

Holy Trinity Newman Center
520 Riordan Ranch Street
Flagstaff, Arizona
Letter report

was a lifelong educator and philosopher at universities across England and Ireland. Newman was canonized in 2019, and the clubs established in his name were intended to foster Catholic faith within the university system. He believed that a complete education cannot be achieved without the study of theology.

The University of Wisconsin began the “Newman Movement” in 1883 to help Catholic students participate and live their faith on campus. They established the Melvin Club for the purpose of keeping Catholics on campus in touch with their heritage and provided them opportunities to discuss the faith. At the time it was meant to establish a comfort level among students amid an era of perceived anti-Catholicism. Ten years later, the University of Pennsylvania started what was called a Newman Club, being the first to adopt the name three years after Newman’s death.

The clubs formed an association in 1908 which eventually became the National Newman Club and the Federation of Catholic College Students was established at Purdue University. By the 1920s Newman Clubs were considered one of the most important and powerful aids contributing to the development of Catholic leaders in University settings. After World War II the G.I. bill increased college attendance and established additional Newman Centers at campuses across the country. The Catholic Campus Ministry Association was formed as the national professional organization for Catholic campus ministers.

Catholic Jacks

Northern Arizona University Newman Center

The first Newman Club at the University was founded in the 1930s when students at the former Teachers College formed a Newman Club under the direction of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church. Eventually masses were held in the Eastburn Education Center Auditorium, and Father Michael Bain who was an assistant pastor for Our Lady of Guadalupe began to meet with students regularly. In order to accommodate the growing Catholic student body, the Holy Trinity Newman Center was constructed in 1966. An apartment for the chaplain and a library were added at a later date. The building was a simple contemporary brick structure with boxed massing and minimal ornamentation. Three years later the Newman Center became part of the newly formed Diocese of Phoenix, moving from its former home as part of the Diocese of Gallup. By 1971, the Newman Center had a full-time director and was staffed by Dominican Friars of the Central Province.

In another organizational shift the Holy Trinity Newman Center became incorporated into the one parish of Flagstaff called San Francisco de Assisi, and it no longer had a full-time priest. As participation expanded over the next ten years, the Newman center was assigned another designated full-time director and Father Matt Lowry took the assignment. Continued support and educational opportunities occurred as the Newman Center was incorporated as its own parish and FOCUS missionaries joined the Center.

Today, the Newman Center has embarked on a capital campaign to build a new facility that would include a new chapel, student spaces, and provide a church like setting. The building resides on 1.2 acres

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and plans are to remove the existing building and construct a new complex over a period of phases to include a new church that doubles the capacity along with social, administrative, and educational spaces.

The existing building no longer adequately serves the student population. Mass has moved from an existing small chapel to the large gathering space to accommodate attendance. Their activities and special events have more than doubled in attendance, over 100 students attend weekly Bible studies, 125 students (on average) attend Newman Nights weekly, and 180 students participate in the Lumberjack Awakening fall and spring retreat.

Holy Trinity Newman Center

The Holy Trinity Newman Center is located on Northern Arizona University campus at 520 Riordan Road. It is in a neighborhood of larger scale academic buildings. It resides at an angle on its lot, leaving ample green space in front of and to the side of the building. Other commercial developments are nearby.

Architecturally, the Newman Center is a simple, multi-bay, brick building with a flat roof that has wide over-hanging eaves. It was built in 1966 and has a one-story addition that accommodated an apartment and library. The unadorned massing and contemporary style were typical of the time. The brick elevations are solid rectangular blocks with small windows. A central entry is recessed under the overhanging roof which is supported by a column. The building resides on 1.22 acres.

The interior of the building is a reflection of the exterior. A relatively simple, unadorned series of rooms, gathering spaces, and residential areas serve the needs of the Center. A small kitchen and lounge area are utilized by students. The main worship space is defined by chairs and furniture to create the church and worship setting. There is no formal architectural space that defines the worship space.

The present building was constructed to accommodate small groups. Though simple and unadorned, its massing, roof configuration, and orientation on the site do reflect mid-century design details in its architectural expression. The building is approximately 55 years old and retains physical integrity.

The age of the property supports a consideration of its historic significance. A property is considered significance Flagstaff municipal code if it is associated with events or persons in the architectural, engineering, archeological, scientific, technological, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military or cultural annals of the city of Flagstaff, the State of Arizona, or the United States. The Holy Trinity Newman Center supported the Catholic students at the University but does not rise to meet significance in any of the above-mentioned areas. Architecturally, the building does retain the minimal mid-century feeling of its time. However, the form, scale, and character of mid-century buildings is not embodied in this property. As a part of the University community, it does express association with student religious education in the city. This association is peripheral as it is not a primarily educational facility as part of the university.

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Additionally, Flagstaff significance consideration B addresses the embodiment of distinctive characteristics of type, period, region, artistic values, or methods of construction, including being the oldest of a type or the best example of a type or if it represents the work of or for an important individual. The architecture and design of this building do not reflect significant distinctive features of its period. It is a reflection of the time when it was constructed, but does not embody, nor is it the best example of its type within the city.

Photographs

Photo 1. Main façade of Newman Center looking northwest



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Photo 2. North and east elevations



East elevation, looking west

View from north, looking south



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Photo 3. View of worship space



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Photo 4. View of worship space



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Photo 5. Kitchen area



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Neighborhood Setting Photos:









Holy Trinity Newman Center
Flagstaff, AZ
Existing Building Photographs



View from Riordan Ranch Road: NE corner looking SW



View from Riordan Ranch Road: NE corner looking SW



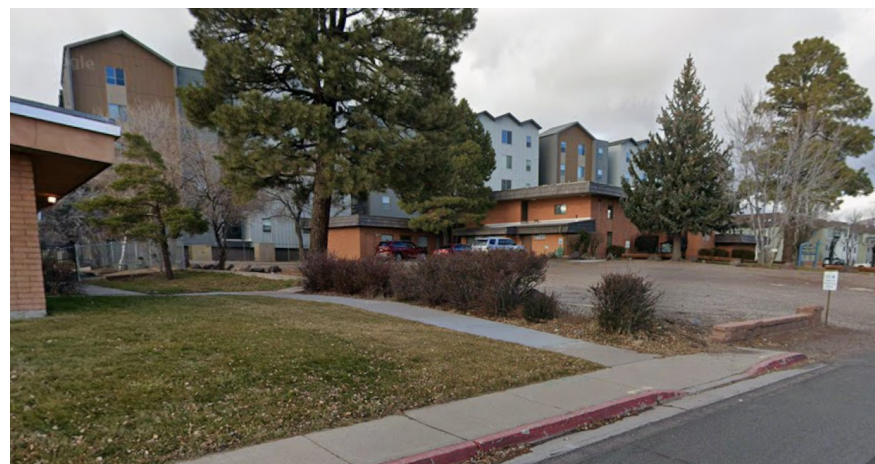
View from Riordan Ranch Road: East to West



View from Riordan Ranch Road: East to West



View from Riordan Ranch Road: Southeast to Northwest



View from Riordan Ranch Road: Southeast to Northwest



View from Riordan Ranch Road: Southwest corner of property to the Northeast



View along west property line looking North



View along west property line looking North



North elevation from North property line