

# THE GORILLA CATHOLIC

## **INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

### **Recounting the Legacy**

*Joe and Sally Hart*

- Susannah Hart | Pg. 2

### **Through the Years**

*Three Generations of  
Catholic Gorillas*

- The Askins | Pg. 4

*For Every Generation*

- Amy Lomshek | Pg. 4

*SEEKing Growth*

- By The Numbers | Pg. 5

### **Generations of Tradition**

*The Legacy of Pitt State  
Homecoming*

- Matthew Schmidt | Pg. 6

### **Annual Snapshot**

*SPX Financials* | Pg. 8

### **Invitation to Generation(s)**

- Fr. Derek Thome | Pg. 9

# GENERATIONS OF FAITH

Annual Appeal Edition



# Recounting the Legacy Joe and Sally Hart

By Susannah Hart

*In 1957, two students at Pittsburg State, Joe and Sally (Patterson) Hart, walked through the doors of the St. Pius X Newman Center and met for the first time. Little did they know that the development of their faith and friendship started at the Newman Center would result in a faith-filled and joy-filled lifelong marriage.*



John's Gospel reminds us that Jesus is the true vine and we cannot grow without a relationship with God. "I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit." (John 15:5). In many ways, Joe and Sally lived out that message in their lives. One of their greatest gifts was sharing their life and faith with others. The life they lived produced much fruit – not just in their marriage and family, but also in their community and the Newman Center itself.

Though both Joe and Sally have passed away, their legacy continues to grow in ways they might never have imagined. Every year new generations of students will walk through the Newman Center's doors at Pitt State. These students come searching for friendship, a sense of belonging, and a deeper relationship with Christ. The Hart family hopes that in some way these students will experience the fruits of the seeds sown into Joe and Sally's lives long ago and that they will also root their lives in Christ and continue to bear much fruit.

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The Newman Center was a special place to Joe and Sally; a place where they found lasting friendships, a community to belong to, and most importantly, a place where their Catholic faith deepened and became the foundation of their relationship. The seeds of faith that were planted in their lives during that time carried over into a 64-year marriage focused on sharing their faith with family, friends, and all who knew and loved them.

Joe and Sally loved the Newman Center for what it was in 1957 but even more for what it has become today. Throughout their lifetime they remained involved and recognized the impact that this place could have on generations to come. Two of their children, Cindy '82 and Brian '89, also attended Pitt State and found a sense of belonging at the Newman Center during their college years. Joe even chaired the fundraising campaign for the 2020 remodel, desiring to help give back to the community that had impacted their lives as young college students. He often told others that if they wanted to see for themselves how wonderful the Newman Center was that they only needed to stop by and pick up a bulletin to see everything that was happening.

“I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit.”

-John 15:5



## Continuing the Legacy

The legacy of generous and faith-filled supporters like Joe and Sally Hart and many other Catholic Gorillas is shaping future generations. As a result, we are excited to announce the *Legacy of Discipleship Fund* to promote and sustain the life-giving efforts of our ministry for years to come.

The Hart family has generously given an inaugural gift in honor of their father to help secure funding for retreats, RESTORE Speaker Series, FOCUS Missionaries, Book Studies, and Music Ministry at Pittsburg State for generations to come.



If you are interested in making a contribution in honor of Joe and Sally Hart or a loved one to the *Legacy of Discipleship Fund* or wish to establish a planned or estate gift please contact Erin Hammeke at [erin@catholicgorillas.org](mailto:erin@catholicgorillas.org)



or give directly online by scanning the QR code



## THREE GENERATIONS OF CATHOLIC GORILLAS

By Mary Askins PSU '64

When I think back on my time at Pittsburg State University from 1960 to 1964, I have such wonderful memories. My husband, Jim, and I were born and raised in Pittsburg, and we have always been so proud of this community. Attending Pittsburg State was a natural next step for us upon high school graduation, and the Newman Center became our second home.

One of the most meaningful parts of our time at PSU was Jim's journey of faith. During our college years, he felt called to become Catholic. Under the guidance and instruction of the Newman Center Chaplain, Father Robert Kocour, Jim entered the Church. That time of learning and growing was incredibly special for both of us. Jim and I were married in 1963. I graduated with a BS in Elementary Education, and we went on to raise three wonderful daughters — Kathy Wilbert '86 (Craig), Julie Cedeno (Pat), and Amy Kannarr '93 (Shane) — who have blessed us with ten grandchildren and six great grandchildren. I am proud to be the first of three generations in our family of Pittsburg State students and graduates. Along with our three daughters, nine of our grandchildren (including current students Brody and Sydney Kannarr ('27)) are Pitt State Gorillas.

A fun and interesting fact is my grandmother, Ann Delaney was among the second graduating class from Pittsburg State, then called Kansas State Manual Training School, graduating in 1906. Over our 62 years of marriage, I have loved hearing my children and grandchildren retell stories from their time at the Newman Center that Jim and I could relate to from our time there. Some of our favorites include: attending Mass with friends after a Gorilla football game, Yell-Like-Hell and decorating homecoming floats, a ski trip to Colorado, Wednesday lunches, Sunday night meals, and swing dancing in the barn! Before Jim's passing in July of 2025, he was happy to know his youngest grandchildren are enjoying the newly renovated St. Pius X Catholic Student Center. Our family is grateful for the opportunities PSU has given us, but most importantly for the lasting impact the Newman Center has had on our Catholic faith through the years. The Newman Center will always hold a special place in our family story.

**"The Newman Center will always hold a special place in our family story."**

## THROUGH THE YEARS

### FOR EVERY GENERATION

By Amy Lomshek

I'm not sure how many students have passed through SPX during my time here, but I would guess it's in the thousands. One of the many highlights of my day is when alumni walk through the doors to visit their old stomping grounds. I'll never forget the first time a couple who met here returned with their daughter for a campus and center tour. I was a bit taken aback—it felt like only a year or two had passed since they had graduated. After that initial surprise, though, I found myself reflecting on how beautiful it was that they brought their daughter to see the place that had been such an important part of their time at PSU. Now, it's a common occurrence to see Newmanites bringing their college-bound students to the place that helped form them. And while I still feel like I'm not quite old enough to be seeing their children here, it warms my heart every time.

The impact this center has during such a formative time in people's lives truly makes a difference. I see it every day, but I'm reminded of it in a special way whenever a second-generation Newmanite walks through the door. Currently, we have many second- and some third-generation PSU students at SPX. It's a powerful testament that what we do here matters—from social and service opportunities to, most importantly, spiritual formation. This special place on campus gives students the foundation and the courage to do what is asked of each of us in Mark 16:25: "Go into the world and proclaim the gospel to every creature." And what better place to begin than with their own families?



SEEK23:  
St. Louis



SEEK24:  
St. Louis



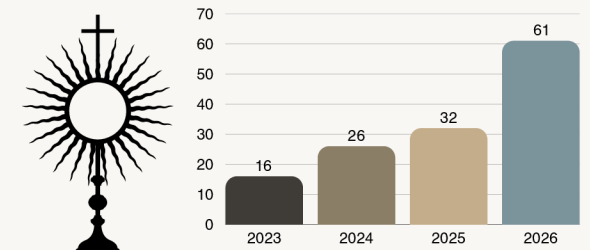
SEEK25:  
Salt Lake City



SEEK26:  
Denver

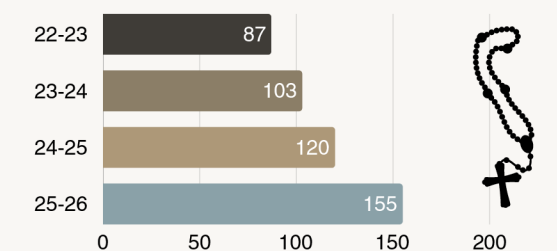
# SEEKING Growth

### SEEK ATTENDANCE



**"Getting to experience SEEK26 in Denver meant so much to me. The talks, Mass, Adoration, the venue, and the music were all amazing. I'm so happy I got to be a witness to my faith alongside my friends and thousands of other Catholics!"**  
-Mary Jo Peterson (Senior)

### REGISTERED MEMBERS



Fully Initiated into the Church **11**

**20** FOCUS and Student Led Bible Studies



# Susie Peak reigns over homecoming

Susie Peak, Pittsburg sophomore, was crowned the 1974 Homecoming Queen during ceremonies before the Homecoming football game. Peak, representing the Newman Apostolate, was crowned Homecoming Queen by the 1973 Queen Anne Hommertzhelm, Garden Plain senior.

Peak received her crown, a bouquet of roses and a silver tray from her predecessor in the final Homecoming ceremony before the beginning of the football game.

Peak was elected by the KSCP students in an election last Friday from a group of 10 semi-finalists. Her crowning was the highlight of a stadium parade that included a look at the prize-winning float.

The 1973 Homecoming parade was closer in some ways to the announcement of the 1974 Homecoming Queen than the 1974 Homecoming parade.

and Sigma Phi Epsilon's "Magilla Gorilla". In the queen car competition, Newman Apostolate won first honors with the "Mickey Mouse" car. Sigma Chi's "Don't Goo! Around with KSCP" took second place.

Shirk Hall's "Mighty Mouse" was third, while Delta Rho-TKE came in fourth with "Lift Abner."

In addition to KSCP's "Pride of the Plains" band, 20 area High School and junior high bands marched in the parade, as well as the band

from Fort Scott Community College.

Participating bands included Pittsburg High School band, Girard High School band, St. Paul High School band, Southeast High School band, Chetopa High School band, McCune High School and Junior High band and Cherokee Jr. High School Band.

The Frontenac High School band, Lakeside Jr. High School band, Cherryvale High School band, Thayer High School band, Uniontown

High School band, Caney Valley High School band, Hamilton High School band also participated.

Jay Hawk-Linn High School band, Bronaugh, Mo. High School band, Girard Jr. High School band, Roosevelt Junior High School band, Coffeyville Roosevelt Jr. High School band and the East Newton High School band from Missouri also participated in the parade.

# GENERATIONS OF TRADITION

## The Legacy of Pitt State Homecoming

By Matthew Schmidt (Grad Student)

*The legacy of the Newman Center's participation in Homecoming Week is deeply engrained in our history, alumni memories, and university life. This year was no different, as the Catholic Gorillas took home the Homecoming Champion trophy. Beyond the victory, what made that week special was the community life that brought us together to continue our legacy for yet another year.*

Homecoming week is always a special time at Pittsburg State University. It's an opportunity for every student and club to make an impact, and the Newman Club is no different. We have been part of this tradition for decades, with trophies at the Newman Center dating back to the 1970s. The legacy of Homecoming runs deep for us, with memories that last long after the king and queen are crowned and the football game is over.

Students grow together during this week in ways that other events just don't provide. Whether it's the energy of Yell-Like-Hell or the late nights building the parade float, there is a real sense of community and a chance for students to come together on a project. While homecoming events happen at every university, the traditions here are unlike any other.

Yell-Like-Hell is usually described as a group dance and cheer competition, but it's much better understood once you witness it for yourself. If you talk to alumni, they'll tell stories about long rehearsals with friends or the rush of finishing the parade float the night before the parade. In my

five years as a Newman Club member, I can say that things haven't changed. We still find ourselves up late the night before the parade, despite vowing every year to start earlier the next time. I still love watching students fall into University Lake each fall after being on a raft made of duct tape, pool noodles, and rope. My personal favorite, Jungle Jump (an indoor volleyball competition), was new last year, but the Newman Club has already won back-to-back years. Participating in these traditions leaves a legacy that lasts way beyond graduation.

That legacy was added to this year as the Newman Club won Homecoming Champion among student organizations on campus. This victory took a lot of effort and hard work from everyone. We had freshmen making an impact in the Raft Races and seniors working on building the parade float. Everyone came together on Saturday to walk in the parade, which was where we learned we had won Homecoming.

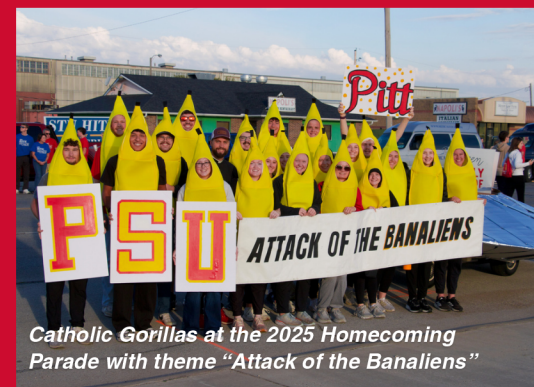
As a graduate student, I knew this would be my last Homecoming as a student. (cont. next page)



Matthew Schmidt with 2025 Homecoming Champion Trophy  
Photo by Alice Carnahan (Student)

**"Receiving the honor of Homecoming King was something that I could have never dreamed of. Getting to represent the Newman Club is an opportunity that I will cherish for the rest of my life."**

**-Austin O'Hara (Senior)  
2025 Homecoming King**



Catholic Gorillas at the 2025 Homecoming Parade with theme "Attack of the Banaliens"

I had the chance to represent the Newman Club on the Homecoming Court the year before, but I just wanted to have fun this year. I got to participate in almost every event, from Jungle Jump to the parade. Knowing it was my last time participating made me realize how much these moments matter. I have experienced the joys of victory, the pains of defeat, and the struggles of leadership. This year was different. I wasn't worried about winning or losing; I was just enjoying the moment. Having some of my closest friends by my side was what made it meaningful.

I will remember the Newman Club winning Homecoming Champion for years to come. When I look back on that week, all I can do is smile. Homecoming had a huge impact on our club. We grew closer as a community and we became true friends, not just people who stand next to each other at Mass. We also grew more active on campus, meeting new people and talking about what it means to be Catholic. Homecoming impacts everyone around us while allowing us to give to something greater than ourselves. That's why Pitt State Homecoming is special.



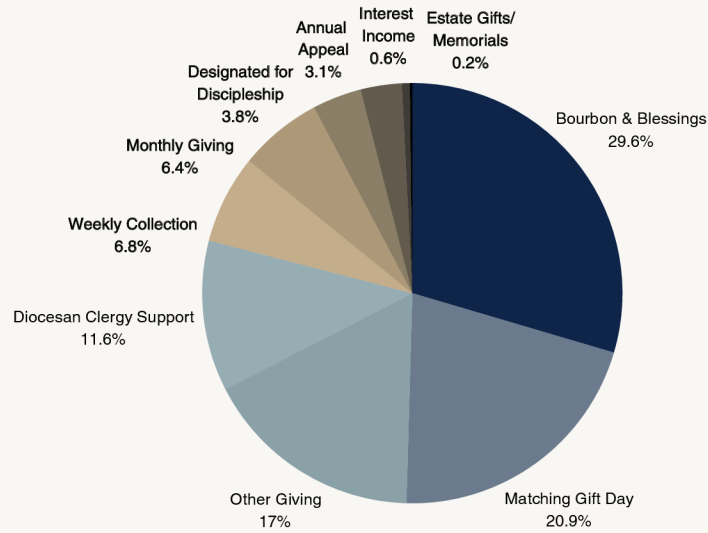
Austin O'Hara wins 2025 Homecoming King



# ANNUAL SNAPSHOT

## FY26 ANTICIPATED BUDGET

July 1, 2025- June 30, 2026



### INCOME \$379,532

Bourbon & Blessings	\$112,202
Matching Gift Day	\$79,268
Diocesan Clergy Support	\$44,000
Weekly Collection	\$25,850
Monthly Giving	\$24,348
Designated for Discipleship	\$14,366
Annual Appeal	\$12,000
Interest Income	\$2,284
Estate Gifts / Memorials	\$715
Other Giving	\$64,499

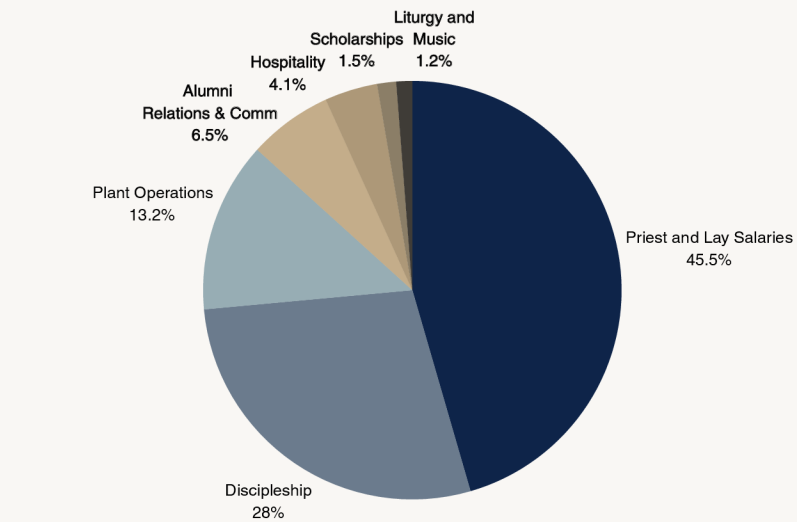
### EXPENSES \$357,610

Priest and Lay Salaries	\$162,793
Discipleship	\$100,232
Plant Operations	\$47,141
Alumni Relations & Comm	\$23,252
Hospitality	\$14,623
Scholarships	\$5,250
Liturgy and Music	\$4,400

### NET SURPLUS \$21,922

#### Generations of Faith Fund (Endowment)

While no withdrawal was needed to cover an operating deficit, we anticipate additional expenses in FY27 with the return of a full-time development director and the possibility of adding a part-time campus minister for the first time.



# INVITATION TO GENERATION(S)

BY FATHER DEREK THOME SPX CHAPLAIN

*People, places, and things have long shaped the trajectory of cultures and societies. One day could change a person's life; one invention, a whole generation. As history has proven for me and others time and again, the impact that one little opportunity can make is not to be taken lightly.*

For Ella Dugan, the daughter of Irish immigrants, it all started while looking for work to bring in extra income for her family. She sought employment at a nearby homestead tending to their domestic needs. What started out as a stable job ended up taking her, along with the family, to California. As though the journey across the country near the start of the 1900s wasn't enough of a challenge, she now found herself as the lone Catholic separated from her family. Yet, she wasn't deterred. Marrying the family's lone son in San Diego, Ella was determined to not only get married in the Church but also to baptize and raise her kids in the faith. When she and John returned to Kansas in 1918, their love story for each other and the Catholic faith blossomed.

Now in 2026, as her great grandson, I have her to thank for the Catholic faith and culture sewn into my family today. Her conviction and love for Jesus Christ and His Church over 100 years ago, exemplified through first her job, then her marriage, has spread to now four generations of Armours. Today the third generation features two priests, one Dominican Sister of St. Cecilia, and many faithful families, who seek to continue the generations of faith that she started.

Ella's story and others like it are the mirror for our ministry. One conversation on campus, one bible study, one confession, one Mass, is all it takes for a life to be transformed and for generations to be brought to life in the Gospel. When we discover a love so powerful, our only option is to share it. Each student that walks in, each person who comes to Mass, is a person Jesus Christ is seeking. Yet as college students find themselves like Ella, away from their families and preparing to start one of their own, it is my desire to provide them the place, resources, and time necessary to encounter the longing of Jesus Christ for not only their heart, but the hearts of those they will meet for generations to come. I pray that St. Pius X brought the same to you and now through you and our ministry, can continue to reach generations to come.

## FIVE-YEAR INCOME & EXPENSE COMPARISON

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025 <sup>+</sup>	2026 <sup>Δ</sup>
<b>Total Income</b>	74,934	123,070	126,857	287,711	269,119	379,532
<b>Total Expenses</b>	166,054	203,405	248,277	288,862	373,000	357,610 <sup>#</sup>
<b>Net Surplus/Deficit</b>	(91,120)*	(80,335)*	(121,420)*	(1,151)	(103,881)*	21,922

+ First full year of FOCUS Missionaries

Δ First year with Bourbon & Blessings Fundraiser

# Expenses decreased due to lack of full time Development Director in FY26

\* Deficit covered by endowment at rates far exceeding long term sustainability (ie 12.7% in FY23)

## BOURBON & BLESSINGS

**Our first ever fundraiser was an incredible success!**

From bourbon and chocolate pairings to student testimonials and auctions, the evening was a powerful witness of support for Campus Ministry. Thanks to your support, we expect to have a net surplus this fiscal year for the first time in many, allowing us to better serve our current and future needs. This includes part-time roles like campus minister and maintenance positions. We are looking forward to our next event in Wichita this fall, followed by Kansas City in 2027. If you would like to help plan or donate auction items, please contact us!



MINISTRY VIDEO

*Address Service Requested*



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St. Pius X Catholic  
Student Center



Scan the QR code to  
visit our website  
[catholicgorillas.org](http://catholicgorillas.org)

***“The St. Pius X Catholic Student Center is dedicated to evangelizing students at Pittsburg State University and forming them into disciples of Christ.”***



## UPCOMING EVENTS

For more information, go to [catholicgorillas.org](http://catholicgorillas.org)

**Family Day**  
*September 5th*

**Bourbon & Blessings**  
*September 26th*  
Wichita, KS

**Homecoming**  
*October 17th*