ways that they can be used, and not just by students and faculty at Newman, but by members of the public too.

Most of the time when people think of a chapel or church, they think of it solely as a place they go for mass and to worship, but chapels can be used for so much more than that. They are a place where people can come together and feel comfortable and safe. There are many ways the chapel at Newman can be a place where people feel welcomed and at ease. A way to use the chapel for student and faculty use during the school day would be to have the chapel remain open the whole day, so that whenever a student, teacher, or anyone else on campus feels the need, they can go there to pray, reflect, or even just sit in silence if they need to. People on campus should feel they have a safe place they can go to just reflect on anything that might be

on their mind, and the chapel would provide this since it would be peaceful there, and with no distractions. Another use of the chapel is to have it be a place for baptisms. Some families may not want to do a baptism in a giant church, so instead the chapel provides a smaller and more personal feel, so that the family can feel truly surrounded by loved ones there on such a happy and sacred day. The chapel's small size can generate a feeling of closeness to the people around you, so families would feel each other's presence more.

Furthermore the chapel can be opened up to the wider community on weeknights or even weekends to host gatherings for grief groups or addiction groups, such as for an AA meeting. People struggling with addiction or grief often need someone or something to turn to, so many turn to God and religion to find peace and meaning in their lives. It can be hard to find places in the community to hold these meetings as space isn't always available at certain times, so opening up the chapel as a place for people to have these meetings is a great way for the school to help the community. I believe it is our duty as members of this community to help people in any way we can, and in this case it means opening up the chapel for these group meetings so they can work towards bettering themselves and overcoming hardships they're struggling with.

Classrooms are designed to be places of learning, and that doesn't just have to be during a standard school day. I think some classrooms at Newman should remain open after school, so students can use them for their own use, instead of only being able to use them while in class. Students who want to form study groups to study for an upcoming test, or students who have a project they need to complete but no one's house is available to do it, can stay in the classrooms after school to work on the projects and to study. The classrooms have whiteboards and tvs, which is perfect for studying and mapping out ideas for a project, and it can mimic a study room

that is typically used in libraries at universities that students are allowed to reserve. The teachers can set up a system where students can go to them and ask to use their room or another available classroom a teacher isn't using after school to do their study groups. Another use of the classrooms would be to host optional SAT/ACT tutoring sessions, where the school can hire a tutor to come in after school and help prepare students for those tests, since many colleges still look at those scores, and hiring private tutors can be expensive, so free after school sessions gives more students an opportunity to get the help they want so they can improve their test scores. Furthermore, students at Newman are always looking for more extracurricular activities to look better on their college applications. A great extracurricular would be to open the classrooms after school to let students tutor other kids at Newman or kids from other schools. This way students who can't drive to facilities that would let them tutor kids can stay after school at Newman and have the kids come to them, and the school can set up a system where kids from local schools like St. Rose or RVMS can come to Newman for the tutoring they may require.

The SLC was highly anticipated and has been used for so many things already since it opened this year. The Newman students have definitely been able to use it for a lot of things already, and I think there are a few more ways it can be used. Instead of the study hall class being in a classroom, it should be moved to the SLC where the lobby is since there are plenty of tables for students to do their work. Furthermore, if some students in the same study hall period have an assignment they want to work on together, using the SLC would allow them to spread out somewhere where they can discuss their work without disturbing the other students as they might in a classroom where even a whisper is very easy to hear. Another use of the SLC would be to offer cooking classes. The kitchen is large enough to host a small group of students for this class,

and it can be during periods where it won't get in the way of the cooks preparing meals for the students. Just like art classes, dance classes, and sports give a way for students to express themselves, cooking and baking is a way for students to do that too, so offering a cooking class at Newman is a great way to do this, and it's an important skill to have in life in general.

Furthermore, the SLC can be used for alumni reunions, such as the ten year reunion, especially if the alumni can't find a venue to host them. What better place to do it than at the school itself they're celebrating graduating from.

The Cardinal Newman campus has grown so much over the course of the time I've been here. The new buildings help make the school look more modern, and they provide the students and faculty with so many opportunities. It's important to remember how fortunate we are to have these buildings, and they should be used in more ways than just what they were specifically designed for. Turning the classrooms and SLC into places that after school students can use to study and work on projects and get help with things like SAT prep is a great way to use the buildings more. Furthermore, our school is always teaching us the importance of giving back to the community and helping others, so opening up the classrooms after school for tutoring and the chapel for grief group and addiction group meetings is a way to help those in the public who need those spaces to better their lives and work towards a better future. It's also important to make sure these buildings can be of use to any student who went to Newman, so alumni reunions in the SLC could show our alumni that Newman is always happy to welcome them back.