

Prelude to Session 2

Prayer to the Holy Spirit by Saint Augustine (Francesca LaRosa)

https://youtu.be/nF2bHZ_WUKQ?si=SZCzqaGMW_MR1g5c

Breathe in me

O Holy Spirit

That my thoughts

May be holy

Act in me

O Holy Spirit

That my work too

May be holy

Draw my heart

O Holy Spirit

That I love

But what is holy

Strengthen me

O Holy Spirit

To defend all that is holy

Guard me then

O Holy Spirit

That I always may be holy

(repeat second verse only) That I always may be holy

Session 2

Light of the World

Matthew 5:14-16 “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”



Discipleship and the Faith Journey

Definition and reminder

- Definition: Someone who is following Jesus, being changed by Jesus, and is committed to the mission of Jesus
- Reminder: Maturing as a disciple can be a challenge. Fortunately one does not mature as a disciple on his or her own initiative. The work of the Holy Spirit within the Christian community forms the person as a disciple of Christ. (2012 US Catholic Bishops “Disciples Called to Witness: The New Evangelization”)

Key points to remember

Discipleship and the Faith Journey recap

- Baptism is not insurance for eternal life but a call to discipleship (priest [sacrifice], prophet [challenge others] and king [leading by example]) and entrance into a community of believers
 - Personal and communal growth/maturation is supported by the grace of the Holy Spirit
- We are called by the Holy Spirit through daily discovery and choose to answer the call
 - It is not Catholic guilt that guides us
- The Church is the body of Christ and we should strive not to stand out as individuals but rather together as the body of Christ
 - Personal relationship with God (seeing, trusting) is critical but so is our role in (developing) the community of faith that supports us and others in our faith journeys and allows us to meet people where they are
 - Don't remove your light from the world, let it shine for others to see

1. Light of the world. <https://youtu.be/tWeXVnRm6R8?si=9vWGHZqSVJL7lbbJ>. Light of the world, We the Kingdom

Light of the world, treasure of Heaven
Brilliant like the stars, in the wintery sky
Joy of the Father, reach through the darkness
Shine across the earth, send the shadows to flight

Light of the world, from the beginning
The tragedies of time, were no match for Your love
From great heights of glory, You saw my story
God, You entered in, and became one of us

Sing hallelujah, sing hallelujah
Sing hallelujah for the things He has done
Come and adore Him, bow down before Him
Sing hallelujah to the light of the world

Light of the world, crown in a manger
Born for the Cross, to suffer, to save
High King of Heaven, death is the poorer
We are the richer, by the price that He paid, ohh

Sing hallelujah, sing hallelujah
Sing hallelujah for the things He has done
Come and adore Him, bow down before Him
Sing hallelujah to the light of the world

You're the light of the world
Light up the dark

Light of the world, soon will be coming
With fire in His eyes, He will ransom His own
Through clouds He will lead us, straight into glory
And there He shall reign, forevermore
Oh, forevermore

Sing hallelujah, sing hallelujah
Sing hallelujah for the things He has done
Come and adore Him, bow down before Him
Sing hallelujah to the light of the world
The light of the world

Quick response

- How are we the light of the world to others?

Challenges of today

Post modern secularism - a plurality of choices to make sense of our lives

- 2015 Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) study found
 - 1/3 (31.7%) of all US adults were raised Catholic
 - Catholics represent 20.8% of US vs. 23.9% in 2007; 13% of all Americans are former Catholics, two percent of Americans are newly converted to Catholicism
 - The median age of Catholic adults is 49, up from 47 in 2007
 - Since 2007, a 3% decline in Americans that identify as Catholic
 - Only 16% of millennials identify as Catholic, the lowest generation ever
 - 30% of the population identified as “none” (not affiliated with any faith), a 33% jump since 2013 (PRRI report), 57% of Americans don’t attend service, a jump from 40% in 2000 (Gallup)

Maturing those that are present

Meet people where they are and help them broaden their personal relationship with God

It is not a linear process but rather a dynamic relationship and any point can be an entry point into a more committed life in Christ

As Catholics, we strive *together as a community* to achieve the following:

To love God (prayer and liturgy), to know God (example, catechesis), to serve God (discipleship, charity and social justice)

Remember: Priest (sacrifice), prophet (challenge), king (lead)



Maturing those that are not present

Can't do this alone as a hero, need a community

- How to bring a person to believe in and follow a shared set of values through strengthening of their personal relationship with God
 - Navigating relativism and subjectivity
 - Presenting a consistent and genuine message so that every moment counts and sparks a greater interest
 - Know your faith and demonstrate it by being a shining example, not a doomsday gong - it is empowering to be a follower, not exhausting
- Unabashedly Catholic - display a robust Catholic identity

A link in a chain

Our role in the community, each quality we possess is a link in a chain

Saint John Henry Cardinal Newman, C.O., D.D

“I have my mission, I never may know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next...I am but a chain, a bond of connection between persons, God has not created me for naught. I shall do good, I shall do God’s work.

Personal presence can influence larger community

Story from a thriving Catholic Newman Community



Cool Thoughts

A Remarkable Renewal

Dear Catholic Tigers,

Catholic life at the Rochester Institute of Technology is experiencing an extraordinary renewal. After the challenges and isolation of the pandemic years, students are hungrier than ever for truth, community, and faith in Jesus Christ—and they are finding it all at the Catholic Newman Community. In a campus culture marked by constant motion and digital noise, Newman has become a spiritual home where students encounter God and rediscover what is lasting, real, and good.

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The numbers tell a remarkable story. Over the past three years, Sunday Mass attendance has grown by 35%, with the chapel now filled as students gather in prayer and song to celebrate the Eucharist. Each year since 2022, the number of students preparing to enter the Catholic Church has increased, culminating this year with nine students in the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA formerly RCIA)—the largest group in more than fifteen years. Their desire to become Catholic is a powerful witness to the living presence of Christ on campus and the enduring relevance of the Catholic faith in a restless and questioning generation.

This surge of faith has created a joyful “problem” of its own

This surge of faith has created a joyful “problem” of its own: space. Newman has outgrown its usual rooms for OCIA, Bible Study, and community Hangouts. Each week, leaders search for larger spaces to accommodate the growing number of students who want to learn, pray, and connect. It’s a welcome challenge—one that speaks to the vitality of Catholic life at RIT and the Spirit’s movement among our students.

Beyond the numbers, the renewal is visible in every corner of student life. The first Sunday Mass of the semester welcomed more than 200 students, followed by over 100 at the opening “Newman Hangout”—double last year’s participation. Through programs like Big Newman—Little Newman, students are mentoring one

another in faith, building friendships rooted in prayer, service, and shared purpose. Participation in Bible studies, Kairos retreats, and the Tiger Stripes service initiative continues to climb, as students discover that faith is not just personal—it’s lived in community.

In the midst of this flourishing, two recent RIT graduates have begun discerning the call to priesthood formation, a testament to the deep formation and spiritual support cultivated through Newman life. Many others are exploring religious vocations, Catholic marriage, or simply a deeper commitment to living their faith in daily life and future careers.

This moment of grace arrives as the Church herself experiences renewed hope with the election of the first Pope from the Americas—a shepherd who speaks with warmth, humility, and conviction to a world in search of meaning. Inspired by his example, students at RIT are seeking truth amid a turbulent and divided age, finding in the Gospel a steady compass for life.

As one student shared, “In a world that moves so fast, Newman helps me slow down and remember what truly matters.” That spirit of renewal is alive and growing at RIT and with your prayer, and support, it shows no sign of slowing down.

Peace,
Fr. Brian C. Cool

Rev. Brian C. Cool, '06W (MS), '21W (EdD)
J. Nelson Hoffman '55 and Joan Dutcher Hoffman '55
Director of Catholic Newman Community Pastoral Care

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- 35% growth in Sunday Mass attendance over last 3 years
- Three year period of growth in number of students preparing to enter the Catholic Church
- Two recent graduates have begun discerning the call to priesthood formation
- This is all taking place at a non-religious institute

- <https://youtu.be/yrvPSE0Ih3s?si=SGN2iViS3NMz4e4q> By our love Kendzia

By our love, by our love,
they will know we are Christians by our love.
Not by words, but how we live,
yes, they'll know we are Christians
by our love, by our love.

When we feed the hungry,
they will know by our love,
lifting up the lowly,
by our love, by our love.
We are one in the Spirit,
we are one in the Lord,
and we pray that all unity
may one day be restored.

By our love, by our love,
they will know we are Christians by our love.
Not by words, but how we live,
yes, they'll know we are Christians
by our love, by our love.

Welcome to the stranger,
they will know by our love,
shelter for the homeless,
by our love, by our love.
We will walk with each other,
we will walk hand in hand,
and together we'll spread the news
that God is in our land.

By our love, by our love,
they will know we are Christians by our love.
Not by words, but how we live,
yes, they'll know we are Christians
by our love, by our love.

We sing praise to the Father,
from whom all things come,
and all praise to Christ Jesus, his only Son,
and all praise to the Spirit, who makes us one,
they will know we are Christians
by our love, by our love.

By our love, by our love,
they will know we are Christians by our love.
Not by words, but how we live,
yes, they'll know we are Christians
by our love, by our love.

Quick response

- How do we show our love and draw others in (actions, characteristics, words)?

The Creed

Catholic belief is succinctly expressed in the profession of faith or credo called the Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation He came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate, He suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

All God's people, but not the same backgrounds

We are part of a diverse Church

- Value and implement regular encounters with people of ages, abilities, different ethnic, religious, and ideological backgrounds as a way to strengthen spiritual maturity
- Single experience not effective, young adults (value personal identity, relationships, well prepared and meaningful message, charismatic prayer and spirited music) vs adults (companionship, practicality, conversation, prayer groups)

Misconceptions about youth

McKinless and Davis, American Magazine.org

- Millennials are not just leaving the church, many were not raised in it to begin with. Therefore they don't have anything to leave and will be building something with the bits and pieces of the institutional lives that have been left behind for them.
 - Faith is no longer something that most of us are born into and live out automatically like a sort of ethnicity. It is chosen.
- Youth are often left at the “kids table”. They are treated as a problem to be solved. They are used for maintenance of the parish rather than the mission of the life of the church.
- Try not to call it a “youth mass”, it is still Mass that just happens to have youth more engaged in the work of the liturgy and keeps the celebration at the same level

- <https://youtu.be/WjZ01FcK0yk?si=gXKJfzg5vyeZiRgL>. Newsboys We believe
- <https://youtu.be/DoPLgOwg4tY?si=RSTL67V4t2Lz0IHg>. Daigle we believe acoustic

In this time of desperation
 When all we know is doubt and fear
 There is only one foundation
 We believe
 We believe
 In this broken generation
 When all is dark, You help us see
 There is only one salvation
 We believe
 We believe
 We believe in God the Father
 We believe in Jesus Christ
 We believe in the Holy Spirit
 And He's given us new life
 We believe in the crucifixion
 We believe that He conquered death
 We believe in the resurrection
 And He's comin' back again
 We believe
 So, let our faith be more than anthems
 Greater than the songs we sing
 And in our weakness and temptations
 We believe
 We believe

We believe in God the Father
 We believe in Jesus Christ
 We believe in the Holy Spirit
 And He's given us new life
 We believe in the crucifixion
 We believe that He conquered death
 We believe in the resurrection
 And He's comin' back again
 Let the lost be found and the dead be raised
 In the here and now, let love invade
 Let the church live loud, our God, we'll say
 "We believe, we believe"
 And the gates of hell will not prevail
 For the power of God has torn the veil
 Now we know Your love will never fail
 We believe, we believe
 We believe in God the Father
 We believe in Jesus Christ
 We believe in the Holy Spirit
 And He's given us new life
 We believe in the crucifixion
 We believe that He conquered death
 We believe in the resurrection
 And He's comin' back
 He's comin' back again
 He's comin' back again
 We believe
 We believe

Quick response

- How do you know what to say when you sense an opportunity, what tool can you work on to prepare for these encounters?

Discipleship is a multidisciplinary effort

Example, parish community, leadership, teaching all important

- Both liturgical and ecclesial ministries must be strengthened so that all members of the Body of Christ are able to live out their vocation as disciples of Christ, sharing in his office as priest, prophet and king in the community
 - Personal connection to God so we “see” the Holy Spirit at work in our lives
 - Communal support for faith journey, atmosphere that is welcoming
- One does not become a disciple of their own initiative. The work of the Holy Spirit within the Christian community forms the person as a disciple of Christ
- Can’t do this alone as a “hero”

What can we do?

Ghezzi, New Covenant

- Be present in your family, parish
- Be engaged, build your knowledge, build community
- Work to free others from the social problems that ensnare them
 - Hunger, poverty, disease and injustice
- Be welcoming so that someone is willing to approach you on their journey
- Humbly carry our cross, love God
- Be a follower, not a fan, model discipline in our lives

Encounters in family life

An opportunity for discipleship

- Parents not equipped to teach
 - But they can lead by example (consistency is critical)
 - Can't give what you don't have
 - For those that can, focus on rituals of prayer, ex. grace before meal, nightly prayer at bedtime, prayer for a special cause
 - Incorporate works of mercy, learn mercy within the lives of our neighbors
 - Regularly attend mass, receive and discuss the meaning of all sacraments, participate in parish life as example of how to live God's life

- https://youtu.be/b_RjndG0IX8?si=JD1Li3wK89m73Gah. Matt West Do something

[Verse 1]

I woke up this morning
Saw a world full of trouble now
Thought, how'd we ever get so far down
How's it ever gonna turn around
So I turned my eyes to Heaven
I thought, "God, why don't You do something?"

Well, I just couldn't bear the thought of
People living in poverty
Children sold into slavery
The thought disgusted me
So, I shook my fist at Heaven
Said, "God, why don't You do something?"

[He said, "I did, I created you"](#)

[Chorus]

If not us, then who
If not me and you
Right now, it's time for us to do something
If not now, then when
Will we see an end
To all this pain
[It's not enough to do nothing](#)
[It's time for us to do something](#)

[Verse 2]

[I'm so tired of talking](#)
[About how we are God's hands and feet](#)
[But it's easier to say than to be](#)
[Live like angels of apathy who tell ourselves](#)

It's alright, "somebody else will do something"
Well, I don't know about you
But I'm sick and tired of life with no desire
I don't want a flame, I want a fire
I wanna be the one who stands up and says
"I'm gonna do something"

[Chorus]

[\[Bridge\]](#)

[We are the salt of the earth](#)

[We are a city on a hill](#)

But we're never gonna change the world
By standing still
No we won't stand still
No we won't stand still
No we won't stand still

[Chorus]

Measuring success

Playing the long game will be needed

Learning in classroom no longer the most important part of faith formation, goal of faith formation needs to be transformation and life change (Lent)

- There is an old birthday tradition of having our height measured. The pantry door in the kitchen is where we would draw a line on the door to represent our height that year. Now, it wouldn't make much sense for parents to measure growth each day because there wouldn't be any noticeable gain. But to compare growth over the span of a year or several years one can see a big difference, and that was exciting. Similarly, you may not notice spiritual growth by comparing days, but over time consistent interactions will accumulate. Discipleship is a long game, and by God's grace the Holy Spirit will show us the big and small moments of life to develop ourselves and our community.

If done effectively parishioners will...

- Know Jesus, have a personal relationship with Jesus
- Trust Jesus, pray personally and in communion with others
- Be aware and open to the Holy Spirit in their lives
- Have a commitment to Jesus, his church, and the community
- Worship regularly recognizing their communal role as important
- Continuously seek to learn
- Participate in sacramental life
- Generously serve others
- Let their actions be meaningful such that they passively evangelize others

- <https://youtu.be/iq5URsXbKXs?si=R0JniaSmdXPcRZnW> We the Kingdom, God so loves

Come all you weary
 Come all you thirsty
 Come to the well
 That never runs dry
 Drink of the water
 Come and thirst no more
 Well, come all you sinners
 Come find His mercy
 Come to the table
 He will satisfy
 Taste of His goodness
 Find what you're looking for
 For God so loved
 The world that He gave us
 His one and only
 Son to save us
 Whoever believes in Him
 Will live forever
 Bring all your failures
 Bring your addictions
 Come lay them down
 At the foot of the cross
 Jesus is waiting there
 With open arms
 See His open arms
 For God so loved
 The world that He gave us
 His one and only
 Son to save us
 Whoever believes in Him
 Will live forever
 The power of hell
 Forever defeated
 Now it is well
 I'm walking in freedom
 For God so loved
 God so loved the world

Praise God
 Praise God
 From whom all blessings flow
 Praise Him
 Praise Him
 For the wonders of His love (praise God)
 Praise God
 Praise God
 From whom all blessings flow
 Praise Him
 Praise Him
 For the wonders of His love
 His amazing love
 For God so loved
 The world that He gave us
 His one and only
 Son to save
 For God so loved
 The world that He gave us
 His one and only
 Son to save us
 Whoever believes in Him
 Will live forever
 The power of hell
 Forever defeated
 Now it is well
 I'm walking in freedom
 For God so loved
 God so loved the world
 Bring all your failures
 Bring your addictions
 Come lay them down
 At the foot of the cross
 Jesus is waiting
 God so loved the world