

Sun & Balance

THE RENSSELAER NEWMAN FOUNDATION

VOL 54, NO. 1 — SPRING 2019

Dear Alums, Family and Friends:

Greetings from Troy and the Chapel + Cultural Center. As I write, we are in the middle of a winter that doesn't want to end and a spring that is struggling to come to life. We have experienced temperatures that have broken records on the high and the low within two days of each other. To say it is interesting is an understatement!

Here on campus, students seek meaning and an education at RPI. A few weeks ago, I received an email from a student asking for an appointment. The student recalled in the note, when in the mental health unit at an area hospital two years ago, I stopped in for a visit.

Frankly, that visit was but a vague memory to me. Then, detail of the time was given to me. It was this person's hope to continue the conversation begun then, and perhaps allow it to become part of their continuing growth, both spiritually and intellectually. At our meeting, many of those moments of two years ago were re-captured by me. I "listened" and, for me, that is the key word for our students and our world today. Their need, then and now, is someone to listen and perhaps ask a few questions. I was able to assure my young friend of support on their journey.

For this student, the professional help received at the hospital, the meeting with me and the ability to articulate their thoughts and feelings became a thoroughly healing experience. For



Fr. Ed Concelebrates Mass with Fr. Jozef Karača from Bratislava, Slovakia.

me, I experienced a steady, wonderfully beautiful person who now feels loved, can love, and is willing to share their story to help others. My young friend reflected that these past few years were like the weather of late – the ending of winter and, truly, now a rebirth - very spring like.

Then and now, I'm afforded the time to listen, to ask and to comment, because of you and all of our great and generous supporters. There are few words I can offer other than "Thank you."

Please, continue to help us so our ministry (this means our total staff) may be available to

all who bring their journey to us.

This one story encapsulates our history for 50 years and our presence here at the Chapel + Cultural Center, the parish, and the chaplaincy. We will be concluding our celebrations of these 50 years in June, with a rededication of our restored and renewed organ and the blessing of our renewed C+CC building. Please, if your schedule allows, join us on Friday, 21 June 2019 at 5:00 pm.

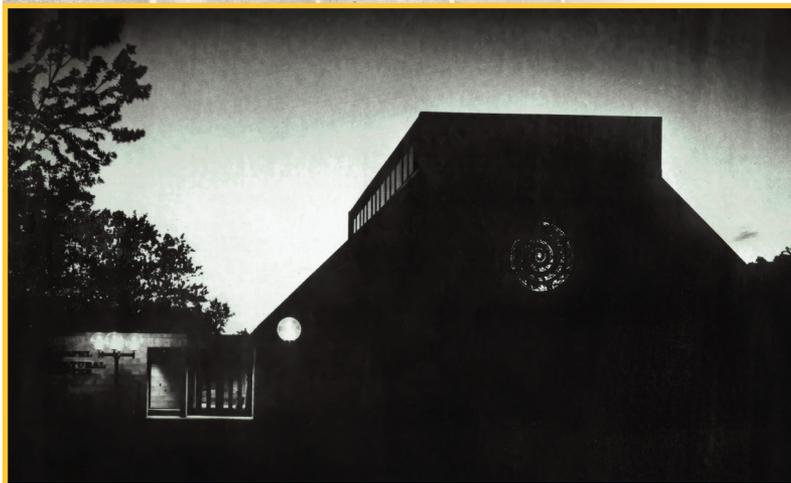
Renewal is our work. Come and renew yourself. Sincerely,

Father Ed Kacerguis
Chaplain and Pastor



CHAPEL + CULTURAL CENTER

Fifty



“...The parish is in its infancy and may very well collapse. The building is just a building and the Foundation is barely managing to keep its head above the financial flood”. — Rev. Thomas Phelan, 1970

When faced with such doubt, why did the founders of the Chapel + Cultural Center persist with their optimism? Because they understood that they were creating something new. Something different. Something which, if nothing else, was for the general good. That the C+CC could be a real contributor to the vibrancy of the community. It was worth it to try. At least they had to try.

The C+CC was not intended to be just another church. The vision was for this space to be a multi-use, multi-cultural and even multi-denominational center of vibrancy for religion and the arts. And today as we call ourselves a “university parish”, we are so much more than church on Sundays to RPI and the community at large.

This is a reason why in 2011 the building was granted status on the National Register of Historic Places, one of the youngest buildings ever to be so honored. As an architecturally significant structure it was recognized for incorporating an energy efficient design years ahead of its time. As such it gained immediate attention from religious and architectural organizations, worldwide. But it was the use of the building, its purpose serving so many people in so many ways, that was never before successfully integrated with a Catholic church.

In 1993 that cautious optimism was rewarded with the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Chapel+ Cultural Center.

Tom Phelan called it “an unqualified smashing success”, citing how well the structure was holding up, the acoustical qualities of the auditorium, but more importantly that it was indeed being used as intended. It was the people who made the Chapel + Cultural Center such a success. At the time of our 50th anniversary we have used that foundation to continue and to grow the visionary purpose of the Chapel + Cultural Center. Central to that ambition are a variety of fundraising efforts: the \$2.4 Million Capital Campaign, the “Preserving A Presence ~ Nurturing A Future” campaign,



and the “50th \$200,000 Anniversary Challenge”, both of which were resounding successes. Through these we have been able to pursue the growth for programs in the arts and performance, as well as social and educational outreach, repair and restore our aging building, and our continued financial viability.



We have been able to expand our music programs for both religious services and secular concerts and productions. Among the organizations which mutually compliment our needs with RPI are groups such as The Rensselyrics and The RPI Concert Choir. We also host community performances including The Capital Pride Singers, The Russell Sage Singers, private instrumental recitals, and Albany ProMusica.

Central to our award as a National Historic Structure is what allows this to happen. Our spaces are unusually adept at

adaptability — we are able to transform the auditorium from a major religious event like Christmas or Easter into concert space, meeting space, banquet space, and performance space. Using portable chairs instead of pews, folding panels to compartmentalize spaces, and theatrical-grade lighting, the transformations can take place not only in a matter of days, but frequently and remarkably a matter of hours!



Our spaces also serve as classrooms for the community including Tai-Chi, Unity House and Troy High School. For example, the "My Journey" program teaches at risk students the fundamental skills of managing a household. Their classes of twelve are held weekly in Hospitality House, a leased adjacent facility which extends our meeting space and provides a home for the students of the Newman Catholic Fellowship.



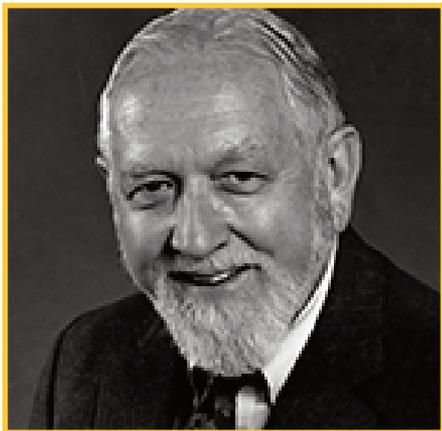
Through prudent and responsible financial management, we have been able to keep up with necessary maintenance and repairs to the building structure, as well as improvements as needed. One such was the extension of the office and storage space by an inspired addition to the side of the building. Replacing a flat windowless wall, the graceful addition designed by Architecture Dean-Emeritus

Patrick Quinn significantly enhances our architectural aesthetics. More importantly it provided space for an upstairs restroom making our facility entirely handicapped accessible. In recent times, our capital campaign enabled us to provide for more significant projects and maintenance of the building structure such as the roof and window projects, and a modern heating and cooling system, but also up-to-date enhancements to the performance space. Future plans include state of the art projection and lighting equipment as well as music equipment.



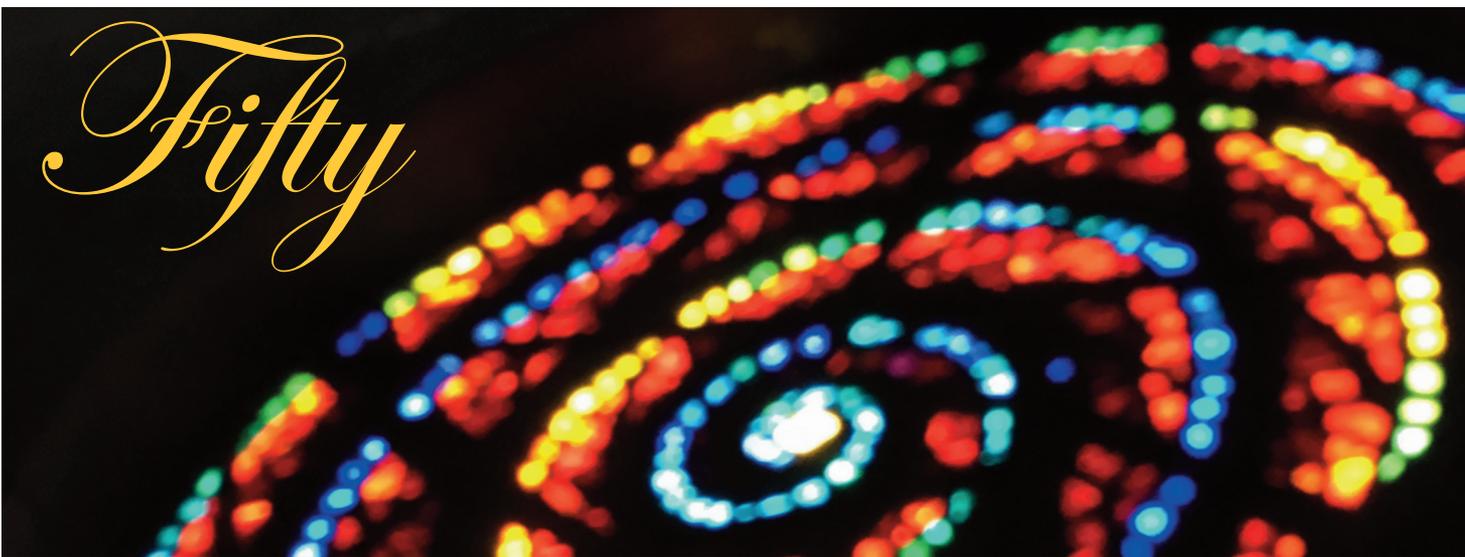
In preparation for the celebration of our 50th anniversary, we realized the importance of our archives collection. Under the direction of Jim Hyde '72, the vast quantity of photographs and documents were organized to help us understand how we arrived to where we are today. Displays were shown at the C+CC as well as in the RPI Folsom Library on campus. This also gave us a renewed push to improve our presence on social media and the internet through our website, in operation since 2002.

Part of our vision for the next 50 years is to expand our visibility in the community as a multi-use facility. Today we want to emphasize that the C+CC is much more than a church. While maintaining our vision and mission, we will grow our cultural aspect. We will continue our mutually beneficial association with RPI by hosting student groups and encouraging our spaces to be enjoyed by students and faculty for a variety of academic, cultural and entertainment purposes. We will also proactively grow our community relationships by reaching out to many other groups in the Capital Region.



The vision of Tom Phelan and the Newman Foundation in 1968 was that the Chapel + Cultural Center would be an ecumenical space, available to all faiths. This is why the auditorium is nearly devoid of religious iconography — to maintain adaptability. Some have criticized the unpainted concrete block walls, but this along with the lack of religious objects moves your focus to the people using the space. Tom characterized that what you see are “not grey walls but colorful faces that add to an honest, straightforwardness” of the space. As Tom Phelan put it then, it is still true today: “As a building, the Chapel + Cultural Center is quite small and anything but opulent, but in its aesthetic appeal and human purpose, it is probably the best such building erected in our community during the last 50 years.”

-Scott Dwyer '90



The Phelan Wiberley Society

The Phelan-Wiberley Society is a community who shares the vision of our early leaders, Fr. Thomas Phelan and Steve & Betty Wiberley. It consists of alumni, parishioners, friends, faculty and staff who support the vision of The Rensselaer Newman Foundation by including the Foundation in their long-term financial and estate plans. Members of the Society belong to a select group of individuals who have chosen to extend their legacies while furthering the work of the Foundation.

If you would like to share your name and intentions with us or learn more about the Phelan-Wiberley Society, please contact Diane Waters at waterd3@rpi.edu or (518) 276-6517.

Thank you for helping us reach our goal!



Thanks to you, our amazing supporters, we exceeded our goal!

We can't thank you enough for helping us achieve and surpass the \$200,000 Matching Challenge for the 50th Anniversary of the C+CC. This year has been extra special with recognizing this milestone in our history. We now invite you to join us as we celebrate the conclusion of our 50th Anniversary year on Friday, June 21. Our evening will begin at 5:00 pm and include a vespers service, organ concert and the re-dedication of the Chapel + Cultural Center. All are welcome!



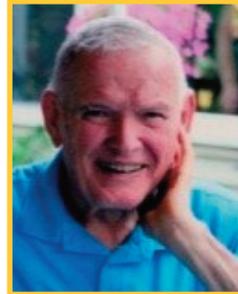
CSJ Welcomes our Newly Baptized

On the Feast of the Holy Family, 29 December 2018, the Parish Community of Christ Sun of Justice welcomed three new members in the Sacrament of Baptism. Congratulations and God's blessings to Fiammetta Jane Reale, daughter of Grace and Tom Reale, Martin Joseph Miller Dunbar, son of Lottie and Martin Dunbar and Xavier Oscar Miller, son of Janice and David Miller.

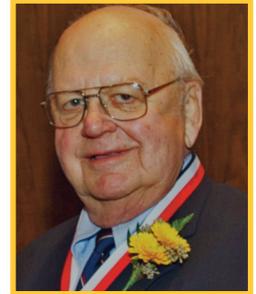


“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life”

John 3:16



William McLoughlin '81



Lawrence F. Mitter '55

It is with great sadness that we share the passing of two former trustees and longtime friends of the Rensselaer Newman Foundation, C+CC, and CSJ Parish. Our hearts and prayers go out to their families and in thanksgiving for all their contributions to our community as a whole.



Upcoming Events

April 13	Penance Service	11:00am
April 18	Holy Thursday	6:30pm
April 19	Good Friday	7:30pm
April 20	Holy Saturday	8:00pm
April 21	Easter Sunday	9:00am, 10:30am, 5:00pm
April - May	“Fugitive States” Art exhibit by Virginia Bryant	
April 25	Virginia Bryant Artist’s Reception	6:30pm
May 5	G.I.F.T. Program	11:30am
May 10	Spring Concert	
	Featuring Mary Simoni	5:15pm
May 18	Rensselaer Class of 2019 Commencement	
June - July	Betty LaDuke – “Dreamers” Art exhibit	
June 5	Capital Pride Singers Concert	7:00pm
June 21	Organ Rededication Vesper Service and Performance	5:00pm
Sept. 26 - 29	Rensselaer Reunion and Homecoming Weekend	

Please check our website for more information about upcoming events. All are welcome.

The Rensselaer Newman Foundation

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www.chapelandculturalcenter.org



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

NAACP Induction Ceremony

Community Event hosted at the C+CC, Sunday, January 13, 2019

The Chapel + Cultural Center was pleased to host the induction ceremony of the revitalized Troy Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) on 13 January 2019. The event was well attended including Patrick Madden, the Mayor of Troy, Congressman Paul Tonko and many local community members, as the group recognized new local leaders.



Renee Powell, RNF Trustee, (center) is the new president of the Troy branch of the NAACP.