



NEWMAN NEWS

in the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland



The University of Akron

Pilgrimage to Philadelphia — A Visit with Francis

When it was learned that Pope Francis would be visiting the United States in September 2015 at the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia, the University of Akron Newman President at the time thought it might be good to see if there would be any interested Newman students who would consider a trip to the event and to see Pope Francis in person.

In May the newly elected University of Akron (UA) Newman Catholic Campus Ministry President Katie Brumbaugh took up the cause and planned the trip to Philadelphia so it would be affordable for college students and would allow for a once in a lifetime experience of seeing the Pope. With additional support of the Northeast Ohio Newman Catholic Ministry Foundation planning for the Philadelphia excursion expanded also to include interested Newman students from throughout the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland. In all, a group of 100 traveled on charter buses from Akron to Philadelphia on September 25th to see Pope Francis. The group included students from most of the Newman campuses in the Diocese of Cleveland, together with alumni, faculty and friends.

Media outlets in Cleveland, Akron and even Chicago learned of the student-planned trip and provided local as well as national coverage. The Wall Street Journal article “College Group Sees Pope Francis on a Budget” by Ben Kesling, who accompanied the pilgrims to Philadelphia, captured the awe and enthusiasm of the crowd when Francis rode by in the popemobile and additionally, the wonder of the *World Meeting of Families* and all that it entailed.

Students slept two nights on a bus, going and returning home and one night on the Jewish Heritage Museum floor in Philadelphia, for a chance to see the Holy Father. For most it was totally worth it.

MarySarah Menkhaus and John Szarwark, UA Newman Minister

Student Reflections

The great number of people and the enormity of the events during the weekend showed that many people are interested and open to Pope Francis' message. God's unending love and mercy for all people and the importance of accepting and understanding all people in the same way most attracted me.

Andy Udovich, UA student

The trip opened my eyes to the size and strength of the Catholic Church. Seeing Pope Francis and hearing him speak in real life, really opened my heart and made me excited to go back to campus and share the beauty of the Church with everyone I encounter!

Hannah Peterson, UA Sophomore

Pope Francis was radiating most when he was out in the streets. It was where he wants to be the most — with the people. Every few feet, he would have a secret service agent bring him a baby or toddler to kiss and bless. Pope Francis was all smiles when he was in the popemobile. He made some impromptu stops, as well. His smile and kindness brought happiness to everyone who was there.”

Mary Kate Prokopijs, UA student

It was like seeing Taylor Swift — if Taylor Swift were known for moral causes rather than catchy songs.

Katie Brumbaugh, UA Newman President

Below: Check-in at St. Bernard parish in Akron. Right: Departure!



Ashland University

The ‘Francis Effect’ at AU

Punch in an Internet search for the ‘Francis effect’ and you’ll find countless articles evaluating the Pope’s impact upon Catholics, the Catholic Church, and worldwide opinions of Roman Catholicism. While there’s not necessarily a consensus on the exact impact of his Pontificate, one thing is certain: Pope Francis is “effectively getting the world to pay attention” (1). The Newman Community at Ashland University is no exception when it comes to following this Pope!



Two current AU Seniors, Zack Lemon (left) and Kim Potter (right), with 2014 Graduate, Alyssa Szpalik, in front of Independence Hall.

Francis’s visit to the U.S. has been a significant aspect of Catholic Campus Ministry at AU this fall. A number of students participated in the Diocesan sponsored Newman trip to Philadelphia. Their experience in Philly will leave a lasting impact! At our Newman Night prior to the Papal visit we watched the 20/20 special, “Pope Francis and the People.” This program stirred up a lively discussion about the topics raised and the Pope’s responses. The week in which the Synod on the Family began we were blessed to have our Busy Student Retreat. Unbeknownst to us, the spiritual directors had designed the retreat around themes developed in Francis’s recent encyclical, “*Laudato Si’*” (2). This provided a perfect prelude to a campus-wide event at AU co-sponsored by Newman and the Departments of Religion and Philosophy. Jana Barrett, Associate Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Dayton, presented the symposium: “*Pope Francis, the Environment, and Christian Life*”.

Even after all of this, much like the world at large, we can’t exactly quantify the ‘Francis effect’ at Ashland University—and maybe that’s a good thing! After all, it appears that our Holy Father prefers to point us beyond his own effect to “something much bigger: if you love Pope Francis, wait until you hear about Jesus” (1).

Nate Ediger, Campus Minister

(1) <http://www.cruxnow.com/church/2015/09/09/the-ability-to-capture-hearts-and-minds-makes-this-papacy-novel>

(2) http://w2.vatican.va/.../papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html

College of Wooster

City of God

I have been to Philadelphia before. I have walked the crowded streets and seen the hurried and hassled people making their way through the bustling city filled with the typical sights and sounds of any large metropolitan area. This time, the city was different. It had been transformed, renovated into something distinctively dissimilar to any other city in America, or any other city in the world for that matter, I am sure.

They say that the city had over a million “outsiders” in it that weekend. People who are not native Philadelphians. People who don’t cheer for the Eagles or the Flyers, or eat cheesesteaks in front of the Rodin Museum. But, in the midst of the crowds and the new faces, I didn’t feel like an outsider. I felt like a member of an intimate family.

We had all come to this city to see a single person, a concept not entirely foreign to Americans. We flock to see celebrities all the time. Yet, this celebrity altered the experience completely. Pope Francis came not to draw attention to himself, but point to something larger, to someone larger.

For a few days, America stopped talking about the latest Hollywood gossip and political scandal, and we listened and watched as a single man shared the good news of what could be. We talked and prayed with strangers from across the world and of different faiths. We united together for one common cause and witnessed a city transformed with the messages of Jesus Christ. I don’t know what the Kingdom of God will look like, but if I had to guess, it is probably a lot like the streets of Philadelphia that September weekend.

Kaitlyn Rayl, Sophomore

Baldwin- Wallace University

First Year Spiritual Home

The Newman Center at Baldwin-Wallace University began the new school year with a vigorous and confident spirit. Having heard about the success of the FYSH (First Year Spiritual Home) program at CWRU, we asked them about it, and they were eager to share their resources. Small groups meet weekly to engage a series of four topics, from community, to faith, to prayer, and service, repeating one and a half times in a ten week cycle through the first semester. Each session involves prayer, a reading or activity, and shared reflection. We adapted the plans for our purposes and recruited and trained upperclassmen to lead small groups in pairs. Ten freshmen signed up, so we scheduled three groups at different times and days of the week.

We are now entering our sixth week, and each group reports a thorough success. Each of the leaders tell of their delight in how meaningful this has been. One spontaneously declared “I just love my freshmen!” And the freshmen too have truly found spiritual homes in their FYSH groups, one confiding that she finds it “like a weekly retreat—that I don’t want to live without.”

Steve Eyeran, Campus Minister

Case Western Reserve University

Joining Papa Francis at the World Meeting of Families and Becoming Family

A rag tag group of 19 faithful Catholics from Case Western Reserve University Newman returned from the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia tired but blessed by having woven new bonds as a local cell of the universal Catholic family. Diverse in age, gender, and course of study, we became one as members of Christ's body. So many contrasts – a first year student who became Catholic at the most recent Easter Vigil sharing her enthusiasm with cradle Catholics who often take the global nature of the Church for granted, undergraduates still considering their options alongside dental students poised to begin their careers, an American citizen active in the close-knit Vietnamese Catholic youth movement, and an Italian surgical fellow. How to sum up 60 hours of sheer joy? I will let the students' words and pictures paint a family portrait.

As we shared our impressions of the weekend, gratitude for a multi-layered experience of family was the unifying theme. A few moments stand out as pinnacles of joy that we now cherish in our hearts. First, there was the serendipity of having stationed ourselves along Pope Francis' parade route to Independence Hall in the second row behind the fenced



barriers. During the five and half hour wait, we did what families do: told stories, shared food, and made new friends, most notably with a young couple and their six-week old son. Within 15 feet of where we stood, Pope Francis' entourage paused as a secret service agent lifted "our baby" to receive a papal kiss. We experienced the genuine love and caring of Pope Francis at close quarters, and several students were shaking and shedding tears of joy in resonance with the infant's mother. As Cleveland Institute of Art student Bianca Breed commented, "*Seeing the Pope in person I was instantly brought to tears. It was such a beautiful thing to be there with thousands of people united under the same cause. The love of God was truly present.*" We had become part of this couple's Catholic family.

Second, on Sunday while walking through Philadelphia to the mass venue, I observed Niki Klco unselfconsciously sharing the food she carried in her pack with a succession of homeless panhandlers. Her joy was spontaneous, and she clearly shared Pope Francis' ability to recognize Christ in our brothers and sisters on the margins. She later wrote, "*God walks in the shoes of the homeless to the Pope, and I learned to love from all those I encountered in Philadelphia. The love and passion of the people around me reaffirmed my belief in our ability to do small things of great good through God.*" We were reminded that the least of our brothers and sisters are our family, too.



Finally, there was the abundant crowd of people joyfully celebrating the closing Eucharist on Sunday evening. Five of our students were lucky enough to get tickets near the altar, but even those of us outside the security cordon were served by a myriad of Eucharistic ministers accompanied by yellow and white papal umbrellas. Much care had been taken to allow so many of those present to receive the body of Christ and experience the overwhelming sacramental unity of worshipping together. In the words of first year student Joyce Chu, "*Seeing the ocean of adoring Catholics really gave me a whole new perspective on the saying 'We are One Body in Christ.' Not only did I see Jesus in thousands of Eucharistic hosts passing by, but also in the vast crowd of believers who had all come together to be the One Body.*" The joy of belonging to the universal, global Catholic family became palpable among the Philadelphia pilgrims.

The words of Pietro Lombardi, a recent medical graduate from Italy, summarize our Catholic family pilgrimage and Pope Francis' call to nurture the global human family, "*I went to Philly because Pope Francis is my father, and when your father is in town you want to see him! I didn't know anybody except Tom and Mike McKenna, but the students of the Newman group welcomed me as a friend, as family. I'm very thankful for this experience, it taught me that in every part of the world I am never alone because everywhere Jesus is preparing something great for me!*"

Sharon Bramante. *Cambus Minister*



Pietro Lombardi, Thomas & Michael McKenna – even the law enforcement officers who were working 16 hour days were joyful!



Diocese of Cleveland
 The Newman Foundation of Northern Ohio
 1404 E. 9th St., Second floor
 Cleveland, OH 44114
 Voice (216) 696-6525 X2450

Non-Profit Org.
 U.S. Postage
PAID
 Cleveland, Ohio
 Permit No. 688

Letter from the President

A Personal Relationship with Christ



Dear Newman Readers,

It is a privilege to be able to write to all of you as president of the Newman Foundation. I've spent some time in prayer asking for inspiration on what to share with you and discerned that the emphasis should be having a personal relationship with Christ.

Each person needs to ask themselves, "How do I start a personal relationship with Christ, and how do I deepen

that relationship?" This relationship may begin differently for each of us, but however this relationship begins the journey must fully embrace all Truths that are consistently taught by the Church.

Too many Catholics selectively choose Truths taught by the Catholic Church that fit them exclusively and discard others. When we decide that we will discard a Truth without seeking the correct teaching we are choosing opinion over relationship with Christ and hindering the development of that relationship. At times, we trade personal preference for the graces we desperately need in order to deepen that personal relationship.

A good way to challenge ourselves when we are in doubt of a Truth is to open Scripture. Our study of the Word helps form a solid conscience. Another way to develop our personal relationship with our Lord is Eucharistic Adoration. For me it's difficult to go through a day without visiting Christ in Eucharistic Adoration.

It is my prayer for those of you who have never considered a relationship with our Lord or believed that a personal relationship with Christ was possible, that you find this relationship. A relationship greater than any personal relationship you have known, a relationship which lifts you up and consoles you when you're down. A relationship of shared conversation, joys and sorrows...I hope that you'll find not only the reality, but the peace and beauty of His friendship.

*Sincerely In Christ,
 Tony Crookston, President
 Newman Foundation of Northern Ohio*

Ashland University

Rev. Vincent J. Hawk, 419-994-4396
frvhawk@gmail.com
 Nate Ediger
nediger@dioceseofcleveland.org

Baldwin-Wallace University

Steve Eyerman, 440-243-4955
seyerman@dioceseofcleveland.org

Case Western Reserve Univ.

Sharon Bramante, 216-421-9614 X302
sbramante@dioceseofcleveland.org

Cleveland State University

College of Wooster

Nate Addington, (330) 287-3718
naddington@wooster.edu

Oberlin College

University of Akron

John Szarwark, 216-696-6525 X3000
 Assistant Director for Campus Ministry
jszarwark@dioceseofcleveland.org

Diocesan Director of Newman Catholic Campus Ministry

Eugene Boyer, 216-696-6525 X2450
www.dioceseofcleveland.org
eboyer@dioceseofcleveland.org

Sandy Williams, 216-696-6525 X4990
 Administrative Assistant
swilliams@dioceseofcleveland.org

Newsletter Editor

David Perry, 330-972-6825
dperry@uakron.edu