

Nels was famous for sending long emails on various causes and concerns.
The one sent to Fr. Cool and many others on April 30, 2015 stands out.

From: Nels
To: All My Friends
Subj: Too many coincidences

Retirement has been a great experience in freedom. No need to get up every day and worry about making money. The good Lord has given us more than anyone could ever dream of. I could not stop working. My concern over the destruction of our manufacturing sector by shifting manufacturing to Asia has happened — to all the worst of my fears. But the other passion of my retirement has been to try to figure out how—on a daily basis— to be a better Catholic/Christian/ Human being? And thus began a big track down the trail of philosophy.

So too begin coincidences: A long-time friend and acquaintance sent me his latest book: *Technocracy-Rising-Trojan-Global-Transformation*. He writes of a global conspiracy to control the world thru technology. It tends to fit with my overwhelming conspiracy idea derived from Lewis Powell's memoranda 1970, and Nobel Prize winner Milton Friedman's charge to business

execs that payment to shareholders is all that counts—no other responsibilities!

That conspiracy has dominated my thinking for at least five years, probably 20. More coincidences? By accident, I picked up a book about Thomas Merton, *The Intimate Merton His life from his Journals*. Merton—perhaps one of the greatest mystics of the past century. Here is the quotation from his journal June the 6th, 1960: "To discover all the social implications of the gospel, not by studying them, but by living them and to unify myself explicitly with those who foresee and work for the social order. — a transformation of the world—according to these principles; primacy of the person (hence justice, liberty, against slavery, peace, control of technology) etc. Primacy of wisdom and love (hence against materialism, hedonism, pragmatism, etc.)" And then I awoke this morning incorrectly recalling a prayer from my book *desiderata* — It was really the serenity prayer. "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, Courage to change the things I can...But I thought it was *Desiderata*. And

here is the template I hope to follow for a while: Cut computer time and current stuff by 90%, Learn about quiet time, and get at the 3-4 year backlog of books and articles stored away.

So please, I won't be looking at email or Facebook except every few days. If we need to talk or communicate, I will be relying on the smartphone and its messaging. Please let me know if this causes any problems.

In one sense, I am embarking on a 3 month sabbatical — and it might last a year or longer. I am expecting the causes I have supported can survive without my help — perhaps prosper!

At any rate, this feels real good. God bless.

"Like many things in life, it is in death we understand more clearly what wisdom is and appreciate deeper from those who share it."

— Fr. Brian Cool

Cool thoughts continued from page 1

district, I was suddenly overwhelmed with the realization that I loved all those people, that they were mine and I theirs, that we could not be alien to one another even though we were total strangers. It was like waking from a dream of separateness, of spurious self-isolation in a special world, the world of renunciation and supposed holiness... This sense of liberation from an illusory difference was such a relief and

such a joy to me that I almost laughed out loud... I have the immense joy of being man, a member of a race in which God Himself became incarnate. As if the sorrows and stupidities of the human condition could overwhelm me, now I realize what we all are. And if only everybody could realize this! But it cannot be explained. There is no way of telling people that they are all walking around shining like the sun."

Anyone who knew Nelson Hoffman was deeply connected to him. They knew him as he sought to know you in a deep and profound way that can only be called spiritual. Nels sought to be one with Joan, his children, grandchildren, the needy, the students at Newman and Rochester, those who worked for and with him, this priest, and indeed every stranger he encountered.

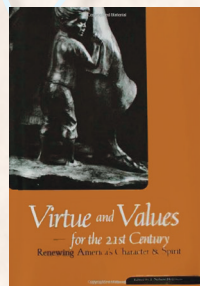
"Our gift is a call for others who are committed to the noble goal of uniting faith and reason and to change lives by supporting Newman."

— Nelson Hoffman

Virtue and Values

Virtues and Values, edited by J. Nelson Hoffman, is a collection of stories that "addresses the serious concern of society's cohesion, sense of belonging, community and mutual purpose that has marked America throughout our history."

Please contact us for a complimentary copy of Nels book.



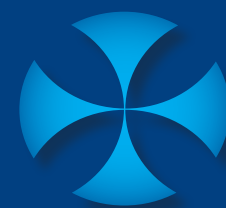
NEWMAN

Please visit us at www.urnewman.org
Catholic Community at the University of Rochester

Interfaith Chapel, Rochester, NY 14627

Phone: 585.275.8515

bcool@admin.rochester.edu



HEART *Speaks* TO HEART *In Memoriam*

Summer, 2016 • Issue III, Volume XVI

J. NELSON HOFFMAN † 1933-2016

John Nelson Hoffman was born in Rochester, NY on March 11, 1933, to Joseph and Isabelle Hoffman.

At the University of Rochester, Nels was a successful multi-sport athlete, inducted into the University's Athletic Hall of Fame in 2004. He was goalie of the soccer team for 4 years, and he earned 3 letters in basketball as a forward and guard. In his fifth year, he coached the freshman basketball team and was an assistant for the soccer team.

After graduating with a degree in optical engineering, he went on to a career as an operating executive and then owned a successful California aerospace



manufacturing business.

A gentleman who loved playing and attending any sporting event, he was a generous, compassionate and intelligent man who will be greatly missed.

He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Joan Dutcher Hoffman; 5 children, 9 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren. Nels and Joan lived for many years in Carlsbad, California before retiring to Palm Springs, California and Snowmass, Colorado.

A funeral Mass was celebrated by Fr. Brian Cool on Monday, February 29th at St. Bernadette's Catholic Church, Louisville, KY.

A Homily for a Loved and Admired Friend

The following is a portion of the homily I had the distinct privilege to offer at the Mass of Christian Burial for my friend and Newman supporter Nelson Hoffman. Words can't capture my broken heart but I trust they reflect the deep respect and admiration I have and the faith we share.

In the summer of 1999, a tall, outgoing, energetic man walked into my office and asked if I had a minute. I was young, overwhelmed by taking on new responsibilities in a brand new job. I knew no one and little about running a campus ministry center. Talking a mile a minute, I soon realized this man had ideas, ideas, and more ideas and was telling me who I needed to meet and why I needed to meet them. This 34 year old priest was being schooled and didn't realize it until somewhere in the conversation, I had to pull out a pen and paper and start writing things down. From this, Nels helped me create a vision for the Catholic Newman Community at the University of Roches-

**COOL
THOUGHTS**
from
Rev. Brian Cool

The J. Nelson '55 and Joan Dutcher Hoffman '55
Director of Catholic Newman
Community Pastoral Care



ter... one that would literally transform lives at a most critical time. He himself knew just how critical college life was.

He knew it was where values, attitudes, priorities are established that last a lifetime. ~He himself, fell deeply in love with the woman who would become his wife of over 60 years.

~He honed analytical skills that would rebuild not only a company but an industry. ~He learned to take calculated risks both on and off the soccer field, basketball court and with life.

~He chose to follow Christ and it guided him always.

Thomas Merton, one of the greatest

spiritual writers of the 20th century, who lived just 40 minutes south of Louisville, shared more than a kindred spirit with Nelson Hoffman. Both men were deeply reflective, both were converts to the faith, both were extremely well read on a variety of topics (I mean Nels actually read papal encyclicals...no one reads these) and both wrote volumes to change the world. It is so fitting that Joan and Nels moved back to Louisville 2 years ago.

On my last trip to see my friend, we took a trip to the Abbey of Gethsemane where Merton lived. It would be my fondest journey ever taken with Nels.

Once when visiting Louisville for a doctor's appointment, Merton would have what many would describe as a mystical experience. A unique encounter that transformed his being and thinking for a lifetime. He writes in *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*:

"In Louisville, at the corner of Fourth and Walnut, in the center of the shopping

Continued on page 4

A Family Eulogy

The following is an edited version of a portion of the family eulogy delivered by Bob and Tom Hoffman

To some of us he is known as Big Nels, on occasion, J-Nels. Or to some of the cooler people in attendance, he is Poppa, or The Gazunk. He refers to himself as The Paterfamilias, a term of reverence he wishes we would all adopt, but it hasn't reached the widespread acceptance he is hoping for. Or, he is also good with The Big Kahuna.

In one of my last conversations in person with Big Nels, I told him, "As cold as it sounds, I am not going to be sad when you die. I'm going to miss you certainly, but I won't be in despair." I said, "You have established a legacy which far exceeds that of most people, and you are a part of all of us. I am confident that after you stop breathing and your heart stops beating, you will be with me, constantly, in more ways than I can describe.

Recently my friend reached out to offer consolation and told me you only get one father, but they are with us forever. And that really rang true for me. Nels has always led by example. For me, he set the standard with regard to how to treat a lady. As far as I can tell, despite the day-to-

day rigors of life and marriage and work and kids and so on, he has always had an unwavering love and respect for the woman of his dreams, the love of his life, Joanie. I'm sure if every man treated his sweetheart like my dad did, there'd be a

"Have you ever had Dad ask you for 5 minutes of your time, only to still be engaged with him an hour later? He dreams of changing the world, even if that is beyond him."

lot less single ladies to go around...When it comes to having a purpose in life, Nels' curious mind and his ability to think BIG is one of his legacies.

Dad recently told Ken about an event

that had a profound influence on him. His grandfather, Grandpa Hill, told him "The sign of a great man is he is able to achieve things beyond his grasp."

Nels was always a spiritual man, He converted to Catholicism after he and Joan were married and was baptized right before Karen was born. His spirituality grew and was something he lived. He offered to teach our CCD classes, shared books and readings that touched him and joined his grandchildren for baptisms and confirmations. We know that his faith in God has been a great source of comfort and strength for him and Joan during these last days and are glad for the peace he has found in his creator.

He continued to think BIG in his retirement focusing on China, competitiveness and the environment. Dad's BIG thinking and BIG personality enriches the lives of all of us and we celebrate that today.

He is with us now. I know he is sitting back with a big smile, perhaps wiping away a few tears (for he was free with his emotions), ...and his only regret is that he can't stand up and grab the microphone to offer his own perspective on what is going on. Let us continue to hear from him, through our hearts and memories. Let us also follow his example of thinking BIG.



In 2007, Nels brought 8 students to University of Illinois at Chicago "Integrates" Institute to attend a lecture on Ethics and Business.



Fr. Cool joins the Hoffman family in Louisville, Kentucky to celebrate Joan and Nel's 60th wedding anniversary.

Memories and Honors

**Director Naming Ceremony:
The J. Nelson Hoffman and Joan
Dutcher Hoffman Director of
Catholic Newman Community
Pastoral Care. October 17, 2010.**

Since 1999, Nels provided the Newman Community with strong and effective leadership for over 10 years as a member of the first Newman Advisory Council. In this capacity Newman student programs tripled and the annual support of alumni, parents and friends more than doubled. Additionally, in 2010, Nels and Joan have made a bequest to the Newman endowment to permanently support Catholic ministry at Rochester. For their commitment and leadership the Director position at Newman was named in their honor in 2010.

Hoffmanisms

- **CHARACTER** its what you do when you don't have to that will determine what you will be when you must.
- **LUCK** is when fanatical preparation meets opportunity.
- **THE PROACTIVE LIFE** - Don't wait for your ship to come in. Swim out to it.
- **FIRST IMPRESSIONS** It's hard to create a good first impression, the second time around.



Fellow classmates, colleagues and friends celebrate with Nels and Joan the naming of the director position at the University of Rochester's Meliora weekend 2010.



Bishop Matthew Clark presents the naming of the J. Nelson and Joan Hoffman Director of Catholic Newman Community Pastoral Care during Meliora weekend 2010.

**Distinguished Alumni Award:
The Philip Morace Alumni Award**

Throughout their lives together, the Hoffman's have been devoted Catholics, living biblical justice, and with unconditional love for each other and all, especially those in need. Under their visionary and transforming leadership the Newman Community has become one of the best Catholic campus ministry sites in the country evidenced by the recognition of three national awards in 2007, 2009 and 2011. In honor of their lives as Christian witnesses and dedicated service to Newman students, the Philip M. Morace '81 Distinguished Alumni Award was bestowed upon Nelson and Joan Hoffman in 2014.



Fr. Cool visits Nels and Joan along with Abbey in Snowmass, Colorado.