Dear Friends,

As you know, the Newman Center is the pastoral center for our university ministry. Through the Newman apostolate there is a long history of service to the University of Pennsylvania (125 years next year) and Drexel University, and in more recent years University of the Sciences and the Restaurant School. We thank God for his faithfulness to us, and for sustaining our work and that of our predecessors, for so many years.

Over these many years, the Newman Center has been blessed with the opportunity and privilege of serving countless young men and women during their university education.

Today, I announce to you – and with great enthusiasm – that we are on the verge of an historic moment for Catholic campus ministry in University City. Plans are underway to move our current Newman Center into much improved facilities located at the former parish school building as well as the lower level of the Church.

The impetus of this move is that the Archdiocese of Philadelphia has entered into an agreement to sell the property located at 3720 Chestnut St. in Philadelphia, the current home of the Newman Center, to EPG Urban LLC.

When this sale is completed, a substantial portion of the proceeds will be designated for a new Newman Center. The net proceeds available after closing costs will benefit the Newman Center and the parish by:

- providing the funds to support the move and redevelopment of the Newman Center on the property of St. Agatha - St. James Parish located between Sansom and Chestnut along 38th Street;
- establishing an endowment to replace income lost as a result of this transaction and move;
- providing funds for necessary repairs to the exterior of the parish church.

The remaining proceeds will be used to support the Archdiocese’s continuing efforts to strengthen its financial position. The sale of this property is a strategic transaction and will achieve the following goals:

1. The current Center needs to be updated. The move of the Newman Center will include a major physical redevelopment of current structures with some new construction. This will enable the Center to better meet the growing programmatic needs of engaging the university community.

2. The redevelopment will be the impetus of a major campaign that will build a network of supporters and partnerships around the world interested in seeing a Catholic center of consequence bearing witness to Jesus Christ in a growing, dynamic, urban neighborhood. The campaign will seek capital and endowment funding to expand the programmatic impact of the Newman Center in all of University City.

3. The move and redevelopment will unify both structurally and architecturally the Newman Center with the ministry of the parish of St. Agatha - St. James, which is the parish church supporting the Catholic mission - in all its forms - in University City and its environs.

With the move and redevelopment, the future is truly exciting for the Newman Center at St. Agatha - St. James. As we move forward into the next phase of the life of the Newman Center, we ask for your continued support and prayers. And in the weeks and months ahead, we look forward to sharing additional details of this exciting project.

May God bless you and your loved ones now and always.

Sincerely in Christ,

Fr. Carlos Keen, SCV
**Contextual Background**

The Newman Club, as it was called at the time, was founded in 1893 at the University of Pennsylvania when Tim Harrington, a medical student at Penn, partnered with the Rev. Dr. J.P. Garney of St. James Parish. Dr. Harrington named the club after Blessed John Henry Newman, the great Catholic intellectual of the 19th century, who authored the Idea of the University.

The Newman Club at Penn was the first in the United States. Now the Newman apostolate extends throughout the United States - with or without the name Newman - supporting Catholic ministry at secular universities.

At the University of Pennsylvania, the Newman Club made its home, known as Newman Hall, in multiple locations in West Philadelphia since its founding. Prior to the move to Chestnut Street, Newman Hall and St. Bede’s Chapel were located near the corner of Spruce & 38th Street where Vance Hall now stands.

In 1970, Newman Hall of the University of Pennsylvania moved its home to the property at 3720 Chestnut St., adjacent to St. James Church (now St. Agatha - St. James). This building has served countless students over the last five decades, helping them grow in an adult faith and launching them into service to the Church and world.

Since 2009, the campus ministry to Drexel University has been supported by the Newman Center, and as such, the building has become home of Drexel students who participate in activities and worship at St. Agatha – St. James.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**What will the buyer do with the property?**
EPG Urban LLC plans to develop a high-rise residential tower with ground floor commercial spaces.

**What is the sale price and how much is being designated to the redevelopment?**
In keeping with established practice, information regarding the final sale price will be disclosed following the closing of the transaction. The majority of the proceeds are for the redevelopment project.

**How is the former school building at 111 S. 38th Street currently used?**
Since 2013 the building has been leased to the University of Pennsylvania for office space for the Netter Center, Penn Design, and the Graduate School of Education. The University has been formally notified that the lease is not being renewed.
What is the timeline for the redevelopment?
The redevelopment of the Newman Center will take place in two phases. Phase I is the renovation of the lower level of the Church with construction expected to take place March 2018-August 2018. Phase II is the renovation of 111 38th Street and it will begin when Penn moves out of the building. Phase II construction is expected to take place January 2019-August 2019.

By August 2018, the lower level of the Church should be complete. For the 2018-2019 academic year this space will serve the program needs of Newman ministry as well as other parish activities. During this transitional Phase (i.e. prior to the completion of the new Newman Center), there is an opportunity to consider ways of doing ministry activities on campus.

Are we losing square footage in the new Newman Center?
As a result of the move, we are gaining square footage and the spaces will be better designed to meet program and community needs.

What part of the project is new construction?
An important piece of the project is the physical link connecting the Newman Center with the lower level of the Church. It will be constructed during Phase II, and it will provide a bright, welcoming lobby and breezeway for movement between buildings.

Where will daily Mass be celebrated?
Daily Mass will be celebrated in the Church of St. Agatha - St. James.

What repairs to the exterior of the Church are necessary?
The exterior stonework of the Church is in need of restoration. That need was identified as a result of recent façade inspections mandated by the City of Philadelphia. A repointing of the entire outside of the Church will be completed.

What will the redevelopment of the lower level of the Church include?
The lower level will have a large meeting space conducive to receptions, lectures, and large group meetings. Projected seating capacity for this area will be 200. The space will be divisible into three smaller spaces by way of retractable partitions. There will be new bathrooms, a new commercial grade kitchen, storage rooms, and a wide corridor along the meeting hall serving as a sitting and lounge area that will lead to the Newman Center.

What kind of spaces will the new Newman Center include?
The Newman Center will have a lobby that will provide access via stairs or elevator to three floors. The 1st floor will serve as an open space housing a library, study nooks, and meeting spaces for quiet and group study. It will serve as an area for small receptions, parties, and film viewings. The 2nd floor will provide classrooms and meeting spaces of varying sizes as well as private spaces for spiritual direction & confession. Highlights of the 2nd floor include a chapel overlooking new green space along Chestnut Street and a lounge overlooking a new courtyard along 38th Street. The third floor will house office spaces for staff and interns.
During Phase I, where will the staff offices be located?
During the 2018-2019 academic year staff offices will be in temporary modular units located in the parking lot next to the Rectory.

What income is being lost from this move?
Currently, the lease of the 111 S. 38th St. property to Penn and the rental of two parking lots generates income crucial to meeting our ministry’s expenses. A portion of the funds resulting from this real estate transaction will be placed in an endowment that will generate an income stream to make up for this loss.

What will happen to the parking lot next to the Rectory?
Beginning in the summer of 2018, parking will no longer be available next to the Rectory due to zoning restrictions imposed by the City of Philadelphia. When construction activity is complete and temporary office units are removed, this area will become a green space available for ministry and events.

Will there be parking available?
Parking will be limited. As part of the real estate transaction, a few spots for staff and scheduled visitors were negotiated to be made available in the underground parking garage of the new high-rise. On Sundays there will be no on-site parking, yet special arrangements with nearby parking garages are expected to provide free parking for those who drive to Mass.

If the majority of the proceeds of the sale are targeted to the redevelopment, why is a fundraising campaign being considered?
If a successful campaign is deemed feasible, funds raised will contribute to important capital projects not in the scope of the current plan (e.g. adoration chapel, improvements to the Church, AC in upper Church, new library, art exhibit space, landscaped park).

The endowment being established will make up for lost revenue currently received, but it will not help us advance our mission, grow our programming, and expand our impact. The Newman Center at St. Agatha - St. James needs a substantial endowment to support our mission in all of University City.

Newman Center Redevelopment Presentation:

Sunday, February 4, 1:30PM,
in the upper lounge of the Newman Center.

The architectural team will assist with the presentation and provide images & design plans.