

# Sun & Balance

THE RENSSELAER NEWMAN FOUNDATION

VOL 57, NO. 2 — FALL 2022

## “Behold, I make all things new!” (Rev. 21:5)

**A**fter completing my first year as chaplain at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, I still feel like the “new chaplain,” the “new guy.” And honestly, I hope that never changes, however long I am able to serve here, because newness is a sign of growth, and evidence that the Holy Spirit is at work.

Newness isn't the same as novelty. Change for its own sake isn't helpful or productive. Certainly, our history is important and formative, and should not be forgotten nor neglected. At the Chapel + Cultural Center, I'm very much aware that I stand on the shoulders of giants, visionary leaders who took risks and marshaled resources to build an amazing place to pursue an important mission: bringing arts and faith to a community more recognized for its achievements in science and engineering.

There is much that's new at the Chapel + Cultural Center and the chaplain's office at RPI. This fall we're welcoming new students — the largest incoming class in the history of Rensselaer — with a new campaign to help them discover our community and all the new things we have to offer. We'll have new banners out on Burdett Ave., a new website, and a new slate of programs and opportunities for our RPI students. And we have a great new video introduction to our community, which you can view at <https://youtu.be/i7nfcP0vkKs>. Believe me, it's worth your time to type in that daunting internet address!

On behalf of all of us at the Rensselaer Newman Foundation, I want to say “thank you” for all the ways you support our work. You are remembered at every Mass at the C+CC. May your fall season be filled with new opportunities and new friendships.

Peace.

Fr. Larry Rice, CSP 



# Student Activities

## Baccalaureate Mass

A special intention Mass was offered on April 24th to congratulate and send off the RPI Class of 2022 seniors. These students were called forward in front of the community to share and talk about their future endeavors.

The book "The Twentysomething Handbook: Everything You Actually Need to Know About Real Life" was presented to each student. The book was written by one of our Lenten Speakers this past year Nora Bradbury-Hael.

After Mass there was a reception to meet and congratulate all the students individually.



## Blessing of the Brains

This year Fr. Larry introduced a new tradition at the Masses prior to RPI finals week called the Blessing of the Brains. At each Mass on April 30th/May 1st the community of Christ Sun of Justice prayed for students to succeed in their final exams and classes.

A care package was also handed out to all students with snacks and homemade cookies from parishioners as a final exam survival kit.

## Summer Programs at the C+CC

The C+CC added new programs for RPI Summer Arch Students.

- **Don't Fret** a new Summer Arch Acapella club comprised of the 5 Acapella clubs meets weekly.
- **Movies** shown in the auditorium and outside on our south patio have been growing in popularity.
- **Music** events featuring local musicians are planned for late August.





# DONOR LIST — Thank you for all of your support!!

\*This list reflects all information from our Fiscal Year: September 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022. Donor recognition does not reflect donations made at Masses

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# Launch! CCMA Conference

Hi all!

Thank you for your ongoing support for the mission of the Rensselaer Newman Foundation: because of your dedication, the faith lives of our students continue to grow and deepen. I am excited to share with you about my experience at the campus ministry conference I attended at the end of June.

## LAUNCH BEGINS

Thank you too for making it possible for me to be a part of the “Launch” campus ministry training conference for those of us newer to this vital ministry. It was one offering of a number of training opportunities organized by CCMA (Catholic Campus Ministry Association). The June 27th-30th conference was held at DeSales University near Allentown, PA. The twenty-five of us campus ministers plus trainers immersed ourselves in our work within the all-important context of prayer. We began our day with simple morning prayer, Mass at noon before lunch, and different communal evening prayer experiences. One of our initial sessions reminded us that as campus ministers who are called to companion young adults on their faith journey, we “can’t give what [we] don’t have” which is to say, that campus ministers must be cultivating our interior lives day in and day out.

## SESSION OVERVIEW

Over the course of the days we engaged in ten sessions of input, each followed by Q and A sessions. Sessions ranged in topics from creating service opportunities that can be transformative to accompanying students with mental health struggles to tips on prioritizing the varied responsibilities that come with campus ministry. Built into our schedule was discussion time in which we compared experiences, brainstormed, etc. with our colleagues. Having this opportunity to build networks continues to be one of the gifts that keep giving: while each of our campus ministry contexts are unique, having the ability to share ideas has proved to be beneficial already. We are excited to incorporate a few programming approaches others have used successfully into our Catholic campus ministry here at RPI.



## KEY TAKEAWAYS

Even though those of us who came together for Launch were from across the country, from private and public institutions, large and small, some with staff as many as ten- or one, very quickly we noticed common challenges and concerns facing our students and their campus ministers these days, for example, how to re-engage (or engage differently) students as our post- pandemic “new normal” unfolds around us. Several colleagues shared that they have been surprised by the new types of programming that are emerging with the reminder to be attentive to what feels like it might work for the students we have in front of us. I feel this is a key takeaway that has been reiterated in multiple campus ministry arenas including with colleagues here in the Albany Diocese.

## BEYOND LAUNCH

Importantly, I will be continuing these conversations and networking this Fall and into the Spring through CCMA’s weekly virtual Affinity Group for newer ministers which is designed to provide real-time feedback for real time ministry. This combined with the programming that Fr. Larry and I have been planning for 2022-2023 and beyond plus the collaborative work of the RNF Campus Ministry Strategy Committee situates our RPI Catholic campus ministry in a space of excellent growth! Please God, may it be so.

Thank you to the Rensselaer Newman Foundation for all you do and who you are to our students, to this ministry, and for your support as I grow as our RPI Associate Catholic Chaplain.

With gratitude, Tracy Watson 

# Recognizing Mary's 19 Years of Dedication to the RNF


Although much of Mary's work is unseen by the public there is much credit deserved for the projects Mary completes with the most thorough detail. The Rensselaer Newman Foundation has been blessed with all of Mary's accomplishments and congratulates her retirement. We would like to share a segment of some of the notes Mary received:

"I have been amazed at her constant dedication and tireless efforts to support The Rensselaer Newman Foundation and the chaplain's office."

"You made the staff, Board members and Parish members strive for "The Mary Standard" work ethic."

"The stewardship and patience you have shown year after year in our budgeting process have been essential to our financial reporting and operations."

"Your dedication, personal integrity, and attention to detail over the years have been remarkable!"

"Mary's deep and abiding concern for the Church at Rensselaer extends to those who minister and worship there, to her staff colleagues at RPI, and to the students who are at the heart of our ministry." 




*Raising a glass to toast Mary's retirement and 19 years of service and future prosperity!*



*Pictured from left to right are Richard Holbritter (Mary's husband), Christine Relyea, Fran Hyde, and the honoree Mary Holbritter on the right. Christine Relyea delivered an eloquent presentation of the quilt she made on behalf of The Christ Sun of Justice Parish for Mary Holbritter in honor of her retirement on June 17, 2022.*


## Thank You to our Soup Kitchen Volunteers

The Troy Youth Association, Inc. (CYO Center) recognized the ICC Soup Kitchen on June 9, 2022 for their many hours of volunteer service to the community and giving during the holiday season to families in need. The Parish of Christ Sun of Justice was listed among the Soup Kitchen volunteers. 



*Members of the Troy Youth Association with Christine Relyea and Fran Hyde second and third from right respectively. Photo courtesy of Jim Hyde.*

## Charitable Donations/ What to Know About Gifting Stocks

Did you know that you may be able to increase the impact of your donation and reduce your tax liability by donating appreciated stock? If you have held the stock for more than a year, you may be able to avoid long-term capital gains taxes and deduct the fair market value of the stock on your taxes while allowing a non-profit (such as the Rensselaer Newman Foundation) to receive the full pre-tax value of those appreciated assets. Please speak with your financial or tax advisor to determine if this might be right for you. 



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**Please visit our website or follow us on Facebook to view a full list of upcoming events.**

*If you're getting this newsletter, you have been connected to the Rensselaer Newman Foundation and our mission at RPI, and you understand how important our work is, bringing together faith, humanities, science and engineering. Please consider making a gift to the Foundation to continue our work; know also that we're praying for you at every Mass at the Chapel + Cultural Center.*

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

September 4 (6:00PM)	Welcome Picnic
September 9 (9:00-2:00PM)	Red Cross Blood Drive
October 2	Animal Blessing
October 8-9	RPI Reunion Weekend - Reception after Masses
October 29-30	RPI Family Weekend - Reception after Masses
November 23 (5:00PM)	Thanksgiving Soup and Salad Dinner
December 12 - 21	Final Exams - Pray for our students!

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