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### Discovering Possibilities for New Cardinal Newman Buildings

The 2016 Tubbs Fire heavily affected the Cardinal Newman community. Much was lost, however the strength in unity within this community has allowed for much to be regained. Some of the most notable attainments would have to be the newly constructed buildings on the Cardinal Newman campus. The new two-story classrooms that opened in 2021, the Student Life Center (SLC) that started being used at the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year, and lastly the new school Chapel that is looking to be completed fairly soon. Each of these buildings have obviously been a positive addition to the school, all the more reason to strive for new possible ways the school and community can utilize them.

The new classrooms have already provided valuable spaces for students to receive a strong education. Nonetheless, these spaces are able to benefit not only the students attending Cardinal Newman, but also others within the community. For example, certain classes or workshops can be made accessible to the public. More specifically, these classes or workshops could be religion based due to the fact Cardinal Newman serves as a prominent Catholic institution for the city of Santa Rosa. Furthermore, providing these unique opportunities to people outside the student body can allow others to make a stronger connection and become more familiar with the campus and the Cardinal Newman community.

Then there is the SLC. This is currently a heavily used space, it serves as a cafeteria, study space, and library, all while providing an engineering classroom as well as faculty and

counselor offices. However, all of the building's current uses doesn't prevent it from possessing the potential to offer more. The SLC is capable of allowing for further advancement to be made in terms of collaboration. For instance, there are opportunities for collaboration between classes, which may involve a certain class going up to the engineering classroom and having that space to carry out projects related to their other class. Something similar to this was done this year with Mr. Clark's Spanish 4 class when they made use of the engineering classroom in order to construct piñatas. This ultimately allowed students who wouldn't normally find themselves in the engineering room to become more aware of the space and what it has to offer.

In addition, a valuable part of the SLC that seems to be misused would be the library. Obviously the library does serve as a good studying and reading space, however, from a student point of view it doesn't feel like the most accessible place. This space is often either closed or unable to be used because of some workshop being held within it. While these creative workshops are a fun and positive activity, one possible change that could be made is holding these workshops in other parts of the SLC. This adjustment would probably be positively accepted because those who view the library as a studying and working space will be able to use it as one, while those who enjoy the fun workshops are still able to take part in them, just in a different location.

Furthermore, although the SLC is an exciting new space with potential that can be utilized in countless ways, it is important that we remember to use this space appropriately and not feel the need to overuse it. This past school year, our school's Arts Alive performances were held in the SLC, and while this was a fun way to bring the student body together, many students agreed that the space ended up feeling too crowded and cramped for both the performers and audience. To avoid cases like this in the future, it would likely be beneficial to continue our

previous tradition of holding bigger events and performances such as these within the gym. This would more likely secure the comfort and space necessary for strong performances and attentive audiences.

Additionally, there is the new chapel. This building sits at the heart of the Cardinal Newman campus and will serve to be an anchor for school unity when classes will come together to attend mass and or religious services. Once this building is complete, religion classes will be able to spend time inside praying together or simply learning more about the Catholic faith whether it's in regards to the holy objects within the chapel or simply the process of mass and how it is carried out within the space. Also, the chapel has the potential to be something the alumni can utilize as well. For instance, marriage ceremonies could be offered and then carried out within the chapel. Being able to perform this act of vocation at the very same place you graduated may hold special significance to numerous alumni and even more to those couples who may have first met during their time at Cardinal Newman.

Finally, it is important to note that the creation of these new buildings within the Cardinal Newman campus not only serve as locations for study and or events, but also acts as a symbol of perseverance and an evolving education. As it was previously mentioned, Cardinal Newman suffered greatly from the 2016 fires, however, that didn't stop the entire community from coming together and rising above the ashes in order to rebuild the very place that holds such great importance to countless people. Ultimately, the construction of the new buildings represents not only a physical rebuilding but also a symbol of resilience and progress in the face of adversity.

Altogether, these new structures, including the two-story classrooms, the Student Life Center, and the upcoming chapel, signify not just spaces for education and events, but also opportunities for growth, collaboration, and community engagement. From providing valuable

educational resources to offering spaces for spiritual reflection and celebration, these buildings will continue to serve diverse purposes for both current students and future generations of the Cardinal Newman community.