



Dear RIT Community Members,

As we begin to forge plans for the year ahead and prepare to welcome a new Associate Director of RIT Newman, I would like to first and foremost thank Alice Miller Nation for her tremendous leadership these last four years. I hate to even think where we would be without her! Of course, we wish her well and trust the Lord is guiding her and all of us on a new path of holiness and grace.

As you may recall, in addition to my current responsibilities at the Catholic Newman Community at the University of Rochester, Bishop Salvatore Matano appointed me Director of the RIT Newman Catholic Community four years ago. While my responsibilities were largely behind the scenes, Alice was the face of our staff and ministry at RIT.

At this new juncture, and with your prayer, support, and assistance, we will start a hiring process to identify and hire an assistant director to manage the operations at RIT Newman. This person will assist in creating, and work to implement, a new strategic vision for our community. Happily, we are in a much better place today in almost every measure. Student engagement and leadership is strong. Financial protocols are in place and slight growth is happening. We are compliant with diocesan regulations, policies, and procedures. And we have a strong core community, sacramental ministers and volunteers that support our ministry to students, staff, faculty, and local residents.

This does not mean we do not have challenges in our efforts to be a sustainable ministry. We very much do! We are still dependent on our year-to-year income to meet budgeted needs. We are lacking an additional full-time chaplain that we had previously and need desperately. Even with these challenges, we are now able to think more strategically, and our next assistant director will help articulate this vision and implement its components. If all goes according to plan, we hope this person can be named in mid-July and begin in early August.

In the meantime, I would like to thank Deacon David Hudzinski and Michael Vernarelli, who have agreed to assist RIT Newman each Sunday with additional responsibilities. They have been terrific and remain vital to our ministry.

I would also like to take this time to thank publically the members of the Finance Council, Jim Gaudet, Dan Rosica, Beth Sieminski and Mike Dybas who have worked hard to secure and safeguard the growth we have seen, and strengthened us in many ways.

Finally, I want to once again express my deepest gratitude to all of you—the RIT Newman Community as a whole. Change is often difficult, and it can often leave us with feelings of great uncertainty. Your admirable commitment to the Catholic faith through the RIT Newman

Community is deeply appreciated and does not go unnoticed! Your continued commitment to the wonderful community and student ministry at RIT, and your faithful presence at Mass and volunteering with student programs gives so much life to our students, whom we all deeply care about, and bolsters the very good efforts of our pastoral care.

As we journey together, the road may seem long and challenging. Nevertheless, we have each other, a God who is always present, and the hearts, minds, and faith of so many students we serve!

Once again, I want to thank you for the blessing you are to RIT Newman. I am honestly very excited about the future, because I have great confidence in the power of Christ's love and your deep faith. If you have any questions, please feel free to email me at [bcool@admin.rochester.edu](mailto:bcool@admin.rochester.edu).

Sincerely,

Rev. Brian C. Cool

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr. Brian C. Cool". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "F".

Director of the RIT Newman Catholic Community

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