



NEWMAN INSTITUTE

FOR CATHOLIC THOUGHT & CULTURE

Dear Friends,

As many of you know, Helen and I have decided to finish our time at the Newman Institute and move to New Mexico, where we will build a home on our land and, God willing, begin the foundation of Kateri College of the Liberal and Practical Arts (www.katericollege.org), an idea that has been in our minds and hearts now for over a decade. It was a great blessing and privilege to be the Institute's first director, and the past five years have shown more clearly the need for such an apostolate. The Institute is now one of a handful of such ventures across the country. Pray that there be many more in the years to come so that Catholics and other Christian students, along with all those of good will, can receive an education in the true, the good and the beautiful. Our country and our Church desperately need young men and women of faith who will contribute to the common good. The failures of higher education are legion, and only increasing with the passage of time. We need to form our young people in the truth - the truth about God, about themselves and about the world we inhabit. We are not, as some now claim, divided by religion, ethnicity, race and culture. We have a common humanity, given us by our Creator. We are equal in His eyes and equally loved. This shared humanity makes us children of one Father, brothers and sisters more alike than different, each with an eternal destiny willed by God. The study of the Great Books underscores this truth and prevents us from becoming the pawns of others; it allows us to think for ourselves and avoid conformity; it teaches us to distinguish wisdom from folly. And it shows us "the path of life." As we conclude our time at the Institute, we want to thank Bishop Conley for inviting us to serve the diocese in this way. We are grateful for your friendship, prayer and support. Our efforts towards a shared goal have forged what St. John Henry Newman famously called that "bond of connection between persons". We are likewise grateful that Patrick Callahan will continue the work of the Newman Institute as its new director (see below). Please give him your support and help him to spread the word about the undergraduate courses, evening seminars, and speakers – all designed to help many grow in faith, knowledge and wisdom. And please remember to pray for us and our work.



In Jesus and Mary,

John and Helen Freeh

CHANGE IN LEADERSHIP – PRESS RELEASE

The five-year old Newman Institute for Catholic Thought and Culture has hired a new director to take the place of inaugural director Dr. John Freeh, who will move to New Mexico with his family this summer.

Patrick Rory Callahan, former director of the Humanitas Program at the St. Lawrence Institute for Faith and Culture at the University of Kansas, will assume leadership in July. Callahan, a native of New Jersey, was a member of the foundational board of the Newman Institute which was launched in 2016 to offer college-credit classes in the humanities for University of Nebraska and other area undergraduates. Since then, the Institute has added non-credit evening seminars in literature, philosophy, and theology for the wider Lincoln community. Of the 40 men and women currently in religious formation in and from the Diocese of Lincoln (excluding Carmelites), 15 have taken at least one Institute course or seminar.



Callahan Family

“Patrick brings a youthful enthusiasm and deep love for the Great Books,” said Bishop James D. Conley, whose study of literature at the University of Kansas’s Integrated Humanities Program in the 1970s led to his conversion to the Church. “I first met Patrick and his wife, Eliese, when they were undergraduates at the Rome program of the University of Dallas, where I served as chaplain. He is an excellent teacher. I know students will appreciate his teaching style and will benefit from his profound understanding of the best that has been said and written in Western Civilization.”

Callahan, who did his doctoral work at Fordham University and has taught widely in Classics, literature, and philosophy, served on the foundational board with Freeh, Fr. Robert Matya, Msgr. Timothy Thorburn, and the late Dr. Don Briel, among others. He was also Program Coordinator for the Koch Center for Leadership and Ethics at Emporia State University.

Callahan said he looks forward to serving the students, faculty, and staff of UNL and other colleges, and to developing additional courses and seminars, while continuing the Reborn in Wonder lecture series and last year’s Called to Greatness pilot course on the virtues for members of UNL’s FarmHouse fraternity. That course, which Freeh team taught with Dr. Tom Field, head of the Engler Agribusiness Entrepreneurship Program will also be offered to freshmen pledges at Phi Kappa Theta, the Catholic fraternity.

“I am humbled and honored to continue the good work that Dr. Freeh has begun with the Newman Institute,” Callahan said. In addition to teaching college courses and evening seminars, he said he is eager to serve the Church in Lincoln in what he called a “crucial mission.”

Freeh decided to finish his time at the Institute and move to Gallup, New Mexico, to build a home and explore a long-standing idea to found a four-year Catholic college that combines the liberal and practical, or trade, arts.

“Professor Callahan has been very close to the Institute since its beginnings,” Freeh said. “The Humanitas Program he directed was the one most like ours. Patrick shares Bishop Conley’s vision for higher education and realizes the need to develop a strong learning community outside the classroom. He frequently led student trips, including a popular annual excursion to the Colorado Rockies. Like the Newman Institute, his program also emphasized the importance of great poetry and the wisdom to be found in God’s creation. Patrick is an excellent fit for the Institute. It is a blessing he was available and willing to undertake this apostolate.”

Bishop Conley said he is grateful for what he characterized as an easy transfer of leadership.

“Dr. Freeh was just the right person to get things up and running five years ago,” Conley said. “Although still in its infancy, the Newman Institute now rests on the strong foundation that John and his adjunct faculty and staff have built, a foundation on which Patrick will doubtless continue to build.

“With his years of experience in higher education at a number of universities, Catholic and secular, Dr. Freeh brought a depth of knowledge and experience to Lincoln,” Conley said. “He was able to teach students truth, goodness and beauty through great literature and poetry. I will miss John and Helen as friends, but I know the Lord will continue to guide them. And I will always be indebted to their helping give birth to our Newman Institute for Catholic Thought and Culture.”

FALL 2021 OFFERINGS: Professor Patrick Callahan will teach two undergraduate classes: **Seekers, Sojourners and Pilgrims** and **Love and Friendship**. In addition to our undergraduate courses, two seminars will be offered: Dr. Arias’ **Introduction to Philosophy** and Dr. John Pepino’s **Patristics Seminar**. We also plan to host our **Reborn in Wonder Lecture Series** this Fall. Stay tuned for details.

